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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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**STAFF REPORT
2008 BRAC AREA PLANS REVIEW**

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S): Mount Vernon

APR ITEM(S): 08-IV-5MV

NOMINATOR(S): Gifford R. Hampshire

ACREAGE: 4.4 acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 83-3 ((1)) 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 41A, 42;
83-3 ((8)) B, C, 1;
83-3 ((22)) A, B

GENERAL LOCATION: Southeast side of Richmond Highway, west of Quander Road,
north of Shields Avenue

PLANNING AREA(S): IV

District(s): Mount Vernon Planning District

Sector: NA

Special Area(s): Richmond Hwy Corridor, Penn Daw CBC, sub-units E-1 and E-2

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: 3-4 du/ac, Mixed Use

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:

Sub-unit E-1: East side of Richmond Highway between Quander Road and Shields Avenue, office and/or retail up to 0.50 FAR with a maximum height of 50 feet.

Sub-unit E-2: South side of Quander Road between Richmond Highway and Quander Road Center, residential at 3-4 du/ac. Option for 5-8 du/ac with complete parcel consolidation.

Land Unit G: Option for intensity up to 1.0 FAR if sub-units E-1, E-2 and E-3 are logically consolidated with Land Unit G.

For complete Plan text see: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/mtvernon1.pdf>, pages 33-34.

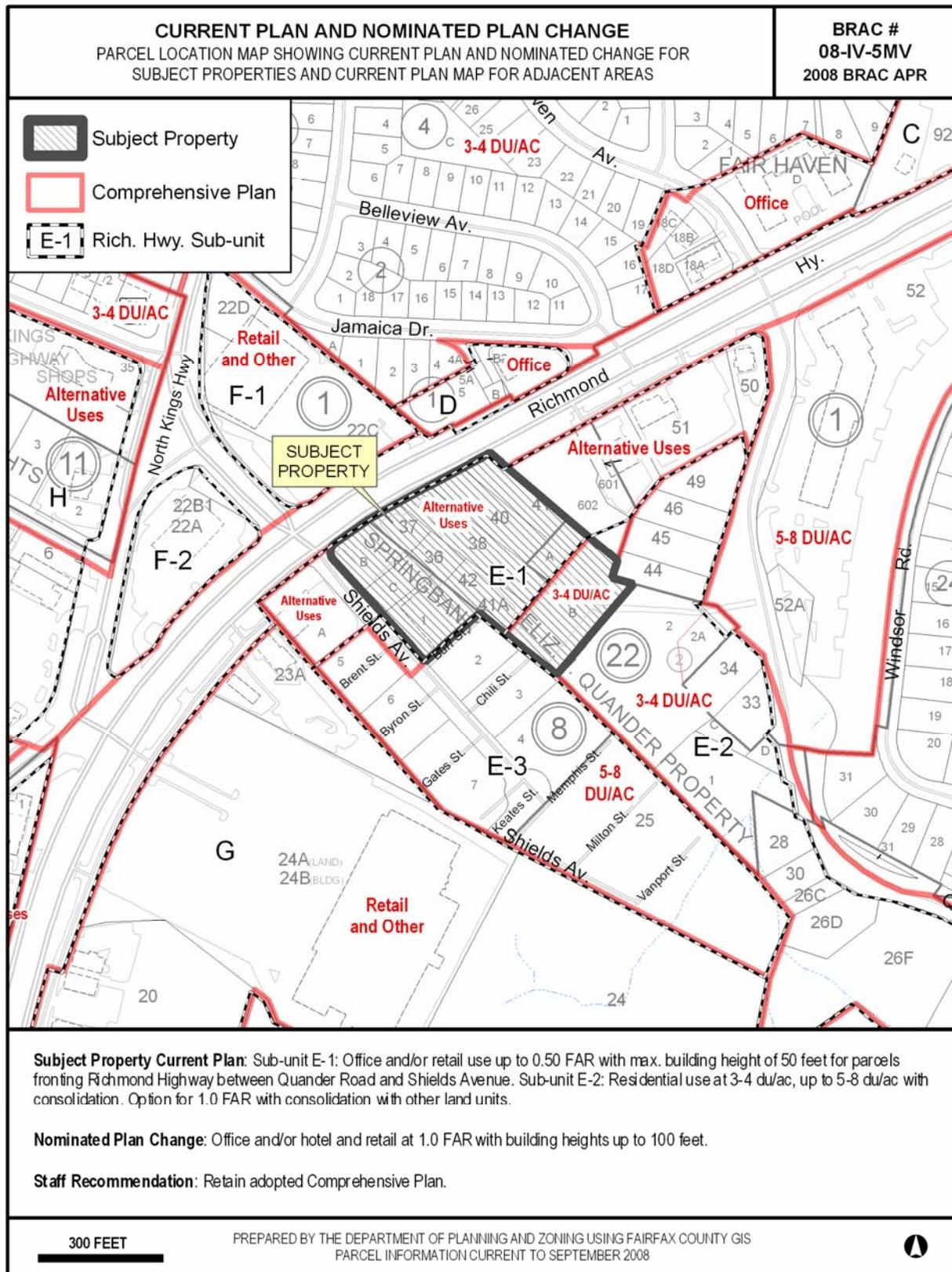
PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Neighborhood-serving office or hotel and retail up to 1.0 FAR with building heights up to 100 feet.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

