

CivFed Statement — 1501 Langston Boulevard - September 9, 2026

Planning Commission — Oral Statement (Under 5 Minutes)

Good evening, Madam Chair and Commission members. I'm Jack Spilsbury speaking on behalf of the Arlington County Civic Federation.

The Civic Federation issued a [resolution](#) in June 2025 calling on the County to improve its site plan review process. We also support the County Auditor's call for greater public transparency in the negotiation and administration of community benefits.

We commend the hard work of the SPRC and its members on the 1501 Langston Boulevard project.

At the same time, we have concerns about the PROCESS followed for this project, particularly the lack of clarity about the current GLUP designations for the site.

This matters because the current GLUP is the essential baseline for determining what GLUP changes are required for the proposed development and, in turn, what community benefits should be considered.

There are three sections of this parcel with different GLUP designations. That by itself is not a problem. We all agree that 1/3 of this parcel has a land use appropriate to the project, which is Low office apartment hotel.

The problem is that in a July presentation and discussion, the staff made a statement that "Although staff interprets existing land use as low OAH, two other designations appear to also apply." In addition to the Low OAH it listed medium residential and public GLUPs. The same square footage cannot have two different current GLUP designations. Staff says the appearance of "double-GLUPing" results from historic errors and inconsistencies.

Before decisions are made about what GLUP changes may be required for this development, we must first decide which of the many competing GLUPs actually are correct. To do this, there needs to be agreement on the accurate current GLUP for each section of the property and we must eliminate the GLUP debate, BEFORE we can fairly assess the site plan proposal.

To ensure an appropriate site plan process, CivFed is submitting three requests that are consistent with our 2025 resolution that we ask you to take and to recommend to the County Board.

First, we ask that the Planning Commission not submit its report and recommendation until the issue is of the correct GLUP is resolved through adequate review and documentation.

If this process relies on previous site plans, land-use decisions, nearby developments, or other documents, those documents should be made available on the project website as part of Planning Commission or SPRC documentation.

Second, we ask the Planning Commission to facilitate a resolution of possible errors, to identify the validated current GLUP that will enable proper site planning.

We ask the Planning Commission to request that the County staff and relevant participants work to establish the single accurate GLUP for each section of the parcel and provide the information and basis for that determination to the public and to all participants.

Finally, once the GLUP and zoning are clarified, we ask that the Commission work with staff to decide whether or not any part of this parcel needs a GLUP change and a new review of related Community Benefits. As part of this process, we ask the Commission to ensure that references to “double-GLUPing” be removed or annotated in any County reports before this project goes to site plan approval, that staff indicate to the developer that he must request the GLUP amendment and engage him and the community to identify the community benefits that should be considered if this development requires a GLUP change.

This is important because a change that allows greater development intensity may affect the community benefits that would otherwise be considered, including affordable housing.

In conclusion, ensuring the transparency and proper consideration of this site plan process is important for any future case in which an adopted land-use or zoning designation is considered to be a potential error including as part of the LB Area Plan.

We ask the Planning Commission to help resolve these questions before moving on to recommend outcomes on the actual site plan request.

Thank you for working with the Civic Federation to ensure that our planning process remains transparent and maintains public confidence.