

ARLINGTON'S MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING PRESENTATION

A MIDDLE APPROACH TO THE EXTENDED HOUSING OPTION

MARCH 16, 2023



Civic-Federation Presentation

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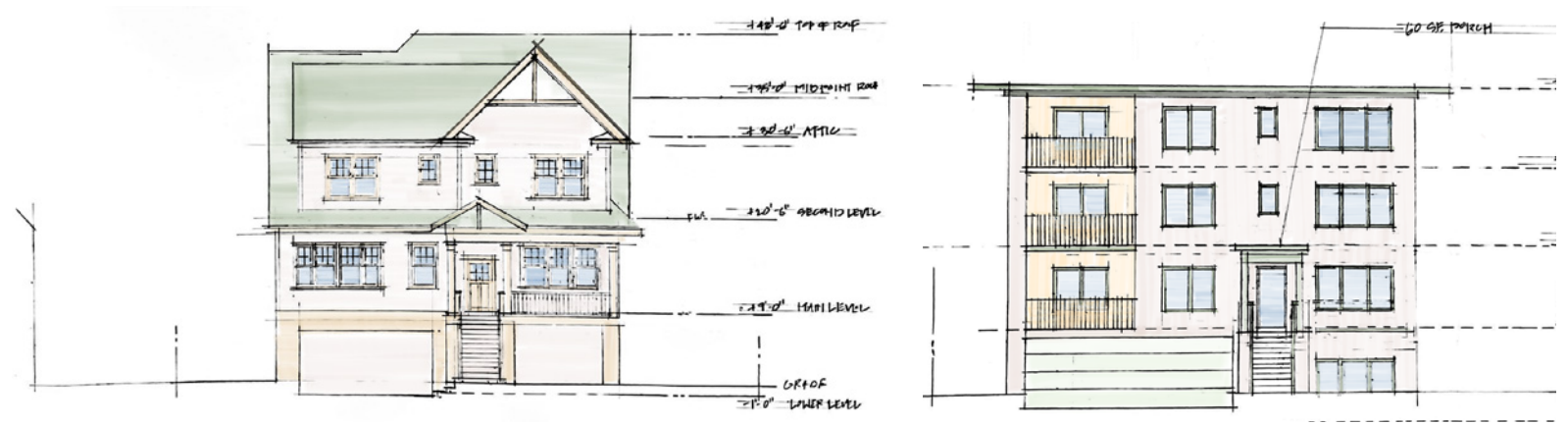
VISION

- Neighborhoods to meet 21st century opportunities



REALITY

- Existing single-family zoning proposed in the EHO that does not rise to the challenge



Existing single family

New EHO typology with proposed rules

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GOALS

- Define a positive vision for Arlington's future neighborhoods
- Provide a framework for community discussion
- Formulate a sound proposal with broad community input
- Develop an alternative to the incomplete county board EHO



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LAB + JANE SIEGEL

- LAB has been working in Arlington since 1999
- Multi-family projects, new houses, and additions
- Urban design
- Design guidelines
- Zoning text
- Historic preservation + award-winning
- Design review
- Transportation planning
- Environment and sustainability
- 18-years collectively on Arlington County Planning Commission
- 100+ years collectively residing in Arlington
- Rosslyn Sector Plan
- Pentagon City PDSP Update
- Livability 22202
- Service on Arts Commission, Joint Facilities Advisory Commission, and Public Facilities Review Committee

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LEARNING FROM OTHER PLACES

- Portland
- Minneapolis
- Sacramento
- Spokane

	Portland	Minneapolis	Arlington
Units/Lot	1 - 4	1 - 3	1 - 6
Density (FAR)	0.4 - 0.7	0.5	0.24 - 1.1
Height	30 feet	28 feet	35 feet
Lot Coverage	22.5% - 45%	45%	33% - 53%

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WHAT IS THE FIX?

