

PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT
2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S): MASON

APR ITEM: 09-I-2L

NOMINATOR(S): Plaza 500 LLC represented by Martin Walsh

ACREAGE: 34.16 Acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 81-2 ((1)) 7

GENERAL LOCATION: Southeast of the Edsall Road and Winter View Drive intersection

PLANNING AREA(S): Area I
District(s): Lincolnia
Sector: Bren Mar Park (L3)
Special Area(s): N/A

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Industrial and Public Parks

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: The 34-acre Plaza 500 tract on Edsall Road is planned for light industrial and warehousing uses up to .50 Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

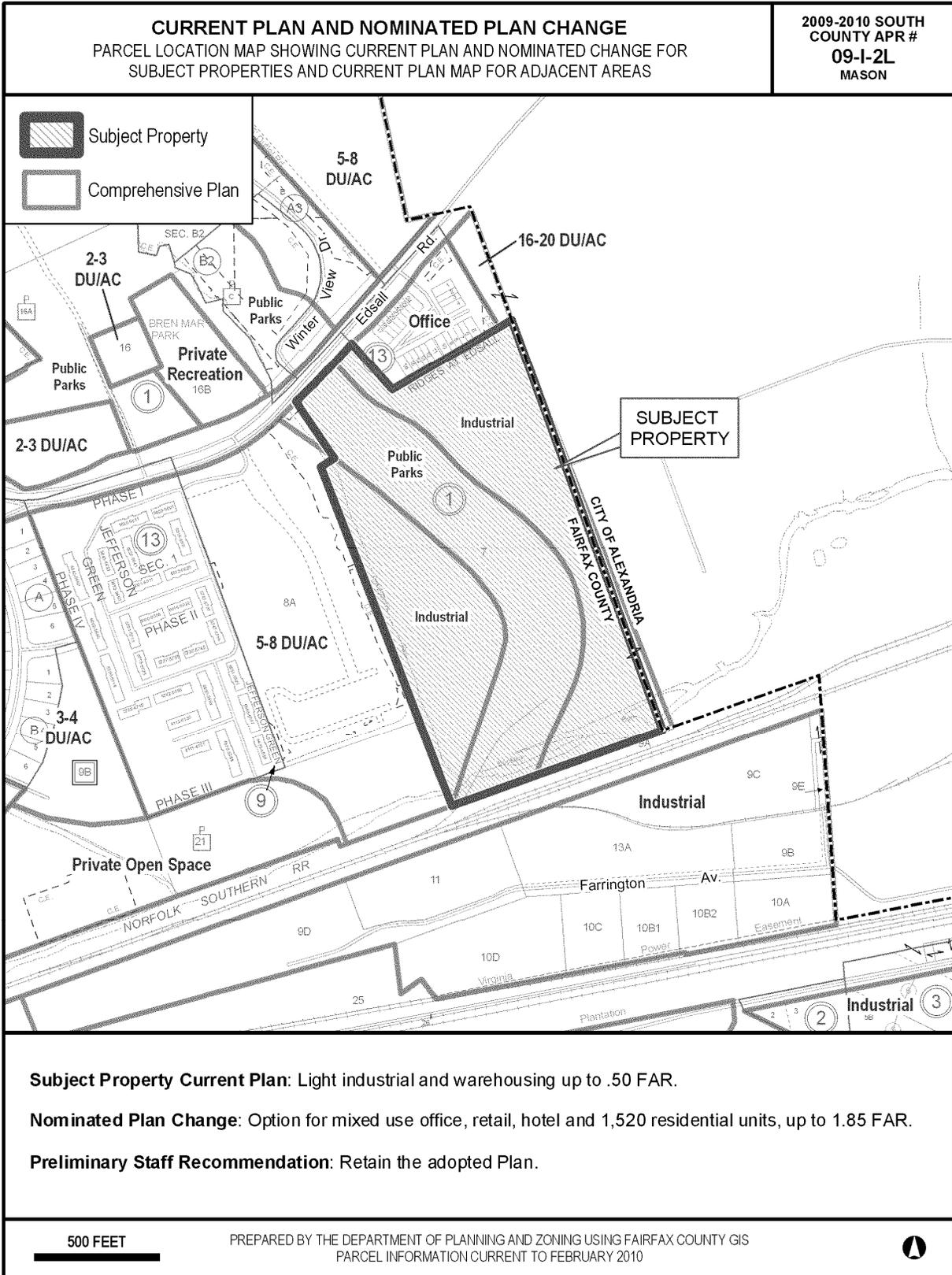
For complete Plan text see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area1/lincolnia.pdf>

