

November 21, 2008

**Public Comment and Response on the  
Draft Master Plan for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Area**

The Draft Master Plan can be viewed at [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/master\\_plan.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/master_plan.htm)

Comments were compiled from emails sent to [laurelhill@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:laurelhill@fairfaxcounty.gov), correspondence from agencies, boards, commissions, and communities, and oral testimony from the following meetings:

- ☞ Project Advisory Committee Meeting, 9/29/08
- ☞ South County Federation Land Use Committee, 9/30/08
- ☞ Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations Planning and Zoning Committee, 10/6/08
- ☞ Fairfax County Architectural Review Board, 10/9/08 and 10/28/08
- ☞ South County Federation, 10/14/08
- ☞ Lorton Heritage Society, 10/20/08
- ☞ Community Association of Spring Hill, 10/23/08 (County staff invited to attend)
- ☞ Middle School Solutions Group, 10/27/08
- ☞ Fairfax County History Commission, 11/5/08

The comments and responses are arranged topically. Responses were prepared by the Department of Planning and Zoning and The Alexander Company.

1. Master Planning Process
2. Project Financing & Economic Assumptions
3. Historic Preservation & Tax Credits
4. Residential Use
5. Public School Considerations
6. Retail Use
7. Commercial / Office Use
8. Education Use
9. Recreation Use
10. Wall & Towers
11. Environmental Considerations
12. Aesthetics & Visibility
13. Pedestrian Circulation & Trail
14. Vehicular Circulation, Traffic & Transportation

Comments from Stakeholder Agencies, Boards, and Commissions listed in the Memorandum of Agreement, and from Local Community Associations:

- A. Architectural Review Board
- B. Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- C. Fairfax County History Commission
- D. Lorton Heritage Society
- E. Community Association of Spring Hill

Alternate plans suggested by individuals:

- F. Neal McBride
- G. Mike Grasso
- H. Tony Martin

## 1. MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

- 1) Is The Alexander Company the presumptive developer? Will an open bidding process (Request for Proposal) select the developer?

Response: The Board of Supervisors determines the developer for the site. The Alexander Company responded to a Request for Proposal (RFP) asking for the preparation of a site Master Plan with the county option to retain the selected firm for the development of the property. The RFP asked for both Master Planning and Development qualifications. Upon completion of the Master Plan, the county can choose to negotiate a development agreement with The Alexander Company, without advertising a new RFP. The county also retains the option to select another developer if an agreement with The Alexander Company is not desired or reached. The county can also choose to advertise a new RFP.

- 2) The proposed plan should contain a design focused on long-term viability of the site. The Alexander Company was hired because of their expertise in this area and they should feel comfortable making suggestions based on thoughtful analysis of what will succeed in many years to come. If that suggestion means removing prison walls and specific buildings, then that is what should be proposed. The local residents have consistently asked that the plans include the removal of most of the prison walls and buildings as needed to support the site being economically viable with the flexibility of adding buildings people want to frequent.

Response: The planning process for the adaptive reuse site considers a variety of interests and needs. The transfer of the Laurel Hill property from the federal government to Fairfax County carries specific stipulations regarding the re-use of the property, specifically as it relates to parks and open space and preservation. Areas containing former prison buildings – the Workhouse, Reformatory, and Penitentiary – are controlled by the Board of Supervisors and are identified for preservation and re-use.

The re-use of historic buildings may require the investment of new construction to pay for the higher-than-average costs of rehabbing older, historic buildings and for infrastructure. The re-use may also involve trade-offs such as selective demolition. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) includes a process for the review of proposed demolition. The Master Plan will include strategies for making the development economically viable.

- 3) What is the underlying premise of the plan and does it violate the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement?

Response: The premise of the plan follows the approved re-use plan for the site, which is also reflected in the Comprehensive Plan. The planning process for the Master Plan follows the MOA procedures for inviting interested parties to comment on the planning activities for the adaptive reuse site.

- 4) How will you weigh all the comments that you've heard from all the different stakeholders? Will you develop alternative plans? Option 1 and Option 2, etc.?

Response: The Alexander Company will examine the comments and present a recommendation and discuss options for retaining existing features. The following planning principles are applied to the Draft Plan: Preserve the essential historic core; minimize financial burden on tax payer; promote socially positive uses that compliment the surrounding community; provide flexibility and transparency in the development process; and permit the adaptive reuse of

Laurel Hill into something of far-reaching significance and consequence – both exciting and uplifting.

- 5) Concern that we are not hearing from all the groups needed county-wide.

Response: The Task Force was a countywide task force that led an outreach process for 2 years. This current process builds on the approved Task Force recommendations incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by the Board of Supervisors in March 2006.

- 6) The transparency of the process has been appreciated.

Response: The County and the Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee (PAC) are committed to providing an open process that considers the input of citizens, boards, and agencies.

## **2. PROJECT FINANCING & ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS**

- 1) Is adaptive reuse, alone, economically viable?

Response: Adaptive reuse, by itself, does not typically sustain itself. Building rehabilitation and reuse costs are typically greater than that for new construction. Wiring, insulation, ductwork, and plumbing must all be installed into existing structures. The Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Citizen's Advisory Committee 2004 report stated that, depending on the development scenario, project financing might experience a \$30 million gap. The report notes that "any development will likely have some level of financial gap."

While each adaptive reuse is different and must be analyzed individually, adaptive reuse projects typically have constraints that make them more economically challenging than new construction. For example, when adapting a historic campus such as Lorton, there are limits put on the height and density of development as a way to protect the historic integrity of the site. Limiting density reduces options for creating revenue on a site and makes redevelopment more challenging. In addition, working within the confines of existing structures increases the cost of design, engineering and construction labor. Although new buildings can be designed with efficient stacking of uses and mechanical systems, each space in a historic structure must be measured and documented and architectural plans and mechanical systems must be designed to fit the existing spaces. Finally, reusing historic buildings for uses that they were not originally designed for tends to result in space that is not used as efficiently as it would be in a new building.

While adaptive reuse is more challenging, it represents an opportunity to create a unique environment that can help differentiate Laurel Hill from other areas.

- 2) Consider creative financing, including 501c3 status.

Response: The Alexander Company will consider a wide variety of financing options and potential revenue sources. The Alexander Company is currently exploring alternative/creative financing including (1) State Historic Credits, (2) Federal Historic Credits, (3) tax exempt bond financing, (4) federal grants and appropriations for historic structures, tourism, and museum creation, (5) state grants and low interest rate loans for reuse of historic structures and infill development, and (6) sources of funding for development of magnet housing. If creating a non-profit organization (501c3) or partnering with a non-profit organization is deemed to be advantageous, it will be pursued.

- 3) What are the economic assumptions for the site? Was the site viewed in terms of profitability versus the good of the community?

Response: The site's National Register of Historic Places designation is a key planning consideration and drives many of the economic decisions about the cost and type of development. The County planning efforts are focused on providing the Laurel Hill area with complimentary and beneficial uses.

The critical stated goals of this master planning process for the site are creating a development that is 1) a positive addition to the community and is 2) economically viable. A plan that is not economically viable will most likely not be implemented in the current economic environment. Likewise, a plan that does not garner the support of the community will not be implemented. The goal is to create an economically viable plan that the community feels will create an exciting and uplifting community asset.

- 4) Please add to the proposal the total maintenance cost for the prison walls, towers and buildings that remain as part of the "final plan." The maintenance cost of these old structures will be huge in future years and must be included in the plans proposed design. Like any development effort, the maintenance costs are frequently ignored and these are the ones that the "owner", the citizens of Fairfax County, will be left to pay in the future. These maintenance costs should be considered when preserving any structure.

Response: All of the costs associated with maintaining the site will be included in the operational budget for the proposed development. The renovated historic buildings will be fully refurbished with new mechanicals and infrastructure. The cost of operating and maintaining the buildings are included in the operational budgets. These are based on The Alexander Company's experience operating other historic structures, and will be the responsibility of the developer. The costs of maintaining the wall, towers, common infrastructure and site will also be the responsibility of the ultimate developers and will most likely be shared by the occupants of the site through the use of an owner's association.

- 5) What sort of gap financing will be needed from the county? [Gap financing relates to the funds required to help close part or all of a funding "gap" that remains after the sale of tax credits and mortgage financing has been determined.]

Response: The Alexander Company has been asked to create a plan that minimizes the burden on the taxpayers of Fairfax County. In order to assess the financial feasibility of the project, and minimize the amount of County subsidy, The Alexander Company is examining a wide variety of financial tools including state and federal tax credits. Additionally, The Alexander Company is programming uses that will help offset over \$20 million of infrastructure costs on the site. At this time, the size of the gap is unknown. In addition, revisions to the Draft Master Plan requested by the community, the historic preservation groups, and the County staff will have an impact on the size of the gap.

- 6) Previous studies indicate a rise in costs as proposed new residential construction is removed from consideration. It is important to consider that less residential construction means less money to the county to defray infrastructure costs. It is important to achieve a balance and remain flexible when evaluating these uses and potential costs to the county. The amount of money contributed should be considered against the money made by the developer.

Response: Infrastructure costs at the site are significant. The high cost of adaptive reuse necessitates an income source to help pay for the infrastructure costs. Sources range from tax credits, income-producing buildings and activities, and county contributions. The Alexander Company was asked to minimize the burden of the project to the tax payer.

