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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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**STAFF REPORT
2005-2006 AREA PLANS REVIEW**

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S): Springfield

APR ITEM(S): 05-III-2FC

NOMINATOR(S): J. Peter Winfield

ACREAGE: 8.01 Acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 56-3 ((1)) 6A

GENERAL LOCATION: SE corner of Lee Hwy (Route 29), West Ox Road and
Fairfax County Pkwy (Route 7100)

PLANNING AREA(S): III
District(s): Bull Run
Sector: Braddock (BR7)
Special Area(s): Fairfax Center Suburban Center (Land Unit T)

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Fairfax Center Area

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Land Unit T: Baseline: Residential use at 1 dwelling unit
per acre (du/ac); Intermediate: Residential use at 1.5 du/ac;
Overlay: Residential use at 2 du/ac. This land unit is within
the Water Supply Protection Overlay District.

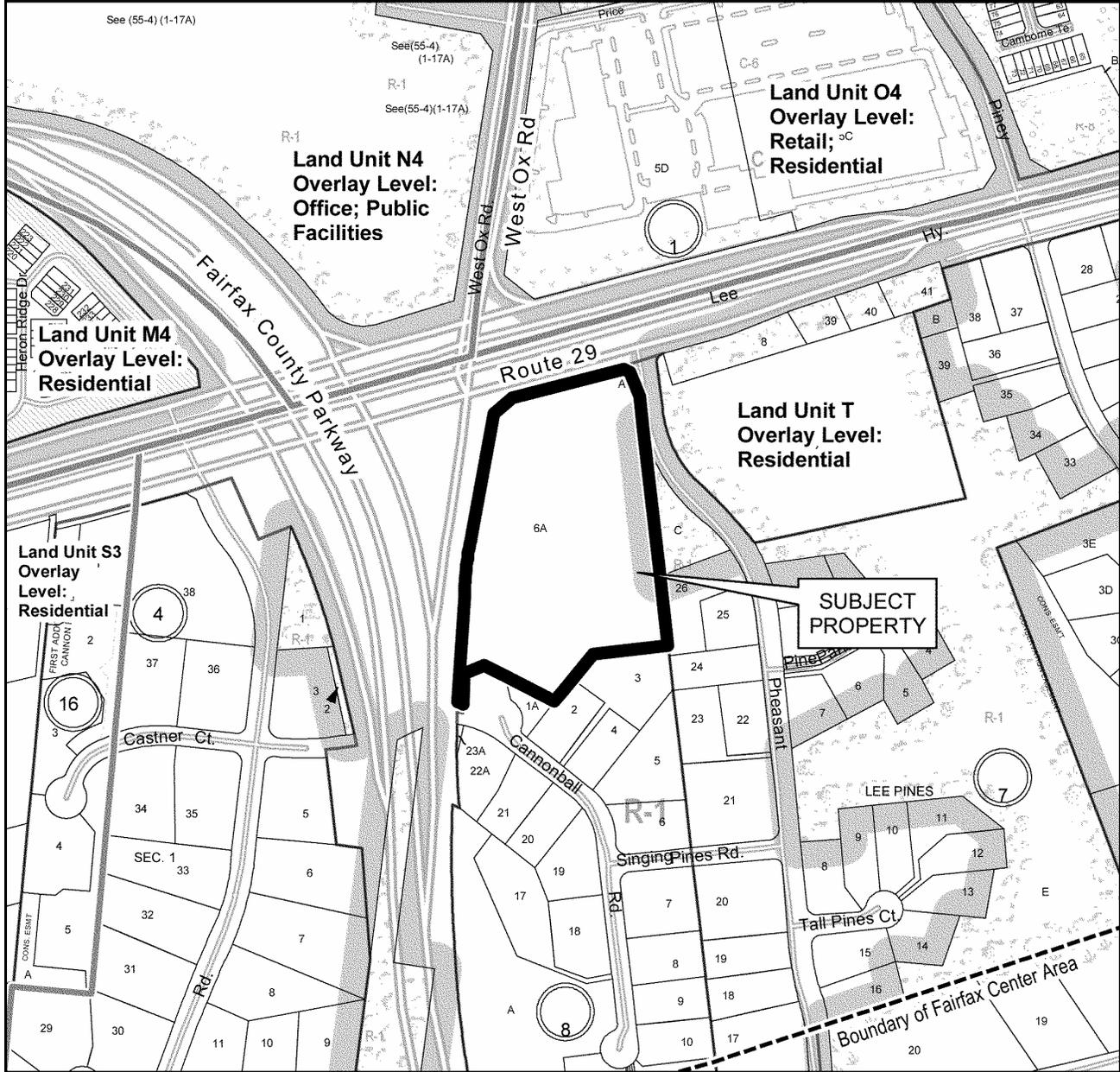
For complete Plan text see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/planareas.htm>
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area3/overview.pdf>
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area3/fairfaxcenter.pdf>
p. 97-98

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Residential use at 16-20 du/ac.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Approve Nomination as submitted
 Approve Staff Alternative
 Retain Adopted Plan
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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	APR # 05-III-2FC SPRINGFIELD
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Subject Property Current Plan : Land Unit T: Baseline: Residential at 1 du/ac; Intermediate: Residential at 1.5 du/ac; Overlay: Residential at 2 du/ac.

