



**A Publication of the County of Fairfax, Virginia
Department of Planning & Zoning**

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STAFF REPORT 2008 BRAC Area Plans Review

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Lee

BRAC APR ITEM(S): BRAC# 08-IV-4FS

NOMINATOR: Lynne J. Strobel, Agent for Springfield Land LLC

ACREAGE: 1.62 acres

TAX MAP I.D.: 80-4((9)) 4, 5 and 6

GENERAL LOCATION: West of Amherst Avenue, North of Old Keene Mill Road, South and East of Bland Street

PLANNING AREA: IV
District: Springfield
Sector: Crestwood (S2)
Special Areas: Springfield Community Business Center (CBC), Land Unit C

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Office, Retail & Other

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Office use with support retail up to 0.50 FAR with substantial parcel consolidation.

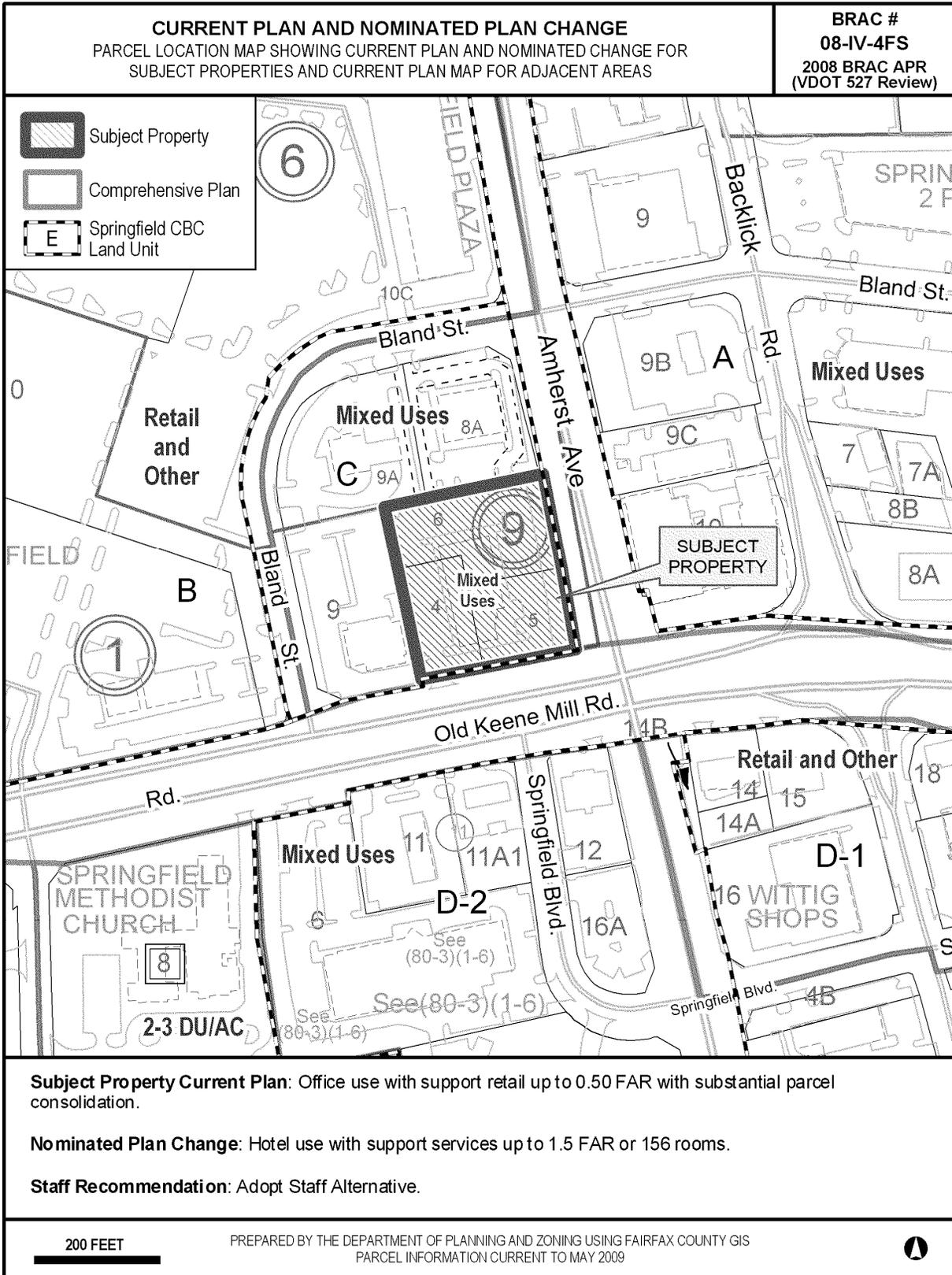
PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Hotel use with support services up to 1.5 FAR or 156 rooms.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nomination as submitted
 Approve Staff Alternative
 Retain Adopted Plan