Retain Adopted Plan



CONTEXT

General Location: The nomination area is located on the southeast side of Richmond Highway, west of Quander Road, and north of Shields Avenue. This subject area is in sub-units E-1 and E-2 of the Penn Daw CBC, along the east side of the Richmond Highway.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

Land Use: The 4.4 acre subject area contains vacant land, surface parking, residential properties, equipment storage, and the St. Clair appliance distributor warehouse. The Plan recommendation for the subject area is mixed use with the exception of parcel 83-3 ((1)) 41, which is planned for residential use at 3-4 du/ac.

Zoning: Parcels 83-3 ((1)) 41, 40, 38, 37, 36, 42, and 41A are zoned R-4. Under this zoning designation, seven single-family detached residential units could be built. Parcels 83-3 ((8)) B, C, 1 and 83-3 ((22)) A, B are zoned to the C-8 district. This would allow for 49,223 square feet of retail use or 24,611 square feet of retail use and 24,611 square feet of office use.

Adjacent Area

North: The area on the west side of Richmond Highway contains retail and commercial uses such as banks, pharmacies, and restaurants. These parcels are located in sub-units F-1 and F-2. Sub-unit F-1 is planned for retail use up to 0.50 FAR with conditions, and sub-unit F-2 is planned for retail use up to 0.35 FAR. Both sub-units are zoned C-8. Lots fronting the west side of Richmond Highway in Land Unit D between Jamaica Drive and sub-unit F-1 are planned for low-rise office up to 0.35 FAR.

East: Single family residential uses, vacant land, and commercial uses are on the east side of Richmond Highway and south side of Quander Road. These parcels are in sub-units E-1 and E-2. Lots fronting Richmond Highway in sub-unit E-1 are planned for office and/or retail uses up to 0.50 FAR. Properties along the south side of Quander Road are planned for residential use at 3-4 du/ac. The land use option on Land Unit G applies to these parcels with consolidation and other conditions. The parcels fronting Richmond Highway are zoned C-6. The single-family homes are zoned R-4.

West: The Penn Daw Trailer Park, a mobile home park, and commercial uses are located to the west of the subject property along Shields Avenue. These parcels are in sub-unit E-3. The Penn Daw Trailer Park is planned and developed as a mobile home park at a density of 5-8 du/ac. These parcels are included in the land use option for Land Unit G contingent upon consolidation with larger areas and implementation of conditions recommended in the current Plan. These parcels are zoned C-8.

