

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

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Lee

APR ITEM: 09-IV-4FS

NOMINATOR(S): Springfield Industrial Park Partnership c/o Zumot Real Estate Management, Inc.

ACREAGE: 4.14 acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 90-4 ((1)) 11A

GENERAL LOCATION: Southeast of Springfield Center Drive and northwest of CSX Railroad tracks

PLANNING AREA(S): IV

District(s): Springfield

Sector: Springfield East (E7)

Special Area: Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area (Sub-unit D2)

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Industrial use

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Light industrial use up to an intensity of 0.35 floor-area ratio (FAR) with an option for biotech/research and development uses up to an intensity of 0.50 FAR to complement the VNCC/INOVA medical center

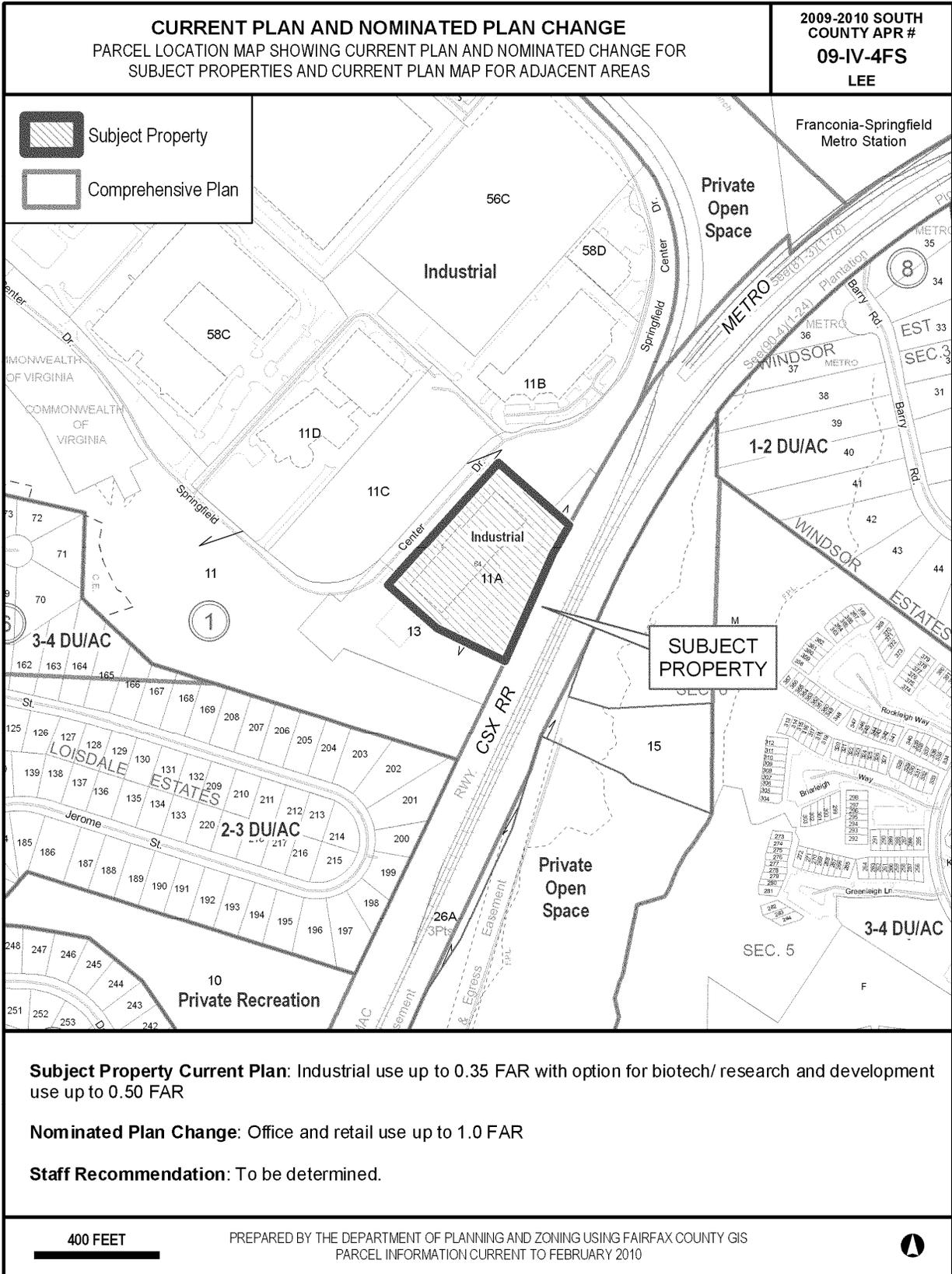
Complete Plan text: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/franconiaspring.pdf>,
Page 55-57

