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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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STAFF REPORT

2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: LEE

APR ITEMS: 09-IV-20MV
09-IV-21MV

NOMINATORS: **20MV:** John H. Thillman
 21MV: Richard L. Labbe

ACREAGE: **20MV:** 10.09
 21MV: 6.08

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: **20MV:** 101-2 ((1)) 22,23; 101-2 ((5))(2) 13-15; 101-2 ((5))(3) All
21MV: 101-2 ((1)) 24, 101-2 ((5))(2) 1,2,5-7,8A,8B,9-12,16

GENERAL LOCATION: South of Buckman Road, east of Janna Lee Avenue, northwest of
Richmond Highway.

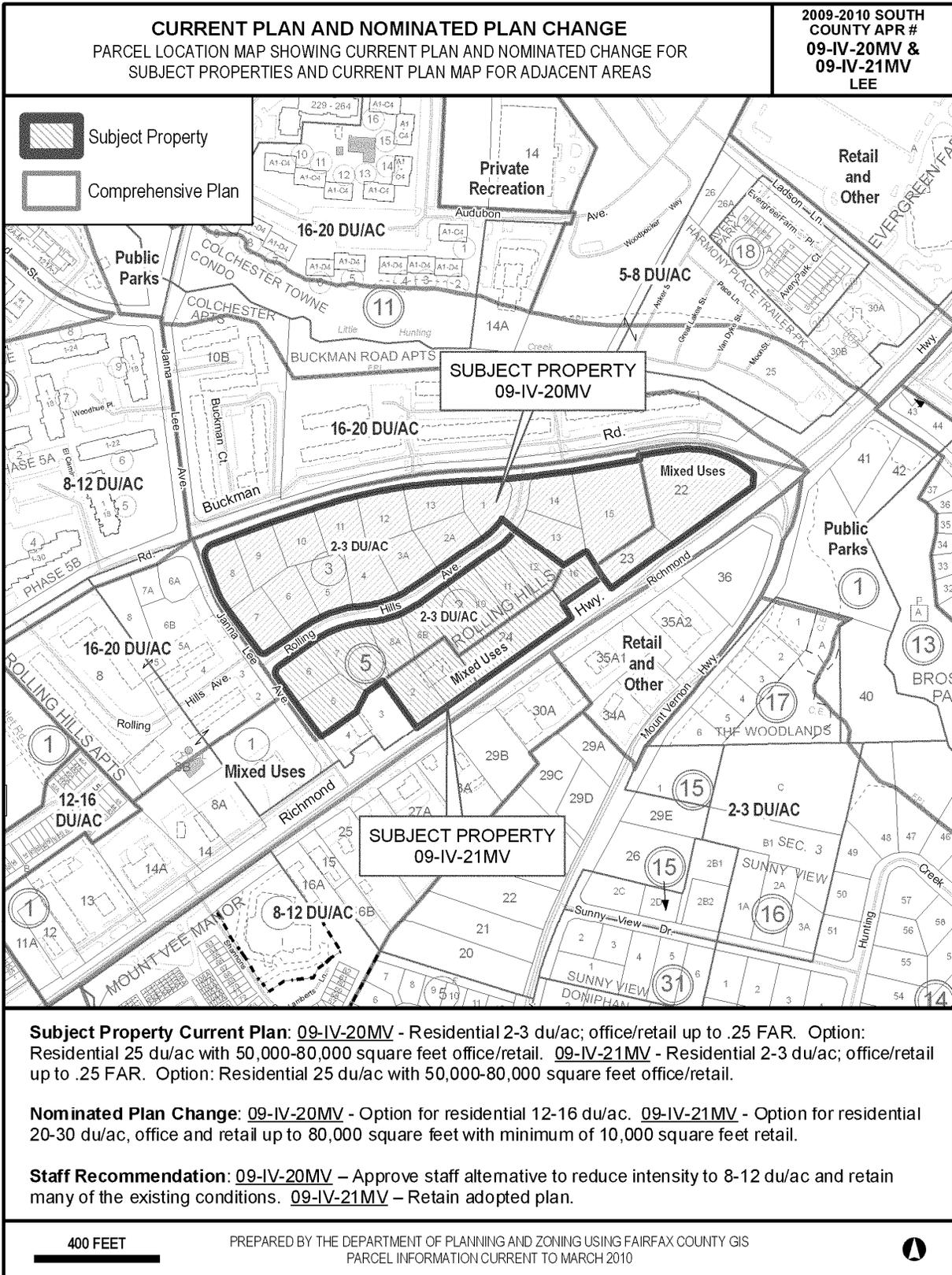
PLANNING AREA: IV
 District: Mount Vernon
 Sector: Woodlawn (MV8)
 Special Area: Richmond Highway Corridor, Suburban Neighborhood Area
 between Hybla Valley/Gum Springs and South County Center
 CBCs, Recommendation 4