Staff recognizes the proposed nomination has consolidation and access challenges; however, the nomination also has potential immediate revitalization benefits, which could provide an investment opportunity for a blighted site. The nomination also has the opportunity to augment the existing Plan recommendations for a commuter parking facility at the intersection of Amherst and Old Keene Mill Roads. Therefore, staff recommends an alternative which can alleviate the concerns about access and transportation, as well as support the commuting needs of the region.

This nomination did not individually warrant a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Chapter 527 review. However, the nomination participated in a cumulative VDOT 527 analysis for the Springfield CBC, which grouped BRAC APR items 08-IV-4FS, 08-IV-5FS, 08-IV-7FS, and 08-IV-9FS. The Board of Supervisors requested that the Planning Commission defer the three other items on June 1, 2009. As a result, the cumulative VDOT 527 is not appended to this staff report.



CONTEXT:

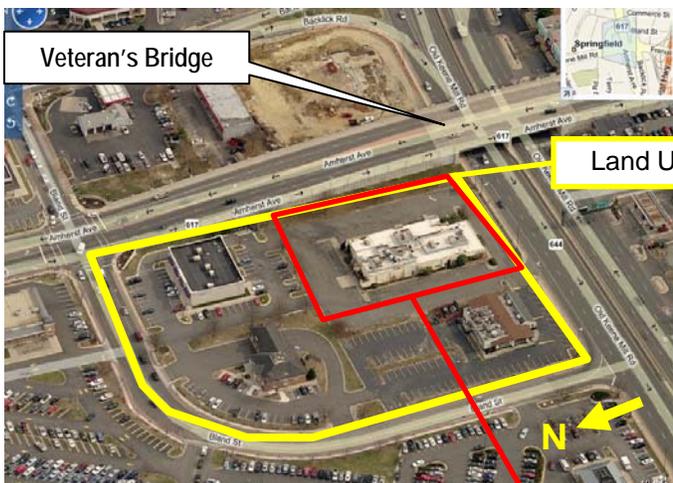
General Location:

The approximately 1.6 acre subject area is located along the north-side of Old Keene Mill Road, west of Amherst Avenue.

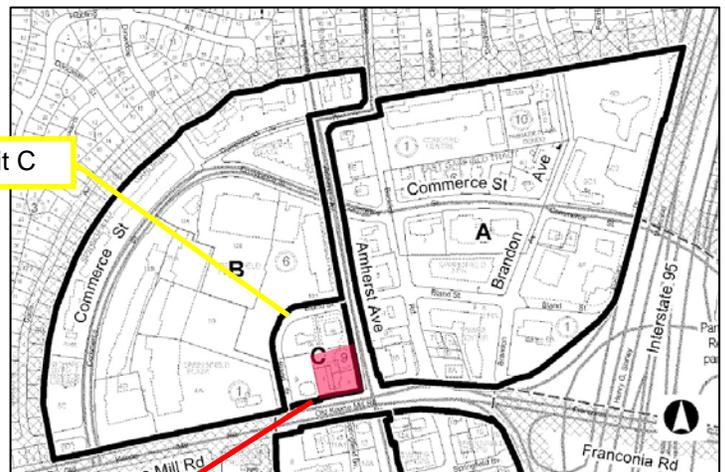
Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning:

Subject Property: The subject area consists of three consolidated parcels, which contain a vacant restaurant, Chi Chi's and the associated surface parking. The subject area is planned for office use with support retail use up to 0.50 floor to area ratio (FAR) with substantial parcel consolidation, as part of Land Unit C within the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC). The three parcels that create the subject area are zoned C-6.