Twelve steps are needed to implement an EHO program that meets citizen goals and balances competing interests:

1. Grow Deliberately
2. Define Neighborhood Building Blocks
3. Design for the Environment
4. Adjust Density and Use FAR
5. Incentivize Affordability
6. Preserve & Re-use
7. Allow Cottage Clusters
8. Lower Building Heights
9. Modify Setbacks
10. Plan for Parking Realistically
11. Update ADU
12. Incorporate Design Standards

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1. GROW DELIBERATELY

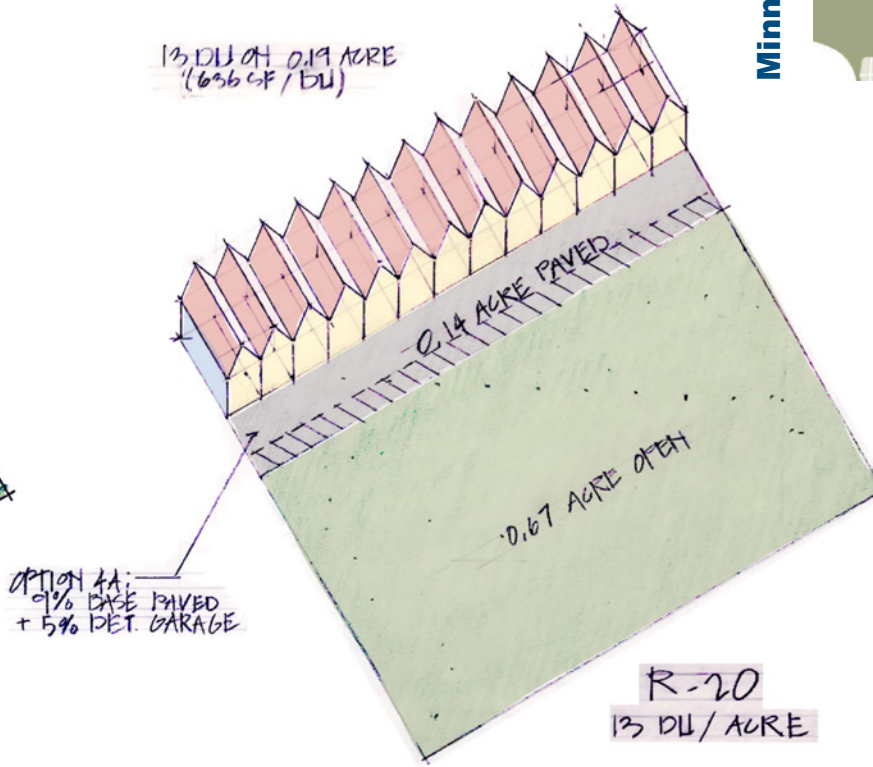
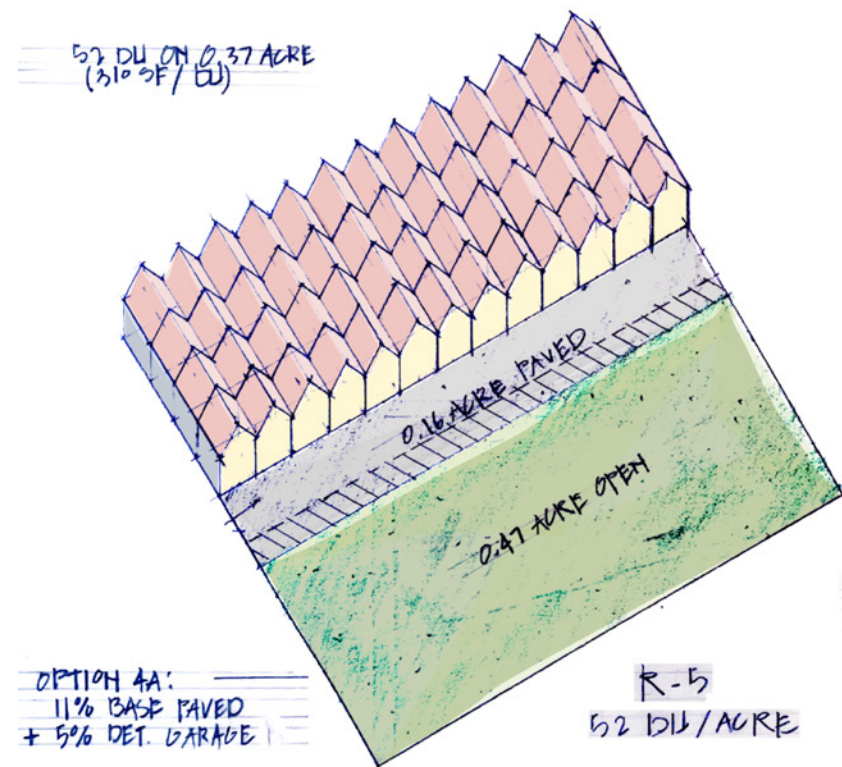
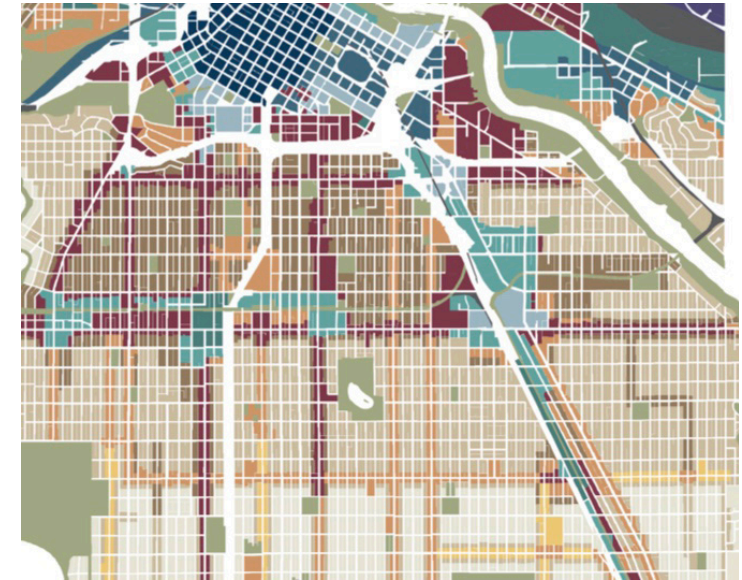
WHAT

