

## Report to the Fire Station 8 Task Force

March 10, 2016 Meeting

# **Arlington County Public Facilities Review Committee**

## **Mission, Roles, Scope, Membership and Process**

Prepared By: DCPHD Planning Division

### **PFRC Established by the Arlington County Board**

The Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) was established by the County Board as a mechanism for advisory commissions and committees to have timely input on the development of County and schools projects prior to public hearings. Its mission is to ensure that the highest quality of land use planning, design, transportation planning and other important community aspects are incorporated into civic projects. It developed the [Principles of Civic Design](#) in Arlington to inform the design of civic facilities in Arlington and to ensure they meet community goals for attractiveness, durability and functionality.

### **PFRC Charge**

See Attachment 1

### **PFRC Members**

PFRC members are recommended by their respective Commissions and, with the exception of Planning Commission members, are appointed by the County Board for staggered two year terms. The PFRC Chair may designate additional PFRC membership in consultation with staff and the County Board for

### **Meetings**

The PFRC meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Locations vary based on the project, see the meeting's agenda for more information. The PFRC schedule below will be updated regularly to identify the discussion topic

### **PFRC Principles of Civic Design**

See Attachment 2

### **PFRC Project Design Review Process (APS Facilities)**

See Attachment 3

### **Contact**

Michelle Stahlhut, Planning Commission/PFRC Coordinator  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201  
[703-228-3541](tel:703-228-3541)

## Attachment 1

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE CHARGE (Updated June 18, 2014)**

#### **I. MISSION**

The Public Facilities Review Committee's (PFRC) mission is to ensure that the highest quality of land use planning, design, transportation planning, and other important community aspects are incorporated into civic projects as assigned to the Committee by the Arlington County Board.

#### **II. SCOPE OF DUTY FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE**

PFRC is being formed as a mechanism for advisory commissions and committees to have timely input on the development of significant County and School projects prior to the formal submittal of the project for public hearings held by the Planning Commission and County Board.

The major responsibilities of the PFRC are the following:

- Provide a forum in which the Planning Commission, citizens' community groups, advisory commissions and committees can have a dialogue with the project lead and other staff to review, discuss, and comment on any important public facility project.
- Ensure that the highest quality of land use planning and design is incorporated into development projects; Promote compliance with the County's Comprehensive Plan, other planning documents and County policies; Address community concerns and goals.
- Help inform commissions and the County Board on the outstanding issues with regard to a specific plan and any conditions which it might determine to be necessary or appropriate to address those issues.
- Provide an efficient means for broad-based public participation, precluding the necessity of multiple presentations to and reviews by each individual commission during the development phase. The PFRC provides the forum for everyone to be heard during the development of the public facility.
- Provide advice to the County Board and County Manager in the development of the Capital Improvement Program.

It is not the purpose of the PFRC to address programmatic needs and interior design; however it may be necessary to discuss the interior/layout as it may impact the exterior, placement, or massing of the building.

#### **III. MEMBERSHIP**

The Committee members are recommended by their respective Commissions and, with the exception of Planning Commission members, are appointed by the County Board for staggered two year terms. Appointees may be current or past members of Commissions. The Committee is composed of the following members:

- 1. Planning Commission**-three members appointed by Planning Commission; one of which shall be designated by County Board as Committee Chair
- 2. Transportation Commission** – one member
- 3. Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing** – one member
- 4. Park and Recreation Commission** – one member
- 5. Disability Advisory Commission** – one member
- 6. Environment and Energy Conservation Commission** – one member
- 7. Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission** – one member
- 8. School Board Nominees**- two members
- 9. At Large Members** – three members
- 10. Project-Specific Membership**

- For each project, the PFRC Chair may designate additional PFRC membership in consultation with staff and the County Board.

- When multiple projects are under consideration and workload demands warrant it, each of the commissions listed in 2-7 above may appoint one additional member to serve as the commission's representative on each additional project to ensure that each project has consistent commission representation.
- The PFRC Chair may appoint a PFRC member from the Planning Commission to serve as chair of the PFRC for a specific project when multiple projects are under consideration.

## **IV. PFRC ROLES**

### **1. PFRC Chair**

A Planning Commission member is appointed as the PFRC Chair by the County Board.

1.1. The PFRC Chair's Scope of Duties are as follows:

- Coordinate meeting schedule with the County's Public Facilities Review Coordinator.
- Work with County's Public Facilities Review Coordinator, County Staff, and Arlington Public Schools staff to develop/review the Operating Guide for the PFRC.
- Report to the Planning Commission on the overall activity and workload of the PFRC.
- Manage and oversee the committee (e.g., providing for training of new PFRC members; etc.).
- Assist staff in the development of the meeting agendas and in identifying project-specific PFRC members.
- Meet with staff and the project lead/manager in advance of the first PFRC meeting to establish an agenda for review of the project. .
- Chair the project meeting and use PFRC time efficiently by keeping the meeting on track and focused on the agenda, and controlling revisiting of issues.
- Provide a project report to the Planning Commission 5 days prior to the public hearing for that project.