View of Subject Property and Veteran's Bridge



SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY BUSINESS CENTER LAND UNIT MAP



Adjacent Areas:

North and West: The remainder of Land Unit C to the north and west, between Bland Street, Old Keene Mill Road and Amherst Avenue are developed with other commercial uses, Kinko's, Wachovia Bank, and Al's restaurant. These commercial uses are located in individual buildings or pad sites, surrounded by surface parking, similar to the existing, vacant restaurant on the subject area. These parcels are planned for office use up to an intensity of 0.50 FAR with substantial consolidation of the land unit and zoned C-6.

East: To the east of the subject property, Veteran's Bridge or Amherst Avenue Bridge over Old Keene Mill Road begins its rise at the northern corner of the subject area and continues along the eastern edge of the subject area. The bridge creates a large, blank wall neighboring the site and

prohibits direct access onto Amherst Avenue. To the east of the bridge is a hotel, which is planned as part of Land Unit A of the Springfield CBC and recently constructed. Land Unit A extends from Old Keene Mill Road north to the Springfield neighborhood, with Interstate-95 to the east. It is planned for office, residential, hotel, and retail mixed-use up to an overall intensity of 1.1 FAR and zoned C-4, C-6, C-8, and PDC. The parcel on which the new hotel is located has specific Plan recommendations for this use up to 110,000 square feet. This level of development equates to an approximate intensity of 2.0 FAR. The Board of Supervisors adopted this guidance on May 23, 2005.

South: To the south of the subject property, across Old Keene Mill Road, is Land Unit D-2 of the Springfield CBC. The existing uses that are along the roadway consist of a vacant restaurant and a gas station. This land unit is planned for office and retail use up to an intensity of 0.5 FAR and zoned C-2, C-5, and C-6.

PLANNING HISTORY

On May 20, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted Plan Amendment S98-CW-1CP (B), which created the current Plan for the Springfield CBC. The Plan amendment evaluated the Plan guidance for the entire CBC area, reconfirmed the CBC as the central business center for the Springfield area, and established Land Unit A as the core area of the CBC. Higher intensities are recommended close to the Interstate and taper down towards the west and south.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, Area IV Volume, 2007 Edition, Franconia-Springfield Area, as amended through January 26, 2009, Springfield Community Business Center, Land Use Recommendations, page 71:

“Land Unit C

Land Unit C is located west of Amherst Avenue, north of Old Keene Mill Road and south and east of Bland Street. The land unit is planned for office use with support retail up to 0.50 FAR with substantial parcel consolidation. High-quality architecture, landscape design, and pedestrian amenities should be provided. Shared parking is encouraged and should be shielded from view within the site. As discussed in the Transportation section and depicted on Figure 18, a commuter parking facility is planned in the area adjacent to Amherst Avenue and Old Keene Mill Road. The facility will complement a commuter staging area for car pool formation and bus/van service located on the south side of Old Keene Mill Road.”

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

The nomination proposes replanning of the subject area for hotel use up to an intensity of 1.5 FAR to provide accommodations for civilian employees and contractors relocated during the

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) proceedings that are proximate to Fort Belvoir, the Engineer Proving Grounds, and the surrounding areas. In an email clarification, the nominator specified that the hotel would have 156 rooms.

The following table summarizes the existing, planned, zoned, and proposed development potential for the subject property:

Impacts Table: BRAC 08-IV-4FS

| | Non-residential | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------|---------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | Multi-family | Retail | Office | Hotel | Total |
| | Low Rise | Sq. Ft. | Sq. Ft. | Sq. Ft. | Non-Res'd Sq. Ft. |
| Existing Development: vacant restaurant - 11,731 sq.ft. | | 0 | | | 0 |
| Current Plan: Office at 0.50 FAR | | | 35,369 | | 35,369 |
| Zoning Potential: C-6 | | 28,295 | | | 28,295 |
| Proposed Plan: Hotel w support services up to 1.5 FAR | | | | 106,107 (156 rooms) | 106,107 |

ANALYSIS

Revitalization: The subject property is part of the Springfield Community Revitalization District (CRD), and the Plan recommendations for the Springfield CBC reflect this. The recommendations promote the revitalization of commercial uses through the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized structures. The nomination would be consistent with this objective as the property currently contains a vacant restaurant and parking facility.