- Focus on neighborhood centers that offer elements of the “15-minute” city
- Balance lower- and higher-density areas
- Adopt a “Built-Form Overlay District” similar to Minneapolis

WHY

- Growth must be in harmony with transportation, community services, schools, infrastructure, natural resources, and housing needs

Minneapolis Built Form Overlay



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2. DEFINE NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING BLOCKS

WHAT

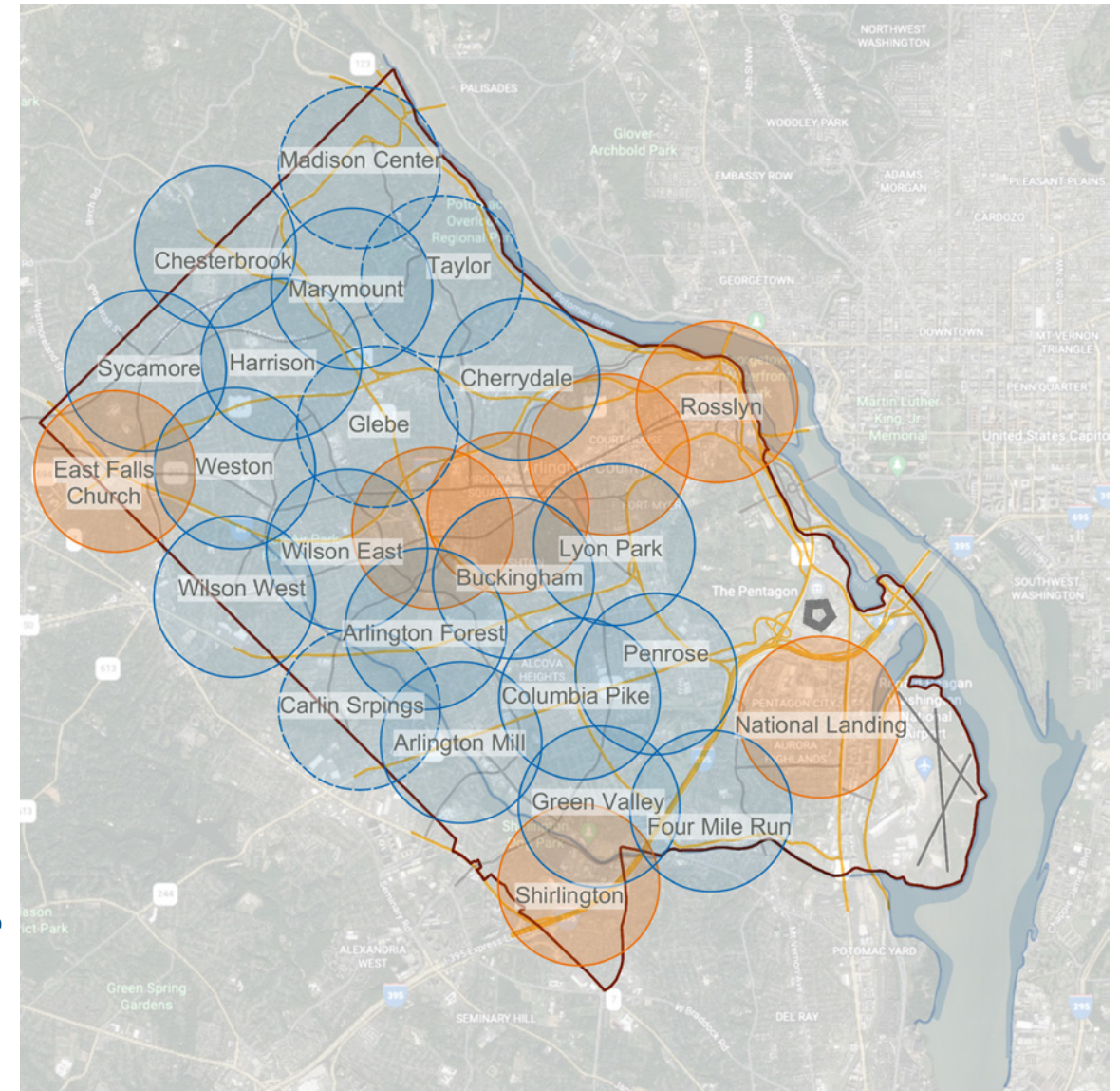
Establish our community goals for neighborhood transformation:

- Walkable
- Increased tree canopy
- Housing for all, including affordable rentals and ownership
- Quality architecture
- Community infrastructure - recreation and services
- Environmental protection
- Sustainable design

WHY

- New development needs to create healthy, safe, and desirable neighborhoods to live in, harmonize, and fit in, and be used to improve our neighborhoods

15-minute walk radius to community center



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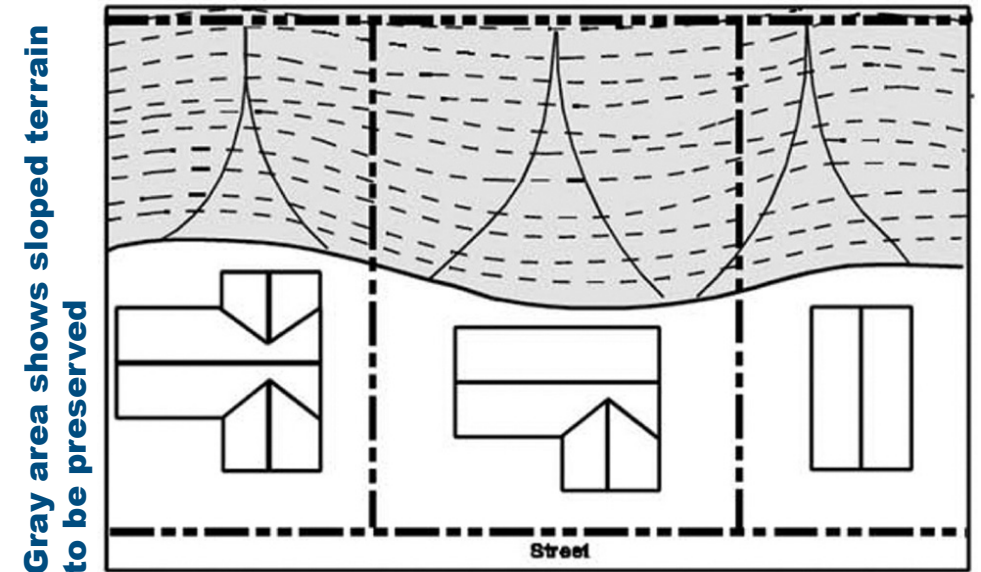
3. DESIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

WHAT

- Preserve and protect mature tree stands
- Enhance street tree preservation, planting, and maintenance
- Enforce minimum standards for tree planting associated with new development
- Reduce storm-water runoff and erosion
- Ensure solar access for passive buildings and active collection
- Retain existing homes, add to them, and integrate them with new buildings

WHY

- Retention of existing mature trees reduces storm-water runoff, enhances carbon capture, improves neighborhood character, and reduces heat islands
- Re-use and rehabilitation of existing structures reduces the carbon footprint of our building stock
- Preservation of historic homes enhances neighborhood character



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4. ADJUST DENSITY AND USE FAR

WHAT

- Utilize a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) approach to establish allowable building area as a percentage of the overall lot area and standardize (equity) lot coverage rates
- Establish lower densities than currently allowed to better balance EHO growth with desired neighborhood building blocks
- Establish more equitable density distribution

WHY

- Control of building scale and mass is one of the strongest tools to ensure compatibility of new development with existing neighborhoods
- FAR is the only practical tool available to create equitable rules for all neighborhoods and lot sizes
- FAR facilitates the implementation of the most effective zoning and allows fine-tuning of outcomes