South: Vacant land and the Penn Daw Trailer Park are located to the south of the nominated area. Parcel 83-3 ((22)) 2, adjacent to parcel 88-3 ((22)) B, is zoned R-4 and is part of sub-unit E-2. This portion of the Penn Daw Trailer Park is located in sub-unit E-2 and is zoned C-6.

PLANNING HISTORY

A Comprehensive Plan change was proposed for the subject property in addition to parcel 83-3 ((22)) 602 during the 2005 South County APR process, item 05-IV-2MV. The nomination proposed a mix of retail, office, or residential uses, or a hotel, or commercial office use up to 1.5 FAR at a height up to 100 feet. Staff's preliminary recommendation was to retain the adopted Plan, which provides a similar option, but requires parcel consolidation in order to create a functional internal roadway circulation system. The nomination was deferred for consideration in the 2008 BRAC APR cycle.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended through 8-6-2007, Land Use Recommendations, pages 32-34:

Penn Daw Community Business Center

“Major existing uses in the Penn Daw Community Business Center include the Penn Daw Shopping Center, and neighborhood and community-serving retail establishments. Stable residential neighborhoods abut the Community Business Center on the east and northwest. A small office building at Franklin Street and Richmond Highway is representative of the small percentage of office use in this area. While there are multiple uses in this area located near the Huntington Transit Station, the uses are not well coordinated and do not encourage pedestrian or transit access. However, the location at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Kings Highway provides good auto accessibility and visibility.

Planned highway improvements will impact some uses at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Kings Highway creating an opportunity for a special landscaped area or other identifying landmark at this intersection. The Penn Daw Shopping Center is planned to remain as a community-serving retail center while the east side of Richmond Highway is planned to be redeveloped into a larger single use or as a mixed-use project comprised of residential, retail and office uses. Additional office uses are planned for the western side of Richmond Highway adjacent to the Fairhaven community.

The opportunity exists on the east side of Richmond Highway to create a large scale well designed mixed-use development as a focal point and core area of the Community Business Center. This area is envisioned as an integrated residential and commercial center which functions well within the context of adjacent existing or planned uses and incorporates high quality urban design elements to create a sense of identity.

Much of the area located to the east side of Richmond Highway contains steep slopes, a stream valley and other environmentally sensitive features which should be protected and any degraded natural conditions and functions restored.

Sub-unit E-1

Lots fronting on the east side of Richmond Highway between Quander Road and Shields Avenue are planned for neighborhood-serving office and/or retail uses up to .50 FAR with a maximum height of 50 feet. See Land Unit G for an additional land use option.

Sub-unit E-2

Properties located along the south side of Quander Road between Richmond Highway and Quander Road Center are planned for residential use at 3-4 dwelling units per acre. As an option, with complete parcel consolidation in this sub-unit, a density of 5-8 dwelling units per acre may be appropriate. Structures should be clustered to minimize impacts on steep slopes in the area. No more than one entrance point onto Richmond Highway that is no closer than 200 feet from Quander Road, and no more than two entrance points on Quander Road, that are no closer than 200 feet from Richmond Highway should be provided. These latter provisions are intended to preclude congestion near the Richmond Highway/Quander Road intersection because of the importance of that road for carrying school traffic to and from West Potomac High School and Metro-related traffic to and from Huntington, as well as the residential traffic generated on these sites. See Land Unit G for an additional land use option.