Other past revitalization efforts in the CBC included a two-phased streetscape project. The project included improvements to bus stops, benches, trash cans, street lights, as well as the construction of wider sidewalks, brick-paved crosswalks, and landscape areas around Commerce Street, Amherst Avenue, and Backlick Road north of Old Keene Mill Road. Streetscape design at the subject site should be of similar character to these improvements. The nomination does not propose to include these types of improvements.

Land Use: The BRAC-related Subject Areas Existing Conditions Report (Fairfax County DPZ, 2008) states that there are two hotels and one motel in currently located in the CBC, which include both limited and full-service facilities. Additional hotel use in the CBC may be an appropriate resource needed due the relocation of BRAC employees and contractors. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that other areas in the CBC for hotel use. Additional hotel use is planned for in Land Unit A, directly east of the subject area, and in Land Unit D, which is south of the subject area and south of Old Keene Mill Road. However, the majority of the planned square feet for hotel use in Land Unit A is constructed (approximately 300,000 square

feet) and the land area south of Old Keene Mill Road may have consolidation and siting issues due to the narrow size of the parcels and the multiple property owners.

With respect to consolidation, the current Plan recommendations for the subject area and the greater Springfield CBC promote coordinated, rather than piece-meal, development through substantial consolidation. The subject area is a small, 1.6-acre, pre-existing consolidation that includes less than half of the 4.4-acre land unit on which it is located. The proposed nomination does not commit to achieving a coordinated design or seeking consolidation with the remaining parcels within the land unit. This lack of coordination and consolidation could undermine future redevelopment in this land unit. At a minimum, the nomination would need to demonstrate that future inter-parcel access could be achieved through the parcels to the west and north.

The location of Veteran's Bridge adjacent to the property and the proposed intensity up to a 1.5 FAR further emphasize the need for this inter-parcel access and thoughtful consideration of building orientation and layout. The bridge may create a visual and design challenge to the layout of the proposed development. The proposed intensity, combined with the size of the subject area, would most likely result in a large footprint on the property and require structured parking. The hotel will need to be sited in a way that will minimize the negative impacts of the bridge and associated blank wall, promote inter-parcel access, and take advantage of relationships among the parcels in the land unit.

Commuter Parking Facility: The current Plan recommends that a commuter parking facility be located at the intersection of Amherst Avenue and Old Keene Mill Road. Current efforts are working towards the location of the commuter parking facility across the street from the subject property, south of Old Keene Mill Road. The location of the facility south of Old Keene Mill Road presents a difficult route for buses moving westbound along Old Keene Mill Road, as there will be no left turn from west-bound Old Keene Mill Road directly into the parking facility. West-bound buses and car pool drivers will have to make a right turn onto Bland Street, then a right turn onto Amherst Avenue, a right turn onto Springfield Boulevard, and finally a left turn in the facility. To leave the parking facility and return to the westbound direction of Old Keene Mill Road would require the reverse of these movements.

An alternative would be to locate a bus transfer facility at a location on the north-side of Old Keene Mill Road that would principally be used to accommodate pick-up, drop-off, and transfer of passengers using the commuter facility. A pedestrian crossing over Old Keene Mill Road from the north-side of Old Keene Mill Road, from or near the hotel, to the parking facility would provide a safe connection between the two locations. The proposed hotel use development could provide an opportunity to construct such a pedestrian facility. At the same time, pedestrian systems also could link the site to other activities within the CBC. An opportunity may be available to work with the adjacent land owners to provide the complete facility, if not possible on the subject site.

Transportation: The proposed nomination is estimated to generate approximately 885 additional daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan. The proposal would generate only modest amounts of additional trips above the current Plan in the AM and PM peak hours. The

following table describes the trips generated from the nomination, above the current Plan and existing development. See Attachment 1 for the complete comments from the Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

Trip Generation Estimates for BRAC APR #08-IV-4FS, Springfield

| Scenario | Daily | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|-------|--------------|------|--------------|-----|
| | | In | Out | In | Out |
| <u>Existing Development</u> | | | | | |
| Restaurant (vacant) 11,731 SF | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | - | - | - | - | - |
| <u>Current Plan (.5 FAR)</u> | | | | | |
| Office 35,369 SF | 389 | 48 | 7 | 9 | 43 |
| Total | 389 | 48 | 7 | 9 | 43 |
| <u>Proposed Plan (1.5 FAR)</u> | | | | | |
| Hotel 156 rooms | 1,274 | 53 | 34 | 49 | 43 |
| Total | 1,274 | 53 | 34 | 49 | 43 |
| Proposed Plan comparison to Current Plan (additional trips) | + 885 | + 5 | + 27 | + 40 | 0 |

NOTE: Trip generation estimates are based on Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation, 7th Edition, 2003 rates.

