



**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:** MOUNT VERNON

**BRAC APR ITEM(S):** 08-IV-9MV

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**NOMINATOR:** Stewart Mendelsohn

**ACREAGE:** 4.35 acres

**TAX MAP I.D.:** 83-1 ((8)); 83-1 ((20))

**GENERAL LOCATION:** South of Huntington Avenue, east of Biscayne Drive, north of Glendale Terrace, and west of Blaine Drive.

**PLANNING AREA:** IV

**District:** Mount Vernon

**Sector:** Huntington (MV1)

**Special Areas:** Huntington Transit Station Area, Land Units T and B

**ADOPTED PLAN MAP:** RETAIL; 16-20 DU/AC; 8-12 DU/AC

**ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:**

Land Unit B: Residential use at 8-12 dwelling units per acre.

Land Unit T: Residential use at 16-20 dwelling units per acre with a retail component of up to 20,000 gross square feet to provide local services to the neighborhood.

**PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:**

Transit oriented mixed use at 3.0 FAR. High-rise residential and office buildings oriented to Huntington Avenue with street level community retail uses. Residential buildings along Glendale Terrace used to transition to the neighborhood conservation area.

**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

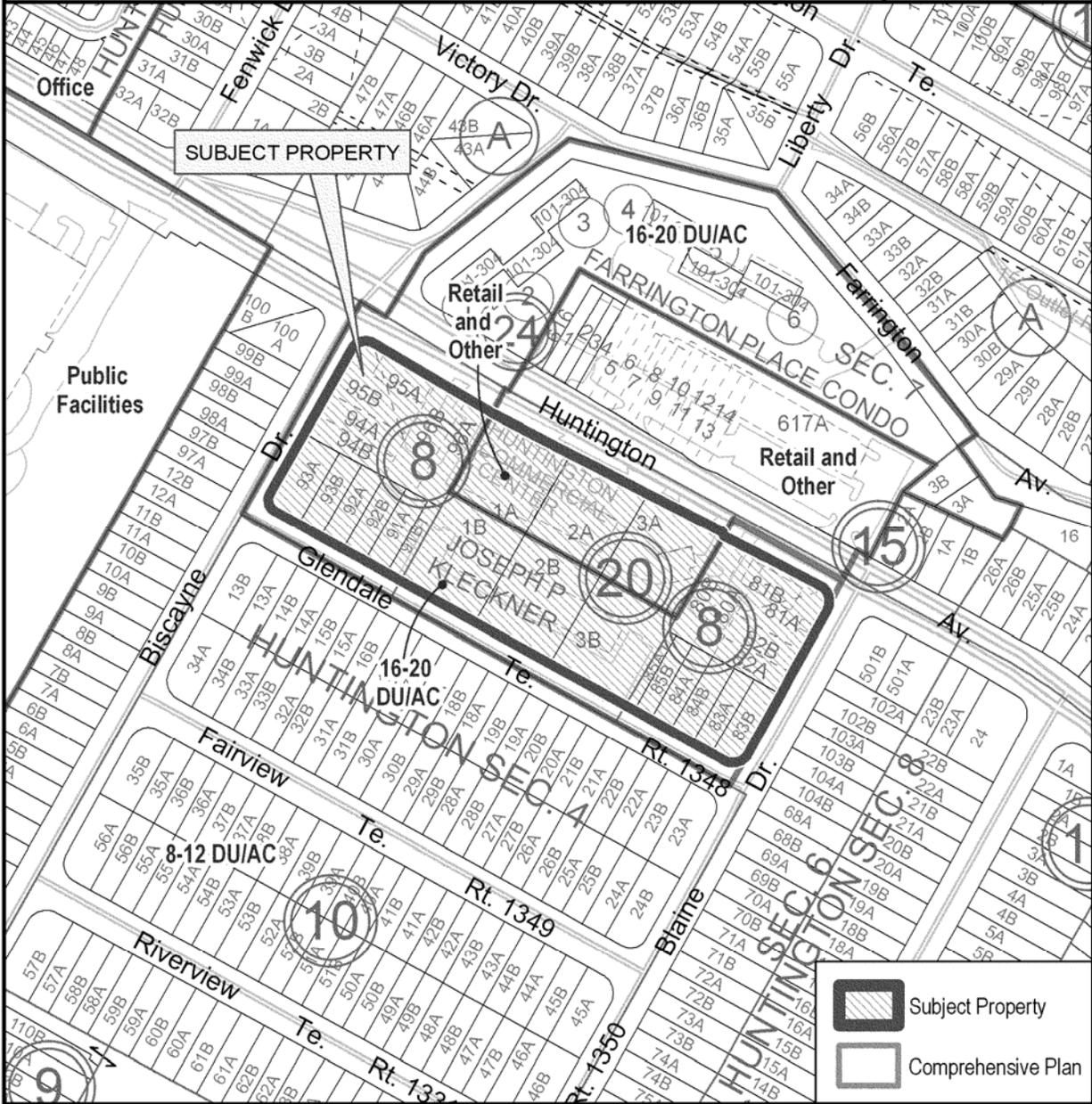
Retain Adopted Plan

Defer

The Huntington Community is currently reviewing the Huntington Conservation Area Plan for possible amendment. The Comprehensive Plan should not be amended until the Housing Authority amends the Conservation Plan.

**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

**BRAC #**  
**08-IV-9MV**  
**2008 BRAC APR**



**Subject Property Current Plan:** Residential use at 8-12 du/ac. Residential use at 16-20 du/ac with a 20,000 sq ft retail component.

**Nominated Plan Change:** Mixed use up to 3.0 FAR with residential, office, and retail uses.

**Staff Recommendation:** Defer decision pending study of the Huntington Neighborhood Conservation Plan.

200 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS  
 PARCEL INFORMATION CURRENT TO SEPTEMBER 2008



**BACKGROUND:**

The subject property is bordered on the north by Huntington Avenue, on the east by Blaine Drive, on the west by Biscayne Drive, and on the south by Glendale Terrace.

