

From: [Sienicki, Carey](#)
To: [Petkac, Cindy](#)
Cc: [Mayor](#); [Town Manager](#)
Subject: MAC
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2019 10:28:27 AM

Cindy,

I appreciate your difficult task (in conjunction with the work of staff, boards and commissions) to update the MAC. This does not need to be posted on Granicus or distributed at the meeting, but I thought I would let you know some of my thoughts in advance of Wednesday's meeting.

I am not sure how we are addressing individual Councilmember's proposals that were given yesterday next week at the meeting. In understanding how the MAC was put together with flexibility for design arrangement, larger vs. smaller parcels, new vs. additions/expansion etc. many of their suggestions/proposals would substantially re-characterize the zone. I am very hesitant to incorporate reactionary or sweeping changes that substantially modify the MAC. As a Town, I believe that we are on a good path. I agree with your measured investigation to look more carefully at incentives, open space, parking, loading and how the building meets the sidewalk, in tandem with design guidelines.

I also liked the idea of a field trip proposal a couple of years ago from Mike D'Orazio to investigate and familiarize Council, Boards and Commissions with some of the newer residential housing options (when we were looking at updates to the RM-2/RTH zone) in surrounding jurisdictions of like scale. Perhaps this could be expanded to include the proposed MAC and could consult Elizabeth Lauder for her MAC insights for commercial and streetscape. I know she had some old Town Alexandria offerings she referenced as direct correlation to the MAC (sidewalk, traffic, etc.). What we are looking at is not innovative. But we should not accept comparisons to larger scale developments as reasons not to pursue what will enhance Vienna. I really enjoyed a VML Arlington tour which talked holistically what the City is doing incorporating transportation, site and building design. I know this might be too difficult of a task.

Some interesting larger points or investigations that I have heard from several directions:

- Two story restrictions for residential uses within a building (not including parking, loading, utility, common elements and circulation)
- Modifying C-1 to increase height a few feet to allow for a by-right proposal (determine best practices for accommodating arrangements, for both today and future)
- Question: On a substantial re-design of a built MAC, would they need to resubmit through the MAC rezone process or would it just be an administrative staff process?
- What is the proper purpose, scale of side alleys/setbacks?

I also see some concern for reactions of a flat facade or roofline as a building form (i.e. canyon

effect). No, we should not expect simply a box, reflecting boundary lines of extruded height, where program is poured into it. However, the point should be to require a building to achieve the best design for the site, programming of uses and meeting the needs of the people who utilize the area. The code should allow for many types of arrangements. By continually adding layers of requirements of "interest" with complex undulating heights and roof forms, vertical breaks and setbacks, as a Town, are we jeopardizing good design, safety and building longevity? I think that paramount should be allowing some interpretation for proposals which allow "form follows function" so that buildings that are designed holistically, not merely a collection of applied elements. I also personally think a roof should be a roof, not a false parapet or an applied mansard masking a floor, that in most cases will look tired and become a maintenance issue in the future.

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