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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-8LP

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

ACREAGE: 2.16 acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 107-4 ((1)) 44, 54A

GENERAL LOCATION: East of Groom Cottage Drive, south of Lorton Station Shopping Center, north of Thomas Baxter Place

PLANNING AREA: IV
District: Lower Potomac
Sector: LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector
Special Areas: Sub-unit E8

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Mixed Use

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Sub-unit E8 is planned for mixed use at an overall intensity up to .25 FAR with conditions.

For complete Plan text see pages 4-5 of 8.

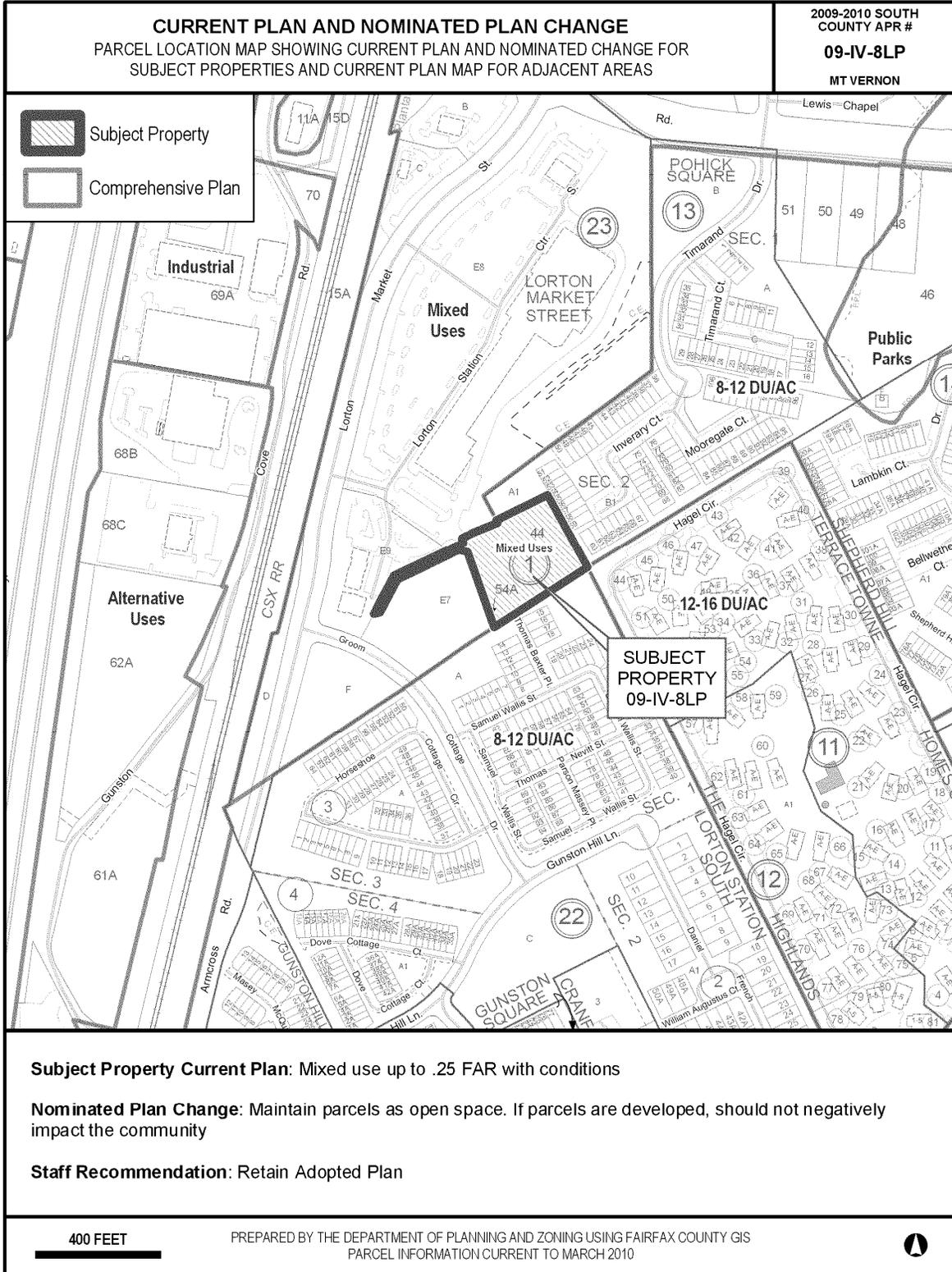
PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Add text stating effort should be made to maintain the subject parcel as open space, but if it is developed special care should be taken to ensure that development does not have a negative impact on the adjacent residential community.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Approve Nomination as submitted
 Approve Staff Alternative
 Retain Adopted Plan
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This Plan amendment was proposed to address concerns regarding development that can occur under the existing I-5 industrial zoning designation of the subject property. The nomination seeks to maintain the parcels as open space, or in the alternative, ensure that development does not adversely affect the abutting residential neighborhood. The proposed additional text would not achieve the goal of the nomination because uses permitted by the Zoning Ordinance are not subject to Comprehensive Plan review. The proposed nomination gives the impression that the Comprehensive Plan could prohibit permitted uses from being developed.