### **2. All PFRC Members**

2.1 Regular attendance at meetings is necessary to maintain continuity of common understandings and create a productive environment for discussion and deliberation. Members should make a commitment to attend as many PFRC meetings as possible.

2.2 PFRC commission representatives are responsible for communicating the status of the PFRC activities with the constituencies they are appointed to represent.

### **3. STAFF**

County staff plays two distinct roles in public projects: 1) as project developer and 2) as project reviewer. In addition, the PFRC will have a Staff Coordinator appointed to provide support to the Committee. These roles are better defined below:

3.1 PFRC Coordinator: The Coordinator of the PFRC will be designated by the County Manager and will be separate from the project lead/project manager. The Coordinator will work with the PFRC chair to provide summaries of meetings that can be distributed to members of the Committee, County Commissions, and other stakeholders.

3.2 Review Staff: The Review Staff will be responsible for reviewing the project for consistency with applicable County Codes, Plans and Policies and will be separate from the Project Lead/ Manager.

3.3 Project Lead/Project Manager: The Project Lead is responsible for developing and managing the project design process as well as presenting the project to the PFRC. Typically the project lead will be in either the Arlington Public Schools or County Facilities Design and Construction group. The presentations may also actively involve any public advisory committee that is working on the development of the project (such as the Building Level Planning Committee BLPC), since a large part of the first and second meetings are intended to help inform the project committees of broader community issues.

## **V. PFRC MEETINGS**

The goal of the PFRC is to accomplish its mission in a minimum of three meetings. Additional meetings may be held based on consultation with the County Board and School Board (for school projects). The three meetings are as follows:

### **1. First Public Facilities Review Committee Meeting**

The first PFRC meeting on any project shall occur at the beginning of public discussion of a public facility, once the County Board and/or the School Board have determined the scope of the project. A BLPC or other project development committee may have been established and had initial meetings; however, it is intended that the first meeting of the PFRC occur as early in the process as possible so that the project development committee is well-informed of issues, concerns, or constraints.

### **2. Second Public Facilities Review Committee Meeting**

The second meeting will occur once the initial conceptual design options are developed for the public facility. It is to frame choices among viable options and explore with greater specificity the impacts of the conceptual designs in areas covered by the PFRC.

### **3. Third Public Facilities Review Committee Meeting**

The third meeting will occur once a project design is ready for submission to the County Board for use permit or site plan approval. Drawings and plans must be in sufficient detail to enable a full understanding of the project. Requirements for a 4.1 site plan submission serve as a general guide. The meeting will occur in advance of consideration of the use permit or site plan by relevant commissions and the results from the PFRC should help inform discussion at the commission meetings.

## **VI. PFRC OPERATING GUIDE**

The County Manager will issue an Operating Guide for outlining the process of the Committee, subject to input from County Commissions, Schools, and Staff. The Operating Guide may be reviewed periodically as necessary by staff or PFRC members.

## Attachment 2

### Public Facilities Review Committee: Principles of Civic Design

These principles are intended to inform the design of civic facilities in Arlington, including buildings and other projects, to ensure they meet community goals for attractiveness, durability, and functionality. The principles reinforce and supplement existing County planning documents and policies, and are meant to promote compliance with certain basic principles, but not to inhibit creative design. Each project will need to be reviewed individually, and for each project, certain principles may be stressed over others.

#### Civic Values

- Respect neighborhood context and important historic structures.
- Take advantage of prominent sites and major civic programs to create bold architecture.
- Emphasize leadership in energy conservation and environmental sustainability through architectural design, materials, and construction methods.
- Utilize universal design to ensure open and welcoming accessibility for all citizens.
- Explore adaptive reuse of significant existing structures and building elements and consider possible future reuse of new buildings.
- Optimize open space for public relaxation and recreation, and minimize building footprint and areas used for parking, on-site roads, and service drives.
- Support joint development and use of school and family facilities when in the best interest of both entities.

#### Siting and Orientation

- Orient the primary building entrance to the appropriate adjacent street or public space so movement and entrance to buildings are natural and intuitive.
- Emphasize pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit over automobiles in building placement, entry, and architecture.
- Ensure building and site are functionally and spatially coherent, facilitating the flow of people to, from, and within the site.
- Create “positive” outdoor spaces with a pedestrian emphasis.

#### Building Form

- Develop massing strategies appropriately scaled to the site and neighborhood.
- Use massing to emphasize a pedestrian, human scale to the building, breaking into smaller sub-parts that respond to site and program.
- Develop a sense of hierarchy in the massing, emphasizing and leading to the important functions and spaces in the building, including the entrance.

#### Building Details and Materials

- Use design details related to pedestrian scale and provide interest, discovery, and character.
- Celebrate the civic nature of the project with public art and iconic architectural elements.
- Use durable and permanent materials to assure longevity of, and civic pride in, the project.
- Appropriately plan budgets to reduce negative design impact of value engineering.
- Explore consistent design elements with other successful Arlington civic projects.
- Design building lobbies to create a sense of place and importance.