

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
<p>Arts & Humanities Council</p>	<p>Missing Items: Street décor (seasonal lights, flowers in pole planters on Washington (2 blocks) & Broad (3 blocks)); Historical markers, Trails signage, Wayfinding (Existing - Care and maintenance (straightening-recommend installation of LSI sleeve at base/ painting), Refurbishing or Replacement of the Historic Trail Kiosks used for Historic Trail maps, literature); Event banners (Arts and Humanities Council of Falls Church Event banners are on light pole hardware obtained by grant from EDA to compensate for loss of street banners that spanned the roadway (new VDOT regulation at the time). Established for promotion of arts, theater, culture and history events of approved non-profits; City map of existing/ planned amenities. Supports a permanent Streetscape Committee</p>	<p>Did not locate per se a statement regarding the Vision and Goals in the draft of Streetscape Standards. Even though the general scope as specified are acceptable but they do not include some elements that were missed.</p>		<p>Opinion not conclusive on color or idea of matching the furnishings and street lamp poles. Many did agree and were pleased with the S. Maple Avenue benches (gray with wood seating) and gray light poles that complemented the brick mortar and gray trims on the buildings.</p>	<p>Bull nose brick perimeter on planters highly recommended to prevent salt damage. The brick perimeter creates a strong classic appearance and the Arts and Humanities Council prefers this option for plant health, clean finish, and neater tree and shrub bed appearance.</p>	<p>Flexibility recommended for sign placement, especially where there is street parking</p>				<p>Question of property owners maintaining landscaping around their properties except the pruning of trees is acceptable and the Council feels this may well improve the overall appearance of streetscape, and reduce the City budget for current maintenance efforts that will now be performed and paid for by the property owners. Setting expectations and defining a process if maintenance is inadequate is also recommended</p>

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Citizens' Advisory Committee for Transportation	<p>We would like something to be included to address the increase of bike traffic on our sidewalks.</p> <p>We would like considerations to be shared on solutions for the existing problem of no required minimum for unobstructed areas on our current sidewalks.</p>	<p>The CACT felt that providing a better definition of “Brand” was needed. Although “a family friendly place’ was mentioned, there was not enough to describe the desire to make our city feel comfortable and inviting. Although “branding” may be important for our local businesses, creating a comfortable streets that feel safe and welcome should also be a priority.</p>		<p>Supports selection of all black furniture, Victor Stanley bench, "hitch" option for future bike racks. Incorporate Little City logo on street name signs Street name signs in Vietnamese at Eden Center</p>	<p>We are all in support of requiring a flush tree pit to improve the walkability of our streets. - We request that clarification is given 5x12 (page 12) is detailed as recommended tree pit, so why is 5x14 on all images? We support the flush tree planters. Would like to see a minimum 5’x12’ size for all tree pits.</p>	<p>Support 20-foot cross section options with flush planters (Options 1 & 2)</p>				<p>None</p>
Chamber of Commerce	<p>Missing Items that should be addressed: Undergrounding of utilities; Marking of historic crossroads; Tree lights; Pole planters at 100 blocks of Washington & 100-200 blocks of Broad; Branding via City markers above street signs; Street/Pole banners; Gateway signage; Sandwich board signs. Address bike and bus shelter plans in this plan. Historic trail signage</p>	<p>Did not note a particular vision statement. General overview and goals seemed appropriate and adequate.</p>		<p>Given the costs incurred recently repainting the current street lamp and traffic light poles, the recommendation is to incorporate color changes slowly, as repainting is required. There was no consensus regarding the actual color scheme or design concepts or even the need for consistency. The committee does believe that the City’s “brand” should be strongly considered in determining the appearance of amenities.</p>		<p>Standards seem suitable Add flexibility re: sidewalk sign placement, particularly in locations with on-street parking. Additionally, more information regarding the sidewalk minimums and rationale for the proposed sidewalk sections would be helpful.</p>				<p>The Chamber is pleased to see that property owners will be afforded the opportunity to maintain landscaping around their properties. This enables them to control the appearance of their property and saves City resources. The Chamber would like this option to be made available, but not mandatory, to existing property owners. The Chamber also recommends that policies be put in place to ensure compliance by the property owners.</p>