Arlington EHO Effective Floor-Area-Ratios: R-6 Zone								
	One-Family	Duplex	Triplex	Quadplex	Five-Unit	Six-Unit	Seven-Unit	Eight-Unit
Lot Area	Allowed Floor-Area-Ratio/Density (EHO Options 11A and 11B)							
5,000	0.99	0.96	0.99	0.99				
6,000	0.99	0.80	0.99	0.99				
7,000	0.99	0.69	0.86	0.99				
8,000	0.99	0.60	0.75	0.90				
9,000	0.92	0.53	0.67	0.80	0.89			
10,000	0.83	0.48	0.60	0.72	0.80	0.80		
11,000	0.76	0.44	0.55	0.65	0.73	0.73	0.73	
12,000	0.69	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67

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EHO LOT UTILIZATION

- R-6: more parking/less building

- R-10: more building/less parking

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5. INCENTIVIZE AFFORDABILITY

WHAT

- Implement the FAR density approach
- Provide modest bonus density greater than the 0.45 FAR suggested here for multi-units and/or committed affordable units
- Retain and re-use existing structures
- Allow 2 ADU per lot
- Allow stacked townhouses, English basement units, and ADU in conjunction with small-lot single-family, semi-detached, and townhouse forms
- Allow small-lot single-family and cottage clusters

WHY

- EHO currently has no affordability incentives
- Bonus density incentives provide the opportunity for increased economic return to developers in exchange for constructing affordable units
- Retention of existing houses reduces construction costs through adaptive re-use
- ADU, cottage clusters, and stacked townhouses favor smaller units, and smaller units enhance affordability through reduced construction costs per unit



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6. PRESERVE & RE-USE

WHAT

- Preservation of historic homes
- Retention and re-use of existing homes
- Modification of structures for adaptive re-use

WHY

- Enhances neighborhood character
- Lowers the carbon footprint of the housing stock
- Increases affordability



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7. ALLOW COTTAGE CLUSTERS

WHAT

- Allow small-scale, small-footprint detached or semi-attached dwelling units on an individual lot
- Currently not allowed in EHO
- 1 to 2-1/2 stories with ground-level entrances
- Shared amenities such as recreation areas, guest quarters, parking

WHY

- Increases opportunities for aging in place, shared childcare amongst families
- Increases homeownership opportunities
- Works well with the retention of existing structures and historic houses



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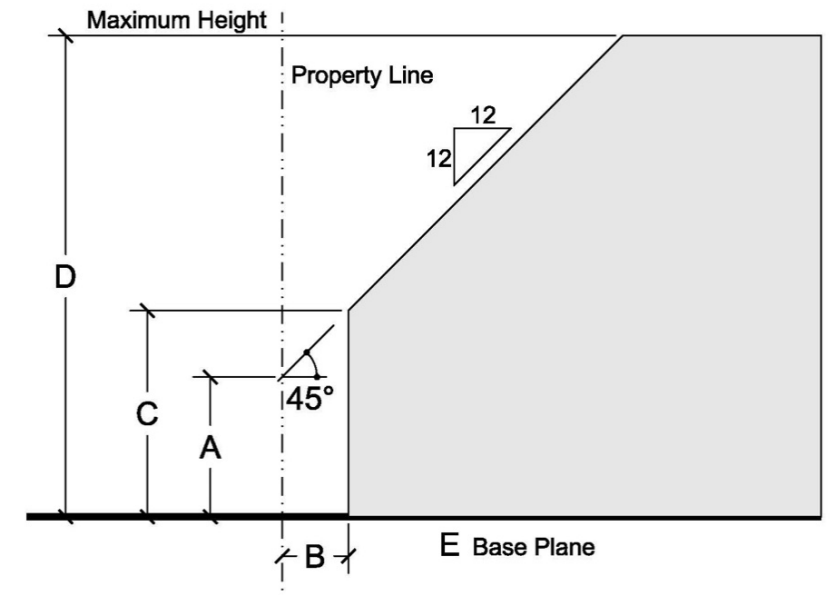
8. LOWER BUILDING HEIGHTS

WHAT

- Reduce maximum height from 35 to 30 feet
- Allow maximum 22-foot height in side and rear yards in conjunction with modified setbacks

WHY

- Heights allowed in current zoning will yield even taller buildings with EHO than single-family development
- Lower heights = improved compatibility of new with old
- Current excessive heights shadow existing neighboring homes and impact solar access
- Arlington's building heights allow 3 to 3-1/2 stories compared to Minneapolis and Portland, which allow 2 to 2-1/2 stories



