



ARLINGTON COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414, Arlington, Virginia 22201

February 27, 2006

Mr. Chris Zimmerman, Chairman
Arlington County Board
1 Courthouse Plaza, Suite 300
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Zimmerman,

The Commission for the Arts voted to support the January 2006 draft Four Mile Run Restoration Master Plan with the condition that some or all of the following suggestions by commissioners for additional language be considered.

p. 26/p. 30 Shirlington Arts District: In the "Future"/"Arts and Culture" sections, include language that with the purchase of 3806 S. Four Mile Run Drive, current planning is for both sides of Four Mile Run at Shirlington to have several arts facilities and so is being considered an arts district.

p.28/ p. 59 Bridges: There is discussion of reclaiming bridges for pedestrian links, including the Nelson Street Pedestrian Bridge (over Four Mile Run) at Shirlington. Bridges are design/public art opportunities since they can be sculptures in themselves. Mention might be made of that for long-range planning purposes. Consideration might also be given to selecting an artist/designer to lay out a concept design that considers all bridges early on so that the design/art is integrated. One-bridge-at-a-time designing may not be as satisfactory, though having all the bridges alike is not necessarily a goal either.

p.84, p.86-89 Integrating good design/public art: All elements mentioned in this section (bridges, furnishing, fencing, lighting) are items considered objects for good design, if not public art. Early planners should target sectors/areas to get the kind of high quality, integrated design that is desired. Planners and project managers looking to this master plan should be alerted to that desire. A global trigger would be better than trying to single out specific elements that should get public art at this conceptual stage. With no mention of integrating the work of public artists or designers in early design stages however, it might be read that public art/creative design is a late stage add-on. This should not be the case since it rarely results in good design.

If there is a desire to single out elements by some at too early a stage, could the language, "such as" be added, so as not to prematurely limit by overly prescribing where public art should go before an artist is potentially tasked with this exercise?

Document the desire for the inclusion of performing arts spaces (i.e., at the Waterscapes Bridge).

Document the desire by some for inclusion of restaurants/food service and other commercial opportunities to promote urban life at designated parts of the park, or at its edges. Since the park is in a high density, urban community, restaurants would add liveliness to the atmosphere at points of respite and access.

Document more opportunities to get to the water and cross it via, for example, stepping stones and fords, such as the one on Four Mile Run at Columbia Pike.

Include the need for basic repair as well as possible design/artistic treatment for Shirlington Road Bridge.

I would also like to thank staff member Scott McPartlin for being so helpful at all stages of the process.

Sincerely,



Wendy Rahm
Chair, Arlington Commission for the Arts

CC: Ron Carlee, Arlington County Manager
Dinesh Tiwari, PRCR Director
Norma Kaplan, Cultural Affairs Division Chief
✓ Scott McPartlin, PRCR project manager
Neal Sigmon, Co-Chair of JTF, Arlington