

**PRELIMINARY  
STAFF REPORT  
2008-2009 AREA PLANS REVIEW**

**SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S):**Dranesville

**APR ITEM(S):**APR# 08-III-16UP; 08-III-17UP;  
08-III-18UP; 08-III-19UP

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**NOMINATOR(S):** APR# 08-III-16UP, 08-III-17UP & 08-III-18UP: Eleanor Weck;  
APR# 08-III-19UP: Eleanor Anderson

**ACREAGE:** n/a

**TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS:** n/a

**GENERAL LOCATION:** APR# 08-III-16UP: Riverfront Planning Sector (UP1)  
APR# 08-III-17UP: Springvale Planning Sector (UP2)  
APR# 08-III-18UP: Hickory Planning Sector (UP3)  
APR# 08-III-19UP: Riverfront, Springvale and Hickory Planning  
Sectors (UP1, UP2, UP3)

**PLANNING AREA(S):**

**District(s):** Upper Potomac

**Sector:** APR# 08-III-16UP: Riverfront (UP1)  
APR# 08-III-17UP: Springvale (UP2)  
APR# 08-III-18UP: Hickory (UP3)  
APR# 08-III-19UP: Riverfront (UP1), Springvale (UP2), Hickory (UP3)

**Special Area(s):** N/A

**ADOPTED PLAN MAP:** Retail & Other, Public Parks, Private Recreation,  
Private Open Space, Public Facilities

**ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:** Generally planned for low density residential with some private  
recreation, private open space, public park and retail.

For Policy Plan text see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/>

**PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:**

APR# 08-III-16UP; 08-III-17UP and 08-III-18UP: Add Plan text indicating that permeable surface  
trails are preferred in this area except within one mile of elementary schools and commercial areas.  
APR# 08-III-19UP : Add Plan text to encourage the use of pervious and semi-pervious materials for  
paved areas.

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**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve Nomination as submitted**

**Approve Staff Alternative**

**Retain Adopted Plan**

Staff recommends retaining the current Plan. The Environment section of the Policy Plan states in Objective 2, Policy k. that in order to minimize the impacts that new development may have on the County's streams, the amount of impervious surface created should be minimized when such treatment furthers the Plan objectives of protecting surface and groundwater resources and protects and restores the ecological integrity of streams. However, there are circumstances when pervious or permeable materials are not desirable. Further, the Public Facilities Manual already regulates the distances for paved sidewalk next to schools. If the language nominated is added to the Comp Plan, the ability to consider other equally important environmental considerations will be weakened.

## CRITICAL ISSUES

**Storm Water Drainage:** The Environment section of the Policy Plan encourages new development or redevelopment to minimize the amount of impervious surface to advance the objective of preventing and reducing pollution of surface and groundwater resources. In some instances, pervious surfaces, such as stone dust, may be detrimental to the environment in the floodplain as they can be eroded quickly. Eroded materials can be washed into streams causing siltation and degrading water quality. The best choice of surface material should be determined based on the circumstances of the site and considering the various environmental policies found in the Policy Plan volume of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Trails Maintenance:** The Policy Plan contains the objective to “Provide a comprehensive network of sidewalks, trails and bicycle routes as an integral element of the overall transportation network”. The ability of Fairfax County to build and maintain the network of trails is an important aspect of achieving this objective. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will not maintain any permeable trails within their Rights-of-Way, as permeable surface trails require more maintenance than asphalt and generally have a shorter life expectancy. In some instance, requiring new development to provide permeable surface trails may lead to greater expense for trail maintenance within the Great Falls area and increased trail maintenance responsibility to the Park Authority and/or the County of Fairfax. The best choice of surface material should be determined based on the circumstances of the site and considering the various countywide policies found in the Environment section of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Paved Trails near Schools and Commercial Use:** The Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual includes the requirement to provide paved sidewalks or trails within 1 mile of elementary schools and 1.5 miles of intermediate and high schools. The current Trails Plan generally encourages natural surface trails in the Great Falls area. The nominations proposal to provide paved trails within 1 mile of schools and commercial areas would contradict the current trails Plan and the Public Facilities Manual. Changes to the Trails Plan for specific areas, such as any specific commercial areas, should occur prior to changing the Area Plans text.

**Conclusion:** The Comprehensive Plan already includes countywide guidance to encourage the use of pervious or semi-pervious surface where appropriate to protect surface and groundwater resources. Further, the current Trails Plan encourages natural surface trails for most future planned trails in the Great Falls area. Implementation of all Policy Plan goals and objectives should be considered based on the specific circumstance of a site. Comprehensive Plan guidance regarding the environment that is not site specific is appropriate to include in the Policy Plan and not in specific planning sectors.







