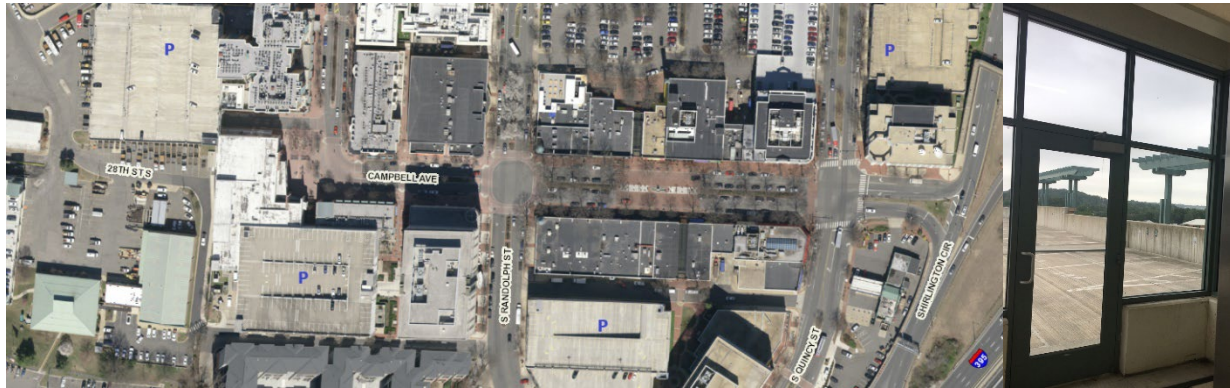


Is there enough parking in the Village at Shirlington?

By Shirlington Civic Association | December 12, 2021



[aerial photo: Shirlington aerial 2019 parking (2).png] [photo: Campbell Garage roof parking_IMG_9178.jpg - delete these notes before posting]

Is there enough parking in the Village at Shirlington? Here's what we told County urban planners on July 7, 2019. It remains our bottom line on any approval process for additional density in the Village. The SCA said:

"How lucky we are to have so many parking garages already built. Now if we could only use them!

There is no lack of parking in the Village. There are over 3,000 off-street parking spaces in five multi-tenant commercial parking structures and one parking lot, in addition to four private parking garages attached to residential buildings.

At any one moment, there are numerous unused parking spaces in our commercial garages. At times, entire floors are empty. The top floors of all these garages are famously 90% empty as can be seen in almost any County aerial photo of the Village at Shirlington. Our visitors should be able to access these spaces and know to find out which spaces are available at any given time. No one should get towed while we have vacant spaces! No one!

Ultimately the Village needs a comprehensive, integrated, digital parking wayfinding system. This has been explored and we will continue to explore it. Unfortunately, implementing such a system is expensive and we understand that it is not a cost that Federal Realty (which owns only 2 of the garages and one parking lot) can afford to bear independently.

We would like to discuss how this can be achieved, and how the original Site Plans and governing agreements for garages approved by the County have contributed to some of our parking issues. We look forward to seeing what is proposed in the public improvement plan (PIP)."

The short [Parking Study report](#) prepared for the Arlington Planning Commission in 2019 is worth reading. It agrees with our view that ACCESS is a bigger issue than SCARCITY: “At first glance, it may appear there is plenty of parking provided, but it is important to note many spaces are restricted to specific uses or times of day.”

Most recently, there was a substantial discussion of parking needs at the July 18, 2020, County Board meeting that approved the Special General Land Use Plan+ for Shirlington. “There’s lots of parking – [but] what’s there isn’t allocated very well,” County Board Chairman Libby Garvey said. ‘It’s frustrating when we have lots of parking and people need parking, and somehow we can’t marry them up.” ([Inside Nova, July 21, 2020](#)) The full transcript of that meeting can be viewed on the [County Board website](#) for that date.

The aerial photo above shows rooftop levels of the four garages in Shirlington, with very few cars parked on them in the daytime, and the second photo shows the same at the Campbell Street Garage. This conversation will continue!