

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

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: MOUNT VERNON

APR ITEM(S): 09-IV-10LP

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

ACREAGE: 2.21 acres

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

GENERAL LOCATION: Generally south of Lorton Station Boulevard, north of Bakers Drive,
west of Pohick Road

PLANNING AREA: IV

District: Lower Potomac

Sector: LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector

Special Areas: Sub-unit E7

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Mixed Use

AREA 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;

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- 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.”

Figure 33 is shown as Attachment I.

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:

Add text stating parcel 107-2((1)13 should be compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

___ Approve Nomination as submitted

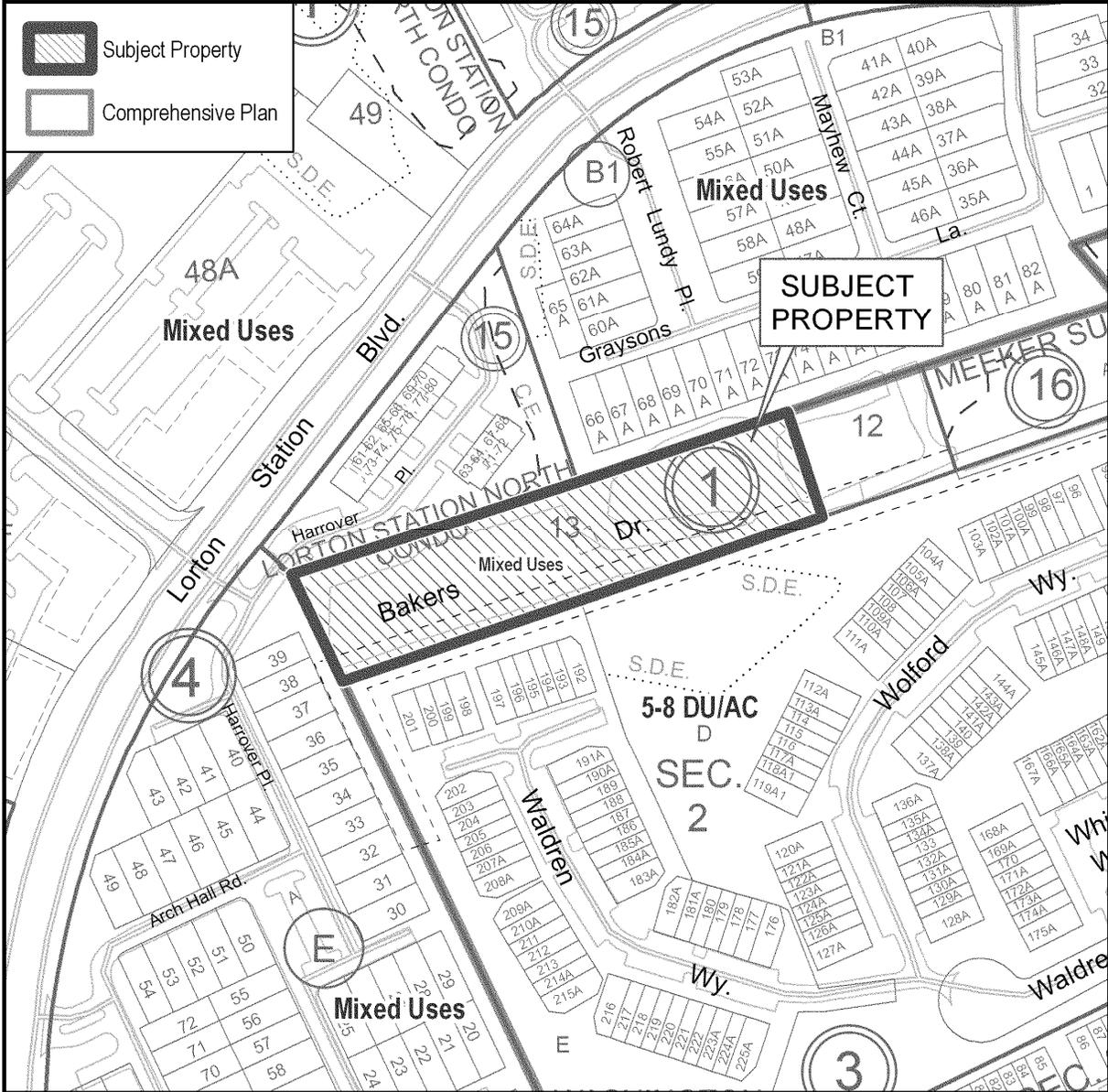
___ Approve Staff Alternative

X Retain Adopted Plan

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 proposal seeks to assure that the parcels would be developed in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding residential uses. However, uses permitted by-right are not subject to Comprehensive Plan review. If a zoning action were sought, the Comprehensive Plan would be consulted. The existing Comprehensive Plan recommends compatibility in height, scale, and intensity with existing residential uses.

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,” and non-residential development should be clustered around the Lorton VRE commuter rail station. This Plan guidance suggests the site is appropriate for residential use, as it is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The subject area is located on the west side of Lorton Station Boulevard, further from the Lorton VRE Station; given this location, non-residential development would not be appropriate under the Plan recommendation for concentrating non-residential development around the VRE station. In view of the fact that existing Comprehensive Plan guidance encourages compatibility with existing uses and generally recommends residential use for this site, it is not necessary to include additional text exclusively for the nominated parcel. It should be noted that in the case of by-right I-5 development, screening and buffering between residential and industrial uses would be required.

CURRENT PLAN AND NOMINATED PLAN CHANGE PARCEL LOCATION MAP SHOWING CURRENT PLAN AND NOMINATED CHANGE FOR SUBJECT PROPERTIES AND CURRENT PLAN MAP FOR ADJACENT AREAS	2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY APR # 09-IV-10LP MT VERNON
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Subject Property Current Plan: Mixed non-residential up to .30 FAR on 22 acres and residential up to 5 du/ac on 202 acres with conditions.