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Add an option for mixed use development up to 1.85 FAR.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Approve Nomination as Submitted
- Approve Staff alternative
- Retain Adopted Plan

The nominated parcel is developed with a 511,000 square foot (sf) light industrial warehouse building. The nomination proposes to add an option for mixed use development up to 1.85 FAR that would allow up to 1,520 residential units (1,700,000 sf); 900,000 sf of office use; 90,000 sf of hotel use; and 60,000 sf of retail use. Staff does not support the proposed higher-density mix of uses as they would replace a viable planned and developed industrial use. The proposed use and intensity are out of character with the surrounding area and would be located outside a designated mixed use center such as a transit station area. The intensity also raises questions about the mixed use development's ability to address parks and transportation impacts.



Land Use

Background

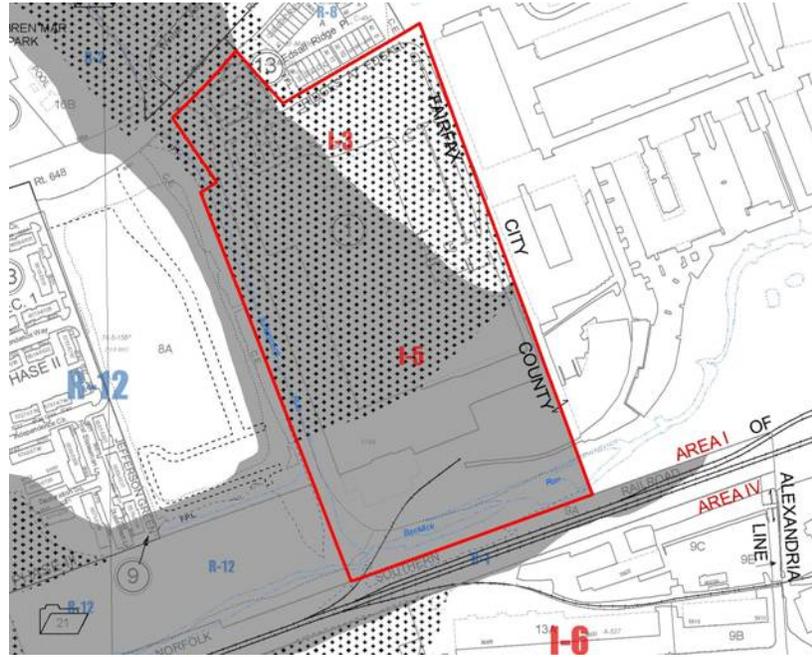
The subject property is bounded by commercial and industrial uses to the east in the City of Alexandria, an Environmental Quality Corridor that is overlaid on Backlick Run and Turkeycock Run along the western and southern boundaries of the nominated parcel. Adjacent to the north is land that is planned for office use up to .25 FAR, but developed under a Plan option with residential townhouses at 5-8 dwelling units per acres (du/ac). North of Edsall Road is Bren Mar Park. To the west is vacant land planned for residential townhomes at 5-8 du/ac.

Issues

- The proposed 1,520 residential units (1,700,000 sf), office use (900,000 sf), hotel use (90,000 sf), and retail use (60,000 sf) at an overall FAR of 1.85 raises concerns about the compatibility of the proposed use and intensity with the existing surrounding community. Picket Street east of the nominated parcel, is currently developed with light industrial and retail uses, Bren Mar Park and residential townhomes are developed to north and planned to the west. Given these established uses, the proposed use and intensity are out of character with the surrounding area.
- The proposed option for mixed use development would replace a viable industrial use on the site. The erosion of industrially planned areas may undermine the County's ability to provide appropriate locations for industrial uses and ancillary uses.
- The proposed option for mixed use development is viewed by the nominator as an opportunity to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) at this site. According to the Policy Plan Guidelines for TOD, a TOD area is "generally defined as ¼ mile radius from the [rail transit] station platform with density and intensity tapering within a ½ mile radius from the station platform." Redevelopment at this site would not meet this general TOD definition as the site is approximately one mile walk and drive from the Van Dorn Metro Station.
- The proposed intensity raises concerns about park and transportation impacts.

Environment

- An Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) is located within the nominated site as shown by the shaded area in the graphic below. Ideally there should not be any encroachments into the EQC in order to protect the ecological quality of streams. Staff acknowledges that much of this area has been developed and that little of the natural characteristics typically found in any EQC are present. Redevelopment of the area should provide an opportunity to eliminate existing encroachments in the EQC and provide some degree of restoration.