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Residential 2-3 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), mixed use

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Residential use at a density of 2-3 du/ac, office and retail use along
Richmond Highway at an intensity up to .25 FAR. Option for
residential use at a density of 25 du/ac with 50,000-80,000 square
feet office and retail use.

For complete plan text see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/mtvernon1.pdf>

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: **20MV:** Option for residential use at a density of 12-16
du/ac.
21MV: Option for residential use at a density of 20-30
du/ac and office and retail use up to 80,000 square feet
with a minimum of 10,000 square feet retail use.



CONTEXT

General Location

The nomination is located south of Buckman Road, east of Janna Lee Avenue, and northwest of Richmond Highway.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

Subject Property: The 10.09-acre and 6.08-acre subject properties are located on the north side of Richmond Highway, south of Buckman Road. As shown on the following map, the nominated properties are in Area 4 of the Suburban Neighborhood Areas between the Hybla Valley/Gum Springs CBC and the South County Center CBC. Area 4 is planned for office and retail uses up to .25 FAR on the parcels fronting Richmond Highway, and residential use at 2-3 du/ac on the rest of the area. As an option, residential use at 25 du/ac with 50,000-80,000 square feet of office and ground floor retail is planned. The subject property currently contains 26 single family homes, approximately 4,200 square feet of retail use, and approximately 5,600 square feet of office use. The majority of the subject property is zoned PDH-30 to allow for 428 residential units and 80,000 square feet of office with support retail. An undeveloped parcel owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is zoned R-3.

