



**Submission Form for Proposed Changes to the Comprehensive Plan or Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program**

To use this form, type responses or print in ink. Attachments may be used as necessary. This form is also available on the Web at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/fairfaxforward/submissionformproposedchangescompplan2.pdf>

**1. Subject Property Information** (Not required for countywide proposal.) For help visit the Planning & Zoning Viewer

Identify general location, street address, or Tax Map parcels, if available.

Countywide

a) General Location: McLean and Great Falls along the Potomac River

b) Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Tax Map Parcel Numbers: Tax Maps 14-3, 14-4, 20-2, 21-1 and 21-2

For help visit the Department of Tax Administration website or the Digital Map Viewer

d) Identify total aggregate size of all subject parcels in acres or square feet: \_\_\_\_\_

For help visit the Department of Tax Administration website

**2. Proposed Amendment to Comprehensive Plan recommendations**

a) Describe the character and type of proposed development, if a land use change is proposed. The potential development could be described in terms of land use floor area ratio (FAR) or dwelling units per acre. Building height or size may also be used to convey scale.

b) If a policy change is proposed, describe why the proposal should be addressed at a countywide level.

Amend the Countywide Trails Plan Map to remove and delete the stream valley trail planned along the Potomac River between Scott's Run Nature Preserve and Great Falls Park. Note: No Comprehensive Plan text changes are necessary or requested with this proposal for the McLean Planning District, including the affected M5-Potomac Palisades Community Planning Sector.

c) Provide justification for the proposed amendment. Describe how the proposal meets any of the following criteria and why the proposal should be included in the work program. Check all that apply.

- Address emerging community concerns or changes in circumstance;
- Respond to actions by others, such as Federal, State, or adjacent jurisdictions;
- Advance major policy objectives, such as promoting environmental protection, fostering revitalization of designated areas, supporting economic development, preserving open space, providing affordable housing, or balancing transportation infrastructure and public facilities services with growth and development;
- Better implement the Concept for Future Development;
- Reflect implementation of Comprehensive Plan guidance through zoning approvals; and,
- Respond to or incorporate research derived from technical planning or transportation studies.

*continued on reverse side*

Explanation for (c). (Additional sheets may be attached.) See additional sheet.

**3. Contact Information** (Name and daytime phone required.\* Provide street address and/or email address.)

a) Name: \* David S. Houston, c/o Blank Rome LLP

b) Daytime Phone: (202) 772-5820

c) Street Address: 600 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037

d) Email Address: DHouston@blankrome.com

**4. Would you like to speak with staff about this submission?**

Select: Yes or No

4a. If yes, how should we contact you? e-mail  phone

**\*\*Staff review of all submissions is anticipated to begin February 2016\*\***

Submit the completed form or direct questions to:

**Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning**

The Herrity Building

12055 Government Center Parkway

Suite 730

Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5500

703-324-1380, TTY 711 (Virginia Relay)

[DPZmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:DPZmail@fairfaxcounty.gov)



## Submission Form for Proposed Changes to the Comprehensive Plan - Additional Sheet

### Section 2(c) - Justification:

The stream valley trail planned along the Potomac River between Scott's Run Nature Preserve and Great Falls Park is not needed or justified because this area of the County has several other existing and planned trail systems: a major trail along Georgetown Pike (Route 193), which is shown as the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail on the Countywide Trails Plan Map, the stream valley trail along Difficult Run, and the Cross County Trail that has its northern terminus at the junction of Difficult Run and Georgetown Pike. Therefore, potential hikers have other trail alternatives. Also, there are existing riverfront hiking opportunities at Scott's Run and Great Falls Park. All of these meet the County's goal of providing a continuous trail system.

Construction and maintenance of a steam valley trail along the Potomac River between Scott's Run and Great Falls Park would fragment the current pristine environment, be disruptive to archeological sites, endanger rare native species, and intrude on wild life patterns. This trail segment, including the bridge required to cross Difficult Run, is neither practical nor cost effective because of the steep embankments and uneven surfaces along the river. The trail would actually be a "billy goat" type of trail – requiring users to climb over and along the existing boulders and large rocks along the river, rather than enjoying a smooth flat surface. In many places the trail would descend steep bluffs and deep rocky cliffs. This rugged terrain is dangerous for most. The severe, rocky crags and bluffs are covered by delicate wildflowers and other native species. Bicycles would be precluded. Overall, the feasibility of constructing a trail on such fragile topography would be challenging, requiring heavy equipment, which would cause further damage to the environment.

The stream valley trail along the Potomac River between Scott's Run and Great Falls Park would cross approximately 20 private residences and a large private all-girls school. All of the owners of these residences and the school would, at a minimum, need to grant easements to construct the trail, to allow for its continuous maintenance, and to permit public access. The likelihood that these owners would all voluntarily agree to such an intrusion is highly improbable because of privacy, safety and property value concerns. What is certain, however, is that all 20+ property owners along the trail would never grant the necessary land and easements to the County at no cost. Development of this trail segment is inconsistent with the County's other Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives including seeking "... scenic and conservation easements in this area to preserve the historic and scenic significance and beauty of the corridor."

A stream valley trail at this location would create more direct and open access to all properties abutting the Potomac River, and as such, would devalue the land. There is no way to protect the property owners, the school's students, faculty and staff, or the future hikers from risk. Fairfax County Police and EMS services would be not practical or cost effective. Because of the "billy goat" topography, mounted Police would not be possible. As a result, all owners would need to provide additional private security measures. The other existing and planned trails for this area, on the other hand, would not jeopardize the safety of the affected parties.

The proposed change to the Countywide Trails Plan Map to delete the Potomac River stream valley trail is endorsed by The Madeira School, the Georgetown Pike and Potomac River Association (John J. Adams, President and Tom Lovejoy, Vice President), and individually affected private property owners.