- 7) The County is the owner of the property, so the county would have to subsidize any demands for proffers. We need to see the financials for the project to understand the gap. Right now, no one can develop this site without economic generation on the site, or without the county putting up significant funds.

Response: The Master Plan will include financial information about the proposed development. The county will review this information in determining the financial viability of the plan. Proffer commitments are evaluated and negotiated during the rezoning process, which will not begin until the master plan is finalized and a developer is hired.

- 8) This is the third time that we have heard that this site needs residential development to support the reuse of the historic buildings. Estimates for infrastructure costs are \$20 million. We need to be careful pushing for proffer commitments; if this project breaks even we will be lucky.

Response: Infrastructure costs are higher than average due to the need to construct utilities on site. Infrastructure construction must also avoid existing structures, retro-fit utilities into existing buildings, and bring buildings up to acceptable fire and safety codes.

- 9) This project is not profitable. We are trying to raise the funds to preserve the buildings, so it will either be tax dollars or more density to support the development. These new residential units cannot just be workforce housing units or apartments.

Response: The project must achieve a balance between stewardship of the resources, sustainability of the site, profitability of the developer, and desirability of the proposed uses. The project must be economically viable for the county. A mix of residential types is proposed for the site with the townhomes generating capital to help lower the infrastructure costs.

- 10) The County supported the Lorton Arts Foundation's (LAF) development of the Workhouse site by contributing \$11 million (6.5 million for building stabilization and \$1 million per year for 5 years). The county also guarantees LAF's \$27 million construction loan. This sort of county financial support is very unlikely for the Adaptive Reuse Area. The Lorton Arts Foundation only applied for state historic preservation credits, not federal credits as well, as the draft plan proposes to do.

Response: The financial information developed by The Alexander Company will identify any need for county subsidy. County subsidies of the type available for LAF are not assumed for this project.

- 11) As the county subsidy for the project increases, we might have less support from Planning Commissions and Supervisors from other districts, so we need to have a plan that is acceptable that minimizes the county investment. Also, if this plan fails, the next proposal may suggest uses in the historic buildings that the citizens don't like.

Response: Subsidy requests for the Laurel Hill project would likely compete with a variety of capital improvement needs throughout the county. Therefore, the availability of county funds to help defray the costs of infrastructure improvements, environmental abatement, or other development expenditures is not known. A financially viable plan minimizes county, i.e. taxpayer, burden. A plan requiring substantial county investment could be rejected and result in alternative development plans that deviate from the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

### 3. HISTORIC PRESERVATION & TAX CREDITS

- 1) What percentage of preserved historic buildings qualifies the developer for historic tax credits? Are there a certain number of buildings that need to be preserved on the site? Can more buildings be removed to lessen the need for new construction?

Response: Removing or modifying the character of historic buildings or features puts the use of historic tax credits in jeopardy. The utilization of tax credits is not based on the percentage or numbers of buildings preserved. The final determination is made with the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources working with the prospective developer. Proposed development scenarios are judged based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. A tax credit review by the National Park Service requires the review of potential impacts to the entire National Register site, including the MOA-contributing buildings and the buildings listed in the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Proposed modifications to historically significant interior spaces, such as the penitentiary cellblocks, gymnasium, and dining hall, will also be reviewed by VHDR and the National Park Service.

- 2) There is a need for flexibility and compromise with regard to historic preservation in order to create a viable and sustainable development.

Response: To obtain historic tax credits, the future developer must work closely with the National Park Service, the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation, the Architectural Review Board, and the Lorton Heritage Society to identify historic components requiring attention and treatment. The Lorton Arts Foundation development at the Workhouse received permission to selectively remove some historic buildings as part of their development plan, though the Foundation obtained only state (no Federal) historic tax credits. Some demolition is proposed in the Draft Master Plan.

- 3) Is there any consideration for removing all the buildings and making this site open space?

Response: The Quitclaim Deed (between the federal government and Fairfax County) and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) requires the county to first attempt to maintain and re-use the historic buildings. The site is also part of a larger National Register Historic District. Any proposal to remove buildings requires the review of the action by the ARB, Lorton Heritage Society, and the VDHR. Final land use and site recommendations go to the Board of Supervisors.

- 4) Consider an alternative that examines the selective demolition of buildings, in particular the Penitentiary Dining Hall, as a way of opening up the space.

Response: The Alexander Company has considered and is proposing the selective demolition of a number of buildings. While removing buildings could improve access and visibility to portions of the site, some buildings, including the Penitentiary Dining Hall, cannot likely be removed without foregoing approximately \$16 million in historic tax credits. The Penitentiary Dining Hall is considered highly significant for a number of reasons. First, its position of prominence at the head of the penitentiary courtyard and the fact that it is different in design from the other more repetitive buildings means that it defines the historic courtyard space. Extra value is given to primary historic facades and its prominence and architectural detail make the dining hall the primary façade of the courtyard. Finally, buildings that had greater access to the public are more highly valued than those that did not. The dining hall had far greater public access than the penitentiary cellblocks that surround it. As a historic asset there

are few other buildings on the Lorton Prison campus that would rival the Penitentiary Dining Hall in significance. In The Alexander Company's assessment, proposing the removal of the Penitentiary dining hall, which is deemed to be highly significant, would likely result in a plan that would not be approved by the reviewing entities and therefore could not be implemented. Even if a plan with the removal of the Penitentiary Dining Hall could be implemented, the time and expense of moving the proposed plan through the approval process would be significant and perhaps prohibitive.

An MOA between the General Services Administration, Fairfax County, and 9 other signatories was executed in June 2001. The MOA lists 136 structures and features designated as "contributing" to the eligible historic district. The MOA requires that all exterior work on contributing historic structures be completed in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The MOA calls for the subject property to be treated as a historic overlay district for review purposes. Any undertaking including alterations to the exterior of a structure or alterations to the grounds is subject to comment from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) and the Lorton Heritage Society and must be approved by the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board (ARB).

The ARB has adopted draft Architectural Standards and Guidelines for the reuse site, which largely mirror the Secretary of Interior's Standard for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

Two of the most significant financial resources available for the renovation of the Adaptive Reuse site are Federal Historic Tax Credits and State Historic Tax Credits. The use of Historic Credits subjects the adaptive reuse plan for the entire site to the review and approval of both VDHR and the National Park Service. A tax credit review by the National Park Service requires the review of potential impacts to the entire National Register site, including the MOA-contributing buildings and the buildings listed in the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Proposed modifications to historically significant interior spaces, such as the penitentiary cellblocks, gymnasium, and dining hall, will also be reviewed by VDHR and the National Park Service, when considering federal and state historic tax credits.

5) Has the preservation of the interior spaces been considered?

Response: County efforts to preserve and catalog artifacts from the prison are ongoing. Items collected from the prison are now part of the permanent collection of the county. This includes photo-documentation of buildings and interior features. The future developer of the site will work closely with the NPS and VDHR to determine the interior elements (portions of cellblocks, for example), to preserve. The Master Plan does not contain this level of detail.

6) Ensure proper consideration of future preservation/restoration of the Laurel Hill House via specific mention of such an activity.

Response: Although the Laurel Hill House is within the boundaries of the Adaptive Reuse Area, the Comprehensive Plan recommends making the house a part of the surrounding county-wide park. The Department of Planning & Zoning will address options concerning the house with the Fairfax County Park Authority once a developer is selected. The Draft Master Plan considers linkages to the house but does not include restoration proposals for the house.

7) Can you build over existing structures so you are not confined to the existing spaces? For example, a church was redeveloped with the new structure built over the existing church.

Response: Infill spaces and modest additions are possible but the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources regulate how historic structures can be changed. The listing of the site on the National Register will preclude radical changes to the appearances of the site.

- 8) Who would restore the bleachers and dugouts?

Response: Responsibility for restoration would be negotiated during a rezoning process.

#### **4. RESIDENTIAL USE**

##### *GENERAL RESIDENTIAL*

- 1) The Draft Plan is tilted too much toward residential use.

Response: The Task Force recommendations and the current Comprehensive Plan identify the existing Reformatory buildings as best-suited for residential use. New residential townhomes can help offset the high costs associated with infrastructure and adaptive reuse construction.

- 2) Concern about the ownership vs. rental property.

Response: A healthy mix of uses can help create a vibrant and active neighborhood. The Alexander Company estimates that the rental units will be positioned in the market for around \$900/month – \$1,600/month rented by families making \$34,000 - \$64,000+.

- 3) Will townhouse occupants own their homes?

Response: Yes, it is envisioned that the townhomes would be ownership units.

- 4) The nature of the proposed retail, and the planned Lorton HealthPlex nearby, warrants the consideration of rental housing for the elderly and aging-in-place options.

Response: The Alexander Company will investigate other possible residential uses. An approved (not yet constructed) four-story independent living building is planned for the corner of Silverbrook Road and White Spruce Way in Spring Hill, the adjacent senior living community, in addition to five historic buildings approved for redevelopment into age-restricted condominiums in Spring Hill. Condominiums are also approved (not yet constructed) on the west side of Spring Hill, adjacent to the golf course.

- 5) A) The last thing the Laurel Hill area needs is more housing. The schools are already over crowded and have trailers. The road infrastructure can't handle the traffic currently, and the county wants to make it worse. Make the right choice and maintain the ball field. Say "no" to more housing in the Laurel Hill area and put some much needed restaurants or something of use to benefit the current residents.

