

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

**SUPERVISOR DISTRICT:** MOUNT VERNON

**APR ITEM:** 09-IV-13MV

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**NOMINATOR:** Patrick Rea

**ACREAGE:** 69.19 acres

**TAX MAP I.D.:** 102-1 ((1)) 1C, 2A, 4, ((7)) (7) 17B, 18A, ((35)) 100-408, ((36)) 1A, 2A, 501-516, ((38)) 201-219, ((39)) 301-319, 401-419

**GENERAL LOCATION:** On Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, south of George Washington's Grist Mill.

**PLANNING AREA:** IV  
**District:** Mount Vernon  
**Sector:** MV7 Mount Vernon Community Planning Sector  
**Special Areas:** N/A

**ADOPTED PLAN MAP:** Office, public facilities, public parks

**POLICY PLAN TEXT:** The Policy Plan of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan recommends the following:

- Land Use: Page 5, **Objective 6: Fairfax County should have a land use pattern which increases transportation efficiency, encourages transit use and decreases automobile dependency.**
- Public Facilities: Page 3, **Objective 3: Balance the provision of public facilities with growth and development.**
  - Policy f) Ensure that when existing public facility sites are no longer needed for their original use, the land formerly used for that purpose is reserved, to the extent possible and prudent, for other public uses.

For complete Plan text see:

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/)

**AREA PLAN TEXT:** Mount Vernon Hospital is co-located on a site with the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, the Mount Vernon Fire Station and the Mount Vernon Center mental health facility. Expansion of the hospital and related medical uses is appropriate to meet the healthcare needs of the community. Development is planned with an FAR up to .35, subject to specific conditions. Complete Area Plan text is shown in Attachment I.

**PROPOSED PLAN  
AMENDMENT:**

The nomination proposes to retain the existing language referring to the expansion of the hospital and related medical uses, but proposes to include the Sherwood Hall Library, Walt Whitman Middle School and commercial uses on the north side of Sherwood Hall Lane in a unified campus that would be planned for an intensity up to 0.5 FAR. The nomination also proposes to add text related to creating a unified campus development with pedestrian, bicycle connections, and transit accessibility. Finally, the nomination also proposes that 33 percent of the site be maintained as useable open space. The nominated Plan text is shown in Attachment II.

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**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