In the case where a change to the zoning is sought, the Comprehensive Plan would be consulted. The existing Comprehensive Plan guidance notes that new development should be compatible in height, scale, and intensity with existing residential uses. Similarly, substantial buffering and screening is strongly encouraged if non-residential uses are developed next to residential use. The Plan guidance refers to architectural design features and landscaping to encourage a visually attractive development in the case of non-residential development. It should be noted that 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. Therefore, the existing Plan guidance and the requirements in the Zoning Ordinance fulfill the underlying intent of the nomination, which is to minimize impacts to the adjacent residential communities and encourage compatibility with existing uses.



CONTEXT

General Location:

The subject property is generally located east of Groom Cottage Drive, south of Lorton Station Shopping Center, and north of Thomas Baxter Place.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning:

Subject Area: The nominated parcel is part of Sub-unit E8, an approximately 34-acre area that is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel, and recreational uses at an overall intensity up to .25 FAR with conditions. See pages 4 and 5 for complete Plan text, and Attachment I on page 7 for a map of all the Sub-units in Land Unit E. Sub-unit E8 is currently developed with approximately 170,000 square feet of predominately retail use with some medical office space. The nominated parcel is zoned I-5. The remainder of Sub-unit E8 is zoned C-6.

Adjacent Area:

North: The surface parking lot of the Lorton Station Shopping Center is located to the north of the subject property. The shopping center is zoned C-6 and is planned for mixed-use, as is the entirety of sub-unit E8 with the exception of the nominated parcel.

East: The Pohick Square townhouses are planned for residential use at 8-12 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and are zoned R-8. This townhouse development is located within sub-unit E9. The Plan guidance for Sub-unit E9 notes that stable residential uses should be preserved and protected, and any new or infill development within the sub-unit should be of a compatible use, type, and intensity to surrounding existing residential developments.

South: The Lorton Station South townhouses are planned for residential use at 8-12 du/ac and are zoned PDH-8. These townhouses are also located within Sub-unit E9.

West: A stormwater management dry pond is located on parcels 107-4 ((23)) E7 and 107-4 ((23)) F adjacent to the nominated area to the west. This stormwater management facility serves nearby residential development and the Lorton Station Shopping Center. The dry pond is currently under the control of the developer. This will become a stormwater pond once it is approved by the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services. These parcels are part of Sub-unit E8 and are zoned C-6. Groom Cottage Drive located to the west of the dry pond and serves as the connection to an access road to the nominated area.

ADOPTED 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 E8

Sub-unit E8 is located east of the CSX Railroad tracks, south of Lorton Road, as shown on Figure 33. Sub-unit E8 is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel/motel and recreational uses. 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;
- A thorough heritage resources survey should precede development and the recovery of significant heritage resources should be undertaken in conjunction with development;
- The overall floor area ratio is appropriate up to .25 FAR;
- Substantial contribution towards transportation improvements should be provided;
- Uses and intensities should generally be arranged so that new uses situated next to existing residential uses are compatible in height, scale and intensity. Generous buffering and screening should be employed between non-residential and residential land uses;
- Good design principles should be employed including the provision of pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems within and to the 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 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; and
- 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.”