B) From the hill on Silverbrook Rd. all I see is rooftops. No green space, just houses packed in so close together that you can barely walk in between them. We do not need nor want more of the same. We already have a problem in my neighborhood with vandalism and gang graffiti and building more housing just opens the door for this type of activity to expand. The schools in this area are already overcrowded, even after school boundaries were re-drawn.

C) Learning of the plan to demolish the field and put in its place yet another development of townhouses came as an unwelcome surprise. Not only would we lose a place of inspiration and

reflection, but this would add to the problems we already face with traffic, school overcrowding, and other infrastructure requirements. Further, given the current business climate it seems that the development may well get started only to languish, partially complete, until economic conditions improve.

Response: Each of the previous Task Force efforts, beginning in 2002, proposed a housing element as part of the adaptive reuse of the former prison buildings. Lessening the financial burden to the county taxpayers, while meeting the historic preservation requirements, requires a revenue-generating component of the development. The high infrastructure costs and the high cost of adaptive reuse lead to the recommendation for new residential construction at the site.

- 6) Consider the merits of an over-55 community in Zone 2 to offset school and traffic impacts. An over-55 community is a better “fit” with the adjacent Spring Hill.

Response: The development of an age-restricted community in Zone 2 has been considered. Age restricted housing has the benefit of reducing the impact of additional housing development on the school system and age restricted housing is a good complement to the retail/service uses proposed; however the draft master plan does not include age restricted housing in Zone 2 for several reasons. First, Spring Hill is immediately adjacent to the Laurel Hill site. It is established and currently provides or plans to provide a full range of age restricted housing options. The ultimate build-out of Spring Hill will include 442 units, comprised of 32 single-family attached units, 149 single-family detached units, five multi-family buildings along the golf course with a total of 125 units (25 each), 56 independent living units in the existing historic structures, and a new four-story independent living building with 80 units. Spring Hill adequately addresses the product type. The draft plan creates village center – a place where the whole community, young and old, can come together to recreate in a space that will include a structure for a farmers market, concerts, and/or weekend art fairs and will include defined spaces for recreation and play areas. The village center planned for Zone 2 should have a variety of residents at various stages of life to create the feeling of traditional community that is envisioned.

- 7) Consider the merits of an assisted-living component in Zone 3 similar to what is planned for Spring Hill.

Response: The width, height, window location and access of and to the penitentiary do not make them conducive to assisted-living. If assisted living is a desired use, it should be programmed for a newly constructed building in Zone 2.

- 8) Does BRAC bring the potential of young home buyers to this area?

Response: Some ancillary benefits are expected from the BRAC activities. It is difficult to quantify these benefits before knowing the extent of the BRAC activities and new population. However, the close proximity of Laurel Hill to Ft. Belvoir may result in a positive benefit to housing and, to some extent, office space at the adaptive reuse site.

- 9) Consider the River Ridge community in Prince William county as a good example of a residential mixed-senior development.

Response: The Alexander Company and staff will visit this community for possible ideas and/or applications to the adaptive reuse site.

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*REFORMATORY (ZONE 1)*

10) Can the Reformatory rental residential units be reduced by 50-60 units?

Response: The Task Force recommendations and the Comprehensive Plan recommendations include residential use in the existing Reformatory buildings. The best and highest reuse potential for the Reformatory buildings is residential units. Reducing the number of units requires a different use in the Reformatory buildings which may bring on a greater (or at least different) set of impacts. Retail use in the Reformatory buildings is not considered viable. A residential use is in keeping with the scale, access, and pedestrian nature of the buildings and site.

11) Can townhomes be removed from the ball field area and placed south of the power plant?

Response: The area south of the power plant is part of a drainage swale and not conducive to new construction.

12) Are there any alternative locations for the proposed townhomes?

Response: The Alexander Company is examining alternative locations for the next draft plan. The intent is to group townhomes together to create a neighborhood synergy unachievable by placing units randomly around the site.

13) Can you build townhomes into the slopes?

Response: Some utilization of the slopes may be possible; however, this drives up the cost of construction. Additionally, many sloped areas are in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive zones.

14) Please do not add apartments to the plan – these units as noted in the meeting will only be marginally self-supporting and will add more people to our roads and school systems.

Response: The Master Plan should respect the historic buildings at Laurel Hill and minimize the burden of the redevelopment on the tax payer. Historic tax credits are a tool for achieving financial feasibility of the redevelopment. Historic tax credits can be used for office, retail and rental housing. Historic tax credits cannot be used for owner occupied housing. Multiple studies have indicated that it is not feasible to develop office and/or retail space in all of the historic buildings in part due to the location of the buildings and in part due to the inefficiencies of working with existing historic space. The multifamily rental housing proposed for the reformatory section, with the use of historic tax credits, is self-supporting, financially feasible and contributes to the infrastructure costs on the site thereby reducing the financing gap.

15) Will there be low-income apartments in Zone 1?

Response: The current master plan contemplates 1BR and 2BR apartments ranging in price from \$900/month to \$1600/month. Some of the apartments will be reserved for residents earning \$34,000 - \$64,000+ annually. The percentage of income-restricted units has not yet been determined. A partnership with either the County or the Healthplex would allow for a magnet housing program (housing reserved for civil servants such as teachers and fire fighters or health care professionals) in at least some of the affordable housing units.

16) Can Zone 1 become an independent living area?

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Response: Yes, independent, age restricted housing could be created in Zone 1; however, the amount of independent, age restricted housing built and planned in the adjacent Spring Hill development should serve the existing market.

17) How many apartments would you need to provide to make up for the funds generated by the 150 townhomes?

Response: The Alexander Company will provide information on the economics of the development at future meetings.

#### *CHAPEL*

18) Reconsider the residential adaptive reuse of the chapel. Could a church use this space?

Response: The Draft Plan shows 10 residential units in the chapel. The Alexander Company will consider other uses for the chapel. A church use requires a large amount of parking and flexible room for growth and expansion. A day-care and/or a community center are other possible uses under consideration.

19) Is it appropriate to have residential uses in the Chapel?

Response: Nothing precludes a non-religious use within the former Chapel. A community space could, theoretically, be reserved by clubs and organizations, including religious groups.

#### *NEW CONSTRUCTION*

20) Can we reduce the number of houses on the Ball Field Area? Can we lower the number of residential units by 100?

Response: The residential and retail components of the proposed development generate income for off-setting the high cost of adaptive reuse and new infrastructure. A reduction in residential units may impact the overall economics of the project. Financial impacts will be reviewed in the next step of the Master Plan.

21) Would elimination of the new residential construction in Zone 2 (the existing Ballfield) lower the infrastructure costs of the development?

Response: Somewhat, but the overall infrastructure costs for the site (stormwater management, roads, utilities, the wall and towers) are not reduced proportionately by removing those townhomes. Under the Draft Plan, the proposed townhomes contribute approximately \$6 million towards the infrastructure costs, estimated at \$18-20 million.

22) Can the townhomes in the Ballfield area move further east?

Response: Physical and environmental constraints limit the area available for new construction, most notably topographic constraints (steep slopes), and a Resource Protection Area to be avoided.

23) Put residential units in the Penitentiary buildings and remove townhomes from existing Ballfield area.

Response: Rental apartments in the Penitentiary buildings do not provide adequate offset to infrastructure costs. The Alexander Company does not view for-sale condominium units as a viable use at the site. Historic buildings with the potential for viable non-residential uses are programmed for office, retail, and mixed use. Townhomes are proposed on the ball field to help

offset the infrastructure costs associated with bringing this site back into use. The capital that can be generated with townhomes cannot be generated with apartments or condominiums. Also see response (3), above.

- 24) Consider using some of the more challenging or environmentally-sensitive topographical areas of the Reformatory, especially on or near the several difficult-sloped or high-ridgeline areas and those overlooking the campus' perimeters where terracing or over-looking structures could be feasibly located.

Response: The patrol road currently on the perimeter of the site generally represents a demarcation between level and steep areas. There is little room for new construction outside of the patrol road, especially to the east of the ball field area. This area will be re-examined for construction suitability. Construction on steep slopes results in higher building costs, potential environmental impacts, possible access constraints, and a reduction in slope and soils stabilization.

#### *WORKFORCE HOUSING*

- 25) The inclusion of Workforce Housing might make the plan more acceptable. Will this type of housing be available?

Response: The Alexander Company is currently exploring opportunities for the inclusion of workforce housing. The rents projected for the reformatory section of the site include rents that would be considered workforce housing. Workforce housing is defined in the County's Comprehensive Plan as rental or for-sale housing units that are affordable to households with maximum income limits up to and including 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area. 2007 AMI for an individual was \$66,150; for a family of 2 was \$75,600 and for a family of four, \$94,500.

- 26) Consider the rental structure for the apartments in the historic Reformatory buildings. The county needs workforce housing for teachers, police officers, firefighters, nurses, etc. and this is an opportunity for a partnership.

Response: Opportunities for workforce and magnet housing are included in the Comprehensive Plan and will be evaluated. A partnership with either the County or the Healthplex would allow for a magnet housing program (housing reserved for civil servants such as teachers and fire fighters or health care professionals) in at least some of the affordable housing units. The ability to implement a plan for magnet housing will be directly related to the County and/or health complexes willingness to participate in the program.