Land Unit G

The area along the east side of Richmond Highway south of Shields Avenue to Fairview Drive is planned for community-serving retail use up to .50 FAR. Existing conditions present an opportunity for a well-designed, mixed-use project that will serve as the focal point and core area for the Penn Daw Community Business Center. As an option, Land Unit G is planned for a well integrated mix of retail, office, hotel and residential uses with an overall intensity of up to 1.0 FAR. Development proposals for a single integrated project or a project that allows for future coordination with other projects should meet the following conditions:

- Consolidation of Parcels 83-3((1))20, 23A, 24, 24A and 24B together with consolidation of additional lots in adjacent Sub-units E-1, E-2 and E-3 is encouraged. If full consolidation is not achieved, interparcel access to adjacent uses should be provided;
- The level of non-residential development should not exceed two-thirds of the total gross floor area for the entire mixed-use development. Appropriate first floor support retail and service uses designed to serve the development in this land unit should be encouraged;
- Non-residential uses should be located at the front of the property and oriented to Richmond Highway. Residential uses should be located toward the middle and rear of parcels 24A and 24B in order to take advantage of the visual and passive recreational amenity provided by the adjacent stream valley area. Residential density and building

- heights should be tapered from mid-rise or garden-style apartments to townhouses located nearest to the existing adjacent neighborhood;
- Building heights are tapered down toward the existing single-family area;
 - Adequate measures to mitigate against undue environmental impact are provided. Steep slopes, streams and floodplains with their existing vegetation located on the property are preserved as a public park. Where past practices have degraded these slopes and streams, bioengineering approaches should be followed to restore them to more natural conditions and functions;
 - Sufficient buffering and screening are provided to mitigate adverse impacts on adjacent residential areas;
 - Adequate right-of-way is provided for road improvements;
 - Pedestrian circulation and the use of mass transit is encouraged through site design, connection with proposed and existing pedestrian circulation systems in the area and other methods;
 - Urban design elements, such as streetscaping, public art, pedestrian plazas, cultural/recreation facilities, landscaped open space, landmarks or building designs which will denote this area as a focal point of the Penn Daw Community Business Center are provided. The urban design recommendations found at the end of this Plan, should be used as a guide; and
 - Incorporation of residential use in office or retail buildings in an “above the shop” arrangement is encouraged.

As an option, if Sub-units E-1, E-2 and E-3 are substantially and logically consolidated with Land Unit G, a well-integrated mix of uses with an overall intensity at up to 1.0 FAR that includes at least two of the following uses: retail, office, hotel and residential. The conditions listed above should be fulfilled for the entire assemblage.”

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

The nomination proposes to amend the Comprehensive Plan to allow for neighborhood serving office or hotel and retail uses at an intensity of 1.0 FAR with building heights up to 100 feet without substantial consolidation with sub-units E-2, E-3, and land unit G. The nomination also proposes to expand the boundary of sub-unit E-1 to include parcel 83-3 ((22)) B. Under one alternative, a 10-story hotel with first floor retail could be developed. Under the second alternative, office buildings with ground level retail could be built. Seventy percent of the development would be office or hotel use, and thirty percent retail use in both alternatives. The nomination would allow approximately 57,369 square feet of retail use and 133,860 square feet of hotel and/or office use to be built for a total of 191,229 square feet of development. As a comparison, the development potential under the current Plan is approximately 73,616 square feet of retail or office use and up to four dwelling units.

ANALYSIS

Land Use

The adopted Plan has an option for a similar development intensity provided parcel consolidation in sub-units E-1, E-2, and E-3 with land unit G is achieved. If this coordination cannot be realized as recommended in the Plan, a less dense residential and retail environment would be more appropriate. By nominating selective parcels within different sub-units, this nomination promotes piecemeal development. This would work against the established sub-unit divisions and effectively eliminate the possibility for the coordinated development envisioned for the Penn Daw CBC. A cohesive, large scale proposal would provide the possibility for high-quality redevelopment and revitalization through the implementation of consistent building design and other urban design elements, parks, public gathering space, a grid-pattern of streets, and would provide a better opportunity to preserve and restore environmentally sensitive land.

Transportation

A grid-pattern of streets is envisioned for the core area of Penn Daw CBC that includes a majority of sub-units E-1, E-2, E-3, and land unit G. The nomination would preclude the implementation of this circulation network that is a key element to a well-designed, pedestrian-friendly mixed-use activity center.

