



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

DATE: October 4, 2015
TO: Mayor Tarter and Members of City Council
FROM: Tree Commission *Jennis Szymanski*
SUBJECT: Proposed Mason Row Project at Broad and West Streets

Introduction

On September 11, 2015, the City Council referred the proposed Mason Row mixed-use development project to City Boards and Commissions for comment. At our September 16 meeting, we discussed the project for potential impact on the City's urban forest. In our review, we restricted commentary consistent with the role of the Tree Commission to advise the City's Arborist, Council and Manager on tree conservation, removal and replacement, both on public and private property, and in particular during commercial and residential development projects. In addition, the Tree Commission makes recommendations on current and proposed regulations, policies, practices and staff plans that promote the City's overall goal of preserving the tree canopy and maximizing its ecological and aesthetic benefits to the community.

This memo responds to Council's referral and is intended to assist Council in its evaluation of the project and we have tried to avoid repeating previous commentary.

Comments

The new plan shows a more robust plant buffer abutting the St. James property. Planters on Broad Street have been moved to the curb, and the Broad Street Streetscape Plan appears to be being followed. We note planters are long and have trees spaced at 30 feet which is a positive factor.

The Tree Commission requests the developer provide a plan for landscaping across West Street, along the W&OD Trail. Landscaping should be complementary to that on Mason Row and should create a single aesthetic corridor all the way to West End Park.

We recognize the challenge of creating and maintaining green space in an urban environment, however we are disappointed that there appears to be a reduction in "market square" green space and would wish to engage the developer regarding the apparent reduction.

cc: Planning Commission