The subject property is located within the Huntington Conservation Area. The Huntington Conservation Plan was adopted for the community by the Board of Supervisors in March, 1976. The basic goal of that document is the conservation and development of a viable and sound residential community in the Huntington neighborhood.

FIGURE 1: Development Potential Table

	Residential						Non-residential			
	Total Units	Res'd Sq. Ft.	Single-Family	Multi-family			Retail	Office	Private Rec	Total
			Attached	Low Rise	Mid Rise	High Rise	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Non-Res'd Sq. Ft.
Existing Development	62		8	54			9,956			9,956
Current Plan: 8-12 du/ac (.92acre) 16-20 du/ac (3.44) Retail (20,000 sf for LU)	79		11	68			3,200			3,200
Zoning Potential: C-5 (3.25 acres) C-8 (1.11 acres)	0						41,818	24,829		66,647
Proposed Plan: Mixed use up to 3.0 (Res 75%, Office 20%, Retail 4%, Private Rec 1%)	541	426,511	22		72	447	22,747	113,736	5,686	142,169

**ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:**

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 8-6-2007; MV1 - Huntington Community Planning Sector, Land Units A, B and T (Huntington Conservation Area), pages 94-96:

“A neighborhood improvement program and the Huntington Conservation Plan were adopted for the community by the Board of Supervisors in March, 1976. The basic goal of that document is the conservation and development of a viable and sound residential community in the Huntington neighborhood. First, the neighborhood improvement program lists a series of public improvement projects that will be necessary to improve the livability of Huntington. Second, the Conservation Plan provides the legal mechanisms for carrying out the activities of the neighborhood improvement program; it firmly establishes land use densities for the Conservation Area; and it sets standards for future development and rehabilitation in the community....”

“Land Unit B comprises most of the southern portion of the Huntington Conservation Area. It is developed with duplex residential units and is planned for residential use at 8-12 dwelling units

per acre. Pedestrian facilities from the terminal points of Blaine Drive and Biscayne Drive should be provided to facilitate pedestrian movement between the Huntington community and the Metro station and Mount Eagle Park.