- 27) Advocate the inclusion of a range of housing, including affordable housing – rental housing for persons earning less than 60% of the area median income, which includes our service workers, day care center workers, retail and hospitality industry, etc. (and who represent a lower income strata than “workforce housing” -- housing for teachers, fireman and policeman.). Affordable housing has been a major priority in Fairfax County and it is very disappointing that the 2,300 acres of the prison site does not include affordable and special needs housing. I believe that the adaptive reuse site has tremendous potential as a mixed use and mixed income center if it is planned and developed with imagination and vision – and, of course, a lot of dollars from various sources.

Response: The financial plan for the apartments in the reformatory site includes market rate rental and affordable rental with rents ranging from \$900/month - \$1600/month. The affordable rentals will most likely target household incomes from \$34,000 - \$64,000+. Magnet Housing is

recommended, but dependant on an acceptable partnership with either the County or the Health Plex .

**5. PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 1) How many students are generated from this development? What is the expected impact on the local schools?

Need to significantly reduce the proposed residential density, especially the number of townhouse units to reduce the number of students. Student generation from the development may range from 92 to 120 new school-age children during at least the initial 15-20 years of the proposed project's development life. The South County area already experiences over-capacity conditions in every single public school, especially at the secondary level. Current population and student growth projections indicate as many as 900 additional students attending area schools by the middle of the next decade. This does not consider the potential BRAC- and non-BRAC-related population increases expected to impact Greater Southeastern Fairfax by the end of the next decade.

Response: School overcrowding is recognized as a concern in this area off the county. The economics of the adaptive reuse development require new construction to offset the cost of adaptive reuse and preservation. Adaptive reuse of the former prison buildings was part of the original 1999 Reuse Plan. Subsequent Task Forces and Comprehensive Plan recommendations identified a residential component for the site.

The Draft Master Plan proposal for residential use results in approximately 93 students (51 elementary, 13 middle, and 29 high) generated from the proposed development (from the approximately 355 units proposed in the Draft Master Plan). By way of comparison, the Comprehensive Plan recommends 155 units in existing buildings. These units would generate approximately 30 students (17 elementary, 4 middle, and 9 high). This information is summarized in the table below.

**Potential New Students from Adaptive Reuse Site**

	<b>Elementary School</b>	<b>Middle School</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Current Comprehensive Plan</b> 155 condos/apartments in historic buildings	17	4	9	30
<b>Proposed Draft Master Plan</b> 200 apartments in historic buildings and 155 new townhomes	<u>51</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>93</u>
<b>Net Increase from Comprehensive Plan</b>	34	9	20	63

*Source: Fairfax County Public Schools, Office of Facilities Planning Services*

- 2) Consider the reconfiguration of the residential mix or type of housing (and/or rules for leasing) to make new tenants “empty nesters” (i.e., young/entry-level professionals or older/post-family couples).

Response: The type of resident (i.e. empty nesters and young professionals) is best managed through the mix, size and design of units versus through restriction. For this reason, the rental units on the site are proposed as 1BR and 2BR units in historic buildings. These units tend to be more appropriate to empty nesters or young professionals and therefore are less often rented by families. In addition, the attached, single-family homes (i.e. town homes) should be and can be configured to make them more attractive to empty nesters and young professionals than to families.

- 3) Can The Alexander Company commit to proffers that will offset the impacts to schools?

Response: At this stage in the process, the county is not reviewing a rezoning application. Proffers are discussed during the county development review process which will not occur until after a Master Plan is finalized and a developer is hired.

- 4) Is it possible to reduce the number of historic structures for preservation in order to lessen the number of residential units and thereby lessen the potential impacts to schools?

Response: The ability to remove historic structures is subject to the review of the signatories to the MOA. Many of the structures are considered significant and their removal would subject the entire site to the loss of approximately \$16 Million of historic tax credits. The Draft Master Plan recommends the removal of some less significant buildings. The proposed removal of those structures is necessary to provide adequate access and parking to support the renovation of the remaining buildings. Removing additional historic structures and keeping the credits on the entire site requires showing VDHR and the National Park Service that among other things the removal (1) does not diminish the historic nature of the campus, (2) does not remove or modify a primary façade, (3) does not remove public spaces that were integral to the historic use, (4) does not include removal of significant architectural fabric, (5) does not include buildings that housed significant historic events or key activities in the historic use and (6) is necessary to the preservation of the remaining structures. If additional demolition is needed and approved, the lost units will need to be replaced with new construction retail or housing. The loss of each historic rental unit increases the financial gap unless replaced with an equal or greater economic generator.

- 5) Will our community undergo another school boundary change due to increasing population? That is not fair to the families who are affected by boundary changes. Building more schools is not the answer, it only moves the kids to a different location according to their grade level, and doesn't reduce the population of each grade. We do not need to flood the schools here by packing in more housing.

Response: A boundary study is currently underway for the new Laurel Hill Elementary School, scheduled to open in the Fall of 2009. Preliminary site planning efforts are underway for a new middle school on the Laurel Hill property to alleviate the current overcrowding at South County Secondary School.

- 6) For future presentations, include a larger map that shows the locations of the surrounding schools, as well as the school impact calculations based on the proposed residential density.

Response: Comment noted. A graphic will be provided in the next iteration of the plan.

- 7) We would be remiss in our stewardship if we did not have at least some cognizance of the negative impact that an additional 95 town homes would have on the delicately balanced South County Secondary School attendance area. Why should we shoehorn 100 or so additional students into an already overcrowded facility?

Response: A proposed development in this area will potentially impact area schools. The Draft Master Plan attempts to strike a balance between the need for residential units to help pay the high cost of development and the concerns about school overcrowding. The Alexander Company will explore options for lessening the impact on schools, including age-restricted development and other uses in the area proposed for townhomes.

- 8) What will you do for us to build a middle school? Assurance is needed that you will commit to proffers before the bond is issued for the school.

Response: At this point in the process, proffer commitments are not under discussion. Proffer commitments are evaluated and negotiated during the rezoning process, which will not begin until the master plan is finalized and a developer is hired.

## **6. RETAIL USE**

- 1) Is there enough retail critical mass as currently depicted sufficient for the success of the retail component? Is the proposed retail sustainable in the long run?

Response: 60,000 square feet is a sufficient critical mass for a neighborhood retail use with a high probability for success.

- 2) The amount of density in Zones 3 and 4 (Penitentiary) is almost identical. Any thoughts about swapping the uses and having the office towards Silverbrook and the retail in the historic buildings? What about having the existing buildings that flank the old cafeteria as retail space as well?

Response: Retail requires high visibility – both of the storefront and parking. Also, retail uses are not a viable use in the existing historic (Penitentiary) buildings; retailers' prefer direct vehicular access, window visibility, and specific space configurations.

- 3) Is the retail on the Draft Plan shown inside or outside the wall?

Response: The two eastern buildings are outside the wall while the proposed western building is inside the wall. The easternmost buildings mimic the feel of the wall by placing building frontage in areas of removed wall panels. The wall presents a challenge to creating viable retail and office uses on the site. The configuration of the retail buildings is being reconsidered based on comments received.

- 4) Does the development need an anchor use, such as a hotel, to create a retail hub of activity described in the plan?

Response: The Alexander Company examined various anchor uses, including a movie theater and hotel. Theaters are not viable based on construction costs and parking requirements while a new hotel may not be compatible with the existing scale of development on the site (which potentially impacts the use of historic tax credits). The site's distance from I-95 may present a problem for a hotel location. Also, developers tend to prefer the close proximity of hotel uses to office uses.

- 5) Regarding the retail assumptions, Old Town Alexandria and National Harbor are unique places that draw consumers. A unique Laurel Hill location should be able to draw people to restaurants. Also, townhomes do not appear viable in the current economic situation. Why should we preserve so many of these buildings?

Response: The Quitclaim Deed and the Memorandum of Agreement address the preservation of buildings and open space at Laurel Hill. Building demolition is an option after the required documentation and agency reviews. However, demolition may hurt the chances for receiving historic tax credits. Historic preservation and adaptive reuse helps create a unique living environment and destination with community appeal. Townhome financing in today's economic climate is difficult. However, the development of this site is at least 2 years away. The retail analysis recommends a retail use close to Silverbrook Road in order to take advantage of access and visibility, and also recommends not dividing retail uses on the site that then might compete against each another. This site does not have the surrounding density – high-rise residential, office buildings, and high-volume arterials – to support the type of retail density and diversity that exists in parts of Old Town, Reston Town Center, and Shirlington.

- 6) A. The main entrance to the site in Zone 4 (Penitentiary) seems too spread out with a large parking field, what design options are there to make that retail area more intimate?  
B. Remove/relocate the poorly-sited retail building along the northern perimeter of the penitentiary campus so that it no longer substantially blocks the public's view into nor the tenants/visitors' view out of the historic site.

Response: The challenges for the retail area (Zone 4) include 1) making the retail options visible from Silverbrook Road, 2) accommodating the construction of new buildings in the Penitentiary area, and 3) supplying adequate parking for the retail uses. The Alexander Company is considering alternative design options based on comments received.

- 7) A. I noted a large sign advertising Lorton Town Center on Lorton Center Boulevard. The development on the old prison grounds will be in competition with that shopping area which has broad easy access from a major roadway. Will retail at this site create vacancies at surrounding shopping centers that are not doing well?

Response: The Alexander Company undertook a retail market study to examine existing conditions, vacancies, rentals, and uses. Results indicate that a neighborhood retail center can achieve success at this location, and that occupancy and rental rates are strong in this area.