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9. MODIFY SETBACKS

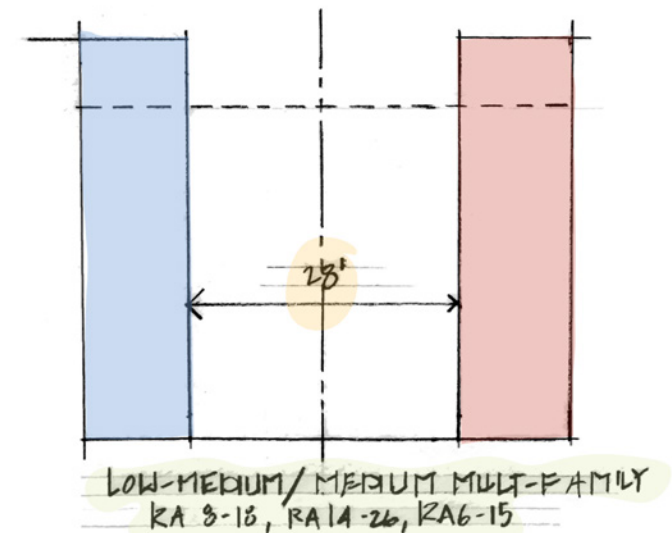
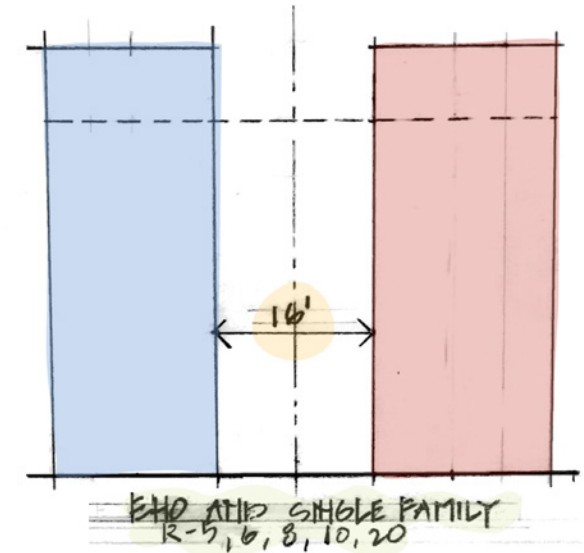
WHAT

Modify existing setback requirements to the following:

- 10-foot minimum front, side, and rear-yard setbacks for all main (non-accessory) buildings in all zones
- Maximum building height of 22 feet and maximum lot occupancy of 50 percent within 10 to 25 feet from a front or rear property line
- Maximum facade length or single building mass of 50 percent of the overall property line frontage within a zone 10 to 20 feet from a front, side, or rear property line

WHY

- Establishes a consistent and equitable setback requirements across all zones
- Setbacks based on providing optimal separation between all lots for light, solar access, air, and noise
- Allows for flexible placement of buildings on a lot to preserve existing buildings and mature trees
- Proposed modifications increase flexibility but provide limitations to prevent building massing from overwhelming any single-lot adjacency



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10. PLAN FOR PARKING REALISTICALLY

