

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2023

TO: CARLYLE/EISENHOWER EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (“DRB”)

FROM: CARSON C. LUCARELLI, URBAN PLANNER AND STAFF LIAISON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF BOARD VACANCIES & CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS
FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONAL APPOINTEES

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide members of the Carlyle/Eisenhower Design Review Board (“DRB”) with: 1) notice of two “design professional” vacancies on the DRB; 2) information regarding the candidates who have applied to fill those vacancies; and 3) the selection process to fill the vacancies.

2. NOTICE OF VACANCIES

Background

The DRB is a five-member body with design and architectural purview for land development applications within Coordinated Development Districts (“CDD” hereafter) #1, CDD #2, and CDD #11. City Council codified the Board’s existence with Ordinance No. 4442 on April 22, 2006 following the recommendation of the Small Area Plan in effect at the time of adoption. In accordance with Section 5-611 of the City’s Code, DRB membership shall consist of the following:

- i. One (1) member of City Council serving for three years, to be selected by the Council following a Council election
- ii. One (1) City Manager or [similar] designee
- iii. One (1) citizen member residing in the area served by the board, and selected annually by the Council, and
- iv. Two (2) qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design, who shall be selected annually by the foregoing three (3) members.

Amendments to Committees, Boards and Commissions

In May 2021, City Council adopted changes to amend Article A (General Provisions) of Chapter 4 (Committees, Boards and Commissions) of Title 2 (General Government) of the Code of

Carlyle/Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB)
Candidate Selection Memorandum 2-10-2023

Alexandria, as amended. The amendments, as adopted, changed the following provisions governing City committees, boards and commissions:

- To remove the waiver for term limits of ten years; ineligible for reappointment for one full calendar year;
- All members must return their mandated oath of office within 60-days of appointment, or face potential removal; and
- All standing boards, committees and commissions enact by-laws.

In late 2021, the Carlyle/Eisenhower Design Review Boards (“DRB” hereafter) adopted a set of governing by-laws. These by-laws lay out parameters for the board’s establishment and operations, including term requirements for standing and future board members.

Recent Events

In accordance with the newly adopted by-laws, Architectural Appointee Roger Lewis and Architectural Appointee Lee Quill’s terms have expired (see Table #1 below). Pursuant to 5-611(B)(4), it shall be the duty of the remaining three DRB members to select the replacements.

Table #1: DRB Member Composition

Board member Name	Board Member Title	Year Appointed	Term Expired? “√” if yes
M. Kirk McPike	Council Designee	2021	-
Charles Paul	Citizen Member	2022	-
Roger Lewis	Appointed Architectural Professional (1)	1990	√
Lee Quill	Appointed Architectural Professional (2)	2011	√
Tom Canfield	City Manager Designee	2015	-

3. APPLICATION PROCESS AND SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES

The City initiated the process to fill the two vacancies in November 2022. The vacancies were advertised on the City's webpage and via an electronic eNews notification. Prospective DRB members were given a period of 30 days in which to submit their application. A total of three (3) applications were received. The names of each applicant are included in Table #2 below.

Table #2 : DRB Applicants

<u>APPLICANT</u>	<u>EMPLOYER</u>
1. Eric Colbert, AIA	Eric Colbert & Associates
2. Matt Johnston, PLA, ASLA	Michael Vergason Landscape Architects, Ltd.
3. Siti Abdul-Rahman, AIA	WDG Architecture

The biographical statements for each applicant are provided starting below. The complete submission package for each prospective DRB member is provided in Attachment #3.

Eric Colbert, AIA

Eric Colbert leads an award-winning architectural practice focused on urban revitalization, multi-family residential design, and historic preservation. After earning his professional degree in architecture in 1975 from Cornell University, where his studies included coursework in fine art and industrial design, he moved to Washington, DC, to join the prominent firm of Arthur Cotton Moore Associates. While there, he worked on the groundbreaking renovation of the Old Post Office, as well as various historic buildings in Georgetown. He went on to work for two other local firms, one specializing in inner-city housing rehabilitations and the other in museum and lighting design.

