



**A Publication of the County of Fairfax, Virginia  
Department of Planning & Zoning**

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## **STAFF REPORT 2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW**

**SUPERVISOR DISTRICT:** MOUNT VERNON

**APR ITEM:** 09-IV-10LP

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**NOMINATOR(S):** Linwood Gorham on behalf of the South County Federation (SCF)

**ACREAGE:** 2.21 acres

**TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS:** 107-2 ((1)) 13

**GENERAL LOCATION:** Generally southeast of Lorton Station Boulevard and north of Bakers Drive

**PLANNING AREA:** IV  
**District:** Lower Potomac  
**Sector:** LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector  
**Special Areas:** Land Unit E, Sub-unit E7

**ADOPTED PLAN MAP:** Mixed Use

**ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:** Mixed-use project to include opportunities for office, townhouses and multi-family housing, open space, retail, cultural, center, and hotel/motel uses to further the attainment of the “Town Center” concept.

For complete Plan text see pages 5-6 of 8.

**PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:** Add text stating effort should be made to ensure the nominated parcel is more compatible with the residential parcels that surround it.

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### **SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

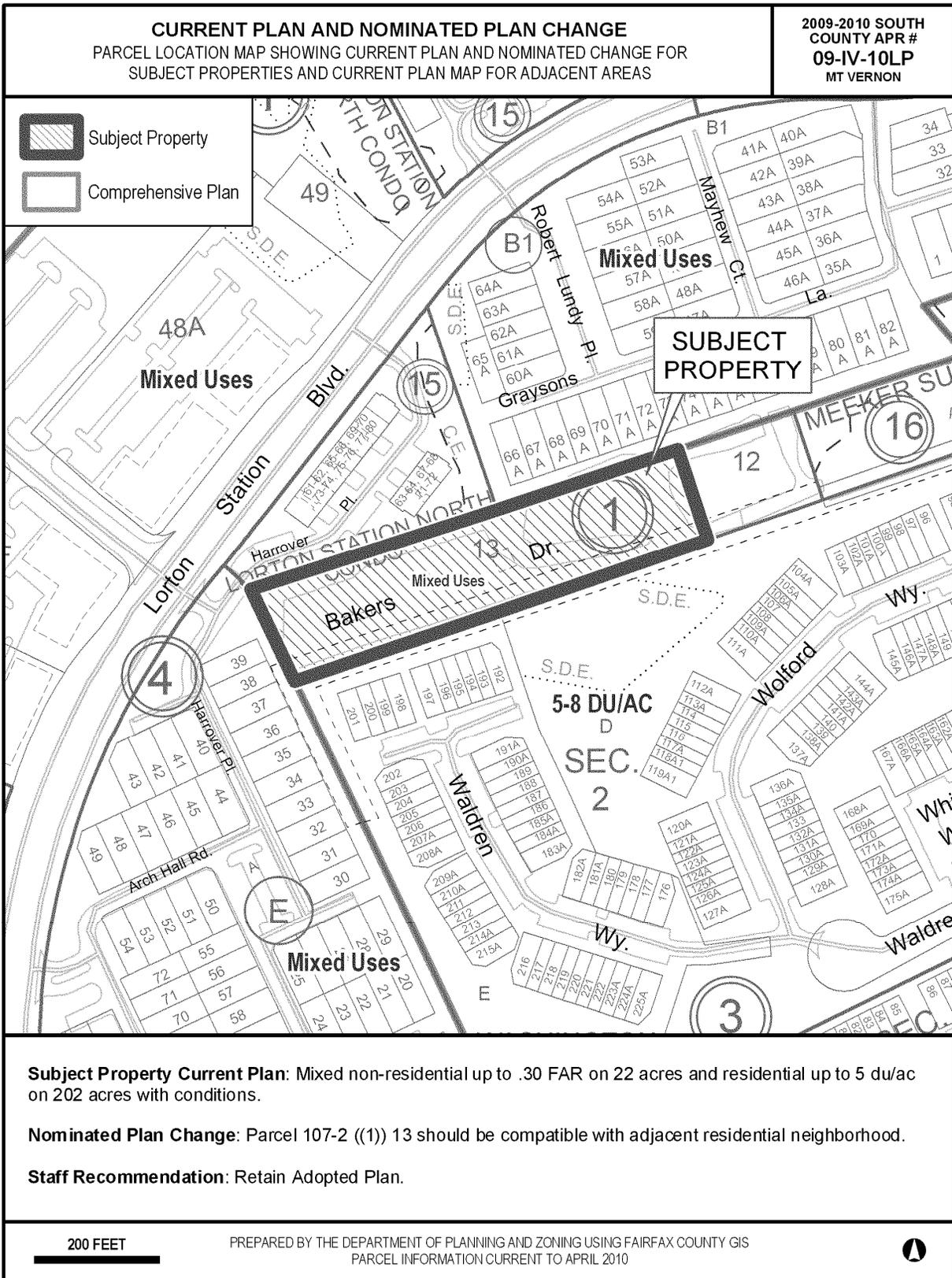
Approve Nomination as submitted  
 Approve Staff Alternative  
 Retain Adopted Plan