In the center of the Huntington Conservation Area on either side of Huntington Avenue is Land Unit T, an area developed with duplexes, garden apartments and local retail uses. This 10-acre area is planned for residential use at 16-20 dwelling units per acre with a retail component of up to 20,000 gross square feet to provide local services to the neighborhood (see Figure 25). Substantial consolidation of parcels is required in order to attain this level of development. To maintain the scale and character of the adjacent residential neighborhood, redevelopment of Land Unit T should:

- Respect a building height limit of three stories on the north side of Huntington Avenue; on the south side of Huntington Avenue, buildings should be within a three-story height as established along Glendale Terrace due to the sloping topography;
- Provide landscaping between the existing residential uses and areas redeveloped with non-residential uses or parking facilities to buffer the residential areas from adverse impacts;
- Encourage the retention and rehabilitation of existing garden apartments on the site; and
- Coordinate building design, massing and open spaces on both sides of Huntington Avenue.”

## CRITICAL ISSUES

### Land Use

The Huntington Conservation Plan firmly establishes land use densities for the Conservation Area, and sets standards for future development and rehabilitation in the community. Any proposed increase in intensity and use for the subject property will need to adhere to the provisions and requirements within the Huntington Conservation Area Plan. As stated on page 40 of the Huntington Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan document, the conservation plan must be amended before the Comprehensive Plan and such amendments go before the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. On page 37 (2.a) the uses and intensity of the area are limited to 1975 Zoning Map, as amended.

Housing and Community Development (HCD) staff is currently working with the Huntington community to explore updating and amending the Conservation Area Plan. The community has been meeting regularly to further this effort, and is hoping to schedule a public hearing before the Housing Authority Board in December.

The close proximity of the subject property to the Huntington metro station provides the opportunity to create a mixed use development oriented to transit. However, the current Comprehensive Plan does not include the property in the area designated as the Transit Development Area (TDA) (see Figure 2). The TDA was established to focus the highest intensity development in the areas closest to the Metro station.

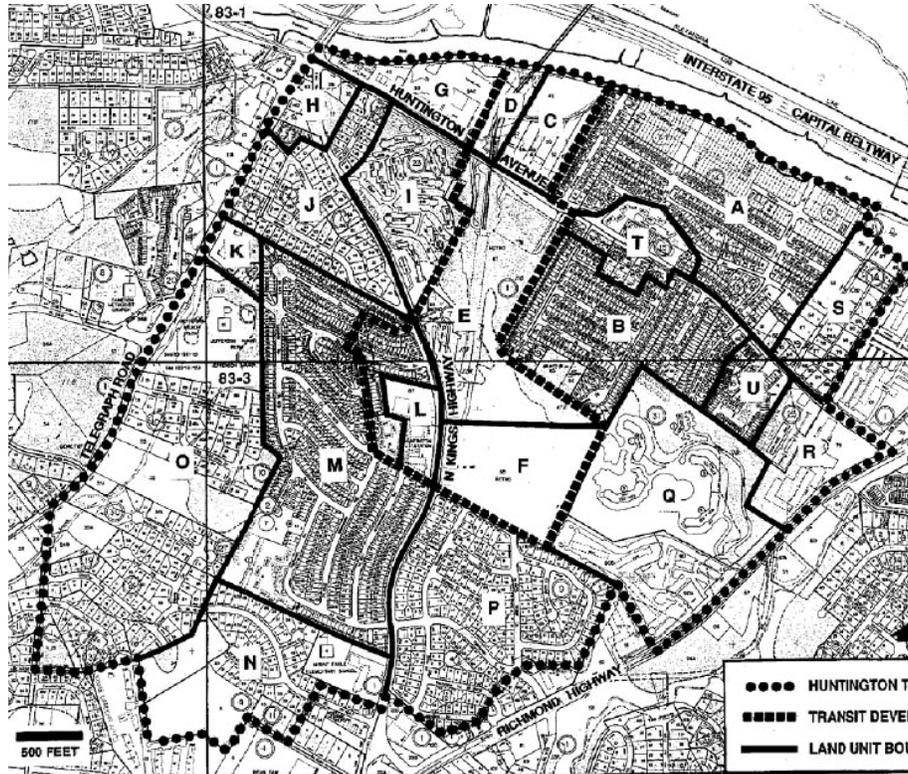


FIGURE 2: Huntington Transit Station Area.

