



The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society

Mayor David Tarter and Members of City Council
City of Falls Church
303 Park Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22046

Dec. 8, 2017

Subject: New City Hall Chambers Design

Dear Mayor Tarter and Members of Council:

The renovation of City Hall, and particularly the Council Chambers, will be a significant step in the evolution and appearance of the City of Falls Church. From what we have seen, and from reports from two members of the VPIS Board who are on the City Hall Renovation Task Force, the latest design of the front elevation of City Hall is a significant and positive step. We think there should be a little more thought into the landscaping opportunities both in front of the building and near the garage, but those decisions can be left for a later date.

Primarily, though, the Board is concerned about the latest proposed design for the Council Chambers. The current Chambers is a beautiful room, and embraced by the community. It evokes a sense of history and careful deliberation. When the issue of design was raised some time ago, the development team said the current design and appearance of the Council Chambers could be replicated wherever it is placed in the building.

It is our understanding that the newest design does not replicate the current design of the chambers, but rather presents a more modern design that may lose the room's sense of history and style. The design of the Council Chambers deserves significant public discussion and input; it is not a matter that should, or need be, rushed or resolved without that public input. The Chambers will be with us for a long time and members of the public, who use the Council Chambers more than any other public building in Falls Church, deserves to have a significant voice in its design.

We recommend that any contract that is approved permit time for significant public review and discussion of the design of the new Council Chambers. The Board of Directors of VPIS looks forward to participating actively in that discussion.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Gross, President
On Behalf of the Board of Directors