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The nomination seeks to assure that the subject parcel would be developed in a manner that is compatible with surrounding residential uses, a concern raised due to the I-5 industrial zoning designation of the subject property. Uses permitted by the Zoning Ordinance are not subject to Comprehensive Plan review; therefore the proposed additional text would not preclude certain uses from being developed on this parcel.

In the case where a change to the zoning is sought, the Comprehensive Plan would be consulted. The Comprehensive Plan recommendations for Sub-unit E7 note that uses and intensities should be arranged so that new residential uses are situated next to existing or planned residential uses and are compatible in height, scale and intensity. The Plan recommends that non-residential development should be clustered around the Lorton VRE commuter rail station. The Comprehensive Plan guidance suggests the site may be appropriate for residential use when distance from the VRE station and the surrounding residential uses are taken into account.

Should non-residential uses be developed, the Plan notes that substantial buffering and screening should be utilized between residential and commercial uses. Screening and/or barriers between industrial and residential uses would be required for development under the I-5 zoning district as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. The existing Plan guidance and the requirements under the Zoning Ordinance fulfill the objective of the nomination, which is to encourage compatibility and minimize impacts to surrounding residential uses.



## CONTEXT

### **General Location:**

The subject property is generally located southeast of Lorton Station Boulevard and north of Bakers Drive.

### **Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning:**

**Subject Area:** The nominated parcel is part of Sub-unit E7 and is zoned I-5. The current Comprehensive Plan guidance for Sub-unit E7 calls for a “Town Center” concept contingent upon several conditions, including substantial and logical parcel consolidation, a mixture of uses to reflect an overall intensity of .30 FAR for non-residential uses on approximately 22 acres and a residential density of 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) of mixed unit types on approximately 202 acres, and clustering of non-residential uses around the Lorton VRE Station. See pages 5-6 for complete Plan text and Attachment I on page 8 for a map of Land Unit E. The Comprehensive Plan map designates this subject property as mixed use. The nominated parcel contains no impervious surface or structures, however it appears to be used as storage for construction equipment and vehicles.

### **Adjacent Area:**

**North:** The area to the north abutting Lorton Station Boulevard is developed with condominiums that are part of the larger Lorton Station North Condominium development, which includes units on the east side of Lorton Station Boulevard. To the west of the condominiums are single-family detached units with minimal side yards. Both the condos and the single-family detached development are zoned PDH-5 and are planned for mixed-use, as indicated by the Comprehensive Plan Map. These areas are included in Sub-unit E7.

**East:** Parcel 107-2 ((1)) 12 is part of Sub-unit E12. The Plan notes this sub-unit contains stable residential uses at various densities that should be preserved and protected, and new or infill development should conform to the planned residential density as shown on the Plan Map. The Comprehensive Plan Map for parcel 107-2 ((1)) 12 indicates residential use at 5-8 du/ac. The parcel is zoned R-1 and is developed with a detached unit that also appears to be used for storing construction equipment and vehicles.

**South:** The Washington Square townhouse development is planned for residential use at 5-8 du/ac and is zoned R-8. This area is also part of Sub-unit E12.

**West:** The portion of the Lorton Station townhouse community along Harrover Place abuts the subject property to the west. This townhouse development is zoned PDH-5. The Comprehensive Plan Map designates this area as mixed-use. Harrover Place has direct access from Lorton Station Boulevard.

**ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT**

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Lower Potomac Planning District, Amended through 5-4-2009, LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector, Page 89:

“Sub-unit E7

Sub-unit E7 is located east of Interstate-95, generally between Pohick and Lorton Roads as shown on Figure 33. This area contains significant wetlands associated with the Pohick Creek Environmental Quality Corridor and represents a unique opportunity to create a focal point for the Lorton-South Route 1 area. Sub-unit E7 is planned for the development of a mixed-use project to include opportunities for a mix of office, townhouses and multi-family housing, open space, retail, cultural center, and hotel/motel uses to further the attainment of the "Town Center" concept. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions:

- Substantial and logical parcel consolidation should be provided so that the area is developed as one unified project to provide for high quality design and an integration of uses in keeping with the "Town Center" concept (consolidation of the entire CSX site will satisfy this condition);
- A thorough heritage resource survey should precede development and the recovery of significant heritage resources should be undertaken in conjunction with development;
- A mixture of uses to reflect an overall floor area ratio of 0.30 FAR for non-residential uses on approximately 22 acres and a residential density of 5 du/ac, comprised of a mix of unit types, on approximately 202 acres is appropriate for this site;
- The land use mix between non-residential and residential uses should be maintained so that the residential use component accounts for at least one-fourth of the total development;
- The non-residential component of the development should be clustered around a commuter railway station;
- Active and passive recreational uses should be provided or a contribution for recreational uses appropriate to the residential development on-site should be provided. Recreational uses consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance may be considered in the EQC;
- Substantial contribution towards transportation improvements should be provided;
- Uses and intensities should generally be arranged so that new residential uses are situated next to existing or planned residential uses and compatible in height, scale and intensity;
- Good design principles should be employed including the provision of pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems within and to this sub-unit with special attention given to the linkages to the commuter rail station;
- Landscaping and trees should be used in parking lots, plazas and streetside areas and medians along major roads in the "Town Center", including the "spine road" to create "boulevard-like effects";
- Architectural design features such as variations of window materials, as well as public space furniture or entry accents are encouraged. When appropriate, arcades, awnings or other building features to distinguish ground floor retail are desirable;
- Comprehensive sign systems that establish a distinctive theme and identity and eliminate visual clutter are desirable. Building mounted and ground mounted shopping center signs incorporated within a planting strip are encouraged. Pole mounted signs are discouraged;
- Safe pedestrian access to the commuter rail station from adjacent recreational areas and from across Lorton Road, Pohick Road and the CSX Railroad should be provided;
- Interparcel pedestrian access should be provided to the adjacent existing residential areas

- to the "Town Center" areas;
- An enclosed commuter rail station structure that accommodates passenger and other public and accessory uses;
- An appropriate school site should be identified with sufficient land set aside to accommodate its construction;
- The Pohick Creek Environmental Quality Corridor is part of the Pohick Greenway and should be dedicated to the Board of Supervisors for public park purposes. The wetlands associated with it are to be protected by locating and limiting development to public uses in a manner which will not adversely impact them; and
- Substantial buffering and screening should be utilized in transition areas between residential and commercial uses.”

## NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

Additions are shown underlined and deletions are shown with ~~striketrough~~.

### “Sub-unit E7

Sub-unit E7 is located east of Interstate-95, generally between Pohick and Lorton Roads as shown on Figure 33. Effort should be made to make parcel 107-2((1)) 13 more compatible with the adjacent residential parcels that surround it. This area contains significant wetlands associated with the Pohick Creek Environmental Quality Corridor and represents a unique opportunity to create a focal point for the Lorton-South Route 1 area. Sub-unit E7 is planned for the development of a mixed-use project to include opportunities for a mix of office, townhouses and multi-family housing, open space, retail, cultural center, and hotel/motel uses to further the attainment of the "Town Center" concept. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions...”

## ANALYSIS

### Land Use

The nominated parcel is surrounded by residential use. As noted in the summary of the staff recommendation, existing Plan guidance calls for new residential uses to be situated next to existing or planned residential uses that are compatible in height, scale, and intensity. Staff recognizes that the I-5 zoning designation permits uses that could be considered incompatible with the adjacent residential uses. This potential situation is addressed through substantial buffering and screening required under the Zoning Ordinance. While the current Comprehensive Plan map indicates that the subject property is planned for mixed use in accordance with the general Plan recommendation for Sub-unit E7, areas within the same sub-unit designated as mixed-use are currently developed with residential use.

### Transportation

Should this site be developed, efficient internal circulation should be developed with adequate connections to and from external streets and neighborhoods. Further review and analysis is needed to determine appropriate connections and access points. Site access should limit driveways, curb cuts and median breaks, and be arranged to minimize conflicts with traffic.