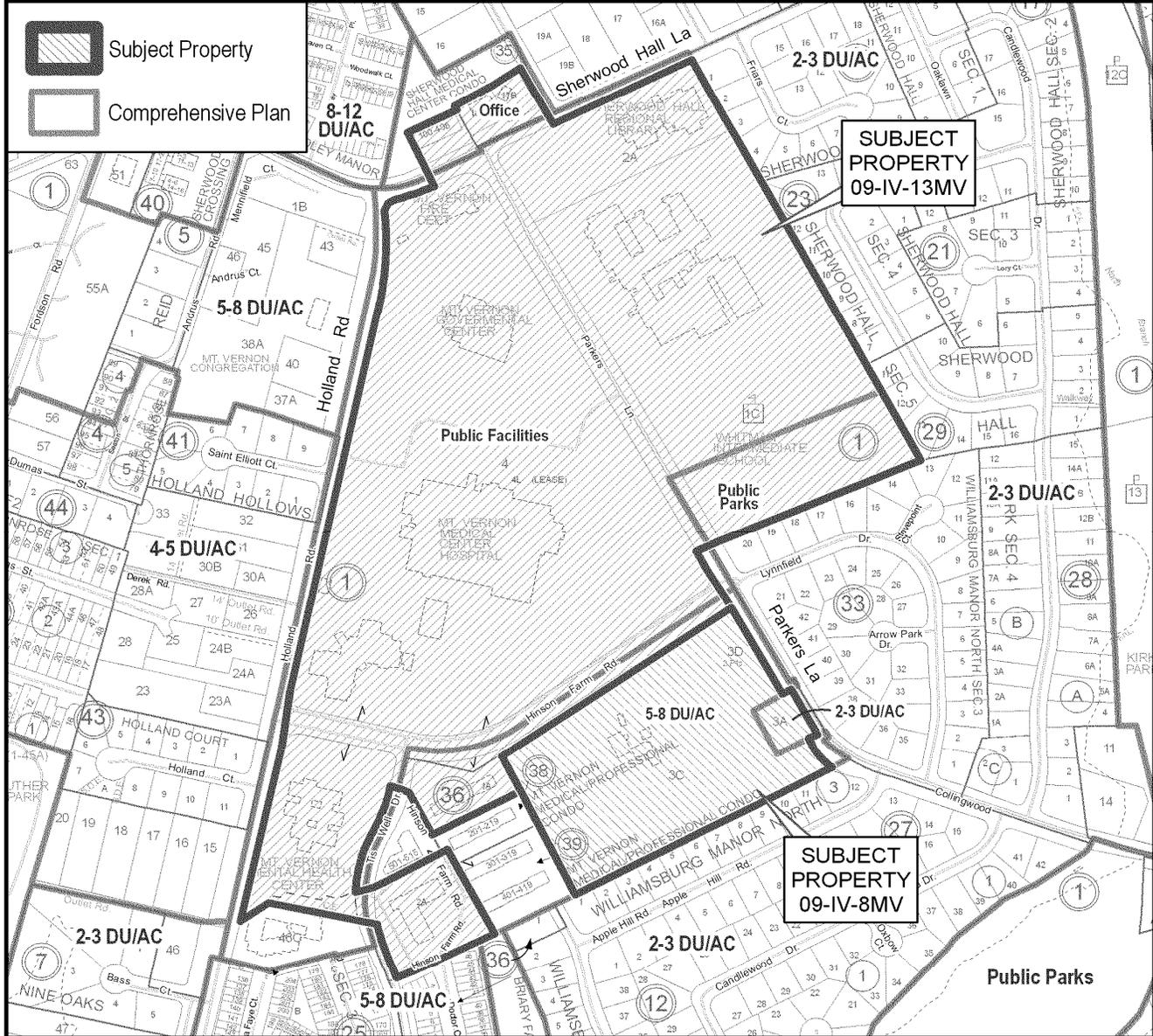
Retain Adopted Plan

Staff proposes to incorporate the nominator's suggestions for redesign of the subject area as a unified campus that includes greater internal pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, new pedestrian and bicycle connections to the larger community, and increases access to public transit. Redevelopment of the site is recommended to preserve existing open space and allow for additional open space to be created by removing some of the existing surface parking areas, and installing structured parking on the site. Staff does not support the proposed intensity of .50 FAR because the resulting 12,500 additional daily vehicle trips would make the subject area less walkable, less bicycle friendly, and less pedestrian friendly. Recognizing that substantial unused development potential exists under the current Plan, staff recommends an alternative that maintains the current Plan intensity of .35 FAR.

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**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-8MV &  
 09-IV-13MV**  
 MT. VERNON



**Subject Property Current Plan:** 09-IV-8MV - Development of gov. center/fire station/mental health fac./hospital fac. w/ancillary uses incl. medical office at an intensity up to .35 FAR w/conditions relating to building height and open space. 09-IV-13MV - Development of gov. center/fire station/mental health fac./hospital and ancillary uses incl. medical office at an intensity up to .35 FAR w/conditions and provided impacts to surrounding community mitigated.

**Nominated Plan Change:** 09-IV-8MV - Residential use for senior housing 5-8 du/ac on 4.4 acre portion of site provided existing covenant is lifted, 7 acres to remain as open space. Surface parking utilize pervious paving materials. New development subject to recommendations of Little Hunting Creek Watershed Management Plan. Option to convey 7 acres of open space to County ownership. 09-IV-13MV - Development of additional gov. center/fire station/police station/mental health fac./hospital/medical office/educational uses in a campus-like design, with retail uses that serve employees and visitors, at an intensity up to .50 FAR with conditions related to use of structured parking, reduction of impervious surfaces and use LID techniques, additional open space, pedestrian and bicycle centered design, transit center to provide additional access to campus from surrounding comm., conversion of neighboring office uses to retail to serve campus when those uses are abandoned, implement the recommendations of Little Hunting Creek Watershed Plan for area.

**Staff Recommendation:** To be determined.



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



**CRITICAL ISSUES**

**Land Use**

Staff supports the intent of the proposed nomination to create a unified campus-like development that increases pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and that allows residents and visitors to the Mount Vernon Governmental Center and the INOVA Mount Vernon hospital and other related medical uses and medical office uses in the area to access these facilities by public transit. The provision of substantial useable public open space with any redevelopment of the subject properties is also desirable.