WHAT

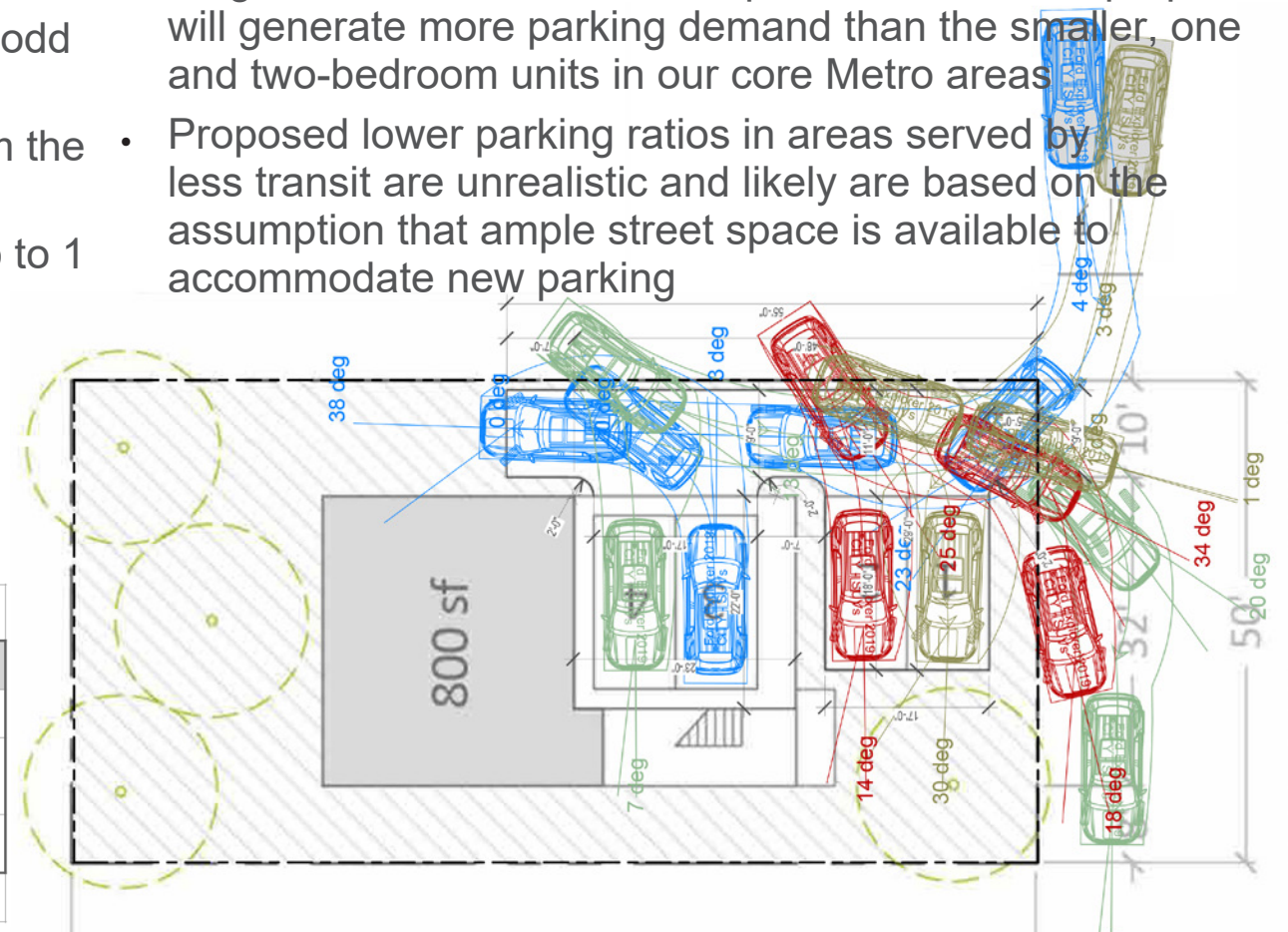
- Allow curb space at the street front of the property to be utilized toward the parking count
- Accommodate the remainder of required parking on-site
- Require 1.125 parking spaces per unit (rounded up for odd numbers of units)
- Exclude ADU and small units of less than 1000 SF from the parking requirement
- Reduce parking requirements within 1000 feet of Metro to 1 space per unit

WHY

- Many dwellings in non-transit accessible neighborhoods will be two-car households
- Larger, multi-bedroom units expected in the EHO proposal will generate more parking demand than the smaller, one and two-bedroom units in our core Metro areas
- Proposed lower parking ratios in areas served by less transit are unrealistic and likely are based on the assumption that ample street space is available to accommodate new parking

Minimum Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit				
GLUP Designation (Residential)				
Low	Low	Low Medium	Medium	High
EHO: Transit Accessible*	EHO: with parking survey*	RA8-18 / RA14.26	RA6-15 / RA7-16	RA-H-3.2/C-O Rosslyn
0	0.5	2.2	2.2	1.125

* Recommended by Planning Commission at its March 9, 2023 Meeting



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11. UPDATE ADU

WHAT

- Allow two ADU (Accessory Dwelling Units) per property, with no more than one ADU within a single main building and one as a free-standing accessory building
- Increase allowable ADU floor area to 1000 square feet per unit
- Reduce parking requirements for ADU to 0.5 per unit
- Allow ADU in conjunction with semi-detached and townhouse housing types defined in the proposed EHO

WHY

- ADU remains an effective solution to provide more housing within the framework of existing neighborhoods and zoning regulations
- The proposed EHO does not adequately incorporate ADU with the new housing types proposed, missing opportunities for adding smaller units and increasing affordability
- ADU can effectively form small-scale cottage clusters and, in so doing, help preserve existing houses and mature trees by reducing the need for ground-up new construction