Parks

This proposal would allow for a potential increase in residents within the Lincolnia Planning District by about 4,034 individuals [(Townhouses 20 x 2.96 = 59.2) + (Multifamily 1,500 x 2.65 = 3,975) = 4,034]. Residents will need access to park and recreation facilities on-site or nearby. Using adopted service level standards for parks and facilities, this increased population will generate the need for about two rectangular fields (1 per 2,700 residents), two basketball courts (1 per 2,100 residents), 1.5 playgrounds (1 per 2,800 residents), 0.5 diamond field (youth baseball 1 per 7,200 residents), and 20 additional acres of local parkland (5 acres per 1,000 residents). County policy states that Plan amendment proposals should address impacts to parks. If the nomination is accepted, the Park Authority staff recommends that the Plan option for mixed use development be contingent upon addressing impacts to parkland and facilities.

The subject property is currently almost 100% impervious surface area adjacent to Backlick Run Stream Valley Park in the Cameron Run watershed. The majority of the site is located in a Resource Protection Area. The undetained stormwater from this property likely increases flooding and stream erosion on both adjacent and downstream parklands. This includes Huntington Park, for which County and Federal agencies are planning significant measures to control flooding in the Huntington area. Any redevelopment of the site should be viewed as an opportunity to significantly reduce stormwater flows over existing conditions that could greatly benefit the receiving streams and associated parkland.

Transportation

The Code of Virginia (Chapter 527 §15.2-2222.1) requires localities to submit Comprehensive Plan amendments that will substantially affect transportation on state-controlled roads to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The threshold is any amendment that would generate 5,000 additional vehicle trips per day, assuming the highest density permissible, above the Comprehensive Plan. As shown in the trip generation estimate table below, this nomination requires a VDOT review. *As such, a traffic impact study is required to be prepared and submitted for review by the nominator.*

**Trip Generation Estimates for APR 09-I-2L
Mason District**

Current Comprehensive Plan (0.50 FAR)		AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Average
	Square Feet	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	Daily
Industrial (110)	744,004	694	95	789	109	798	907	5,456

Proposed Amendment (1.85 FAR)		AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Average
	Sq. Ft./Units	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	Daily
Office (710)	900,000	1,228	167	1,395	228	1,113	1,341	9,909
Retail (820)	60,000	38	24	62	108	117	225	2,575
Hotel (310)	150	41	26	68	47	42	89	969
Residential MF (220)	1,500	147	589	737	548	295	843	9,214
Residential TH (240)	20	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>168</u>
Total Trips		1,456	816	2,272	939	1,571	2,510	22,835

Net Impact of Proposed Amendment above Comp Plan Option								Trips
		762	721	1,483	830	774	1,604	17,379

¹⁾ Trip Rates are from the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Book 8th Edition, 2009
²⁾ Trip generation estimates are provided for general order-of-magnitude comparisons only and do not account for pass-by, internal capture, or transit reductions

Due to the location of the nomination adjacent to the City of Alexandria border and the planning studies currently being conducted by the City, the analyses should also include an assessment of the impacts of the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan in Alexandria in addition to any analysis of just the nomination.

As shown on the chart, this proposed Plan Amendment would permit significantly higher traffic generating uses on the subject property that would affect the surrounding roadway network.

The ability to mitigate these traffic impacts should be reviewed within the context of existing and potential transportation conditions and improvements:

- There are no transportation improvements identified on the Transportation Plan Map that directly affect the nominated site.
- Access to the site currently is from Edsall Road in Fairfax County and South Picket Street in the City of Alexandria. There are no additional connections shown in the Fairfax County Transportation Plan Map.
- The City of Alexandria has proposed a possible bridge that would run along the Fairfax County/City of Alexandria border (on the east side of the nominated area) that would connect South Picket Street with Farrington Avenue. The purpose would be to enhance connectivity and provide another connection to South Van Dorn Street. Fairfax County staff has not evaluated this proposal.
- The nomination offers the ability to have a public road that would connect Edsall Road with South Picket Street. There is currently a road that runs along the north and east sides of the site that connects Edsall Road and South Picket; however, it is private. This nomination could provide Fairfax County staff an opportunity to evaluate this private road and perhaps enhance the connection as a way to alleviate some traffic on Edsall Road.
- Continued and enhanced connectivity between the nominated area (in Fairfax County) and the adjacent studies in the City of Alexandria is needed to ensure that all identified modes of transportation can be utilized.

The transportation issues associated with any redevelopment of the nominated parcel, particularly those associated with access and connectivity, will need to be adequately addressed during the course of the normal review process. The development plan should address overall circulation patterns, turning movements, parcel consolidation, pedestrian circulation, safety issues, and signalization issues. Pedestrian safety and access to and through the site should be of primary concern.