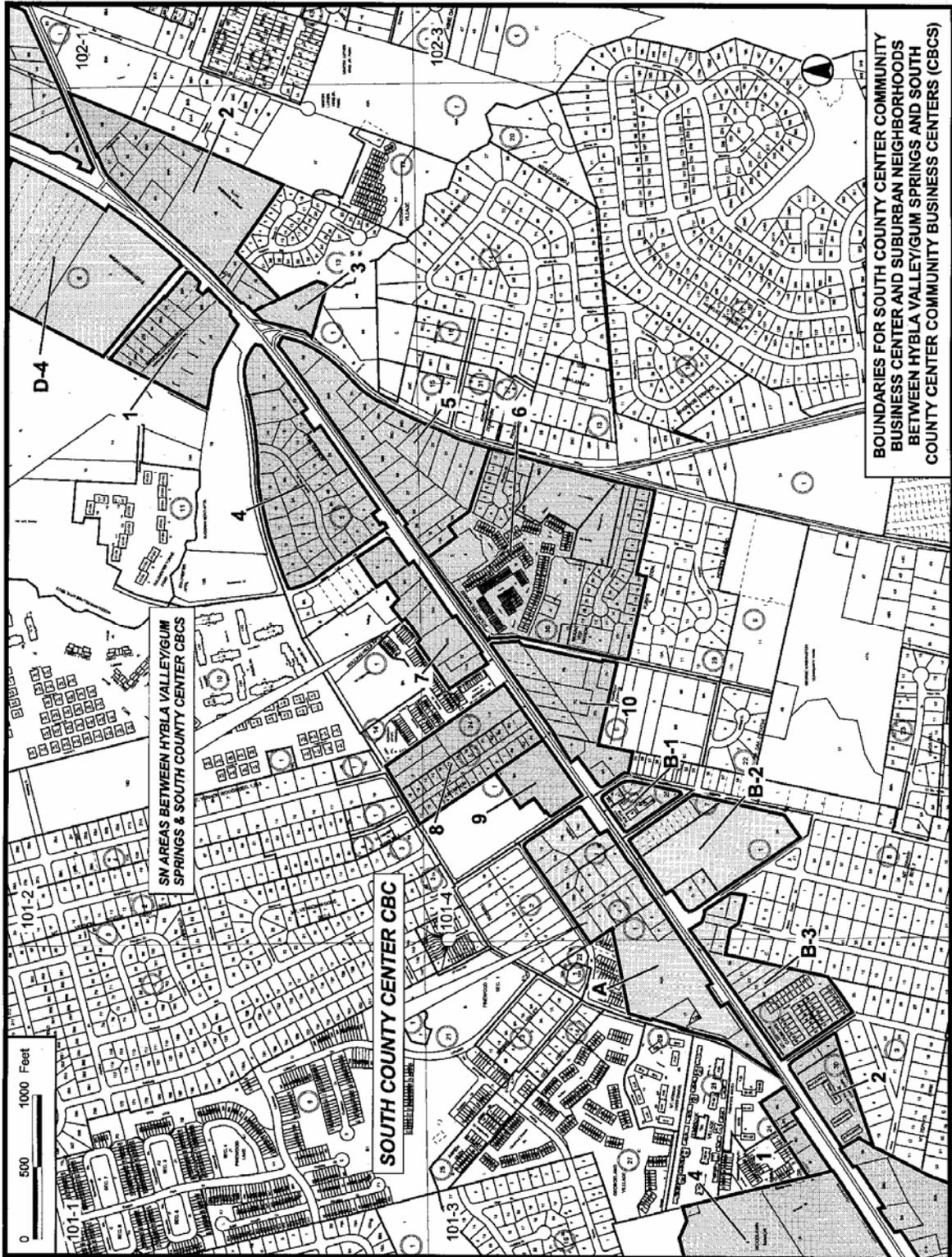
Adjacent Area:

North and West: Garden apartments to the north and west of the subject property are planned for residential use at 16-20 du/ac, and are zoned R-20.

South and East: Low intensity retail uses to the southeast across Richmond Highway are part of Area 5 of the Suburban Neighborhood Areas between the Hybla Valley/Gum Springs CBC and the South County Center CBC. Parcels in the immediate vicinity of the Richmond Highway/Mount Vernon Highway intersection are planned for retail use at .30 FAR or .35 FAR, while those to the south along Richmond Highway are planned for residential use at 5-8 du/ac, with an option for residential use at 8-12 du/ac with substantial consolidation. These parcels are zoned C-8.

PLANNING HISTORY

The subject property has been the subject of two plan amendments within the past ten years. The first of these occurred during the 2002 South County Area Plans Review. APR# 02-IV-11MV proposed to change the Plan text to allow for townhouse-style office and neighborhood serving retail up to .50 FAR for parcels fronting Richmond Highway, with an option for residential use at 8-12 du/ac and local-serving commercial uses at an overall intensity of .50 FAR. The Board of Supervisors approved an alternative that retained the base recommendation for office at .25 FAR but updated the option to allow for local-serving commercial uses up to .50 FAR in addition to the residential use at 8-12 du/ac. A subsequent Out-of-Turn Plan Amendment, S04-IV-MV1, was approved by the Board of Supervisors in February 2005. This Plan amendment modified the option for the subject property to allow residential use up to 25 du/ac with 50,000 to 80,000



RR10.4

square feet of office and retail use. The subject property was subsequently rezoned to a PDH-30 classification under application RZ/FDP 2004-LE-021. This rezoning approved the development of 306 multifamily residential units, 122 single family townhome units, and 80,000 square feet of office and retail use. Additionally, 6.78 acres of open space were provided as a part of the rezoning.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, as amended through 3-9-2010, Richmond Highway Corridor Area, pages 52-55:

“Land Unit A

4. The area fronting on the west side of Richmond Highway south of its intersection with Buckman Road to Janna Lee Avenue is planned for townhouse-style office and neighborhood-serving retail use up to .25 FAR to provide a transition to the adjacent single-family neighborhoods. The remainder of the land unit is planned for residential use at 2-3 dwelling units per acre. As an option, a mix of predominantly residential use up to 25 dwelling units per acre with 50,000 – 80,000 square feet of use consisting of office and ground floor retail may be appropriate if the area is redeveloped in accordance with Appendix 8 of the Land Use section of the Policy Plan “Guidelines for Neighborhood Redevelopment,” and all of the following conditions are met:

Phasing and Land Use:

- The non-residential component of the project is constructed and completed with the first phase of the development to ensure its compatible integration. A minimum of 70,000 square feet of commercial space comprised of a minimum of 60,000 square feet of office use and a minimum of 10,000 square feet of retail use is desired. Retail uses should be located on the ground floor of office buildings. Freestanding retail uses are discouraged.

Design:

- Complete parcel consolidation is desired. If total consolidation is not achieved, the development plan should demonstrate how the unconsolidated parcels could be integrated within the project at a later date, and buffered from the development in the interim.
- High quality, pedestrian-oriented architectural and landscape design, and other elements contained in the Urban Design Recommendations for the Richmond Highway Corridor are incorporated.
- Buildings provide appropriate transition in scale and mass from Richmond Highway towards existing adjacent residential areas along Buckman Road and Janna Lee Avenue.
- A mix of unit and building types including mid-rise structures are provided to create open space.

- Useable, well-landscaped open space is provided throughout the site.
- Landscaping is employed to offset the effect of parking lots, driveways and pavement areas adjacent to the commercial and residential structures.
- All stacked townhouses and multi-family units are designed such that they include doors, windows, and recessed balconies in the front and rear elevations to ensure an attractive “front door” appearance from all sides. Commercial buildings designed to provide an attractive appearance on all sides. Building materials of the highest quality should be used.

Environment:

- Residential development is not located in any portion of the site with projected highway noise exposures exceeding DNL 75 dBA, and outdoor residential recreation areas are not located in areas with projected noise levels in excess of DNL 65 dBA. Full mitigation should be achieved through appropriate design of the site, and the design and construction of buildings. Noise walls along Richmond Highway are not appropriate.
- Trees determined to be of value by the Urban Forester are preserved if feasible.

Parks and Recreation:

- The existing park and recreation deficiencies are offset through provision of neighborhood park land through a dedication to the Park Authority of 2.5 to 4 acres, if provided on-site, or 3 to 4 acres, if provided off-site. As a substitute, funds may be dedicated to the Park Authority for off-site land acquisition and/or facilities. Appropriate neighborhood park recreation facilities should also be provided. In addition, urban park features should be integrated within the site, such as plazas, gathering spaces, special landscaping, street furniture, and pedestrian amenities.

Transportation and Pedestrian Circulation:

- Capacity issues associated with the Buckman Road/Mt. Vernon Highway/Richmond Highway intersection are resolved with the dedication of right-of-way for an interchange. If right-of-way for an interchange is not provided, Richmond Highway should be improved to a six-lane divided highway with a raised median between Janna Lee Avenue and Buckman Road.
- Primary access is provided via Janna Lee Avenue and Buckman Road. Vehicular access from Richmond Highway is limited to one right turn in and one right turn out access point only with a possibility of a pick up/drop off area along the highway frontage.
- Janna Lee Avenue between Richmond Highway and Buckman Road is improved and modifications of the Janna Lee/Richmond Highway intersection are made to achieve efficient circulation patterns.

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- Continuous sidewalks and trails within a streetscape consistent with the Richmond Highway Corridor guidelines are provided along Richmond Highway, Janna Lee Avenue and Buckman Road. Hard surface material that enhances the corridor's urban character should be used. Within the site, trails and sidewalks are provided to create a pedestrian friendly environment and to connect the site with transit services along the Richmond Highway corridor and surrounding areas.
 - An effective Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program applicable to residential and non-residential uses that utilizes a combination of measures as deemed appropriate by the Department of Transportation is provided. These measures may include shuttle services, transit subsidies, vanpool or carpool matching services and bus shelters as well as telework office space with advanced telecommunication systems. The program should be monitored periodically.”