The single family houses along the west side of Biscayne Drive create a clear delineation between the TDA and the Huntington Conservation area. Outside the TDA (with the exception of areas oriented to Richmond Highway), the Plan recommendations limit development to .35 FAR and 16-20 du/ac. Along Richmond Highway development intensities are higher, up to 50 du/ac.

The proposed height limit of 180 feet is 30 feet higher than the maximum allowed in the TDA north of the Metro station, and about 6 times higher than the current Plan for the subject property. Current Plan text limits the height in the subject area to three stories.

Using an average unit size of 1,200 square feet, the current development potential of the subject area would be approximately 0.5 FAR. The proposed intensity of 3.0 FAR represents a five-fold increase in the intensity allowed on the site.

If supported as a component of a mixed use option, residential use should provide at least 12% affordable housing in conformance with the Board policy. In addition to the 12% affordable housing, any existing affordable housing units that are demolished should be replaced. Given the proximity to the metro station, strong consideration should be given to the provision of more than 12% affordable housing.

### **Parks**

The Mount Vernon Planning District has 34 neighborhood and community parks and three district and countywide parks owned and maintained by the Park Authority with a total of 598

acres. The recreation facilities in these parks do not meet the standards established by the Park Authority through the Needs Assessment study. The following table details the park and recreation deficiencies in the Mount Vernon Planning District:

FIGURE 3: Park Needs Assessment

PARK FACILITY	2004 DEFICIENCY	2015 PROJECTED DEFICIENCY
Local Parkland	52 acres	132 acres
District and Countywide Parks	766 acres	974 acres
Rectangle Fields	14	20
Adult Baseball	1	2
Adult Softball	3	4

The proposed increase in population increases the public need for parks and park facilities, and further exacerbates the deficiency of facilities and related services. Opportunities to mitigate these impacts may be available by adding facilities to existing parks in the Planning District.

If the nomination is supported, the following recommendations apply:

- The impact on parks and recreation should be mitigated per County policies contained in Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan;
- Urban Park features, such as pedestrian accessible plazas and seating areas, and Neighborhood park facilities should be constructed in conjunction with the proposed development; and
- Language supporting integration of urban park areas within the application area should be added.

**Schools**

Currently, the subject area is developed with a total of 8 units in duplex homes and 54 low-rise garden apartments with a total student population of 17 students (8 elementary, 2 middle, 7 high school) as of September 2007. The proposed Plan language to redevelop the area with 22 single family attached units (7 students); 72 mid-rise units (6 students); and 447 high-rise units (35 students) is projected to generate a total of 48 students.

The proposed parcel is within the Cameron Elementary School, Mark Twain Middle School, and Edison High School boundaries. The chart below is intended to show the existing school capacity, enrollment, and projected enrollment in five years.

FIGURE 4: School Capacity Projections

SCHOOL	CAPACITY	ENROLL. (9/07)	2008-2009 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT*	CAP./ENROLL. DIFFERENCE 2008-2009	2012-2013 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT*	CAP./ENROLL. DIFFERENCE 2012-2013
Cameron ES	612	544	592	20	530	82
Twain MS	1,025	837	837	188	876	149
Edison HS	1,675	1,776	1,786	-111	1,642	33

The schools serving the subject parcel contain sufficient capacity for the projected students generated from the number and type of housing units proposed.

It is noted that there are four other BRAC APR nominations (1MV, 2MV, 3MV and 4MV ) that would have school impacts that are within the boundaries served by Cameron ES (2MV students would attend Mount Eagle ES), Twain MS, and Edison HS. Individually, these five nominations will not significantly impact the receiving schools. However, collectively, if development occurs as proposed by the changes to the Comprehensive Plan for each of the nominations, then there is projected to be a capacity deficit at Cameron ES and Edison HS by 3 spaces and 18 spaces, respectively, by the 2012-2013 school year. Twain MS will still have sufficient capacity.