Nominated Plan Change : Residential use at 16-20 du/ac.

Staff Recommendation : Retain the Comprehensive Plan.



CONTEXT

General Location: The subject property is bounded on the north by Lee Highway (Route 29), on the east by Pheasant Ridge Road, and on the west by the Fairfax County Parkway (Route 7100) and West Ox Road.

Planned and Existing Land Use and Zoning

Subject Property: The subject property consists of a vacant 8-acre parcel that is zoned R-1. The subject property is planned for residential use at 1 du/ac at the baseline level, for residential use at 1.5 du/ac at the intermediate level, and for residential use at 2 du/ac at the overlay level.

Adjacent Area:

North: North of Lee Highway the adjacent area is located in Land Unit O4 of the Fairfax Center Area and is planned for community level retail up to .23 FAR and single-family attached residential use at 8 du/ac at the overlay level. This area is currently zoned C-6 and is developed with commercial buildings at the intersection of Route 29 and West Ox Road. To the northwest of the nominated parcel, opposite Route 29 and between West Ox Road and the Fairfax County Parkway, the area is located in Land Unit N4 of the Fairfax Center Area. This area is planned for low intensity office use at an intensity up to .15 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and public facility uses. This area is zoned R-1 and has been approved for the County's Public Safety and Transportation Center (PSTOC), a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) facility, and a bus maintenance facility.

West: The nominated parcel is bounded by the Fairfax County Parkway to the west. Further west opposite the Parkway the adjacent area is located in Land Unit T of the Fairfax Center Area, is planned for residential use at 2 du/ac at the overlay level, and is zoned R-1.

South and East: The area to the south and east of the subject property is also located in Land Unit T of the Fairfax Center Area, is planned for residential use at 2 du/ac at the overlay level, and is zoned R-1. Immediately to the east of the nominated parcel across Pheasant Ridge Road is Piney Branch Stream Valley Park, owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

PLANNING HISTORY

No Comprehensive Plan changes have been proposed for this area since 1994.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, as amended through February 27, 2006, Land Unit Recommendations, Land Unit T, Recommendations, Land Use, p. 97-98:

“This land unit is planned for low density residential use at 2 dwelling units per acre at the overlay level. Buffering along Route 29 should be provided...”

The Land Unit Summary Chart for Land Unit T shows:

Baseline Level: Residential 1 du/ac
Intermediate Level: Residential 1.5 du/ac
Overlay Level: Residential 2 du/ac

“Note: This land unit is within the Water Supply Protection Overlay District.”

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, as amended through February 27, 2006, Fairfax Center Area-Wide Recommendations, Land Use, p. 14:

“...Existing stable neighborhoods should be preserved, enhanced, and reinforced. Infill development in these neighborhoods should be of a compatible use, type, and intensity in accordance with the guidance provided by the Policy Plan under Land Use Objectives 8 and 14. The Fairfax Center Area includes areas not scheduled for the expansion of public sewer...”

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, as amended through February 27, 2006, Fairfax Center Area-Wide Recommendations, Environment, p. 36:

“Maintain very low density development in the portions of the Fairfax Center Area that are environmentally constrained and drain into the Difficult Run and the Occoquan Reservoir;...”

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, as amended through February 27, 2006, Land Use Recommendations-The Overlay Level, p.44:

“In general, intensity of development at the overlay level diminishes with distance from the core area. The overlay level represents a level of intensity achievable only in conjunction with the provision of substantial development elements. As such, it is a planning goal, rather than a prediction of the level of development that will be realized in the area. The intensity incentive philosophy is the underlying premise for setting development levels within the area...”

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

The nomination proposes to change the current Plan recommendation for the subject property from residential use at 2 du/ac at the overlay level to residential use at 16-20 du/ac.

ANALYSIS

Approved Sewer Service Area

The subject property is located outside of the Fairfax County Approved Sewer Service Area (ASSA), and would require an expansion of the ASSA to serve the proposed density. Under certain circumstances some properties adjacent to the ASSA boundary are able to utilize existing sewer lines. However, the Board of Supervisors' approval in June 1986 of the ASSA expansion north of the subject property included a condition that the ASSA boundary shall not extend south of Lee Highway without explicit approval from the Board of Supervisors. This condition applies to the subject property.

Water Quality

The subject property is within the Water Supply Protection Overlay District (WSPOD). Water quality measures or Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be required to reduce projected phosphorous runoff pollution to fifty percent over pre-development conditions for the proposed use. An intermittent stream traverses the property, which is in the headwaters of the Popes Head Creek watershed. This stream flows into a larger tributary approximately 400 feet east of the subject property, which is designated as Resource Protection Area (RPA) and could potentially be Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC). High intensity development on the subject property would create increased impervious surface that would increase runoff into the environmentally sensitive area to the east. While grades on the property were likely altered during the construction of the Fairfax County Parkway, any development should preserve the flow of this stream as it passes through the subject property.