One goal of the Comprehensive Plan for the Richmond Highway Corridor Area is to promote revitalization and redevelopment while maintaining an acceptable land use and transportation balance. Richmond Highway is designated as an Enhanced Public Transportation Corridor, and the Transportation Plan map shows future “Metrorail/Monorail/LRT/BRT” service along the corridor. Should this Plan amendment be approved, provisions of right-of-way for an eight lane cross section of Richmond Highway, six lanes for vehicular travel and two dedicated lanes for transit service, should be recognized in Plan guidance. If inter-parcel access is not provided, a provision for service roadways should be made. Inter-parcel access is strongly encouraged in place of service drives, and should address traffic and pedestrian safety, access management, and consolidation of access points to Richmond Highway. Consideration for a shuttle service or other similar connection to the Huntington Metro station to and from the site is also suggested.

Environmental

Approximately 30 percent of the northeast portion of the nomination area is characterized by dense deciduous/evergreen vegetation. Objective 10 under the Environmental Resources recommendations of the Policy Plan notes that non-residential development should conserve and restore tree cover on developed sites. Any redevelopment of the site should exceed the 10 percent phosphorous removal requirement for water quality control and adequate outfall requirements. The subject property is located in the Penn Daw CBC. CBC’s are specifically cited in Policy B, Objective 13 of the Policy Plan as areas where a “green building” commitment would reinforce the importance of environmental sustainability and conservation principles for this development. If the Plan is amended as nominated, a comprehensive landscape plan as well as streetscape and design principles per the urban design guidelines for the Richmond Highway Corridor should be developed and implemented.

Stormwater Management

The stream system to which the nomination area would convey its stormwater runoff is severely degraded. Any development should maintain or return pre-development hydrologic conditions on site to limit further degradation to the watershed. The area of Dyke Marsh in the Belle Haven watershed has been listed as impaired on Virginia's 303(d) list of impaired estuaries for PCBs in fish tissue, bacteria, and aquatic plants. Subsequently, TMDL's (Total Maximum Daily Loads) plans are being developed. TMDL's represent the total pollutant a waterbody can assimilate and still meet water quality standards. Increased density may decrease the ability to meet the goals of these plans.

Parks and Cultural Resources

Major parks and recreation objectives for the Mount Vernon Planning District are to expand selected park sites for additional active recreation facilities and to provide urban and neighborhood parks and facilities in conjunction with new development. Based on the Park Authority's Needs Assessment study, by the year 2015 the Mount Vernon Planning District will have a projected deficiencies of 132 acres of local parkland and 974 acres of district and County-wide parkland. A large, coordinated, high-intensity development would provide an opportunity for urban park features such as plazas, gathering spaces, street furniture, and pedestrian amenities. The adopted Plan text currently provides this option, but the proposed nomination does not offer these conditions to offset the negative impacts on parkland and park resources.

The subject parcels are within a possible archaeological site. This was the location of a Federal Camp Site as determined in the 2002 Fairfax County Civil War Site Inventory. While this site has been disturbed, some areas may contain remnants of the camp. Additional investigation is warranted before a determination of site designation can be made due to the existing land use.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends retaining the adopted Plan. The nomination proposes development at an intensity for a small portion of sub-units E-1 and E-2 that is recommended for the entirety of the consolidated area of sub-units E-1, E-2, E-3, and land unit G. An adopted Plan option exists for development similar to what is proposed with conditions and greater consolidation, therefore revitalization of the Penn Daw CBC in the Richmond Highway Corridor would be better realized through this existing Plan option. The current Plan option requires interparcel access within a larger consolidated area, which would provide critical circulation connections through the site and alleviate traffic congestion on Richmond Highway. Approval of this nomination would make it more difficult to improve connectivity throughout the area than the existing Plan option. Other nominations located close to transit and/or those that propose a mix of residential, retail, and office uses are better suited to fulfill BRAC-related needs and County-wide land use objectives.