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Office use up to 1.0 FAR with support retail use

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Approve Nomination as submitted
- Approve Staff Alternative
- Retain Adopted Plan

Staff recommends that the subject property be replanned to include office use up to an intensity of 0.50 FAR, in addition to the current Plan for biotech/ research and development use. Additional intensity related to the transit orientation should be considered for the entire land unit in the future, dependant on the implementation of the Frontier Drive extension. The addition of the office use recommendation would be appropriate as the nomination would be considered transit-oriented development, based on its location within the ½ mile radius from the Metrorail station platform and walking distance from the platform, once the extension of Frontier Drive is implemented. However, the proposed intensity is not appropriate as it involves piecemeal replanning of a single parcel at twice the intensity of other parcels in Sub-unit D2, and the intensity could have an adverse visual impact on the nearby low density Loisdale Estates neighborhood, particularly if underground parking can not be provided. The intensity also would exacerbate roadway capacity and access problems without the Frontier Drive extension. Finally, the Plan recommendation for nearby development does not necessitate the increased intensity.



CRITICAL ISSUESLand Use:

- The subject property is located southeast of Springfield Center Drive, southeast of the General Services Area Parr Warehouse, generally north of Loisdale Estates community, and southwest of the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station. The property encompasses one parcel and contains a 50,000 square foot (SF) warehouse.
- The property is located within Sub-unit D-2 of the Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area, which is planned for light industrial use up to 0.35 floor-area ratio (FAR) and has an option for biotech/research and development uses up to an intensity of 0.50 FAR to complement the Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) / Inova medical center. The current Plan would result in approximately 63,000 SF of industrial use or approximately 90,000 SF of biotech/ research and development use.
- The nominated area consists of a portion of the subject area for Base Realignment and Closure Area Plan Amendment (BRAC APR) 08-IV-3FS, which was withdrawn in July 2008. BRAC APR 08-IV-3FS proposed office or mixed use with office and retail at base of 1.5 FAR with an option up to 2.0 FAR. The preliminary staff report for 3FS expresses concern with the proposed intensity and recommends that office use could be appropriate, in addition to the current Plan recommendation for biotech/ research and development use, at a less intense development than proposed, up to a 0.50 FAR.
- Nomination APR 09-IV-2FS proposes to add an option for redevelopment as one office building with a 1.0 FAR, support retail use, and structured parking below the building. The proposed Plan would result in 176,400 square feet (SF) of office use (95%) and 3,600 SF of retail use (5%).
- Including an option for the proposed office use on the subject property would complement the nearby planned office use to the north of the subject property in Land Unit D-1 and to the west in Land Unit D-2. The replanning would support the county goal of locating similar uses adjacent to one another.
- However, the proposed intensity creates concern. The nominator states on page 21 of the nomination form that the amendment is justified due to “development in progress, state college building on other side of street. Zoning of I-4 is outdated and inefficient for the current times.” However, neither of these developments would support the replanning of the subject property at the proposed intensity.
- Staff interprets the “development in progress” as the recently adopted Plan amendment (BRAC APR 09-IV-2FS) for the parcel to the north and the existing Plan recommendation for additional office to the northwest of the subject property. Although BRAC APR 2FS is located within Land Unit D-1, the nomination was proposed as coordinated development with Sub-unit D-1, and both properties are located approximately ½ mile from the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station via the existing shuttle road and slightly greater than ¼ mile from the Metrorail station via the conceptual plan for the proposed extension of Frontier Drive. The properties are also served by a private shuttle to the rail station. County policy for transit-oriented development defines transit-oriented development as ¼ mile radius from the station platform with density and intensity tapering to within a ½ mile radius from the station platform, or a 5-10 minute walk, subject to site-

specific conditions. The “development in progress” would be considered transit-oriented development.