The nomination proposes to amend the Comprehensive Plan to allow a higher development intensity for the parcels located south of Sherwood Hall Lane, up to .50 FAR compared to the current Plan recommendation for .35 FAR. The stated purpose for proposing an increase in intensity on these parcels is to achieve the goals stated above through redevelopment of the area as a unified development that would include greater pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and centralized access to transit, and for approximately one third of the site to be set aside as open space. However, the proposed intensity would generate approximately 12,500 new vehicle trips per day compared to the current Plan intensity. This represents a dramatic increase in traffic volume for the area, and would have a negative effect on pedestrian and bicycle circulation, and transit accessibility, which is counter to the intent of the nomination.

Currently, the proportion of the subject property devoted to public open space is approximately 20 percent. The largest of these spaces are the park associated with the Whitman Middle School, and the two large green areas associated with INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital, located on Parker’s Lane. Although some additional open space could be created on the subject property if some of the surface parking were removed, achieving the one-third total that is called for in the nomination may not be feasible given that the footprints of the hospital, library, school and government center are unlikely to change. Moreover, if redevelopment of these institutional uses was to occur, increased building height could conflict with long-standing Plan guidance that states that large non-residential buildings should taper down to provide a compatible transition to surrounding residential neighborhoods. However, the existing green spaces could be modified to include features that would create a focal point or points for communal gathering places, such as plazas, gardens and walkways and paths which would increase the use of these spaces by residents of the surrounding community.

Parcel	Acres	Existing Uses	SF	Current Zoning	Current Plan .35 FAR	Proposed Plan .50 FAR	SF
102-1 ((1)) 1C	20	Whitman Middle School	154,334	154,334*, R-3	219,365	Public facilities, governmental, institutional.	289,321
102-1 ((1)) 2A	4.2	Sherwood Hall Library	37,680	37,680*, R3	53,557	"	70,577
102-1 ((1)) 4	39	Mount Vernon Hospital, Mount Vernon Mental Health Center, Mount Vernon Government Center, Police Station, Fire Station, Sunrise Assisted Living Facility.	467,065	467,065*, C-3	663,954	"	875,867
102-1 ((1)) 4			0	0	0	Retail	11,493
102-1 ((7)) 17B	0.4	Sherwood Hall Service Center	1,202	1,202*, C-5	1,202	Retail	1,623
102-1 ((7)) 18A	0.3	Burke & Herbert Bank	3,378	3,378*, C-5	3,378	Retail	4,560
102-1 ((35)) 100-408	2.5	Sherwood Hall Ln. Medical Offices	34,162	34,162*, C-2	34,162	Office	46,119
102-1 ((36)) 1A	1.3	Hinson Rd. Medical/Dental Offices	18,365	18,365*, PDH-5	26,075	Office	91,942
102-1 ((36)) 1A			0	0	0	Retail	11,493
102-1 ((36)) 2A	2.3	Mount Vernon Nursing Center	45,654	45,654*, C-3	64,883	Public facilities, governmental, institutional.	85,512
<b>Total</b>			<b>761,840</b>	<b>761,840</b>	<b>1,066,576</b>		<b>1,488,507</b>

1. Current Plan: expansion of current uses up to .35 FAR  
 2. Existing uses developed at .25 FAR  
 3. Proposed Plan: For parcels ((7)) 17B,18A, ((35)) 100-408, office and retail up to .35 FAR;  
 For parcels ((1)) 1C,2A,4, ((36)) 1A,2A, office and public facilities, governmental, institutional uses up to .50 FAR.  
 \*Proffered

The current Plan intensity provides additional development potential that could result in a redevelopment of approximately 305,000 square feet over the existing level of development on the subject property as shown in the above table.

This additional development potential could be used to accommodate future expansions of any of the uses that currently exist. Redeveloping the site according to the current Plan intensity while incorporating the nominator’s suggestions regarding pedestrian and bicycle facilities, access to transit and provision of open space could also achieve the redesign of the site as a unified campus that provides the amenities desired by the nominator. Developing the site at the current Plan intensity would also avoid the increase in vehicle trips generated from the subject property that the proposed plan would have, and would actually make redeveloping the area as a pedestrian and bicycle friendly design, more achievable. Staff also recommends that the office and commercial properties along Sherwood Hall Lane that face the Campus, be planned at an intensity of up to .35 FAR to ensure a compatible transition to the Gum Springs neighborhood.

