

## **UDC Guideline Update Discussion / Working meeting – April 4, 2019**

The bullet points below show the main topics brought forth by the comments I received from UDC members. I've organized the subjects into corresponding scopes of review as they pertain to: Location (actual siting of the design plan components); Character (the aesthetic nature of the design plan components); and Extent (the scope of the design plan components as they may address quality of life aspects in the public realm such as sustainability, preservation, etc.)

### **Transportation Overall Comments:**

**Guidelines in this document relating to transportation include paving and surface materials, parking, street design, multimodal transportation, traffic management, and handicap accessible curb cuts.**

#### **• Paving and Surface materials?**

- Location:
  - Parking Areas – pervious pavement technology
  - Crosswalks – brick paver (DPW does not believe this would be a good fit due to maintenance)
- Character:
  - Consider lighter colors; standard color for ADA surfaces
  - Consider a limit to types of material
- Extent:
  - Consider the appropriateness in application of the material
  - Consider if this will address benefits of pervious pavement, storm water, or urban heat impact
  - Consider LEED suggestions for non-roofs: shade (within 5 years of occupancy); reflective paving material; open grid pavement system or place a minimum of 50% of parking spaces under cover (underground, under deck, under a building) any cover for parking must have an SRI of at least 29
  - Projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

#### **• Pedestrian amenities and Accessibility - curb extensions, signals, signage, desire lines**

- Location:
  - ROW
- Character:
  - Consider incorporating landscaping as part of softening design when possible
  - Consider sensitivity to historic character
  - Consider Human-scale design
- Extent:
  - Consider if this will enhance the pedestrian experience, potential to incorporate storm water treatment within curb extensions
  - Consider landscaping for traffic calming?
  - Consider design that speaks to desire lines, vision zero, and complete streets
  - Projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

## **Environment Overall Comments:**

Guidelines in this document relating to environmental quality include design guidelines for public parks, landscaping and storm water management. (not sure we still need this: Guidance regarding Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is included in Appendix 1., perhaps Urban Heat Island becomes more focused in this section)

- **Landscaping**

- Location:

- In areas to soften hardscaping,
    - ROW
    - Parks, Plazas, other public spaces
    - Streetscape, spacing, and proximity to furnishings and other streetscape amenities

- Character:

- Consider non-invasive species that can be used to enhance public spaces
    - Consider species of trees that can be qualified as shade trees, ornamental, etc.
    - Consider species of perennials, annuals, grasses

- Extent:

- Consider the appropriate application of plants that may help with storm water drainage/treatment
    - Consider this as part of a larger storm water management or sustainable landscape initiative
    - Consider how this can be used to: reduce urban heat impacts, increase biodiversity, and enhance the natural ecology of the area
    - Consider what entities will be responsible for maintenance/replacement of landscape
    - Projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
    - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

## **Public Facilities Overall Comments:**

Guidelines in this document relating to the goals for public facilities found in the City of Richmond's Master Plan include guidelines for building orientation\*, building setback\*, site features, building proportion\*, building mass\*, building height\*, roof form, modular units, telecommunication towers, building materials, building colors, architectural details, windows, facade design, and handicap ramps.

- **Buildings**

- Location:

- City-owned properties
    - \*We need to define UDC role when it comes to partnership projects, i.e. Bon Secours Training camp, Westhampton School

- Character:

- Reference zoning and FAR (for setback requirements when necessary)
    - Consider Roof design that incorporates LEED suggestions: light colors, materials, green roof, solar panels
    - Consider designs that speak to sustainability and Urban Heat Island reduction, green walls

- Designs should be pedestrian oriented in TOD areas, i.e. minimum setback, fenestration on the ground floor
- Preference for natural lighting into buildings
- Materials should complement the surrounding community
- Discourage the addition of modular units, program new buildings with versatility
- Emphasize human scale in design
- Extent:
  - Consider sun studies, building orientation, life cycle analysis of all materials to further enhance sustainability efforts
  - Projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies
- **Sites**
  - Location:
    - City-owned properties
    - We need to define UDC role when it comes to partnership projects, i.e. Bon Secours Training camp, Westhampton School
  - Character:
    - Consider non-invasive species that can be used to enhance public spaces
    - Consider species of trees that can be qualified as shade trees, ornamental, etc.
    - Consider species of perennials, annuals, grasses
  - Extent:
    - Suggest certain percentage of shading provided by either trees, canopies, temporary structures (such as large umbrellas) to help off-set urban heat impacts
    - Suggest short-term bike racks for at least 2.5% of peak visitors, but no fewer than four racks per building, alternative to bike racks could be dock-less electric scooters to encourage sustainable practices
    - Consider LEED suggestions for non-roofs: shade (within 5 years of occupancy); reflective paving material; open grid pavement system or place a minimum of 50% of parking spaces under cover (underground, under deck, under a building) any cover for parking must have an SRI of at least 29
    - Suggest projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
    - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

