

Planning Board Testimony: Jervis Dorton

From: Jervis Dorton

Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2016 1:19 PM

Subject: PB 422 Amendment to FDP Crescent Neighborhood Phase 1

The Downtown Design Guidelines describe the kind of streets we all would like to see as The Crescent and other parts of Downtown developed. Unfortunately the customary setback distance from curb to building necessary to accommodate this vision is not mentioned. This is particularly important where the street will be dedicated to the County as a Public Right of Way. Keep in mind that in this area, planned for 2,300 apartments, for many residents the out of doors means the street, despite the proximity of Symphony Woods.

The Design Guidelines (page 49 Sidewalks para. C) mention a minimum sidewalk width of 10 feet including space for street trees. This is inadequate, 20 feet is needed for the health of the trees and vehicle clearance. Not all buildings will have retail storefronts so this would allow space for minimal landscaping or design features to soften the austere appearance of blank facades.

The Rouse Company vision for Downtown was a greener environment than typical urban developments and city streets. Consequently I hope that this Planning Board will make a minimum setback (build-to-line in current terminology) a condition of approval of this FDP Amendment for all streets or at least for the Public Streets.

I understand that this is usually addressed at Site Development Plan review, but in fairness to the developer, specifying it sooner would be better than later.

Respectfully submitted

Jervis Dorton