Figure 33 is shown as Attachment I.

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

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

“Sub-unit E8

Sub-unit E8 is located east of the CSX Railroad tracks, south of Lorton Road, as shown on Figure 33. Sub-unit E8 is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel/motel and recreational uses. Effort should be made to maintain parcels 107-4 ((1)) 44 and 107-4 ((1)) 54A as open space. In the event this parcel is developed, special care should be taken to ensure that it does not have a negative impact on the adjacent residential community. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions...”

HISTORY

On April 24, 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved RZ-1999-MV-025 to rezone the majority of sub-unit E8 from the I-3, I-6, and PDH-5 districts to the C-6 district to permit the development of a commercial project. While the nominated parcel was not included in this

application, the proffers for RZ-1999-MV-025 dated March 8, 2000 note the “Applicant shall dedicate a 30-foot wide public ingress/egress easement to achieve interparcel access from parcel 107-4 ((1)) 44 to the public Spine Road or the Residential Access Road” if a site plan is submitted for any portion of the property adjacent to parcel 107-4 ((1)) 44. See Attachment II on page 8. After RZ-1999-MV-025 was approved, both the Spine Road (Lorton Market Street) and the Residential Access Road (Groom Cottage Drive) were built. To satisfy this proffered condition, site access is possible via Lorton Market Street through the parking lot of the Lorton Station Shopping Center.

ANALYSIS:

Land Use

The subject parcels are surrounded by an area that has been developed in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. The nominated area was not consolidated with the larger area that was subject to RZ-1999-MV-025; therefore it is zoned I-5 while the rest of the sub-unit was rezoned for commercial use. 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.

Transportation

Should the site be developed, site access should limit driveways, and curb cuts and median breaks should be arranged to minimize conflicts with traffic. Further review and analysis is required to determine the most appropriate access points, whether along Groom Cottage Drive, or solely through the adjoining shopping plaza to the north.

While not directly abutting the site, it should be noted that the Fairfax County Transportation Plan Map shows Lorton Road being improved to six lanes between Furnace Road and Richmond Highway. There are also interchange improvements shown at I-95 and Lorton Road. These improvements have been implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends retaining the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The additional Plan language proposed by the nomination would not preclude development under existing zoning. While staff recognizes the concern regarding compatibility with adjacent residential communities, regulations set forth in the Zoning Ordinance address screening and buffering if development occurs under the existing I-5 zoning district. If a change to the I-5 zoning is sought, the extensive Comprehensive Plan recommendations for Sub-unit E8 and other relevant guidance in the Plan would be consulted.