The nomination did not warrant a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Chapter 527 review because the nomination did not surpass the 5,000 additional trip threshold, as compared to the highest density recommended under the current Comprehensive Plan. The Code of Virginia (Chapter 527 §15.2-2222.1) requires localities to submit Comprehensive Plans and amendments to Comprehensive Plans that substantially affect transportation on state-controlled roads to the VDOT that surpass this threshold. This nomination participated in a cumulative 527 analysis for the Springfield CBC, which grouped BRAC APR items 08-IV-4FS, 08-IV-5FS, 08-IV-7FS, and 08-IV-9FS. The Board of Supervisors requested that the Planning Commission defer the three other items on June 1, 2009. As a result, the cumulative VDOT 527 is not appended to this staff report.

The proposed nomination mentions in Part 6: Justification section of the nomination form that the hotel use may provide a shuttle service to the Springfield Metro and VRE station. A shuttle service and/ or contributions to any bus circulator service that links the subject area to the Joe Alexander Transportation Center and the remainder of the CBC would improve the multi-modal connectivity of the area, promote public transportation usage, and reduce vehicular trips.

Access to subject area is currently attained through a curb cut along Old Keene Mill Road. The access to Old Keene Mill Road may need to be closed, based on the proposed land use and intensity. The hotel development on the opposite side of Amherst Avenue from the subject area was not granted access to Old Keene Mill Road. Instead, the development was able to provide access from a secondary roadway, Backlick Road. This type of alternative access is a significant challenge to the approval of this nomination because access can not be gained from Amherst Avenue. Staff was made aware of an easement by the nominator that exists through the property to the north to Bland Street, but staff is concerned that this easement may not accommodate the type of roadway required for the proposed development. This level of analysis would occur during the zoning evaluation of the amendment.

Parks and Recreation: The Springfield Planning District has 18 neighborhood and community parks and one countywide park. The Park Authority owns and maintains a total of 963 acres of parkland in Springfield. The recreation facilities in these parks do not meet standards established by the Park Authority through the Needs Assessment study. By 2015, the projected deficiency in the Springfield Planning District will include: 715 acres of district and countywide parks; 7 rectangular fields; 1 adult softball field; 21 basketball courts; and 3 playgrounds.

The proposed nomination would contribute to this deficiency. Employees and hotel guests generated by the proposal would need leisure and recreation opportunities. The nomination does not propose measures to address this need. However, the impact on parks and recreation should be mitigated per County policies contained in the Objectives of the Parks and Recreation Section of the Policy Plan and Springfield Planning District during the time of the rezoning. For example, the integration of an urban park in the overall development design would enhance the desirability of the project. Furthermore, the provision of all-year recreational facilities for employees and hotel guests should be included, if the nomination is approved.

Environment: No Resource Protection Area, Environmental Quality Corridor, or floodplain exists on the site. Transportation generated noise may impact hotel development on the subject property. The property may be impacted by noise levels exceeding 65 dBA DNL from Old Keene Mill Road and Amherst Avenue. A noise study would need to be completed to determine the full extent of impacts. New development should be designed in a manner which incorporates runoff detention and water quality improvement measures, such as LID techniques. LEED or an equivalent third party certification would also be required as part of the Environmental Section of the Policy Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recognizes the benefit of hotel and other commercial redevelopment in this land unit and in the greater Springfield CBC area for revitalization purposes. The replanning also could take advantage of the opportunity to make a connection between the north and south side of Old Keene Mill Road. Hotel use is already planned for other areas within the CBC; however, the potential for redevelopment as planned in these other areas may be diminished due to site constraints. Therefore, staff supports the redevelopment of the subject property for hotel use with additional text that supports inter-parcel access and the connection.