- 8) What types of lights are planned for the retail area?

Response: Lighting details are not part of the master planning scope of work. These details are typically determined in the development review process. Future lighting details are subject to review by the Architectural Review Board. Future lighting considerations include commercial signage, safety, light pollution, and design compatibility.

- 9) How do you decide to have retail versus residential uses?

Response: Visibility, access, and parking are important factors for retailers. Providing for these factors are difficult in the existing buildings. For this reason the draft plan shows most of the retail use (except the dining hall) in new buildings.

- 10) Which area would be most likely to flip to retail use?

Response: The Penitentiary buildings on either side of the dining hall; however retailers want visible storefronts and the windows begin 8 feet off the ground. These buildings do not have great vehicular access either, making retail use here a challenge.

## 7. COMMERCIAL / OFFICE USE

- 1) Can an office building of .5M square feet function in the ball field area?

Response: The required size, massing and height of a 500,000 s.f. office building on the ball field is not considered compatible with the size, massing, and height of the historic structures. The incompatibility makes approval of the plan by the MOA reviewing entities highly unlikely.

- 2) The Draft Plan needs more office and commercial uses. The Plan should consider office uses more seriously. The Draft Plan leaves a lot of density on the table

Response: The development of the Master Plan considers the delicate balance between economic feasibility, historic preservation, creation of green space, and addition of density. Increased density has been balanced against historic preservation, economic viability of structured parking and traffic concerns.

- 3) The amount of office space seems low; was a higher density option reviewed?

Response: A variety of densities and uses were considered. An increase in office space requires additional parking and may create greater traffic impacts. The Plan seeks a balance of uses; an office-focused use will reduce much of the vitality of the area after 5 p.m. An office market study indicated that the office rents in the subject area do not support structured parking. Without structured parking, the amount of office space is limited by the area available for surface parking. Additional office development would give rise to large paved parking areas and eliminate green space.

- 4) Did the consultant consider a conference center in a campus-like setting? It would be close enough to D.C. for business and government retreats. The Penitentiary seems like a logical spot.

Response: A conference center was not considered. Conference centers typically require state-of-the-art facilities better served in new buildings. They also require parking adjacent to the center or in a structure. The Penitentiary cellblocks are ill-suited for conversion to a conference center; natural light is situated too high for first-story use and too low for second story use and the buildings are not easily adaptable to high-technology functions.

Conference centers are a very specialized use. A hospitality/conference center developer is needed to define the economics, identify the subsidy necessary, and implement the development. No such developer came forward during the prior Request for Proposal processes so the viability of creating a conference center is suspect.

- 5) Define “mixed use” as used in the plan.

Response: Mixed-use can refer to the larger site-wide development of residential, professional office, educational, and retail uses in a village center concept, as described in the County’s Comprehensive Plan (March 2006). The term can also refer to a building that might contain two or more uses, such as an office building with a restaurant on the ground floor, or a medical office with a retail medical supply business in an adjacent space. The Draft Master Plan identifies several buildings as “mixed-use.” Those buildings are envisioned primarily as a

combination of office uses and service retail uses, with space marketed to potential restaurant users.

## 8. EDUCATION USE

- 1) What is the viability of the Education use either in the front of the Penitentiary cells or in the ball field area?

Response: If an educational user is identified, the use is potentially a good fit for the property. However, the response from public sector institutions has been limited and for-profit educators are unlikely to commit to leasing space that is more than a year from delivery. The public sector educators that attended the previous Task Force educational summit (Summer 2004) were contacted to assess their interest in the site. The feedback received suggests the site is not a good fit for institutional expansion goals. Housing educational uses in historic buildings poses challenges; educational users require significant parking, state of the art technology, and specific classroom design. To accommodate a future educational flexible space to accommodate a for-profit educational user should be identified and marketed to those users.

- 2) Can a combination of Zones 3 and 4 sustain a viable education location?

Response: Zone 4, with new construction, can sustain an education use, but no education user has yet been identified. Combining Zones 4 and Zone 3 does not create a viable education site due to the need to re-use the Penitentiary cellblocks. These buildings are ill-suited for an education use. The use of Zone 4 for education means that the retail use must be pushed to a less-desirable location. Retail uses need to be located where they have the greatest chance to succeed.

The Alexander Company examined a variety of uses, including an educational facility at the site. An education use in the historic buildings is difficult due to the space and technology requirements of educational users. Private educational users (ITT, for example) will not typically commit to a site 2-3 years prior to construction (the time frame for this development). Education uses also require large parking facilities. Space for parking is a constraining element of the adaptive reuse site.

## 9. RECREATION USE

### *BALLFIELD AREA*

- 1) The South County Hawks community has expressed a concern about the loss of the Ballfield [currently used by the Hawks through an interim agreement with the Fairfax County Park Authority] as shown in the Draft Master Plan, and the need for ballfields in this part of the county.

Response: The Master Plan must achieve a balance between historic preservation, economic viability and sustainability, recreation needs, and sound planning principles. The proposed new construction in the area of the Ballfield reflects the need to reduce the burden of infrastructure costs to the county. The proposed community green space is intended to provide recreational open space for all the members of the community, as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan preserves the historic grandstand and portions of the ball field recreation area as noted in the National Register. A proposed discontinuance of the baseball use at the adaptive re-use site should include recommendations for accommodating baseball users. New construction in the ball field area is ultimately the decision of the community and elected leaders.

The Draft Master Plan's proposed village green is intended as a gathering place for the community. The inclusion of a structure for potential farmer's markets, weekend art fairs, and family or community organization gatherings could create an attractive and active community space. The space could accommodate planned areas for recreation such as pick-up soccer, football or baseball and play equipment to attract families. A winter skating rink is a possibility. Maintaining the area as a baseball field eliminates the ability to build structures and program alternative uses that appeal to the broader community and bring a full range of neighbors to the site.

- 2) A) From a retail perspective, there is great potential for the businesses to do well there with parents coming to watch their players. On Sundays the Old Timers (over-30 crowd) plays their games too. This field has been used by those from 4 to 55 +.

B) The revitalization of the historic field has the potential to return more revenue to the people that have businesses in the area and the future businesses being built by providing more exposure to the area with such a "diamond in the rough." We recommend an outfield retail loop similar to Camden Yards. The business would experience additional revenue with the ball field intact.

Response: A dedicated baseball use at the Reformatory does not generate sufficient numbers of people to support ancillary retail uses. A retail use in the ball field area was examined and rejected due to lack of access and visibility. A Camden Yards-type retail loop is not comparable; Camden Yards is supported by an 82-game major league schedule that attracts over 25,000 people a game (2008 average) with adjacent high density residential and office uses. A dedicated baseball use will also have little impact on the proposed retail uses in the penitentiary area.

- 3) A) Decrease the outfield size to a traditional sized outfield. This would allow 55 out of the 90 currently designed townhouses to be built. Zone 1 still has sufficient space for additional townhouses and could possibly have space for the townhouses removed from the field.

B) Can only some part of the field be given up for townhouses or apartments? I think a compromise for the field can be worked out. I sincerely hope something can be worked out and the ball field could be saved. I sincerely hope the planning committee please consider saving our historic baseball field.

Response: Fewer townhouses can be placed on the Ballfield. The result, however, is the potential loss of income generated to help support the high infrastructure costs. A dedicated 90' baseball field also means the removal of one proposed mixed-use building and the income generation from that use. The townhomes proposed in the open ball field area create a viable and sustainable neighborhood. The creation of an open green park allows a recreational amenity for use by all residents and adjacent neighborhoods.

- 4) The cost to restore the field would be less than the cost of 2 townhomes or \$500,000. This would include lights and irrigation.

Response: The Board of Supervisors presently controls the 80-acre property including the recreation field. A decision to provide a dedicated baseball use at the Reformatory must include decisions about agency responsibility for the field, improvements, maintenance, and the scheduling of teams. This is typically the purview of the Park Authority and Community &

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Recreation Services. Any future request by a developer to restore the field through proffers would be negotiated during the development review process.

- 5) If the baseball field needs to be removed to make the plan more viable long-term then so be it. There are two baseball fields planned for the Laurel Hill Elementary School across the street from the prison and they will open up in 2009. A baseball field can be added in many other areas on the Lorton prison property that will have better access to major roads for players.

Response: Future baseball fields are planned for the Park Authority's Heritage Recreation area in Laurel Hill (at least 1-90' field) and Patriot Park (3-90' fields). The timing for construction of these fields is uncertain. There are 90' baseball fields at the South County Secondary School and the Occoquan Regional Park.

- 6) How does Zone 2 "honor the site?" (referring to the existing Ballfield area shown with townhomes).

Response: In 2007, the County, working with the Architectural Review Board, prepared Draft Architectural Standards and Guidelines for the Adaptive Reuse Site. These guidelines identified areas within the adaptive reuse site suitable for new construction. The ball field area was one such location identified as suitable for new infill construction. A financially viable Master Plan may require new construction to offset infrastructure costs for the entire site. The Draft Master Plan shows approximately 2-3 acres of open space preserved adjacent to the historic bleachers for a variety of recreation and community activities.

The historic use of the site was not strictly baseball. The prison's annual report for fiscal year 1947 – 1948 notes the field being used for picnics, track events, and various other activities. Historic records point to activities such as concerts on the field while aerial maps show as many as 5 separate softball diamonds on the recreation field.