- The proposed nomination is located over $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walking distance from the Metrorail station platform, via the existing shuttle bus road, and approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walking distance from the platform, via the proposed Frontier Drive extension. With the extension of the Frontier Drive, the subject property would be considered transit-oriented development, but it would be on the edge of where the tapering would need to occur. See map on page 6.
- Staff understands the “state college building,” addressed in the Justification, as the Northern Virginia Community College facility to the west of the subject property. This property is planned within the same sub-unit, Sub-unit D-2, as the subject property and is developed at an intensity of 0.50 FAR. The building consists of approximately 130,000 SF of development on a 257,000 SF parcel. The NVCC facility was implemented under current Plan optional recommendation for the sub-unit, and its intensity would not be considered justification to amend the Plan for the subject property.
- The Plan vision for the intensity on site should not be incrementally adjusted through piecemeal replanning of individual parcels to more intense uses. The subject property is a single, 4-acre parcel within the 61-acre sub-unit. Other portions of the land unit also are located within the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius of the station platform and within a 5-10 minute walking distance. In order to support the county’s goal of coordinating development, which is expressly stated throughout the Plan text for Land Unit D, a future amendment should be considered that includes the land unit and has the ability to cumulatively assess the impacts of transit-oriented development on land use and transportation in this area.
- The 0.50 FAR should be retained, resulting in a building size of up to approximately 90,000 SF. The subject property is located approximately 500 feet from the nearest house in Loisdale Estates. An intensity of 0.50 FAR would limit development and minimize the visual impact on the nearby neighborhood related to building height. This would be consistent with the Plan for other parcels Land Unit D-2.
- With the implementation of the Frontier Drive extension, additional intensity may be appropriate if the tallest buildings or structures are located closest to the transit station and oriented away from the neighborhood. This design would need to be demonstrated during the rezoning process.

Transportation

- The proposed nomination would generate higher daily, AM and PM peak hours trips than the land uses allowed under both the current Comprehensive Plan base and option recommendation, as shown on the table on next page.
- Vehicular access to the subject property is from Springfield Center Drive. The recently adopted Springfield Connectivity Plan Amendment S09-CW-3CP amended the Plan to extend Frontier Drive along Springfield Center Drive as a 4-lane divided section to Loisdale Road. Right-of-way and construction of a portion of the Frontier Drive improvement along the frontage of the subject property, as well as a contribution to an areawide transportation fund, should be provided as a condition for redevelopment.

- The subject property is located within a ½ mile radius of the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station. The property has the potential for redevelopment as a transit-oriented development, subject to provision of direct pedestrian access to the station that would substantially reduce the vehicular trips generated. Access and safety issues, particularly related to pedestrians, are of primary concern. The transportation issues associated with any development of the subject area, particularly related to access, will need to be addressed during the rezoning process, if this Plan amendment is adopted. The development plan should address vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, turning movements, signalization, safety issues, and transit amenities. Additional dedication of right-of-way for sidewalk, roadway improvements/ widening, transit, and associated easements may be required.
- Based on the comparison of the average daily trips generated by the plan options, the nomination would not require a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Chapter 527 review. The Code of Virginia (Chapter 527 §15.2-2222.1) requires localities to submit Comprehensive Plans and amendments to Comprehensive Plans that will substantially affect transportation on state-controlled roads to the VDOT. Any amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that generates 5,000 additional vehicle trips per day, assuming the highest density permissible, would trigger a review by VDOT. This review is also commonly referred to as “VDOT 527” or “Chapter 527”. The nomination would not generate 5,000 additional vehicle trips per day, as compared to the highest density recommended under the current Comprehensive Plan.

Trip Generation estimates for APR 09-IV-4FS

Current Plan		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average
Development Type	Quantities	In	Out	In	Out	Daily
Light Industrial (110)	63,000	45	6	7	48	391
Total		45	6	7	48	391

Current Plan option		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average
Development Type		In	Out	In	Out	Daily
Office (710)	90,000 Sf	109	15	20	99	882
Total		109	15	20	99	882

Proposed Plan		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Average
Development Type		In	Out	In	Out	Daily
Office (710)	180,000 Sf	219	30	41	198	1,764
Total		219	30	41	198	1,764

Net impact of Option above Comp Plan	173	24	34	150	1,373
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1) Trip rates and formulas used are from the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation, 8th Edition, 2008.

2) Trip generation estimates account for reductions due to proximity to transit.

Environment

- An unnamed tributary associated with Long Branch traverses in a westerly direction south of the subject property and it affects the southeastern corner of the subject property. This feature is considered Resource Protection Area (RPA) and Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC), and 100 year floodplain, which consists of environmentally-sensitive wet areas. See attached map on page 7 of this staff report for map.
- The nomination may incur an obstacle with underground parking because of the shallow depth of ground water surrounded on the south and the east by the wet areas. Water may pose an obstacle to underground parking. If these areas necessitated above-ground parking, then the building would result in an increased height, which could visually loom over the nearby community.

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 development would likely require additional infrastructure to meet fire flow requirements and increase reliability. Individual developers would be responsible for extending lines to their development and would make these commitments during the rezoning and development process.