Eric founded ECA in 1982. While growing the firm, he has placed an emphasis on hiring and retaining talented professionals with strong design abilities and technical knowledge. Eric remains directly involved in all of the firm's major projects, and personally attends the majority of project-related public hearings and community meetings. He has been an active participant in the Mayor's Building Code Advisory Committee, several real estate associations, and the American Institute of Architects. Eric has made presentations to, and acted as a guest critic at the University of Maryland and The Catholic University of America.

Having had my urban and neighborhood oriented architectural practice for 40 years has given me a vast amount of experience interacting with various stakeholders in the community. The majority of our projects require approvals from neighborhood groups, city zoning agencies, and historic boards. I believe that this experience has enabled me to understand the priorities of the affected residents and government agencies having jurisdiction over the project. The City of Alexandria has always been one of my favorite places in the greater Metro area. I go there often on weekends to walk around and observe new developments or just stroll along the waterfront. I would be honored to donate my time to help assure that future developments are well organized and aesthetically pleasing. Alexandria has its own unique character that upcoming projects should embrace and I hope to help further this goal.

Carlyle/Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB)
Candidate Selection Memorandum 2-10-2023

Matt Johnson, PLA, ASLA

I'm writing to respectfully request that you consider my application for one of the open vacancies on the Carlyle/ Eisenhower East Design Review Board (architectural/ design professional). My education, experience, and interest position me as a worthwhile candidate, and if selected, I feel confident that I would be a successful Board member.

I have Masters degrees in Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture from Virginia Tech, which equipped me with skills helpful to working on the Board. These might include evaluating impacts of proposed developments upon pedestrian safety and comfort, or suggesting ways to include sustainable planting and stormwater management in beautiful and effective ways.

I've recently served on two public committees: the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC), and the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Public Art Committee. Both committees allowed me to work with diverse groups of citizen experts and City Staff, and see first-hand how the committee structure is employed to resolve questions that affect a public with a variety of needs and aspirations.

Over the years, I've enjoyed seeing the evolution of the Carlyle / Eisenhower East sector first-hand, since I live nearby and pass through fairly often. It's a really interesting district that stands apart from the rest of Alexandria, and I'd welcome the chance to understand its character and prospects for continued growth in a more active way.

I've long felt compelled towards public service, and have looked for opportunities to use my time in a way that might benefit my family and community. I would value the opportunity to help advise on new development for the Carlyle/ Eisenhower East area.

I'm a homeowner and proud resident of Alexandria, a truly unique place with a rich history, exemplary built fabric, and a caring, intelligent citizenry. It would be an honor to serve if chosen, and I thank you for your consideration.

Siti Abdul-Rahman, AIA

Siti Abdul-Rahman is a Managing Principal at WDG Architecture. She graduated with her Master of Architecture degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1989 and started her career in Washington D.C. working at George Sexton Associates, Geier Brown Renfrow Architects and BBGM Architects and Interiors before collaborating at WDG Architecture in 2006. She has 33 years of experience designing projects both nationally and internationally which concentrated in Multifamily Residential, Hospitality, Commercial and Urban Planning efforts. At WDG she continues to focus on these efforts while serving as the Design Principal for all the projects that she works on. From conception to construction administration, she leads the team through all phases of the design process. She strives to create a harmonious balance in all her projects by incorporating wellness, sustainability, art, details, and design aesthetics. Through a design process that emphasizes on inquiry, analysis, and observation, Siti leads the team to create designs that strengthen the dynamic fabric of our life. She believes that successful designs extend beyond the building itself and they must engage the community while also contribute to its environment.

4. CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS

Staff recommends that the three remaining DRB members select two “design professional” appointees from the candidate pool at the January 2023 meeting. DRB members may wish to consider the following standards (also included as Attachment #4 to this memo) as they evaluate the three candidates for the Board:

- Professional experience in architecture and urban design;
- Demonstrated experience in high-rise construction;
- Success in designing urban streetscapes, open spaces, and placemaking;
- Familiarity with green building and infrastructure best practices; and
- Demonstrated experience with design guideline review.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1: Adopted DRB By-Laws

Attachment #2: Council Ordinance

Attachment #3: Candidate Application Materials