**Transportation**

**Trip Generation Estimates for APR #09-IV-13MV**

Scenario	Daily	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		In	Out	In	Out
<b>Current Comp Plan</b>					
Middle School	3,023	525	429	136	125
Library	3,012	40	16	188	203
Hospital	8,285	332	230	243	335
Mental Health Ctr.	1,178	59	16	28	77
Govt. Office	1,008	71	9	32	71
Fire Station	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ALF	340	12	6	12	16
Gas Station	1,302	41	40	54	53
Bank	500	24	18	44	43
Medical Office	1,234	62	17	30	80
Medical Office	942	47	13	23	63
Nursing Center	492	26	10	25	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,316</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>1,089</b>
<b>Proposed Plan</b>					
Middle School	3,987	692	567	179	165
Library	3,969	52	21	247	268
Hospital	10,930	438	304	295	408
Mental Hlth Ctr.	1,554	78	21	36	98
Govt. Office	1,329	93	12	42	94
Fire Station	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ALF	450	16	8	16	21
Retail	1,664	7	4	73	76
Gas Station	1,953	61	61	81	80
Bank	676	31	25	59	59
Medical Office	1,666	84	22	39	104
Medical Office	3,322	167	44	71	191
Retail	1,664	7	4	73	76
Nursing Center	648	33	14	33	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,812</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>1,107</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>1,670</b>
<b>Net Impact of Proposed Plan Amendment Above Comp Plan</b>	<b>12,496</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>581</b>

As shown in the table above, the proposed change to the land use intensities for the nominated parcels would result in a major increase in trip generation of up to 12,496 daily trips above the number of daily trips for the current Comprehensive Plan. The increase represents a substantial impact to, and could potentially create adversities within, the proximate transportation network. A Chapter 527 Traffic Impact Study is required, if this level of intensity is pursued.

The Fairfax County Transportation Plan shows no planned improvements in the immediate area. Access to the subject parcels should be limited on Sherwood Hall Lane and Parker’s Lane. Efficient internal circulation should be developed with curb cuts minimized and locations of entrances and median breaks arranged to minimize conflicts with traffic on the adjacent roadways. Connectivity to the site, as well as to and from external streets and neighborhoods should be considered.

Given the proposed increase in intensity, some surface parking may be needed for new structures, when parking requirements increase. Parking structures should be considered.

Currently, Fairfax Connector Routes 151, 152, 161 and 162 serve the area. Development of this site should accommodate efficient transit operations within the vicinity. Enhanced transit service should be considered to better serve the expanded campus.

The Fairfax Countywide Trails Plan shows minor paved trails along Parkers Lane and Sherwood Hall Lane. Efforts should be made to connect internal bicycle/pedestrian facilities with existing and planned County facilities.

**Schools**

The Walt Whitman Middle is planned for an expansion of approximately 11,500 square feet that is scheduled to be completed by the end of the 2012 school year.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The nominator’s proposal to redevelop the Mount Vernon Hospital area into a more pedestrian, bicycle and transit friendly unified campus design with more useable open space to create a focal point for communal gathering places would have substantial benefits for the surrounding community. Staff agrees that redevelopment and expansion of existing uses is the vehicle for achieving the desired redesign of the site, however, staff believes that the current Plan intensity of .35 FAR affords sufficient additional development potential to reach this goal since this provides an additional 305,000 square feet of development potential. The proposed intensity of .50 FAR would generate a much greater level of vehicle trips than the current Plan intensity, and could make the area less walkable, less bicycle friendly, due to the increased traffic congestion that would be created in the area, and could create issues of compatibility due to the taller buildings that would result in order to meet open space recommendations. Therefore, staff recommends the following alternative:

- MODIFY:** Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, amended through 8-3-2009, MV6 Fort Hunt Community Planning Sector, Land Use, Pages 151-153:
5. Mount Vernon Hospital is co-located on a site with the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, the Mount Vernon Fire Station and the Mount Vernon Center mental health

facility. The governmental center/fire station and hospital portion of the complex is bounded by Holland Road, the office and commercial properties along Sherwood Hall Lane that face the Campus, Sherwood Hall Lane, Parker's Lane, and Hinson Farm Road. The mental health facility portion of the complex is located south of Hinson Farm Road between Holland Road and Tis Well Drive.