Currently, this area is served by Fairfax Connector Routes 171 and 307 (to/from Richmond Highway Corridor and Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station), as well as the Lorton Station on the Virginia Rail Express (VRE). The Fairfax County Countywide Trails Plan shows a major paved trail and

Stream Valley Trail in the vicinity of this site. Efforts should be made to connect internal bicycle/pedestrian facilities with existing and planned County facilities.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends retaining the adopted Comprehensive Plan. While the I-5 zoning designation is incongruous with surrounding existing uses, the additional Plan language proposed by the nomination would not preclude development under existing zoning. Staff recognizes the concern regarding compatibility with adjacent residential communities, and regulations set forth in the Zoning Ordinance address screening and buffering. If a change to the I-5 zoning is sought, the extensive Comprehensive Plan guidance for Sub-unit E7 and other relevant guidance in the Plan would be consulted.

ATTACHMENT I

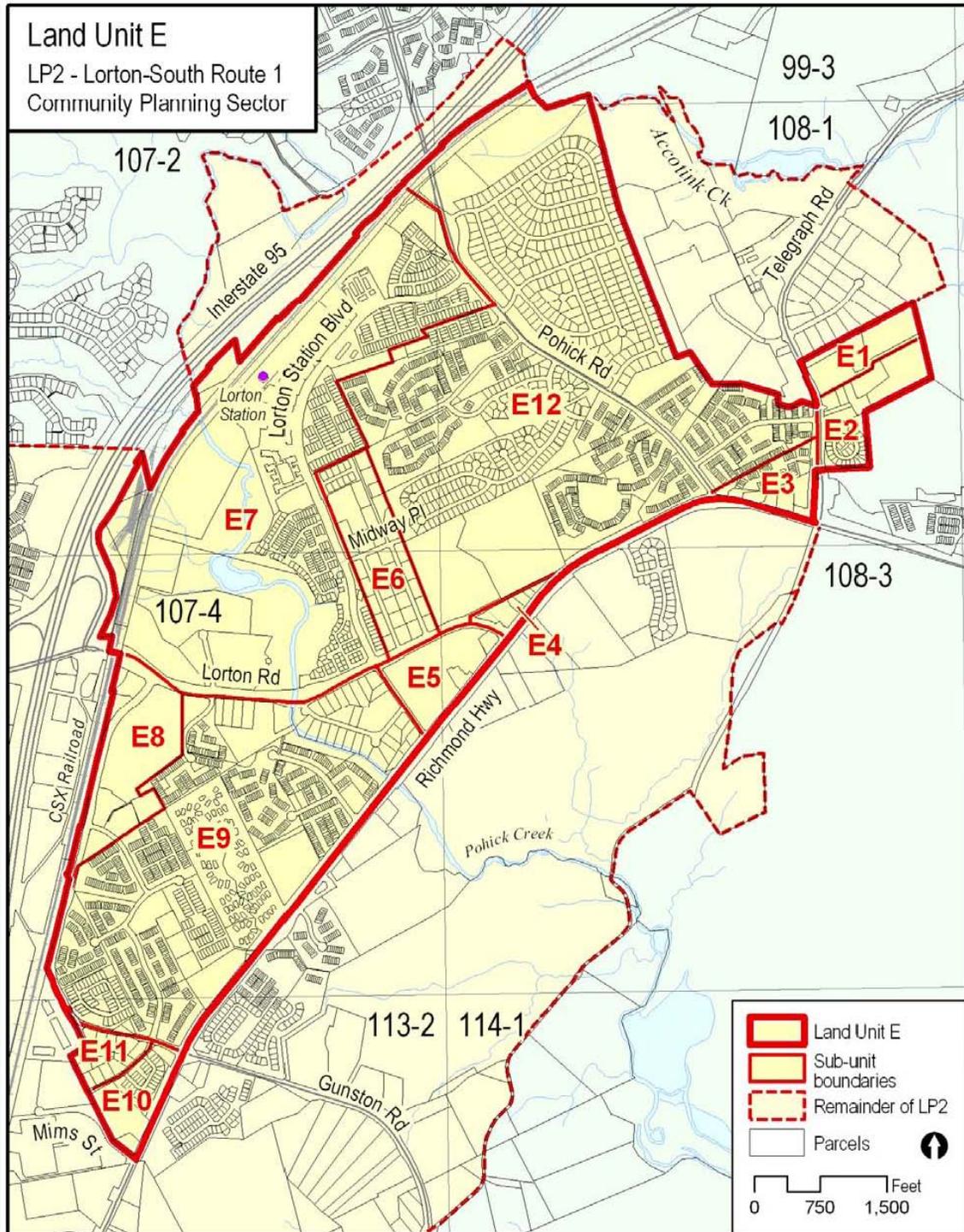


FIGURE 33