RECOMMENDATION

As an alternative to the nominations, staff recommends the following text be added to guidance for

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area, Land Unit D-2, as amended through 8-3-2009, page 55:

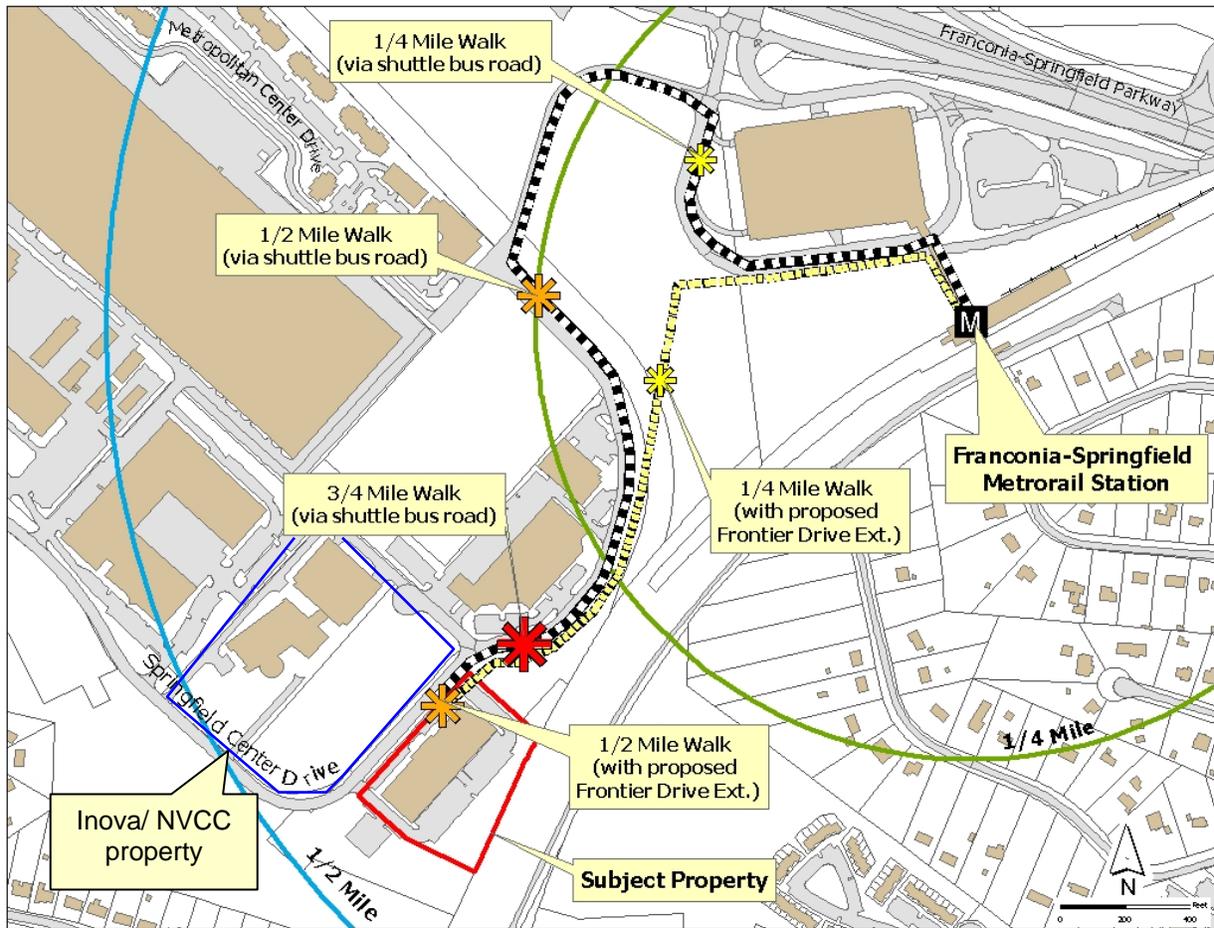
“Sub-unit D-2

This Sub-unit is located south of the GSA-Parr Warehouse and north of the Loisdale Estates Subdivision. It is about 61 acres in size and contains the site of the Northern Virginia Community College and Springfield Center Industrial Park.

Sub-unit D-2 is planned for light industrial use up to .35 FAR. As an option, biotech/research and development uses up to .50 FAR may be appropriate to complement the VNCC/INOVA medical center. For parcels 90-2((1))57E, 57F, 57G, and 57H and 90-4((1)) 11A, office use up to .50 FAR may also be considered. Any development under this option must demonstrate that it will generate less peak hour traffic than the planned baseline use to minimize traffic generation in an area with limited transportation capacity. Development should provide a landscaped buffer of at least 75 feet in width along the Loisdale Estates subdivision boundary. Redevelopment of Parcel 90-4 ((1)) 11A should provide for the dedication of right-of-way for the extension of Frontier Drive as well as provide for a contribution to the areawide transportation fund.”

Walking Distance Map:

Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station Platform to Subject Property



Environmental Map: APR 09-IV-4FS

