



April 21, 2022

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

**RE: Clarendon Sector Plan**

Dear Chair Cristol,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the Clarendon Sector Plan, and encourages the County Board to approve the Plan as written. The previous Clarendon Sector Plan was put in place in 2006 and is very restrictive in many respects. The draft Plan offers a good compromise on many key items that will better serve the needs of the community today and help move the neighborhood forward.

With a Metro stop just blocks away and a highly dense, retail-rich area surrounding it, Clarendon offers a great opportunity for additional housing density. We would have preferred the Plan go even further to add more density to the western portion of Clarendon. This area has run well behind the rest of the neighborhood and continues to have many outdated structures. However, the additional density offered will help bring more units to this part of the neighborhood, revitalizing those blocks and bringing them more in line with the character of the rest of Clarendon.

We also appreciate the change in step-back requirements from 20 feet to 10. While maintaining 10-foot step-backs is more restrictive than we would like, it does represent a compromise that will enable new buildings to make better and more efficient use of their available space relative to the current Plan.

We believe that the approach taken by the County to the Joyce Motors site is the right one, and we support the staff recommendation for it. The approach taken as part of the proposed redevelopment of that site will incorporate the materials and name into the façade of the building, maintaining that essential historic resource for decades to come. The current use of that site does not fit well with the rest of the neighborhood, and is not likely to be viable there for the long term. The parking lot is also heavily contaminated. This project represents the best way to preserve the historic nature of the Joyce Motors building, while allowing the neighborhood to move forward. Failing to allow this site to be a part of the planned redevelopment would take too many units away, make the parking and garage access unworkable, and render whole project financially infeasible. In recommending full preservation of the Joyce Motors building in its current place, the Planning Commission failed to show that their proposed alternative of building a new building atop the existing one would even be viable. What is clear is that this option would be inconsistent with the character of the rest of the neighborhood, and would unnecessarily hold back the progress of this portion of Clarendon.

The planned redevelopment is consistent with the type of walkable, mixed-use, urban neighborhood that the County needs just two blocks away from a Metro station. Clarendon has evolved significantly over the years, and this western portion of the neighborhood has so much potential. We urge you to approve the Clarendon Sector Plan, including the staff

recommendation for the Joyce Motors site, without further delay. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "K" and "B" being notably large and stylized.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County Board Vice-Chair Christian Dorsey, and members Matt de Ferranti, Libby Garvey, and Takis Karantonis; County Manager Mark Schwartz; Planner Brett Wallace