Expansion of the INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital, Mount Vernon Governmental Center, Mount Vernon Fire Station, Sherwood Hall Regional Library and Walt Whitman Middle School and related ancillary medical service uses and the mental health care facilities is appropriate to meet the health care, civic, and educational needs of the community provided the expansion and development is done in a manner that integrates these institutions into a campus-like environment, to be called the "Mount Vernon District Campus", that preserves the existing open green space and mitigates the impact on the surrounding community, particularly the impact of vehicular traffic that may result from additional employees and increased public use of the facilities and services. as described below. Such facilities for the hospital portion of the complex (located between the governmental center/fire station portion of the site and Hinson Farm Road) will be limited to hospital and related ancillary medical service uses, a helistop for medical emergency transport, medical offices, employee child care facilities and skilled nursing care facilities. Any skilled nursing care facility shall be added as additional floor(s) to the existing hospital or may be freestanding so long as there is no reduction in the total open space on the hospital campus portion of the complex.

Development of governmental center/fire station use, mental health facilities and hospital facilities with related ancillary uses, including medical offices, may be appropriate if the impacts on the surrounding community are mitigated. Development is planned with at an intensity FAR up to .35 FAR if certain the following conditions are met;

- Limit the height of buildings on the periphery of the site to minimize visual impacts on the community.
- Provide for substantial, usable open space. The entire complex should be visually screened by evergreen landscaping from the residentially planned and developed land fronting on Holland Road. However, landscaping along Holland Road should not be designed or located in a manner that interferes with the safe operation of the existing helistop.
- Existing open spaces should be preserved and retrofitted to include features such as plazas, gazebos, gardens, and pedestrian walkways and paths in order to create focal points for community gathering places. Additional open space could be added on areas of the site currently devoted to surface parking, and converting these areas for new open spaces should be explored.
- To the extent possible, in order to accommodate future parking needs due to expansions of current uses on the site, surface parking should be replaced with structured parking.
- Development design that encourages the concentration of services, and the inclusion of retail concessions to serve the local workforce and public is appropriate. Development that improves accessibility and integrates the hospital facilities, civic and public safety

institutions, and commercial concessions throughout the campus using pedestrian walkways, both covered and uncovered, and bicycle paths that limit the need for vehicular transport should be utilized. A common streetscape theme throughout the campus should be created.

- A transit center should be established on the campus to provide community access to the hospital and other institutions and services as well as reduce the need for private vehicular traffic.
- Development and/or redevelopment of the subject properties including the nursing home [102-1 ((36)) 2A] or the medical condominiums [102-1 ((36)) 401-419] should avoid the RPA, include strong stormwater controls, reductions in impervious surfaces, and employ low impact development practices as recommended by the Little Hunting Creek Watershed Management Plan.

Note: The Plan map for parcels 102-1((7))(7) 17B, 18A, ((35)) 100-408 would be changed from office to alternative uses.

**ATTACHMENT I  
ADOPTED AREA PLAN TEXT**

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, amended through 8-3-2009, MV6 Fort Hunt Community Planning Sector, Land Use, Pages 151-153:

5. Mount Vernon Hospital is co-located on a site with the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, the Mount Vernon Fire Station and the Mount Vernon Center mental health facility. The governmental center/fire station and hospital portion of the complex is bounded by Holland Road, Sherwood Hall Lane, Parker's Lane, and Hinson Farm Road. The mental health facility portion of the complex is located south of Hinson Farm Road between Holland Road and Tis Well Drive.

Expansion of the hospital and related ancillary medical service uses and the mental health care facilities is appropriate to meet the health care needs of the community if certain conditions are met as described below. Such facilities for the hospital portion of the complex (located between the governmental center/fire station portion of the site and Hinson Farm Road) will be limited to hospital and related ancillary medical service uses, a helistop for medical emergency transport, medical offices, employee child care facilities and skilled nursing care facilities. Any skilled nursing care facility shall be added as additional floor(s) to the existing hospital or may be freestanding so long as there is no reduction in the total open space on the hospital campus portion of the complex.

Development of governmental center/fire station use, mental health facilities and hospital facilities with related ancillary uses, including medical offices, may be appropriate if the impacts on the surrounding community are mitigated. Development is planned with an FAR up to .35 if the following conditions are met;

- Limit the height of buildings on the periphery of the site to minimize visual impacts on the community.
- Provide for substantial, usable open space. The entire complex should be visually screened by evergreen landscaping from the residentially planned and developed land fronting on Holland Road. However, landscaping along Holland Road should not be designed or located in a manner that interferes with the safe operation of the existing helistop.