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Economic Development Authority	Taskforce work ties closely to visioning efforts, placemaking, branding, goal for uniform theme. Welcome signs at gateway locations are very weak and a good place to begin with implementation of the new streetscape standards. Missing Items: Outlets for tree lights			Additional bike racks with more capacity than decorative racks	Consensus for flush planters	Supported 22-foot setback zoning code changes for larger buildings	More pedestrian bump-outs at downtown street crossings.			
Environmental Sustainability Council	The ESC fully supports a robust urban tree canopy. At the same time, there are many other elements of smart streetscape design that contribute to an environmentally sustainable urban landscape. These include reducing greenhouse gas and particulate emissions through enhanced walkability and connections to sustainable transportation, as well as reducing stormwater runoff by integrating green infrastructure elements in the streetscape. We would like to see these benefits articulated in the document.	Revise environmental goal to state "Promote environmental sustainability and tree canopy". Articulate environmental benefits of smart streetscape design.			Private landowners should retain flexibility to install planters designed to capture stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff is a leading cause of pollution to local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, and it is the only one that is still on the rise. Jurisdictions around the region are implementing programs to install green infrastructure on both public and private land to achieve compliance with water quality regulations. Many of these programs are ambitious, fully integrating green infrastructure into design guidelines for streetscapes and urban infrastructure. While Falls Church City has not yet attained that level of ambition, the City should at a minimum retain the ability to use		With respect to walkability, the ESC supports efforts to increase pedestrian safety by increasing the number of crosswalks with enhanced safety features such as hawk signals and Leading Pedestrian Indicator sequencing.			Supports transferring bulk of maintenance responsibilities to private landowners, with important caveat: City should develop clear, rigorous maintenance standards that landowners must apply and should monitor and enforce these standards with input from the City Arborist as appropriate. To support private landowners' maintenance of planters, the ESC supports proposals to explore environmentally friendly alternatives to road salt as a de-icing tool. In addition to damaging plant health, rock salt is found in increasing concentrations in urban waters – including drinking water – and has a negative impact on aquatic life. The City should take advantage of MWCOG's cooperative purchasing program for Calcium

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Environmental Sustainability Council					streetscapes as one potential location for stormwater infiltration facilities to support MS4 permit compliance. Safety and appearance of green infrastructure installed on sidewalks have been concerns within the City. The City should avail itself of design guidelines developed by other jurisdictions to mitigate these concerns. For example, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation Green Infrastructure Standards includes safety and access guidelines as well as plant lists and maintenance schedules. The safety guidelines require an 18" raised edge if there is a vertical drop in a bioretention facility adjacent to a high volume pedestrian area and 4" high and 6" wide curb in low volume pedestrian areas.					Manganese Acetate, a low corrosion, plant friendly, effective alternative to rock salt. With volume purchase, the cost of this material should be competitive with rock salt/brine and, once deployed, would set a standard for the region as well.
Planning Commission	Use photos from City where possible and make sure consistent with caption/show desired effect.	Understands that the use of bullets implies that the goals are not listed in a priority order List "safety and accessibility" goal first because ordering may be interpreted as priority order		Recommends the following color combinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new black style benches be used along Broad Street • The Pearson Square style benches be used along Washington Street. The small area plans 	No firm recommendation on raised vs flush. Commission recommends that the following issues be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A raised edge can be a tripping hazard • A raised edge matches existing 	A building setback of 20' is already established in the City's zoning ordinance. The Planning Commission recommends not including additional requirements for building undulation because those				The Planning Commission supports allowing/requiring property owners to maintain the streetscape in front of their properties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During budget down turns, maintenance is one of the first things to get cut, so relying