## **Community Character Overall Comments:**

**Guidance in this document relating to the goals for community character found in the City of Richmond's Master Plan include guidelines for streetscapes, lighting, signs, site furnishings, walls, fencing, and screening. (this section to be enhanced with Urban Forestry, lighting/street lights/color temperature comments)**

- **Lighting**
  - Location:
    - City-owned properties

- Parks, Plazas
- Streetscape
- Character:
  - Consider brightness
  - Consider color temperature
  - Consider lighting design (up-lit/down-lit)
  - Consider what it will be used for: illumination of pathways, security, accent, etc.
- Extent:
  - Consider how lighting may impact the surrounding areas at dusk, night, dawn
  - Light pollution / Dark Sky considerations
  - Consider if Solar Panels, LED technology can be incorporated

## • Streetscaping

- Location:
  - City-owned properties
  - Parks, Plazas, passive areas requiring hardscaping
  - Urban Street Tree placement
  - Street light placement
  - Street furnishing placement
- Character:
  - Consider lighter colors
  - Suggest materials should complement the surrounding community
  - Consider a limit to types of material?
  - Consider types of trees that speak to seasonal variety
  - Suggest granite curbing should be retained when possible
  - Suggest fencing – black coated, ways to screen fencing are needed, landscaping, etc.
  - Suggest using permeable pavers where possible (DC example between curb-side tree boxes?)
- Extent:
  - Suggest the use of suspended pavement systems to allow for growth of trees, consider soil volumes and other structural soils
  - Consider trees and landscaping that speak to urban heat impacts
  - Consider potential benefits from pervious pavement, storm water, heat impact reductions
  - Projects should have a plan for the preservation, demolition, and new trees proposed
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

## • Signage

- Location:
  - UDC reviews signs that are encroaching into the ROW, per DPW requests
- Character:
  - Consider blinking/moving/scrolling
  - Consider brightness
  - Consider size of sign
  - Consider lighting design (up-lit/down-lit)

- Extent:
  - Consider how will these signs impact the surrounding areas at dusk, night, dawn
  - Consider material and past signs
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies

### **Encroachment Overall Comments:**

The Urban Design Committee (UDC) provides an aesthetic recommendation to the DPW in regards to a number of types of above-grade administrative encroachments. The UDC requires its application process be followed, and reserves the right to require additional information if so needed.

Encroachments preexisting 1954 are not subject to UDC review. The UDC reviews the application and makes a recommendation. When City Council is required to review an encroachment, the UDC reviews and provides a recommendation to the City Planning Commission, which then provides a recommendation to City Council.

**Applications for encroachments are initiated through the permitting process (building, work in streets, signs, etc.). – explain the types of encroachments we would review – update flow charts**

#### **• Outdoor Dining**

- Location:
  - UDC reviews Outdoor Dining amenities that encroach into the ROW, beyond regular business hours, per DPW requests, these requests require City Council approval
  - Consider placement on sidewalk and effective width/spacing for pedestrian movement through the surrounding area
- Character:
  - Consider sidewalk café design guidelines
  - Consider opportunities for permanent components that may enhance the public realm, i.e. planters, barriers, seating, lighting, shade
- Extent:
  - Consider the implications on accessibility
  - Concerns of other city agencies, specifically DPW, ROW

#### **• Parklets**

- Location:
  - UDC reviews Parklets that encroach into the ROW, per DPW requests, these requests require City Council approval
  - Consider placement on streets and effective width/spacing for pedestrians and other means of transportation movement through the surrounding area
  - Consider stormwater flow
- Character:
  - Consider parklet design guidelines
  - Consider opportunities for components that may enhance the public realm, i.e. planters, barriers, seating, lighting, shade
- Extent:
  - Consider the implications on accessibility

- Concerns of other city agencies, specifically zoning

- **Awnings and Canopies**

- Location:
  - UDC reviews signs that are encroaching into the ROW, per DPW requests
- Character:
  - Consider materials, color
  - Suggest if there is lighting, a lighting plan should be submitted as well
  - Suggest minimum clearance height of 7'
  - Suggest design is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood
- Extent:
  - Is this an appropriate application of an awning/canopy?
  - Consider if there been an encroachment here in the past
  - Consider the concerns of other city agencies, specifically zoning

### **Other Overall Comments:**

- preference for burying electrical/utility lines when possible
- include lighting amendment from Rob Smith
- how do we ensure quality design remains even when value engineering takes place on projects?
  - Are there recommended tiers of completion based on budget? i.e. landscaping at the minimum, followed by seating, shade structures?
  - Interim improvements until more permanent means can be met?
  - It's necessary to distill the main intent of the project/improvements which will be different case by case
- be more general with design suggestions to allow for an enhanced creative process - do we want to move in this direction?