ATTACHMENT I

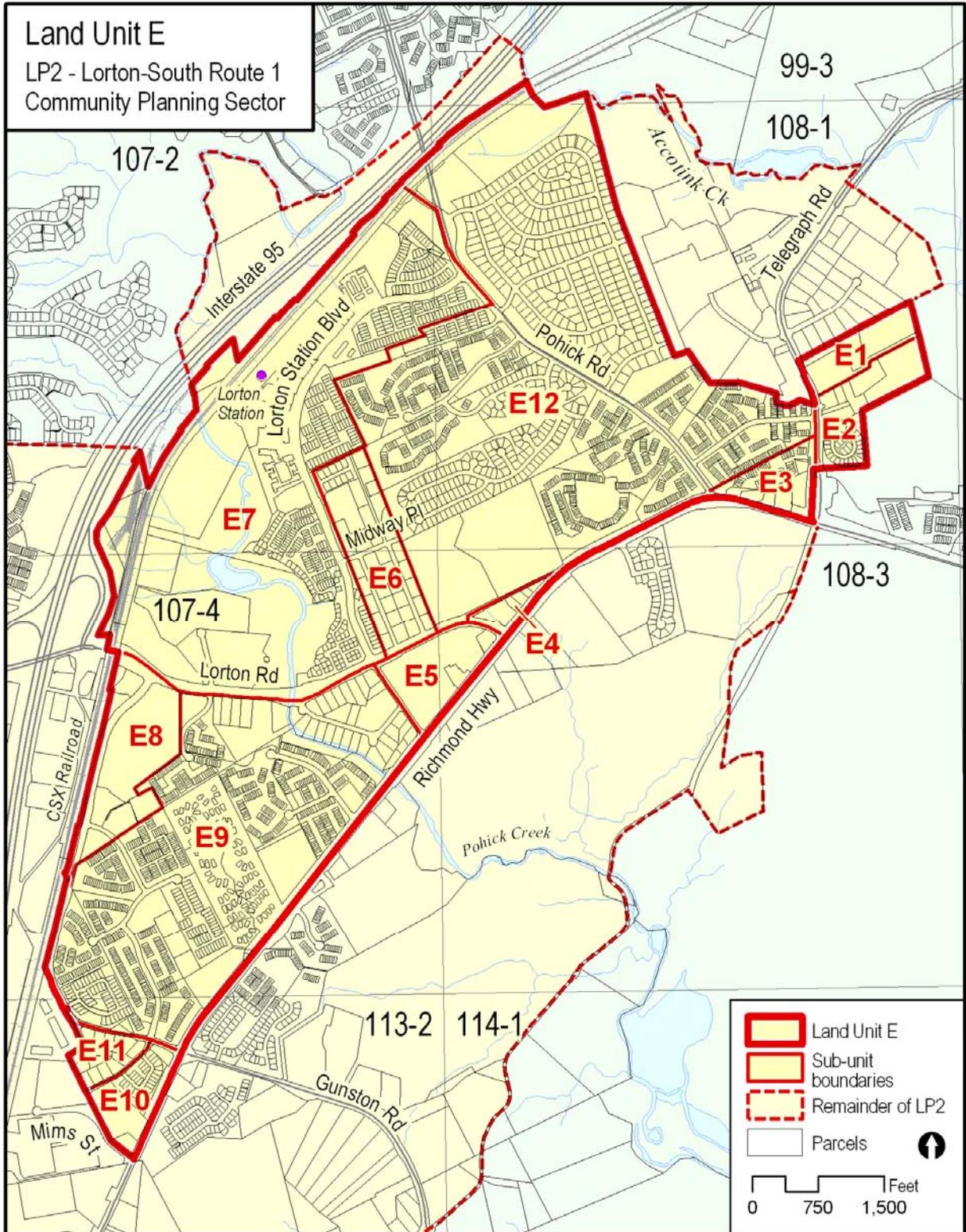


FIGURE 33

ATTACHMENT II

Proffers
Elmwood, LLC
RZ 1999-MV-025
March 8, 2000

Pursuant to Section 15.1-2303 (A), Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, the undersigned applicants and property owners for themselves and for their successors and assigns (hereinafter “Applicant”), filed for a rezoning to the C-6 District on property identified as tax map reference 107-4 ((1)), Parcels 52, 53, 55, 56, 57 and pt 17A1 (hereinafter referred to as “Application Property”) hereby agree to the following proffers, provided the “Board of Supervisors” (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) approves the rezoning of the Application Property. IF the Board accepts these proffers, then all previously adopted proffers shall become null and void.

2. TRANSPORTATION**c. Interparcel access**

- i. At time of site plan submission for any portion of the Application Property adjacent to Tax Map Parcel 107-4((1)) 44, the Applicant shall submit a plat for subsequent DPWES approval showing dedication of a 30-foot wide public ingress/egress easement on site from Tax Map 107-4 ((1)) 44 to the public Spine Road or to the Residential Access road either directly or through the center’s parking lot.
- ii. Applicant shall record the easement among the land records of Fairfax County, Virginia prior to site plan approval.
- iii. Applicant shall provide written evidence of Applicant’s coordinate with the land owner of Tax Map Parcel 107-4 ((1)) 44 on the location of this easement, subject to the approval of DPWES.