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
				<p>speaks to each street having its own identity, and this concept should be carried forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street can color should be matched to the bench color. Street lights and mast arms along Broad and Washington should stay the existing grey color to avoid being too bold/loud. All bike racks should be green to be more visible. <p>Some trash cans are overfull and in need of more frequent emptying. Prefers the existing street lamp style along W Broad Street. Do not like the lamps along Park Avenue, too close together and sun-like in color. Supports the green bike racks that look like bikes. Less supportive of the bike rack consisting of a black post and circle with an inscribed bicycle design, smaller and looks less utilitarian.</p> <p>Sign toppers be used for specific areas of interest. Do not have a firm recommendation on sidewalk sign boards.</p> <p>Supports outdoor dining, but wants to ensure sufficient space is left open for pedestrians</p>	<p>streetscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not clear from information provided that raised edges promote tree health If trampling of root zones is a concern, can tree grates be used as an alternative? Raised planters can give the appearance of a suburban design, which may not be in keeping with the City's downtown areas 	<p>decisions should instead be made on a case-by-case basis. Recommends 10-foot pedestrian space to allow sufficient passage. Supports outdoor dining but ensure sufficient pedestrian space.</p>				<p>on the private sector makes sense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some developers have already been required to do this, so the City is learning how to manage these agreements. Health of the tree stays with the City Arborist, other maintenance to private side, which provides a good balance. Trees- when they die, need to be replaced with the tree species from the site plan, to confirm landscaping is consistent with what was approved. A template or guide for maintenance agreements should be developed to make clear what is expected. <p>Supports alternative de-icers but materials best suited to clear ice should be used.</p>

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Tree Commission	Additional dialogue required on: application of standards to existing streetscape, process controls of standards vs guidelines, incentivizing compliance for ongoing maintenance. Continue research into alternative deicing materials	Supports in particular the goal “Promote tree canopy and environmental sustainability.”		<p>The street furniture is appropriate and acceptable, but we believe we should see street furniture that is consistently applied. If the brand is that FCC is “a unique and special place, then other than the unique bus stops, we don’t see what other street furniture features rise to the level of promoting the City’s brand. Please see further discussion of “branding” problems under “Trees” below.</p> <p>In short, the draft recommendations do not show sufficient examples of ‘how’ the street furniture supports the City’s branding efforts.</p>	See full comments at end of matrix.	See full comments at end of matrix.				See full comments at end of matrix.

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Village Preservation & Improvement Society	See full comments at end of matrix.		The map on page 6 should be re-titled “City Entrances.” Pg 7, Metro map, bottom center should be re-titled “City of Falls Church,” remove Fairfax County. Key - better if said streetscape Type A, Type B, etc, more specs than just sidewalk width.	We support maintaining the taupe or grey color of all street lamp poles and street furniture. Black poles will make it very obvious when poles are missing where the streetscape is incomplete. We support the bench type that is of the art nouveau style in a taupe or gray. The vertical parts in the streetscape (lamp post, signs and bus stop shelters) should be truly vertical, and should not be tipped to follow the incline of the sidewalk. We support maintaining the interval between lamp poles at 110 feet as can be seen in the west end.	Support continued use of bullnose borders on Broad Street so (1) Broad Street has a planned and cohesive appearance; (2) plants and trees protected from salt, pedestrians’ compacting the soil. Support design of tree soil trenches that allow more growing soil for trees than the surface level pits alone. Support use of flush border tree pits with mini-fences at all locations other than Broad Street. On Broad Street - multi-tree pits of 2, 3 or 4 trees when long pits exist on the opposite site of the street or nearby.	We feel the streetscape appears cluttered with elements including trash cans and sandwich signs. We support placement of needed trash cans, bike racks and other amenities on the trailing edge of planters, so they are not as noticeable for motorists traveling on that side of the street. We support the wider sidewalks (20 feet minimum up to 24 feet) on Broad and Washington Streets. We support the requirement for permits for outdoor dining to control how much of the clear walk space remains.				Support irrigation system requirement for all tree pit and planters. Support the continued management, maintenance and ownership responsibility to remain with City staff and that they be funded appropriately. We support the requirement for business districts to use non-sodium chloride snow and ice melting agents such as Calcium Chloride (and for the City to locally supply them.).
Fire Marshal	The elements of streetscape provide usefulness and beautification within an urban setting. However, the needs of public safety should also be recognized as a stakeholder in order to perfect a better standard that meets everyone’s concerns. Location of Fire Department Connection (FDC): FDC shall be within 75 feet of the fire hydrant.				In addition, raised streetscape creates a trip hazard for responders. During the winter months, snow is typically shoveled into these streetscape beds thereby creating an even more difficult challenge.	Building Egress and Access Points: Streetscape, bus shelters, bike racks should not obstruct the means of egress away from the building or access into a building by emergency responders to include main points of entry and fire control rooms.				
Department of Public Works	Purpose of the document? For use with all development along streetscape corridors? Only SEs?	Branding: The Streetscapes Taskforce was commissioned to ensure a streetscape “brand” for Falls	There is no reference to the maps on pg. 6 and 7 in the text. They feel out of place because of this. The	Other signs, such as the adopt-a-spot signs will add to potential sign clutter. Street sign section vague,	See full comments at end of matrix.	See full comments at end of matrix.		See full comments at end of matrix.	There are no guidelines or preferences for placement of sculptures or statues.	Maintenance: I’m not sure that the city can require building owners to maintain the public streetscape. The