The ball field area represents an opportunity to create an asset for enjoyment by the entire community. The proposed plan envisions the space as a community gathering space that can be used for farmers markets, concerts, picnics, family reunions, and a host of community-oriented functions that will not be available if this space is a dedicated baseball field.

- 7) A) The teams have put a lot of money and hard work into the maintenance of those fields, which the county should be grateful. Tearing down the ball field would be a tragic thing to do to the local kids. Please do something right for the county and the kids and maintain the Ball field. Let's not line the pockets of special interest groups and local government. The people that are making these decisions are there to make a difference and help improve the community of Fairfax County, not destroy it with over crowding.

B) The county would be well served to preserve ball fields and the like as open space for our children. Fairfax County draws people largely due to their outstanding parks and recreational opportunities.

Response: The County appreciates the efforts – time and money – expended by the South County Hawks on the baseball field. The adopt-a-field agreement between the Hawks and the County stipulates the Hawks' responsibility for maintenance. The proposal for infill development is meant to save the larger historic fabric of the former prison and create viable uses to help pay for the infrastructure and building rehabilitation, while minimizing costs to taxpayers.

- 8) After spectating at a few games on the Laurel Hill 90 foot baseball field, I came to see a sparkling future for that field, with its stately covered brick bleachers contrasting the excitement of America's pastime. The setting also serves in a very real way as a reminder of the benefits of youth sports to our community and to society in general to provide the sort of environment which promotes good citizenship to our future generations. It would also be a wonderful gathering place, even when there were no games, as a central part of the Lorton Station area.

Response: The vast majority of the Laurel Hill site is controlled and programmed by the Park Authority which features baseball diamonds as part of the Parks Master Plan. The focus of the Draft Master Plan is to make this location a gathering place for the larger community.

- 9) We have many places where houses are built throughout the County, and there are many parcels which can still be filled with housing. The former Lorton prison complex however, has some historical significance and the baseball field has come to serve a better purpose as a place where we truly live together. I would ask that the planners for this area revisit their blueprint, and consider that both from a large scale view of our society, as well as the immediate community, that it might serve a better purpose to preserve and improve this small piece of the fabric of our past and future.

Response: From a planning perspective, the community green space proposed in the Draft Master Plan specifically considers the large-scale view of the community; a constituted area serving as a community space for use by young and old, active and less-active, on-site residents and area neighborhoods. The programmed uses on this space can serve a wide-variety of interests, activities, community gatherings, and individual needs.

- 10) I am strongly opposed to destroying the 90' ballfield on the old prison grounds to build additional housing. Hosting special venues throughout the year would draw people to the field. These people will patronize the shops and restaurants that are planned for other sectors of the prison and increase business for those establishments. Build a restaurant that overlooks the field and give it a historic theme. What makes our field special is that it IS historic. It is more than just a ballfield, it has a story to tell. Once the history is gone, it is gone forever. Hire someone to publicize it and use it as a public place, not as a place to put more townhouses in an already overcrowded neighborhood. Believe it or not, people will be drawn to the history. It would be a great place to hold charitable events and celebrations, and soccer can also be played there. The list of possibilities is long. Save our ballfield, publicize and market it to expand its usage, keep it as a permanent home for our community sports programs and preserve this green space for the public to enjoy.

Response: A dedicated baseball use excludes the opportunity for events, celebrations, community uses, and other sports. Accommodating both a dedicated baseball use and community activities appears impracticable. The focus of the Draft Master Plan is to make this location a gathering place for the larger community.

The proposed town green honors the history of the site by allowing the use of the open space by community residents for activities such as touch football, picnics, and concerts – which were among the prisoner activities that took place on the recreation field.

- 11) History of Ballfield—it was not only prisoners that used the ball field. The Lee District Pioneer League played there in the '50's and '60's and there are many people around today who took part. Special Olympics were held there many times and the Washington Senators (the original team) helped build and maintain the field and even played there. Without the ball diamond, the bleachers would be useless and out of context.

Response: The documented history of the ball field area is rich with a variety of uses including concerts, picnics, softball, football, and baseball. The County currently does not possess documentation about the involvement of the Washington Senators. Aerial photos from 1938 and 1953 indicate an open area without baseball fields in the ball field area. Ball fields were located to the north of the reformatory and in the Penitentiary wall. In 1938 the ball field area appears as a primary entrance and drop-off point for vehicles. In 1953, the area is simply an open field. Aerial photographs beginning in 1962 show the presence of ball fields in the area. However, in aerial photos examined between 1962 and 2003, the site contains multiple fields, sometimes with as many as 5 diamonds on the site.

The future use of the bleachers could include seating for outdoor concerts and events, an area to watch children play sports, picnics, or as a way-station for bikers and pedestrians from the Greenway Trail, to name a few.

- 12) Can a Ballfield be placed at another location off the adaptive reuse site? The Alexander Company should be prepared to show alternatives to address the baseball supporters.

Response: The Final Master Plan for the adaptive reuse site will include information about options for baseball users, should the plan propose the elimination of the dedicated baseball use on the recreation field.

- 13) An interesting and most-energizing example of how to create a residential and/or a commercial community within the immediate environs of --- in fact close-up and personal-to --- an active 90-foot baseball-oriented public ballpark (similar to what the SC Hawks and others have suggested can be done at the Reformatory's Ballpark by a modest-redesign of its existing baseball field) is in active use at the FC Park Authority's new Dulles Corner Park, located on Dulles View Drive just inside its intersection with Sunrise Valley Drive in Reston. This ballpark (constructed as part of a rezoning proffer by the adjacent community's developer) is now or will soon be immediately surrounded on at least three sides (mainly up against its outfield areas) by a mixture of residential (Townhome and Apartment-style) and commercial buildings (office and parking structures); and I understand via personal contact with local residents that the ballpark is a welcome part of the neighborhood and that many of the residents who live in the units that more immediately overlook the ballpark enjoy the opportunity of watching the games and other on-field activities - especially the lighted night games.

Response: The land dedication and construction of the Dulles Corner 90' ballfield was proffered as part of an approximately 1.2 million square foot development at Dulles Corner. The development includes two 8-10 story office buildings, an 8-10 story hotel building, support hotel uses (with an option for additional office and retail in lieu of hotel), and two 5-story residential buildings (470 units). The ballfield is located at the southeastern edge of the development, and is immediately surrounded by a surface parking lot, and two 5-story parking structures, which serve the residential and office buildings.

#### *PARK AUTHORITY*

- 14) Does the Plan take land away from the Park Authority?

Response: No; the adaptive reuse site is an 80-acre parcel controlled by the Board of Supervisors.

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- 15) This is one of the very few 90 foot diamonds available in Fairfax County for our young kids to play. During the season, the Hawks travel team invites teams from all over Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and even PA to come and play our Hawks teams.

Response: There are five existing publicly owned (Parks and Schools) 90' diamonds in the Lower Potomac Planning District:

- (1) Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Area
- (2) Lower Potomac Park (Noman Cole Treatment Plant site)
- (3) McNaughton Fields
- (4) Occoquan Regional Park
- (5) South County Secondary School

- 16) Where is the open space for children to “do what children do”, i.e., not ‘tot lots’ etc. but un-programmed space so kids don’t have to play in the street.

Response: Un-programmed space in the Draft Master Plan is found on the Greenway Trail, the proposed town green space around the historic bleachers, the quadrangle within the Reformatory, and the adjacent Giles Run Park and Park Authority property surrounding the site.

## **10. WALL & TOWERS**

- 1) Structural compromises to Tower Number 5 (closest to Silverbrook Road, currently fenced) are visible to the naked eye. This is very consistent with the presentation and troubling when considering the concept plan. Should this tower be removed?

Response: The structural issues associated with the Tower are understood and must be addressed with any proposed use in or adjacent to the tower. The towers represent important design and structural elements of the prison and removal of any tower is not considered an option under the Draft Master Plan.

- 2) Can the Towers serve as a draw to bring people into the area and site?

Response: The Draft Master Plan uses the towers as key elements in the future development of the site. The exact function of the towers is to be determined; uses to consider are boutique retail, visitor’s center, and historical interpretation site. The intent is to keep all of the brick towers. One idea for the towers is to take advantage of grant opportunities to allow public access into a tower to read plaques describing the history of the site.

- 3) What will happen to the wall?

Response: The Draft Master Plan proposes the removal of portions of the wall to allow for visibility and access from outside the site and between zones. The exact amount to be retained is not known at this time.

- 4) Does the Plan address the considerable expense of maintaining the wall?

Response: The Draft Master Plan proposes to remove select panels of the wall between the buttresses. This includes sections of the wall closest to Silverbrook Road to allow visibility of the site from the street and vehicular access into the site. Further discussions with the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the National Park Service are needed to assess the viability of this proposal. Future decisions must reflect a balance between preservation and the need to access the site.

- 5) Is it possible to retain more of the wall, and perhaps use it to hide some of the parking?

Response: The Draft Master Plan suggests the removal of sections of the wall between buttresses to allow for the necessary retail visibility from Silverbrook Road. However, a balance is needed to ensure that a parking lot is not the predominate view.

- 6) Can the wall be used as the back of buildings?

Response: Early conversations between The Alexander Company and VDHR and NPS indicate an agency preference for buildings near the wall but not penetrating or incorporating the wall into the buildings.

- 7) The westernmost wall between the site and Spring Hill should be kept intact.