The Comprehensive Plan Map shows the subject properties as planned for residential use at 2-3 du/ac and mixed use.

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

20MV: The nomination proposes to add an option for residential use at 12-16 du/ac. The nominator proposes 121 townhouse units, falling at the low end of the density range. The townhouses would be 35 feet in height, and would consist of front and rear loaded units.

21MV: The nomination proposes to add an option for residential use at 20-30 du/ac, along with office and retail use up to 80,000 square feet. At a minimum, there would be 10,000 square feet of retail use. The nominator proposes 180 low-rise multifamily units with above ground, internalized parking.

ANALYSIS

Land Use

The Policy Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan states that infill development should be of a compatible use and intensity as the surrounding community. The townhomes proposed in APR nomination 20MV are at a similar density to the garden apartments located to the north and west of the subject property, and would provide an appropriate transition to the planned commercial uses along Richmond Highway.

APR nomination 20MV proposes a density range of 12-16 du/ac. The proposed number of townhomes falls at the base level of this density range. Since it is likely that number of townhomes to be constructed could be less than what is nominated, a density range of 8-12 du/ac would be more reflective of the type of development envisioned in the nomination. Additionally, prior to the approval of Out-of-Turn Plan Amendment S04-IV-MV1, the subject property had an option that included residential use at an intensity of 8-12 du/ac. Therefore, an option for residential use at 8-12 du/ac would be consistent with prior Plan guidance for the nominated area.

The option proposed in APR nomination 21MV is similar in intensity to the existing Plan option for Area 4. However, this nomination would remove or modify a number of conditions that are beneficial to the Richmond Highway Corridor, including those addressing building massing, tree preservation, parkland contribution, streetscape, intersection improvements, and Transportation Demand Management strategies. As a result, this nomination would not meet the planning objectives of the Richmond Highway Corridor in an improved manner over the current Plan option for the subject property.

Additionally, these two nominations cover all of Area 4 with the exception of two parcels located at the corner of Richmond Highway and Janna Lee Avenue. Development of both of the nominated options would render the remaining two parcels unable to consolidate and develop to their full Plan potential. It is important that any redevelopment of the subject properties allow for the future integration of these two parcels.

Transportation

Access

Access to the subject properties is from Richmond Highway and Buckman Road. Richmond Highway is shown on the Transportation Plan map to require major improvements. Any rezoning should provide the type of retail facilities that would serve the local neighborhood community and be of a type that is not considered automobile-oriented, in order to reduce the number of trips.

The nominations propose to modify language related to capacity issues associated with the Buckman Road/Mt. Vernon Highway/Richmond Highway intersection. It should be noted that while the Transportation Plan shows a grade-separated interchange at this intersection, current Plan text also states that Richmond Highway should be improved to a six-lane divided highway with a raised median between Janna Lee Avenue and Buckman Road if right-of-way for an interchange is not dedicated.

Trip Generation

Nomination 20MV would generate fewer AM and PM peak hour trips than the land uses recommended under the current Plan option, as described in the following table. Specifically, nearly 1,300 fewer average daily trips would be generated, a reduction of over 100 percent. Nomination 21MV would generate approximately 900 more average daily trips than the land uses allowed under the current Plan option. However, the net impact of these two nominations results in reductions in both peak hour trips and average daily trips. As a result, the transportation plan for the area would not need to be amended.