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Department of Public Works	Needs background info. Table of Contents? Make clear that for future projects, not retroactively require for current development projects. Various options for cross-sections great idea. Hope final guide states preferences, mins/maxs as appropriate.	Church and promote the city’s identity, yet the result looks entirely generic – the proposed streetscape design recommendations could just as well represent Ballston or Cincinnati.	map on page 7 should include “neighborhood transitions” at E Broad/Fairfax and N West/Grove. P. 8: The City Gateways section should be expanded to make intentions/expectations for design in those locations clearer.	inaccurate. Guidance on street lighting vague. Preference for LED lighting? Flexibility on style of luminaire (no “acorn” lights are Dark Sky-compliant)? Will new bike rack selection impact bus shelter standard design. Trend toward mast arm signs along streetscape corridors to improve wayfinding. Manhole treatment may or may not be feasible for the City. Describe how to incorporate Bikeshare stations into the designs. Picture of James Thurber Ct “existing” street sign not current. Can add branding to end of street signs or special brackets to the top of the sign for certain areas but currently no money allocated or plan. Where city owns light poles, we try to remove sign poles from the streetscape beds and place them on light poles.					Factors such as pedestrian clear space and sight distance need to be considered.	maintenance agreements we have so far have been voluntary. We need to define who owns the streetscape elements (trees, irrigation system, pavement, benches, trash cans, etc.), and how their maintenance will be enforced. Planting Rehabilitation. I am wary of raising expectations for gardening in the older tree planters; tree roots are filling all available soil space so that the last re-planting of flowering plants (in 2013 I think) failed almost entirely. It wouldn’t hurt to reiterate within these standards that adjacent property owners/managers are already responsible for litter and leaf pickup and snow and ice removal on sidewalks in front of their properties.

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Streetscape Standards Sections

Group	General Comments	Introduction (pgs. 3 - 5)	Streetscape Districts (pgs. 6 - 7)	Street Furniture (pgs. 8 - 10)	Tree Planters (pgs. 11 – 12)	Cross Sections (pgs. 13 – 19)	Crosswalks (pg. 20)	Utilities (pgs. 23-25)	Public Art (pg. 26)	Maintenance (pg. 27)
Zoning Administrator					Plantings, especially shrubs, often grow to pose a vision obstruction at intersections, such as where a driveway crosses a sidewalk. I recommend the standards include language that supports Sec. 48-1103 to avoid creating a safety and enforcement problem	Outdoor dining is a very popular feature of city business owners; It would be very beneficial to the city if these standards could facilitate outdoor dining. If there are minimum accessibility requirements, it appears there will be more room available if a sidewalk railing adjacent to outdoor dining is not made an option. I recommend against changing Sec. 48-1101 footnote 11. The proposed amendments will place many existing and newly-developed properties into noncompliance. Rather, I suspect the intent of the proposed amendments can be achieved during the site plan phase.				

Note: The Materials section of the draft Streetscape Standards did not receive comments and is therefore not included in the table.

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

Tree Commission Comments continued:

Tree Planters: Are the following proposals right for the City – tree spacing, planter sizes, planter edging? See pages 12-13.

Planter shape. Since we have options for rectangular or oval beds, we suggest removing "oval ends" from the following sentence: "To balance rain water infiltration and functional space, surface tree planter areas will be 5 feet wide by 14 feet wide, with oval ends, and one tree per planter." (See also Question #3, second para.)

Tree spacing. The Tree Commission laments the "one tree per planter" recommendation. The presence of multiple trees in a single planter is both visually appealing (we find value in "massing") and beneficial to tree health. The Task Force suggestion that FCC abandon planters with multiple planted trees in favor of single trees also moves away from another unique "branding" feature of the current streetscape.