Nominated Plan Change: Parcel 107-2 ((1)) 13 should be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhood.

Staff Recommendation: To be determined.

200 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
 PARCEL INFORMATION CURRENT TO FEBRUARY 2010



CRITICAL ISSUES:**Land Use**

The subject area is within a planned community but was not consolidated with the other development, and remains zoned I-5. The nominated parcel abuts townhouses on all sides with the exception of the eastern boundary of the site. As noted in the staff recommendation, the existing Plan guidance generally recommends residential use for the subject area to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses and to minimize impacts to the neighbors should new development occur on the site.

The intent of this nomination is to ensure that any development is compatible with the surrounding area, even if developed by-right under existing zoning. The I-5 zoning designation permits uses that could conflict with the character of the surrounding area. However, since the Comprehensive Plan is not consulted in the review process for by-right development, the proposed text would not achieve the goal of the nomination.

Although outside the scope of the APR process, an alternative for future consideration may be to re-plan the property for a specific use that takes into account surrounding development. For instance, residential use could be explored. Adding clarity to the land use recommendations may provide an incentive for redevelopment that would better assure compatibility.

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 those connections that are appropriate. Currently, this area is served by Fairfax Connector Routes 171 (to/from Richmond Highway Corridor and Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station) and 307, as well as the Lorton Station on the Virginia Rail Express (VRE). Development of this site should accommodate efficient transit operations within the vicinity.

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 planned at I-95 and Lorton Road.

The Fairfax County Countywide Trails Plan shows a major paved trail and Stream Valley Trail in the vicinity of this site. Development of this site should accommodate these planned trail improvements. Efforts should be made to connect internal bicycle/pedestrian facilities with existing and planned County facilities.

ATTACHMENT I

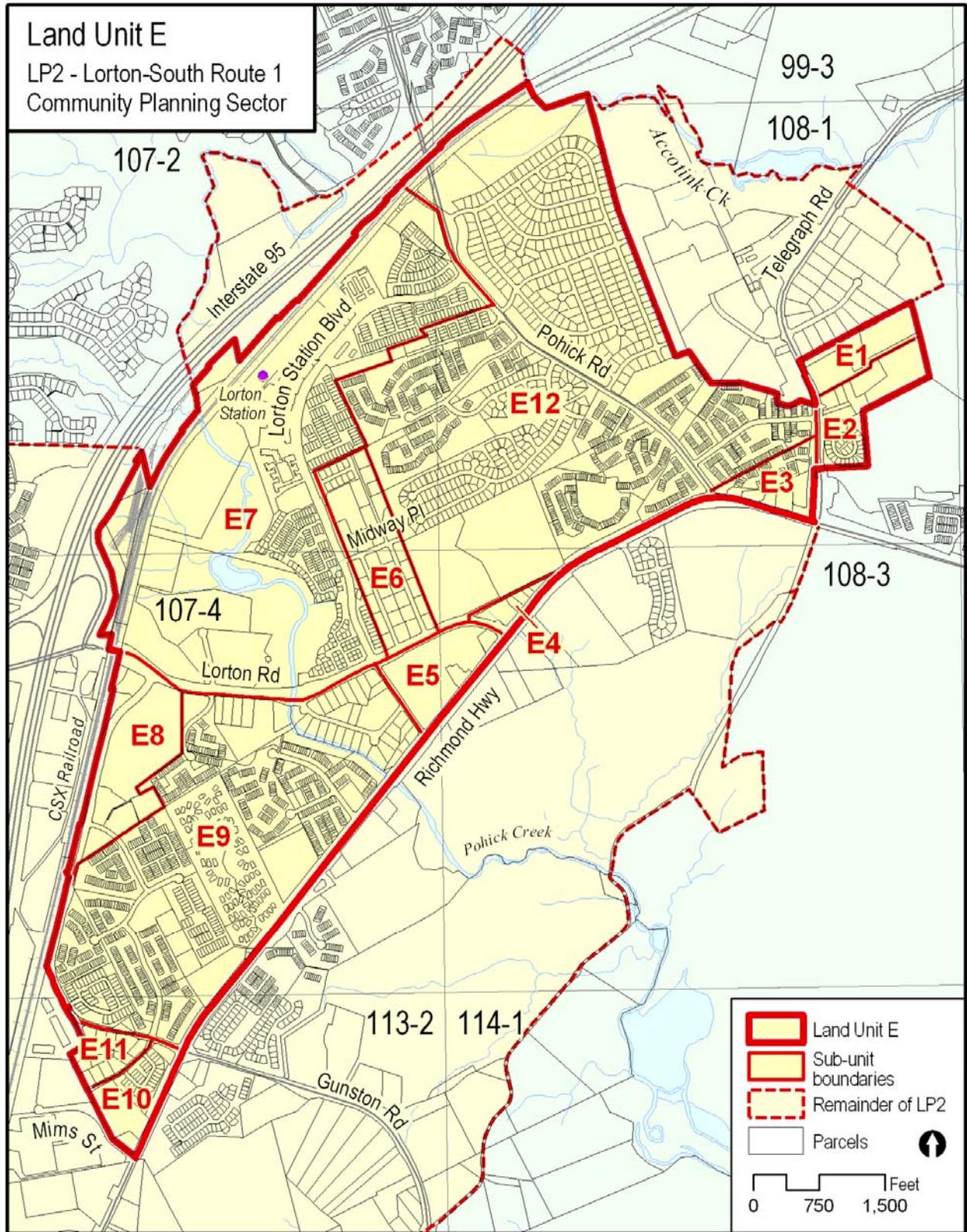


FIGURE 33