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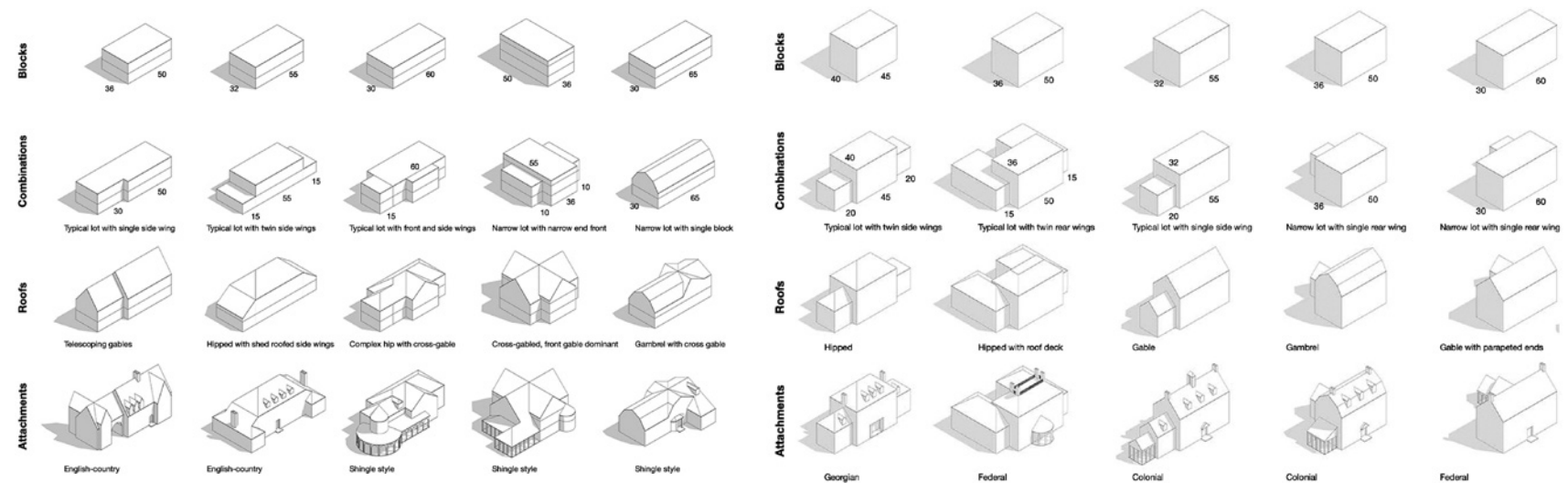
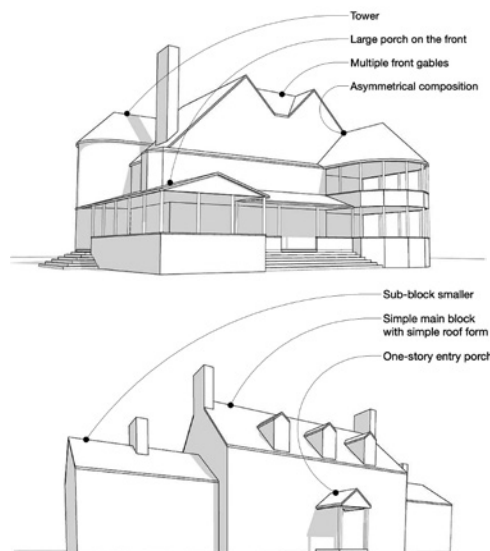
12. INCORPORATE DESIGN STANDARDS

WHAT

- Specify key design characteristics for EHO to prevent negative impacts on neighboring properties and enhance neighborhood character

WHY

- The existing Arlington County EHO proposal contains minimal design standards, which fall short of the design controls needed to successfully implement a program for added density
- Limit on streetfacing garage doors that is overly broad and should be modified to a maximum single garage door of 18-foot width
- Small front porch of 60 square feet provides an enormous density bonus that can best be used for other purposes
- Controls on the numbers of front doors and their locations



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SUMMARY

- LAB + Jane Siegel continue to work on finding the middle ground approach
- There is a balance between growth, affordability, variety, and neighborhood character that can successfully be met
- We need to coalesce around a middle ground solution that incorporates multiple viewpoints and addresses community equities and concerns
- Our belief is that a better solution can be found and implemented - but it will take work and collective action
- Discussion, input, compromise, and trust from both of the current “two sides” are essential



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THANK YOU!

- Questions
- Discussion

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