Environment

The subject property is wooded, primarily with hardwoods. The quality of existing tree cover would have to be determined with any development proposal which might arise from this process. Tree save areas would likely be based on that assessment in combination with information submitted by the applicant(s) and findings from the Urban Forestry Division. Adjacent lots to the south and east are developed, with additional vacant lots to the east.

Transportation generated noise from Lee Highway and the Fairfax County Parkway affects the subject property. The lot is adjacent to the interchange of these two highways. Noise studies may be required for any noise sensitive uses which might be proposed for this land area to determine the extent of impacts and any proposed mitigation measures which might be applied.

Parks

The Fairfax Center Area is currently served by 10 Local Parks and 1 District Park, totaling 298.5 acres. Recreation facilities within these parks do not meet standards established by the Park Authority through the Needs Assessment study. The proposed increase in local population increases the public need for park development on new and existing parkland. Opportunities to mitigate these impacts may be found at existing parks in the Fairfax Center Area or through the provision of usable parkland dedication. Mitigation measures should be guided by the policies in Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan.

The nominated property is located adjacent to Piney Branch Stream Valley Park. Parks are often impacted by neighboring properties through encroachments. These impacts should be mitigated in a fashion consistent with Objective 5 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan.

The site is located in the Popes Head Creek Watershed, which is rated as having fair habitat quality. The Fairfax County Physical Stream Assessment found a total of 382 ‘inventory points’ (deficient buffers, crossing, ditches and pipes, erosion, head cuts, obstructions and utilities) in this watershed.

The property is currently undeveloped and is located at a headwater spring for Piney Branch and near several recorded prehistoric sites. The property has a moderate potential for both prehistoric and historic archaeological sites.

Park Trails: There exists a paved asphalt trail along the Fairfax County Parkway frontage of the subject property and a sidewalk trail along Route 29. These trails are sufficient to allow for safe pedestrian connections between the Fairfax County Parkway trail and Piney Branch Stream Valley Park.

Transportation

The Comprehensive Plan Map identifies the Fairfax County Parkway/Lee Highway interchange for potential improvements. There is currently no study underway for this interchange, so the potential impacts on this property are not determined. Access to the property is limited to Pheasant Ridge Road, with a possible access point on Cannonball Road.

Schools

The subject property is within the Fairfax High School Pyramid. The site is assigned to Willow Springs Elementary School and Lanier Middle School. The proposed increase in density could result in an additional 18 elementary school students, 4 middle school students and 8 high school students when comparing the maximum student yield anticipated with development at the current Plan overlay level (2 du/ac) and the maximum student yield anticipated under the nomination, as illustrated below.

Existing Plan

SCHOOL LEVEL	UNIT TYPE / SINGLE FAMILY RATIO	MIN. NUMBER OF UNITS	MINIMUM STUDENT YIELD	MAX. NUMBER OF UNITS	MAXIMUM STUDENT YIELD
ELEMENTARY	0.244	8	2	16	4
MIDDLE	0.07	8	1	16	1
HIGH	0.145	8	1	16	2

Proposed Plan

SCHOOL LEVEL	UNIT TYPE / MULTI-FAMILY RATIO	MIN. NUMBER OF UNITS	MINIMUM STUDENT YIELD	MAX. NUMBER OF UNITS	MAXIMUM STUDENT YIELD
ELEMENTARY	0.137	128	18	160	22
MIDDLE	0.03	128	4	160	5
HIGH	0.06	128	8	160	10

RECOMMENDATION

The long standing Comprehensive Plan guidance for low-density, single-family residential uses south of Lee Highway in the Fairfax Center Area reinforces the transition from higher densities in the core of the Fairfax Center Area to the lower densities planned south of Lee Highway to conform with the findings of the Occoquan Basin Study. The Fairfax Center Area land units south of Lee Highway are generally planned for no more than three dwelling units per acre.

The subject property is currently planned for residential use at 2 du/ac at the overlay level, which would allow for approximately 16 single-family homes on the 8 acre property. The nomination proposes a residential density of 16-20 du/ac, which would result in approximately 160 dwelling units on the property, a ten-fold increase in the planned residential density of the property. This proposed density is out of character with the surrounding low-density residential uses which have developed under current Plan guidance.

The subject property is not within the Approved Sewer Service Area, and is specifically precluded from sewer service without explicit approval from the Board of Supervisors. The necessary public sewer infrastructure is not available to serve the proposed development.

Due to long standing Plan guidance for lower residential densities south of Lee Highway, the incompatibility of the proposed density with the surrounding residential densities, and the lack of necessary infrastructure to serve the proposed nomination, the staff recommendation is to retain the existing Plan guidance for the subject property.