**ATTACHMENT II  
NOMINATED PLAN TEXT**

Recommended modifications to the Comprehensive Plan are shown as underlined for text to be added and as ~~strikethrough~~ as text to be deleted.

**MODIFY:** Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, amended through 8-3-2009, MV6 Fort Hunt Community Planning Sector, Land Use, Pages 151-153:

5. Mount Vernon Hospital is co-located on a site with the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, the Mount Vernon Fire Station and the Mount Vernon Center mental health facility. The governmental center/fire station and hospital portion of the complex is bounded by Holland Road, Sherwood Hall Lane, Parker's Lane, and Hinson Farm Road. The mental health facility portion of the complex is located south of Hinson Farm Road between Holland Road and Tis Well Drive.

Expansion of the INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital, the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, the Mount Vernon Fire Station, the Sherwood Hall Regional Library, and the Walt Whitman Middle School and related ancillary medical service uses and the ~~mental health care facilities~~ is appropriate to meet the health care, civic, and educational needs of the community provided the expansion and development is done in a manner that integrates these institutions into a campus-like environment, to be called the "Mount Vernon District Campus", that preserves the existing open green space and mitigates the impact on the surrounding community, particularly the impact of vehicular traffic that may result from additional employees and increased public use of the facilities and services. Development is planned with an FAR up to .50 if certain the following conditions are met; as described below. Such facilities for the hospital portion of the complex (located between the governmental center/fire station portion of the site and Hinson Farm Road) will be limited to hospital and related ancillary medical service uses, a helistop for medical emergency transport, medical offices, employee child care facilities and skilled nursing care facilities. Any skilled nursing care facility shall be added as additional floor(s) to the existing hospital or may be freestanding so long as there is no reduction in the total open space on the hospital campus portion of the complex.

~~Development of governmental center/fire station use, mental health facilities and hospital facilities with related ancillary uses, including medical offices, may be appropriate if the impacts on the surrounding community are mitigated. Development is planned with an FAR up to .35 if the following conditions are met;~~

- Limit the height of buildings on the periphery of the site to minimize visual impacts on the community.
- Provide for substantial, usable open space. The entire complex should be visually screened by evergreen landscaping from the residentially planned and developed land fronting on Holland Road. However, landscaping along Holland Road

should not be designed or located in a manner that interferes with the safe operation of the existing helistop.

- To preserve existing open space and add more, while still providing for expected, additional hospital outpatients/visitors, reduce the existing surface parking area and replace it with structured parking which should be available also to visitors to the governmental center/police station. Subsequently, approximately 33% of total acreage must be reserved as useable open space.

Development should include consideration for both the lease of commercial space for medical-related offices that encourage the concentration of services, and the inclusion of retail concessions that are appropriate to serve the local workforce and public that use the health, civic, and educational facilities of the campus. Special consideration should be given to development that improves accessibility and integrates the hospital facilities, civic and public safety institutions, and commercial concessions throughout the campus using pedestrian walkways, both covered and uncovered, and bicycle paths that limit the need for vehicular transport. Walkways and paths should create a common cityscape throughout the campus.

Special consideration should be given to establishing a transportation center centrally within the campus in order to better provide community access to the hospital and other institutions and services as well as reduce the need for private vehicular traffic.

Special consideration should be given to increase the FAR of the Mount Vernon Government Center to accommodate the placement of a Traffic Court and to the Hospital for added floors.

Parcels on the north side of Sherwood Hall Lane, between 2600 and 2616 Sherwood Hall Lane, are planned for office use. The existing neighborhood-serving businesses on lots 102-1 ((35)) 17B and 18A should be allowed to continue. Should they give up their business, however, the area should be retained for commercial use in support of the Campus. Alternatively, a table service restaurant supporting the proposed Mount Vernon District Campus is not inappropriate in this area. Any commercial or retail establishment within this area should not exceed .35 FAR.

Because of the environmental sensitivity of the site's location in the vicinity of Little Hunting Creek, development or redevelopment of any of the included sites should require strong stormwater controls, reductions in impervious surfaces, and LID practices that effectively mitigate adverse environmental impacts. Recommendations in the Little Hunting Creek Watershed Management Plan pertaining to this area should be implemented.

Redevelopment or expansion of the nursing home [102-1 ((36)) 2A] or the medical condominiums [102-1 ((36)) 401-419], both of which border on the RPA, should be allowed only after pertinent recommendations of the Little Hunting Creek Watershed Management Plan and the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance are satisfied.