"Planter Styles. Flush planters should be the predominant planter type used in all areas. They are especially important when there is limited sidewalk width. They are also important to when providing access for emergency services, such as fire and medical. "

The Tree Commission continues to support the use of raised planters, referred to as "bullnose planters" in the City. Raised planters provide the best protection for vegetation on any kind and provide a traffic buffer for pedestrians, especially young families. Continuing to utilize these planters also provides an architectural consistency to streetscape planters in FCC and contributes to the City's unique "branding."

It is the Tree Commission's position that by promoting flush planters, the City is making a clear statement that tree health in the streetscape is much lower priority than other streetscape features. Flush planters are a problematic choice in any area much less in one where there is significant pedestrian traffic. Pedestrians will use the planter space as additional walking space thus increasing stress on any planted material and requiring increased maintenance – unless, of course, it is decided that an unattended, worn out look is what FCC is going for. Other cities are cautious in deploying flush planters. In Northern Virginia, only the City of Falls Church and Town of Herndon currently deploy flush planters to protect vegetation and pedestrians. The City of Milwaukee's Streetscape Guidelines address the use of flush planters: "Flush planters have no curb and are placed at the same elevation as the surrounding sidewalk. Flush planters can be installed without railings, with turf, or with more intense plantings, including groundcover, annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, and shrubs, or simply mulched. When more intense plantings are used, a railing is recommended to protect the plantings. Pedestrian traffic levels must be taken into account when designing flush planters, as they may be used for additional walking space if adequate space is not allocated. In this scenario, railings may be warranted. Low, ornamental railings add interest and identity to a streetscape, as well as protection from pedestrians and animals, when placed in combination with flush or curbed landscape planters."

Good intentions aside, our region has many examples of poorly maintained flush planter beds. See Comments for #4 above. The Tree Commission has provided photo evidence of how flush planters compromise the health of the trees and plants in planters around Northern Virginia, including at Pearson Square in Falls Church. Edging that allows pedestrian foot traffic in planters and erosion of soil will result in the need to replace dying trees.

Flush planters do not protect vegetation from road salt and are an invitation for animals to deposit waste, thus adding an environmentally unsound practice while at the same time adding a hazard to pedestrians. Research into salt alternatives is ongoing but there is as yet insufficient data to support a cost effective, environmentally friendly alternate. Therefore, until such time as the data are secured, we must deal with the impact of deicing salts on plant material.

If developers are adhering to the 20-foot setback, then why would there be a problem with "limited sidewalk width?" Does this mean our specification of setback already is inadequate? As mentioned in Section 2 above, the Tree Commission would recommend a 30-foot setback in part to ensure that pedestrian spaces do not overlap with tree spaces. If greater building height is the market cost of wider sidewalks, stepped-back building heights could be used, and the market could otherwise determine how to meet this requirement and to maintain profitability. The "advantage" of using flush planters for emergency services ignores the actual fact that we already have curbing on our public streets that require navigation. We could remove the curbing, but it is there for, among other things, public safety. All things considered, curbing and any other raised surface are simply a component urban living.

In summary, the flush planter recommendation clearly demonstrates how trees are prioritized in Falls Church. It is not at all an efficacious choice if FCC desires an attractive, well-maintained streetscape that promotes a healthy urban forest, meets its goals and supports branding.

Cross Sections: Passable and Impassable Spaces. There simply must a minimum of five (5) feet of unimpeded space for the planter. Where there is on street parking, unimpeded space is needed between the building and the planter as well as between the planter and curb. This would allow passengers to exit vehicles without trampling on the planter. In locations where the vehicle exit area is structured to allow for this "landing area," the planter must still have five feet of unimpeded space if we are to avoid compromising the health of the vegetation, even if this requires a compromise of either the building or pedestrian zone.

The language reads "As a rule of thumb, half of the amenity area between tree planters should be kept clear to provide pedestrian passing and waiting spaces," while the question above asks for "the right mix." "Rule of thumb" and "half" are generally accepted terms, but it is unclear what constitutes "the right mix." This is too subjective. We would support objective standards on spacing of amenities.