Response: The Draft Master Plan shows this segment of the wall remaining and serving as a backdrop to the Greenway Trail. The intent is to keep this entire length of wall intact.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 1) What are the Storm Water Management considerations for the site? Will the Plan address all of the impervious cover on the site?

Response: Storm water management (SWM) is a key component of any development plan for the site. The SWM systems associated with the former prison use must be replaced and expanded to accommodate new development. Increased development will result in increased storm water and the county will work with the future developer to plan and engineer SWM systems for the site. The Master Plan does not describe SWM systems in detail because the full extent of the development is unknown.

A local civil engineer hired by The Alexander Company is reviewing the Draft Master Plan and estimating the cost of infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to, storm water management, construction of roads and parking lots, and design and construction of utility systems. The engineer is also providing The Alexander Company with storm water management alternatives. The Alexander Company is assuming that all county policies regarding storm water management and environmental issues will need to be addressed during the rezoning process.

- 2) Have alternative energy sources been considered? Solar panels, LEED, etc. County has policy regarding green buildings; LEED for new development should be considered.

Response: County policies related to LEED and green buildings will be considered with any development proposal for the site. Detailed review of these strategies occurs during the development review process.

## **12. AESTHETICS & VISIBILITY**

- 1) Consider the approaches to the site and the visibility of the prison site from these approaches.

Response: The Architectural Standards and Guidelines considered the visibility of the site from a variety of vantage points in the area. There is a lack of monumental or significant views of the prison from around Laurel Hill. The approach to the prison from Lorton Road provides a significant natural setting. The future design and placement of buildings must be sensitive to the approach from Lorton Road. Internal viewsheds of importance include along the patrol road

looking west toward the Power Plant and the Reformatory, and views of the towers from inside the site. Care will be taken to preserve this view.

- 2) The new construction appears to encase the historic buildings and negatively impact the prison context. We won't be able to see the historic buildings when you drive up to it given all the proposed new construction on the periphery of the site.

Response: While there are not many high-quality views of the prison from the approach roads, the few that do exist – mainly the approach along the driveway from Lorton Road – should not be overwhelmed by new construction. Future plans will consider, and modify where appropriate, proposed new development that distracts from the existing historic elements of the site. Critical viewsheds from within the prison consist of the courtyards, views to the towers, and the uninterrupted pattern of building facades. The Final Master Plan will attempt to preserve these critical views and make them signature elements of the Plan.

- 3) Redesign, relocate or remove at least one of the two stockade-appearing blocks of buildings that loom-over and effectively shut-out the views into and out of the historic core of the site along the southern perimeter of the Reformatory.

Response: The area along the southern perimeter of the Reformatory is designated for new construction. New construction should be sensitive to the views and placement of the historic buildings. The Alexander Company will revisit the design and location of new construction.

- 4) Remove the water feature in the Reformatory quadrangle.

Response: The depicted water feature in the quadrangle is suggested to break up the large grassy area adjacent to the Reformatory dorms. Landscape features and aesthetic contributions to the quadrangle are subject to review by the National Park Service, the ARB, VDHR, and LHS as part of the plan review of the site.

- 5) Will the interiors of buildings be preserved?

Response: By and large, the interiors are without significant design features, however, the MOA cites a couple of interiors of significance. The developer, if seeking historic tax credits, will work with the National Park Service to identify interiors of significance for preservation. A notable interior, the dining facility at the Penitentiary, has large unique window that should be incorporated into any future development.

- 6) Consider the visual impact of the Reformatory parking lots and roads on Spring Hill.

Response: The site plan will consider the potential visual impacts from the Reformatory, and the entire re-use site, to and from Spring Hill. Landscaped buffers can be examined in the site design phase of the project.

- 7) What are the proposed building heights inside the wall?

Response: Building height determination inside the wall is part of the development review process. It is expected that heights will generally conform to the existing heights of the penitentiary cell blocks. The ARB will provide input in this determination.

- 8) Can bricks from demolition be used in landscaping or other entryway features?

Response: Bricks can be salvaged and used for repair work or other site amenities as approved by the ARB and other review agencies.

- 9) What will the signage look like in Zone 3? (Penitentiary buildings, new mixed use buildings, and power plant)

Response: Signage details are not included in the scope of the Draft Master Plan work. Signage will be reviewed as part of the development review process, with input from the Architectural Review Board. The county will seek sign treatments that are uniform and unique to the Laurel Hill area.

### **13. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION & TRAILS**

- 1) The green connections back from the Central Green to the Reformatory are not strong and appear to conflict with the Power Plant parking lot, which seems obtrusive.

Response: Further refinement of the plan will strengthen the green connections and work to refine the parking area size and placement. One challenge with this area is the introduction of vehicular connections required to create a workable traffic flow through the site.

- 2) The pedestrian plan looks choppy and doesn't connect green space.

Response: The first draft of the pedestrian plan is under revision to show smoother transitions and connections to green space. The pedestrian plan is somewhat dynamic as a result of modifications to the land uses and placement of buildings in the reuse site.

- 3) Show pedestrian connections to Spring Hill and to the larger area.

Response: The Spring Hill development plan shows connections from the Spring Hill community to the Greenway Trail. These access points will not change in the reuse plan. Coordination with Spring Hill, the Park Authority, and other citizen groups will determine the connections from the Greenway Trail into the larger adaptive reuse area.

- 4) There is not enough connectivity to residents outside the planning area, in the adjacent condominium and townhouse subdivisions at Gunston Corner, Gunston Commons and Laurel Crest, just southwest of the planning area. These are communities of hundreds of households within walking distance of the planned development. Currently residents and school children are forced to walk on the sidewalks on Silverbrook Rd, which is a noisy, busy eight 6-8 lane arterials feeder. I would like to see trails through the wooded area between these communities and the proposed development. These trails would provide opportunities for the residents of these communities to walk through the beautiful woodlands on the east side of the planning area to exercise, access the planned businesses and employment opportunities at the site, and have a safer walking route to the high school and elementary schools at Laurel Hill.

Response: The Greenway Trail is the best trail in the area for connectivity between neighborhoods, park property, and the adaptive reuse area. The proposed adaptive reuse site will strengthen these connections and build on the Greenway connections. Expanded trails through wooded, i.e. Park properties, are the responsibility of the Park Authority. However, the future developer should work closely with the Park Authority to identify points of opportunity for connectivity to areas not served by trails.

### **14. VEHICULAR CIRCULATION, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION**

#### *ACCESS*

- 1) Is Lorton Road viable as the primary entrance into the facility to the ball field area?

Response: The existing Lorton Road entrance to the site is expected to serve a portion of the adaptive reuse site, primarily the residential component of the Reformatory. Coordination with the Park Authority is required since this road passes through Park property. Further analysis is needed to determine if this driveway needs to be widened or improved. The site development process will include a site-wide traffic analysis.

- 2) Is the proposed drive from Silverbrook Road safe? The entrance may need to move further south to meet intersection spacing standards. and the potential safety impacts

Response: A preliminary assessment of this alignment by Fairfax County DOT and VDOT indicates adequate spacing and sight distances for the proposed entrance. Additional and more detailed analysis is needed to consider median breaks, storage lanes, signalization, sight-distance, and traffic volumes associated with the proposed entrance.

- 3) Remove the newly proposed egress and ingress roadway from the site to Silverbrook Road. This location appears to pose substantial threats to driver and pedestrian safety, for relatively little gain. This will also be a significant infrastructure-related expense and may damage the immediate environmental and tree buffer conditions along the hillside facing both Silverbrook Road and the Laurel Crest HOA.

Response: See response 2), above. The proposed entrance does not impinge on the adjacent environmentally sensitive area. Design considerations must take into account the environmental impacts including storm water management, impacts on trees and vegetation, and impacts on soils and slopes.

Preliminary analysis from Wells and Associates indicate that the two access points on Silverbrook Road are necessary, feasible and sufficient to serve the site. The access road from Lorton Road is suggested to serve the residential portion of the site in the Reformatory.

- 4) The access road planned on the east side of the planning area onto Silverbrook Road should be reconsidered, because this is a poor location to intersect Silverbrook Rd, on a fairly steep grade and curve with heavy traffic. As well, this access road would cause substantial clearing on a steep slope of some of the little remaining woodland left on Laurel Hill. I think walking paths should be built in these woodlands, and the vehicle access to the site should be at the top of the hill, in the areas already cleared, in front of the prison walls. There is an existing paved road where the cross county trail currently is routed, and this road should be used for vehicle access to the site. The tradeoff is intruding on the view of the prison wall and guard towers. I don't think this outweighs the need to protect woodlands, and avoid a dangerous intersection on Silverbrook road.

Response: Wells and Associates, a traffic engineering firm, has performed a preliminary analysis and has confirmed that the access points shown on the draft master plan would adequately serve the proposed uses on the site.

The Draft Plan shows a new access point off of Silverbrook Road to provide access to Zone 2 as well as to the proposed office uses in Zone 3, in addition to utilizing access from the existing cul-de-sac on White Spruce Way. The existing paved ring road provides access to the western part of the site from the drive from Lorton Road, but does not provide a second point of access to the site. See comment-response (2) above.

- 5) Does the Plan utilize the driveway that runs alongside the Laurel Hill House and connects to Lorton Road?

Response: The Draft Master Plan does not propose the use of the driveway by the Laurel Hill House for access to the site. The Park Authority envisions this road remnant as an internal trail. The existing paved driveway from Lorton Road to the Reformatory is expected to adequately serve the site from the south.