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, Area IV Volume, 2007 Edition, Franconia-Springfield Area, as amended through January 26, 2009, Springfield Community Business Center, Land Use Recommendations, page 71:

“Land Unit C

Land Unit C is located west of Amherst Avenue, north of Old Keene Mill Road and south and east of Bland Street. The land unit is planned for office use with support retail up to 0.50 FAR with substantial parcel consolidation. As an option, Tax Map Parcels 80-4 ((9)) 4, 5 and 6

may be appropriate for hotel use up to 110,000 square feet. Access should be provided from Bland Street and an inter-parcel access should be provided to the parcel to the west (Tax Map Parcel 80-3 ((1)) 9). Similar to the hotel use to the east in Land Unit A, redevelopment should be considered for this intensity only if enhanced streetscape amenities that create a focal point and gateway to the CBC are provided. In addition, redevelopment is encouraged to meet the development criteria for Land Unit A. The installation of rooftop vegetation and/or rain gardens is recommended to offset the effects of impervious surfaces. Furthermore, redevelopment should provide or contribute to a pedestrian bridge to facilitate the safe crossing of Old Keene Mill Road for transit users.

High-quality architecture, landscape design, and pedestrian amenities should be provided. Shared parking is encouraged and should be shielded from view within the site. As discussed in the Transportation section and depicted on Figure 18, a commuter parking facility is planned in the area adjacent to Amherst Avenue and Old Keene Mill Road. The facility will complement a commuter staging area for car pool formation and bus/van service located on the south side of Old Keene Mill Road.”



County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 20, 2008

TO: Marianne Gardner, Chief
Policy and Plan Development, DPZ

FROM: Leonard Wolfenstein, Chief
Transportation Planning Section, TPD, DOT

SUBJECT: BRAC APR #08-IV-4FS, Springfield

The Department of Transportation offers the following comments regarding the proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan indicated in the subject Area Plan Review (APR) nomination:

- The subject property is located on the north side of Old Keene Mill Road and east of Bland Street, in the Springfield CBC. Old Keene Mill Road is a minor arterial roadway carrying high volumes of traffic in this area. The Comprehensive Plan does not presently recommend improvement of Old Keene Mill Road. Bland Street in this area is recommended to be widened to a 4 lane facility. Development of this property under the current plan or the proposed plan to develop the site with hotel use would require additional right-of-way to be provided on Bland Street to accommodate the future 4 lane section.
- Safe access to the property should be provided from Bland Street. This may require a right of way easement on adjacent property.
- Estimated trip generation for the proposed plan is shown in the table below. Trip generation is compared to that under the current Comprehensive Plan and existing development on the site. As shown, the proposed plan is estimated to generate approximately 885 additional daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan. The proposed plan would generate only modest amounts of additional trips above the current Plan in the AM and PM peak hours. The additional trips generated by this proposed plan amendment would not necessitate a change in the Comprehensive Plan's transportation recommendations for this area.
- Specific traffic improvements and mitigation associated with the development of this property, particularly related to access and/or frontage improvements, would need to be addressed at the time of rezoning.

Trip Generation Estimates for BRAC APR #08-IV-4FS, Springfield

| Scenario | Daily | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|--|-------|--------------|------|--------------|-----|
| | | In | Out | In | Out |
| <u>Existing Development</u> Restaurant (vacant) 11,731 SF | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | - | - | - | - | - |
| <u>Current Plan (.5 FAR)</u> Office 35,369 SF | 389 | 48 | 7 | 9 | 43 |
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| Total | 1,274 | 53 | 34 | 49 | 43 |
| Proposed Plan comparison to Current Plan (additional trips) | + 885 | + 5 | + 27 | + 40 | 0 |

NOTE: Trip generation estimates are based on Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation, 7th Edition, 2003 rates.

- Specific traffic improvements and mitigation associated with the development of this property, particularly related to access and/or frontage improvements, would need to be addressed at the time of rezoning.

Please contact Jaak Pedak, Transportation Planner, at 703-324-1171 or by email at Jaak.Pedak@fairfaxcounty.gov should you require further information or clarification of these comments.

Jp:jp

- cc: file
 Meghan VanDam, Planning Division, DPZ
 Lindsay Mason, Planning Division, DPZ
 Nick Perfili, Transportation Planning Section, DOT
 Dan Rathbone, Transportation Planning Division, DOT
 Angela Rodeheaver, Site Analysis Section, DOT