### **Transportation**

The subject property fronts on the south side of Huntington Avenue and is located within a 1/4 - 1/3 mile walk of the Huntington metro station. With its proximity to metro, the property has potential for a transit-oriented development that can be designed with enhanced pedestrian connectivity to the station, while providing benefits in terms of reducing vehicle trips in the area and increasing transit ridership. Should this nomination be approved, site planning should seek to optimize the orientation to the metro station.

Huntington Avenue is a minor arterial roadway which currently exists as a four-lane section along the frontage of the property. The Comprehensive Plan does not presently recommend improvement of Huntington Avenue.

Before accounting for trip reductions associated with the proximity to transit, the proposed plan is estimated to generate more than 2,900 additional daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan. On a peak hour basis, the proposed plan would generate approximately 286 additional trips in the AM peak hour and 377 additional trips in the PM peak hour. Directional flows into and out of the site during the peak hours of travel would be balanced. At these levels of additional traffic, Huntington Avenue would not be required to be widened to a six-lane section. However, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of this nomination with other plan amendments proposed nearby that may be adopted, the additional traffic generated on Huntington Avenue may require an amendment to the County's Transportation Plan to require a six-lane facility. In this case, additional right-of-way from the development would be expected.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The proposed nomination creates a unique tension between important County land use objectives: concentrating development in an area served by transit, creating balance in the mix of land uses, and protecting older stable neighborhoods.

The subject property is within a ¼ to ½ mile of the Huntington transit station. Mixed use and transit oriented development guidance in the Plan favors the creating activity centers within Transit Station Areas. However, staff is concerned about the impact of the proposed intensity on the Huntington Conservation area neighborhood, of which the subject area is a part. The intensity proposed is more similar to that allowed within the Transit Development Area, not within a neighborhood conservation area.

Amending the boundary of the TDA to include the subject area is not a viable solution, as it would have to include part of the single family neighborhood which was not nominated for amendment. Allowing such high intensities outside of the TDA would set an undesirable precedent that may create redevelopment pressure on other stable neighborhoods within the TSA.

In addition, with the narrow depth of the block, it may be difficult to provide a transition to the surrounding single family homes along Glendale Terrace, Biscayne Drive, and Blaine Drive.

The proposed development would be predominantly residential (75% of GFA). This area is already heavily residential with a low percentage of uses providing employment opportunities. Staff favors a greater emphasis on office use in order to create a better balance between housing and employment opportunities in the area, and to better tie into the needs created by BRAC. A better integration of housing and employment could benefit the transportation system and air quality if some residents work within walking/biking distance. In addition, as a terminus station, increasing office use would promote a reverse transit commute pattern.

As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, "[T]he Conservation Plan provides the legal mechanisms for carrying out the activities of the neighborhood improvement program; it *firmly establishes land use densities for the Conservation area*; and it sets standards for future development and rehabilitation in the community" (pg. 94, emphasis added). The current Comprehensive Plan recommendations for the subject area reflect the uses and densities described in the Conservation Plan.

In addition, on page 40 of the Huntington Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan, Section ix. Procedure for Plan Amendment:

"All proposed amendments to the Conservation Plan shall be submitted to the Authority for the purpose of holding a public hearing to provide the opportunity for residents of the project area and all other affected parties to voice their views on the proposal. The Authority shall then submit the amendment along with its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Prior to taking final action on any amendment, the Board shall hold a public hearing. Any Conservation Plan amendments that require an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan shall further require the approval of the amendment and the Comprehensive Plan change by the Planning Commission."

Therefore, Staff recommends deferring this nomination pending the completion of the Huntington Community's examination of the Conservation Area Plan and adoption of any amendments to the Plan by the Housing Authority Board. Congruence between the Conservation Plan and the Comprehensive Plan would be best achieved by this order of events. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan should reflect the community's vision for future development.