Trip Generation Values for Nomination 20MV

Current Comprehensive Plan						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Single Family DU (210)	24 DU	5	14	15	9	230
Office (710)	10,509 sf	14	2	3	13	116
Retail (820)	10,509 sf	81	81	89	93	537
Total Trips		100	97	107	115	883

Comprehensive Plan Option						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Office (710)	44,692 sf	61	8	11	55	492
Retail (852)	5,956 sf	46	46	50	53	304
Low Rise MF DU (221)	182 DU	18	66	69	37	1,199
Townhouse DU	70 DU	5	16	15	10	294
Total Trips		130	136	145	155	2,289

Proposed Amendment to Comp Plan						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Townhouse DU	121 DU	13	52	51	28	1,016
Total Trips		13	52	51	28	1,016

Net Impact of Proposed Amendment						Trips
Above Comp Plan		-87	-45	-56	-87	133
Above Comp Plan Option		-117	-84	-94	-127	-1,273

Trip Generation Values for Nomination 21MV

Current Comprehensive Plan						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Single Family DU (210)	12 DU	2	7	8	4	115
Office (710)	11,162 sf	15	2	3	14	123
Retail (852)	11,162 sf	87	87	95	98	571
Total Trips		104	96	106	116	809

Comprehensive Plan Option						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Office (710)	27,128 sf	37	5	7	34	299
Retail (852)	3,875 sf	28	28	30	32	183
Low Rise MF DU (221)	110 DU	11	40	41	22	725
Townhouse DU	42 DU	5	18	18	10	353
Total Trips		81	91	96	98	1,560

Proposed Amendment to Comp Plan						
Development Type	Quantity	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average Daily Trips
		In	Out	In	Out	
Office (710)	70,000 sf	95	13	18	87	771
Retail (852)	10,000 sf	78	78	85	88	511
Low Rise MF DU (221)	180 DU	17	65	68	37	1,186
Total Trips		190	156	171	212	2,468

Net Impact of Proposed Amendment						Trips
Above Comp Plan		86	60	65	96	1,659
Above Comp Plan Option		109	65	75	114	909

The transportation issues associated with any development of the subject parcels, particularly those associated with access will need to be adequately addressed during the course of the zoning review process. The development plan should address overall circulation patterns, turning movements, signalization, parcel consolidation, pedestrian circulation, safety issues, and transit amenities. Internal circulation and access issues as well as safety issues (particularly pedestrian related) are of primary concern. Dedication of right-of-way for sidewalk, roadway improvements/widening, transit, and associated easements may be required.

Parks and Recreation

In total, these proposals could allow for a potential increase in residents within the Mount Vernon Planning District by approximately 603 individuals—264 within the limits of Nomination 20MV and 339 within the limits of Nomination 21MV. Residents will need access to park and recreation facilities on site or nearby. Existing nearby parks, including Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, Little Hunting Creek Park, Vernon Heights Park, Mount Vernon Woods Park, and George Washington Community Park, will meet only a portion of the demand for parkland generated by residential development in the service area of the nominations. In addition to parkland, the recreational facilities in greatest need in the Mount Vernon Planning District include rectangular fields, adult softball fields, basketball courts, playgrounds, neighborhood skate parks and trails. The nomination references the addition of the school site on Buckman Road to the park inventory. However, this property remains in the ownership of the School Board of Fairfax County and is not considered parkland.

The Parks and Recreation section of the District-wide Comprehensive Plan recommendations for the Mount Vernon Planning District establishes provision of Urban and Neighborhood Parks and facilities in conjunction with new development as a major park and recreation objective. Additionally, as mentioned previously, guidance for Suburban Neighborhood Area 4 between Hybla Valley/Gum Springs and South County Center CBCs provides additional conditions to be satisfied coincident with the higher density option. Several of these conditions include the provision of useable, well-landscaped open space; that outdoor residential recreation areas are not located in areas with projected noise levels in excess of DNL 65dBA; preservation of trees of value, if feasible; and contributions to offset park and recreational deficiencies through dedication of land (2.5-4 acres if on-site, 3-4 acres if off-site) or funds to the Park Authority. Additional conditions include provision of appropriate neighborhood park recreation facilities as well as urban park features.

The retention of the existing plan text as it relates to the design of open space, preservation of trees of value and the parameters to offset park and recreational deficiencies, including the provision of urban park features, is recommended. Additional guidance may be added to clarify the responsibility of each application toward the contribution of park dedication. However, each of these conditions would continue to well serve any future development at the proposed densities as well as the surrounding community and are worded in ways that provide flexibility and reasonableness.

Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan Trails Map identifies the Interstate Route One Bikeway across the application's frontage on Route 1. Continuation of this cross-country bicycle route would improve non-motorized access to parks from commercial and residential areas and increase connectivity between park sites.

Environment

Natural Resources

Both APR nomination areas are located directly upstream of parkland on Little Hunting Creek. This area experiences excessive stormwater flows during storm events due to lack of adequate detention and treatment. It is recommended that all redevelopment on the subject properties be required to detain stormwater on site, consistent with stormwater management policies in the Mount Vernon Planning District and Policy Plan volumes of the Comprehensive Plan.

Cultural Resources

Two parcels within the area of APR nomination 21MV contain two architectural sites, VDHR#029-4143 (Fairfax County Architectural Site #101-2A03) and VDHR#029-5144 (Fairfax County Architectural Site #101-2A04). Both sites were built between 1937 and 1953. The area of these APR nominations also lies in the heart of the Gum Springs tract, which was given by George Washington to his freed slave, West Ford. The area is particularly sensitive to the County's African American heritage. Although portions of the property have been surveyed, others have not. Any relatively undeveloped parcels that have not been surveyed should be addressed by a Phase I archaeological survey, and, as warranted, a Phase II significance assessment and Phase III data recovery.

Water

Water service in the subject area is served by Fairfax Water, which is a non-profit Water Utility that serves Northern Virginia. Providing service to a more intense, mixed-use development would likely require a looped water main configuration to accommodate reliability, water quality, and fire protection needs. It should be noted that transmission system improvements are anticipated along the Richmond Highway Corridor. Coordination of land development activity with these improvements will be necessary. Individual developers would be responsible for extending lines to their development and would make these commitments during the rezoning and development process.

As the area transitions from suburban to urban, water system infrastructure improvements and expansion will ultimately be required. In addition to the proposed transmission main, affected facilities include supporting pumping stations located in the Gum Springs and Hybla Valley sections of Route 1 and water storage facilities at Beacon Hill.

RECOMMENDATION

Taken together, these two nominations would reduce the overall intensity on the subject property compared to the existing Plan option. Nomination 20MV will provide an option that is consistent with surrounding residential uses. However, staff believes that a density range of 8-

12 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) would be more appropriate, as it would be consistent with prior plan guidance for the area and would be more reflective of the development that is proposed by the nominator. Additionally, staff believes that certain conditions, such as those related to park dedication and open space, should be retained in the Plan text. Nomination 21MV proposes land use and intensities that are similar to those in the current Plan option; however, a number of conditions related to redevelopment would be modified or removed. This nomination does not contribute to the redevelopment of the Richmond Highway Corridor in an improved manner over the existing Plan option; therefore, staff recommends retention of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Staff recommends the Comprehensive Plan be modified as shown below. Text proposed to be added is shown as underlined and text proposed to be deleted is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~.

ADD: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, as amended through 3-9-2010, Richmond Highway Corridor, page 55:

“As a second option, a subset of Area 4 (Tax Map 101-2 ((1)) parcels 22 & 23; Tax Map 101-2 ((5))(2) parcels 13-15; and Tax Map 101-2 ((5))(3)), may be appropriate for residential use at a density of 8-12 dwelling units per acre provided that the area is redeveloped in accordance with Appendix 8 of the Land Use section of the Policy Plan “Guidelines for Neighborhood Redevelopment.” Construction of the residential units may be phased. All of the relevant conditions that apply to the first option apply to this second option, except as indicated below:

- The existing park and recreation deficiencies are offset through provision of neighborhood park land through a dedication to the Park Authority of a proportional share of the total 2.5 to 4 acres to be dedicated in the first option for Area 4, if provided on-site, or a proportional share of 3 to 4 acres, if provided off-site. Any on-site dedication should be located such that it can be expanded upon at the time the remainder of Area 4 redevelops. As a substitute, funds may be dedicated to the Park Authority for off-site land acquisition and/or facilities. Appropriate neighborhood park recreation facilities should also be provided. In addition, urban park features should be integrated within the site, such as plazas, gathering spaces, special landscaping, street furniture, and pedestrian amenities.”

NOTE: The Comprehensive Plan Map would not change.