The question does not allow the Boards and Commission to weigh in on setbacks and whether a 20-foot setback is adequate for what they visualize for the space. This misses an important component of the streetscape. The Tree Commission believes that while the 20-foot setback is a step forward, it is still inadequate for tall and straight tree growth and for all of the restaurant and pedestrian amenities that the Task Force foresees. Rather than overcrowding the streetscape design with these amenities and potentially compromising tree health, the Task Force should seize the opportunity to create a forward-looking standard for ample tree, pedestrian and dining spaces. The Tree Commission would recommend a 30-foot setback but would also support any setback between 23 and 30 feet. Please see related discussion of planter edging below.

The Tree Commission supports the development of Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines or a City Ordinance for establishments whose intended purpose is the consumption of food or beverage by patrons. The Guidelines will provide acceptable dimensions for dining area access within the public sidewalk, sidewalk dining barriers, and the layout of outdoor service areas. The City of Richmond has created a web page to facilitate opening and maintaining a sidewalk café'. <http://www.richmondgov.com/PlanningAndDevelopmentReview/SidewalkCafe.aspx> The City of Falls Church has had a set of draft permitting guidelines since 2013 which should be shared with the Task Force as well as with Boards and Commissions.

Maintenance: How should maintenance of streetscape, plantings, and trees be divided between the public and private side? See page 30.

Planting Rehabilitation: The text reads: "These maintenance agreements would establish expectations for maintenance and provide protections for long term tree health." While details of the agreements may be discussed at a later time, each agreement should clearly outline how private parties would be incentivized to properly maintain the planters. In current FCC practice, the Lincoln at Tinner Hill agreement does not address the consequences of poor maintenance/non-compliance. Hoping it will be maintained is not enough.

Draft Streetscape Standards – Boards & Commissions, and Development Review Committee Comments

The Tree Commission believes that the City needs standard agreement that sets forth real consequences for failure to maintain or especially damage to trees. Consequences should include the City's right to remedy problems and fines that would create a disincentive to non-compliance. Ultimately, the City has the legal authority under Code to determine how City property is maintained and should judiciously apply controls in any delegation of this authority in order to ensure long-term tree health. If private owner maintenance is an opportunity to improve on current public streetscape maintenance, the City should do all it can to ensure success of this new practice.

A consequence of a standard private owner maintenance agreement is that City Code Section 44-24(a), which requires all street tree plantings and maintenance to be under the direction of the City arborist, might need to be amended to reflect the changes in responsibility. Alternatively, the Task Force should confirm with the City Attorney if would be sufficient for each agreement to state that the Arborist delegates authority under this Code provision by directing the private owner to maintain the plantings under certain conditions in the agreement.

Village Preservation and Improvement Society Comments continued

VPIIS supports expansion of plan to cover all commercial areas. The following images and discussions are not what Falls Church is seeking and its appearance in the standards is confusing and misleading to the reader, and therefore should be removed: Page 3, figure 1 of Staunton has no trees or ground planters; Page 3, figure 2 shows an assortment of large sandwich signs, which could be photo-shopped out. Page 4, figure 3 shows dining both curb-side and building-side in the same space. Page 3, figure 4 (Lincoln at Tinner Hill) is a special streetscape that was an approved anomaly and does not represent the standard. Page 5, figure 6 in Philadelphia is parking lane dining which is not included in the plan here. Page 7, Metro map, bottom center should be re-titled "City of Falls Church," and remove Fairfax County. The key on that map would be better if it said streetscape Type A, Type B, etc, because there are more specifications than just the sidewalk width that apply. Page 11, Street signs, should be "Street Name Signs," and we suggest an isolated image that does not have the distractions of newspaper boxes and street elements.

Department of Public Works

Tree Planters: On-site facilities for pet relief should be required in new mixed use buildings to reduce the pet waste now damaging the street planters in front of new condo/ apartment buildings. I know this is not a streetscape standard, but it is crucial to protecting the streetscape. Tree Planters: The existing long, oval-shaped planters with multiple trees in them on West Broad Street are an uncommon design which provides a brand for Falls Church. They also provide a significant visual and practical barrier between pedestrians and the highway. While the desire for "relief space" between planters makes sense, no reason was given for abandoning the entire design. Tree Health and Planter Dimensions: The paragraph on cantilevered pavement should note first that a shared rooting space the length of the block is desired. That is the reason for wanting cantilevered pavement. Tree Health and Planter Dimensions: Planters with larger areas of soil open to the surface are better for tree health, another reason to favor planters with multiple trees in them. Planter Locations: Reference should be made to plant locations in relation to fire department access. Trees and shrubs must not be placed directly in front of access doors to a building, so that emergency responders will be able to fully access their equipment and move from their vehicles to the building unimpeded. Planter Styles/Edging: Planters with no protective edging are much harder to keep nice-looking, and contribute to early decline and death of street trees. A solid raised edge, like the current bullnose on Broad Street, is a very significant deterrent to foot traffic and also reduces the inflow of de-icing salt from sidewalks. Therefore, some kind of solid raised edge is preferred on all planter styles. Flush-style planters will likely need to be retrofitted with fences or other edging to protect the planters if they get trampled. I know that these standards mentioned awnings over the sidewalk as tree protection (from salt use), but I don't see it. Perhaps awnings could be included in a more general section of the text, with some dimensions. Irrigation: The last sentence should say, "Permanent irrigation systems with spray heads must be used, not drip irrigation or temporary systems." Planter Type: I would like to see oval planters on Broad Street, but other designs perhaps on other streets. The "when to use" section should also describe "where to use". Cross sections: The Pedestrian Zone is listed as appropriate for bicycling. This seems unsafe. Passable and Impassable Spaces – is the rule of thumb (half the amenity area between tree planters should be kept clear) based on anything? How the "right mix" of planter space, pedestrian space and other utilities/amenities was derived is not evident. The drawings should be more consistent, so that the raised planter does not appear to take a foot or more away from the passable space. I suggest not including the planter edging, whether flush or raised, within the pedestrian space. On side streets where parking is allowed, include the dimension for a paved strip for passenger access between the sidewalk and car doors. The five-foot minimum planter width is truly a minimum. On side streets where there is on-street parking, a paved area for opening car doors and stepping out must be provided by moving the planting beds further from the curb, not making them narrower.

Cross Sections: There are graphics showing seating for outdoor eating in the building space (pg. 18, 22). You may recall we currently have an issue where properties with limited outdoor seating have encroached into the ROW. I think this is at least worth mentioning in the report. I've attached a draft policy Matt Hansen worked on some time ago but it lost traction. There is no clear language regarding clear space at the corners of intersections. These are under the same risk as the space between the tree pits of becoming too cluttered. Building setbacks: No mention was made of public gathering spaces adjacent to the sidewalk that may be provided by private developers. How these spaces are located and configured makes a difference to the streetscape. Building setbacks: Even the 20-foot setback currently required makes life difficult for street trees next to taller buildings. They will tend to bend away from the building face to get enough light or to avoid reflected heat. Ideally, upper floors of buildings over 2 stories in height would step back 10 feet or more to allow more light and air circulation around the tree tops.

Utilities: There is no mention of stormwater curb inlets and the associated concrete pad and manhole cover. These do take a fair amount of space and are placed based on need - there is no standard spacing requirement. I do think they are worth acknowledging as another feature that must be thought about in the design process. I am not familiar with the proposed manhole cover treatment or the maintenance issue associated with them (pg. 27). I do know covers that have been paved over weigh a ton. I recommend we do not require these and remove the use of "should" in the text. Should there be a mentioning of the need to underground the electrical and communications utilities? Electrical Transformers: Traffic signal cabinets, streetlight power panels and irrigation controllers are also located within the streetscape. Fire Hydrants: Find out whether hydrants can be located next to the curb. The streetscape is an opportunity for the City to lead by example on environmental issues. I would be interested in including options for stormwater improvement in the streetscape. It would be consistent with goals stated in the N. Washington Streetscape standards written in 2010. It would also be consistent with Chapter 5 of the Comp. Plan regarding the environment; Goal 3 in that chapter asks the City to "design stormwater management structures and bioretention areas to control flooding, protect water quality, and provide for associated vegetative buffers." Beneficial use of the streetscape for stormwater management has been implemented very well near Yards Park in DC. While I've heard plenty of concerns about the aesthetics of these planters, and desires for fencing, perhaps we can consider options to improve upon our N. Washington example of streetscape stormwater management instead of omitting it from this streetscape standard.