- 6) Will the connector road on the Transportation Plan allow local users to avoid using Silverbrook Road to travel south? Does the new collector road serve Zone 1?

Response: The Transportation Plan for the County shows a Collector/Local road – probably two-lanes – connecting the site with Laurel Crest Drive. Further analysis is needed to determine the full-extent of the impact of the reuse site on the road and the road on the reuse site and park property.

- 7) Unless significant landscaping fills-in the ravine running generally parallel to the wall between Tower Number 5 and the baseball field, road access to the areas proposed for retail and destination stores or offices will be limited to two rather narrow lanes. If true “destinations” are located in the area of the present baseball field, there is significant risk of congestion that could strangle those “destinations.”

Response: Comment noted. The sizing of the proposed drive is important, although at this time it is shown as a 2-lane road. Further traffic analysis is needed to determine the number of lanes and the exact lane-widths.

- 8) Access to [the Penitentiary], facing Silverbrook Road and proposed for housing and/or educational use [note: now proposed for office/retail use], would apparently be limited to roads that would circle back from the area of the baseball field unless there is an opening in the wall where turning traffic would not potentially cause backups along the access road toward Silverbrook.

Response: Some wall openings are needed for traffic circulation through the site. Specifically, wall openings shown on the south, east, and northern portions of the wall are intended to allow for vehicular movement.

- 9) Demolish Tower Number 5 [located closest to Silverbrook Road] rather than expend the effort to restore its structural integrity and to replace it with an entry point for [the Penitentiary]. This provides another entry and exit point for the housing or educational facility in [the Penitentiary] [note: now proposed for office/retail] and relieve some of the traffic pressure on the road that would run along the wall toward the village center with retailing and “destination” stores or offices.

Response: Adequate access from the northern part of the site is critical to the success of the adaptive reuse. While an access point close to the northeast portion of the wall potentially allows vehicles to move around the Penitentiary buildings, removal of the tower may be at odds with the desires of review agencies seeking to maintain and reuse this historic component. Options may include relocating the proposed retail use on the outside of the tower to allow greater vehicular movement through this area.

#### *PARKING*

- 10) Concern about the driveway, parking and amount of parking inside the Penitentiary quadrangle.

Response: The proposed parking in the Draft Master Plan is sized to accommodate the retail uses in the Penitentiary. The design of the parking lot will require sensitivity to the historic components of the site. Of all the uses, retail is the most sensitive to parking needs. The success of the retail space will depend on sufficient parking in close proximity to the retailer. The

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Alexander Company is exploring alternative layouts to the retail space that would make the asphalt and parking less prominent.

- 11) Investigate opportunities to include less parking on-site than required by the Zoning Ordinance to allow for more retail on northern section of site. Determine how less parking would change the design.

Response: The Master Planning-level of analysis must show adherence to standard on-site County requirements. Discussions about waivers or changes (such as a reduced parking footprint) are more appropriate during the development review process.

- 12) Remove all parking spaces and other non-historic features (like the water-pond) located in the sacrosanct Reformatory and Penitentiary Quadrangle-Lawns or Common-Ground Areas.

Response: The parking and landscaped features depicted on the Draft Master Plan were suggestions for accommodating accessible parking and creating landscaped focal points. The Alexander Company will solicit feedback from the ARB, NPS, VDHR, and others about these features. The Master Plan must balance sensitivity to the historic landscape and the need to provide vehicular access to buildings that historically were not served by vehicles.

Several parties of interest have expressed concern about the driveway and amount of paving inside the Penitentiary quadrangle. Adequate parking is critical to the success of the office space in this location; however, The Alexander Company is exploring several alternatives to allow parking and additional green space in the courtyard of the quadrangle.

- 13) Concern about size of parking lot near Power Plant and the amount of impervious surface. The southern one-way pair road around the Laundry building empties into a parking lot. Reconsider this design.

Response: The parking lot near the Power Plant and the one-way pairs that feed into and out of the lot will be re-examined in light of vehicular and pedestrian circulation needs and design. Best Management Practices and Low-Impact Development Techniques will be evaluated for controlling storm water throughout the site.

- 14) The parking and access for the townhomes is hard to visualize.

Response: Parking for the townhomes is proposed in garages located at the rear of the homes, accessed by an alley. The intent is to retain an appealing street frontage of the townhomes.

- 15) The parking spaces shown in the Reformatory area for the apartments should be on the same side of the street as the units themselves, so that residents do not have to cross the street to get to the units.

Response: Comment noted. Parking configurations for the Reformatory buildings are being re-examined.

#### *ON-SITE CIRCULATION*

- 16) Is the driveway crossing the Reformatory quadrangle in front of the Administration Building allowable?

Response: The Draft Master Plan proposed this driveway to allow some vehicles close access to the building. Adequate parking may be achieved on the western side of the building.

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Comments from VDHR also oppose the placement of this driveway. The connection will be re-considered.

- 17) Consider a connection from Zone 1-A (existing parking lot) to the Reformatory area to the left of the Chapel, and creating a connection from the Reformatory area to Zone 2 closer in to the site rather than using the existing ring road.

Response: Comment noted. Alternate circulation patterns are being examined to allow for better traffic flow, pedestrian connections, and site suitability.

#### *TRAFFIC*

- 18) Concern about the amount of traffic in the cul-de-sac and the impact to the Spring Hill Community. Will the development require a signal at Silverbrook and White Spruce?

Response: Retail traffic will use the cul-de-sac entrance at White Spruce and Silverbrook Road, entering the site through a proposed break in the wall. This entrance is the best-suited for the retail component of the proposed plan. The entranceway design is sized to accommodate traffic from White Spruce into the adaptive reuse site. Care needs to be taken to ensure adequate signage and markings to differentiate Spring Hill from the adaptive reuse site. The preliminary traffic analysis indicates that a signal may be required at White Spruce and Silverbrook Road.

- 19) Silverbrook and Lorton Roads will experience high traffic volumes with the planned LHES, SCMS, Inova Healthplex, Overlook Ridge Park, LH Sportsplex, LH Equestrian Center, the expanded and improved I-95/Lorton Road Interchange, and the expanded and improved VRE and Inter-City Commuter Train Services. Please add to the cost estimates the effect on more residential units on the traffic and roads. At 7:30 in the morning the intersection of Silverbrook and Lorton Road (the area where most of the proposed residents will also commute) the traffic is constantly backed up. This situation will only get worse and will be greatly impacted by the proposed residential units in the plan.

Response: A detailed traffic analysis will accompany a rezoning application and a site plan submission to the county for any development at the site. Specific traffic volumes are not known at this time, but county and VDOT review of any proposed development plan will ensure adequate road carrying capacity, signalization, and signage.

#### *TRANSIT*

- 20) Consider adding a transit stop (bus) near Tower 1 (entrance to Reformatory).

Response: The consideration of a bus or transit stop is appropriate once more information is developed about the uses, density, and traffic circulation of the site. The development will promote alternate transportation modes including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit, to the extent possible. An existing bus stop is located near the corner of White Spruce and Silverbrook Road, in close proximity to the reuse area. The reuse plan will also consider the utilization of this stop.

## **A. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) meeting was held as a workshop, where feedback was provided to the Alexander Company on the draft master plan. As such, a formal vote was not taken on the draft plan.

### **Richard Bierce**

This plan review was prefaced by reading the 2007 FFX Comp. Plan for the site as well as the guidelines prepared by Gleason and Associates for new construction, infill development and preservation/re-use of the historic structures. The fundamental thing to remember is that guidelines are not limits, but rather the threshold for achieving best possible design outcomes. It should be clear that I want and expect this project to meet or exceed the goals for its transcendent excellence that have driven many decisions and aspirations over the years. Each of these comments and observations is offered in the spirit of furthering that outcome.

A quick response to the Outline given to ARB on 9 October:

I.

- a. Good objective, except for the inclusion of the modifier “essential” to the discussion of historic core: what does it imply, and who decides?
- b. Minimal financial impact a worthy goal, but should not be an absolute criterion w/no context of establishing a quality result.
- c. & d. Concur.
- e. The overriding goal from the standpoint of ARB mission imperatives: make the project memorable and worthy of the opportunity; in my view, the concept is lacking in some key elements to reach this plateau, but has potential to do so.

II.

- a. The limited input ARB heard was a telling response from the community regarding the lack of ‘a sense of place’; I concur, as the plan now stands, but again, I believe it possible to amend that lack.
- b., c. & d. Concur.

IV. Criteria to be met:

- a. Connectivity: notably lacking in plan; gateways to Laurel Hill not acknowledged or accepted; these were/are major directives in their plan;
- b. Balance is a flexible goal; if the economics support this as proposed, I can support it.
- c. Concur.
- d. ‘Useable’ open space needs more clarity in concept, placement and relationship with the underlying planning grid; also needs to assume a more affirmative role in defining the village center as a gathering place for people and many types of potential activities.
- e. Of course, and do so by articulating a clear sense of the present in defining the preferred vocabulary of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the new buildings; compatible does not mean imitative.
- f. The pedestrian network at present is not clear, not continuous and has no points of sequence or arrival hierarchy; this should be paramount in a small but disparate setting as this. Maybe bicycles can do this as is, for an alternate mode, but the idea of public transport such as a Connector type bus link to VRE as a means to reduce some of the vehicular demands for a limited site does not seem to be readily apparent.
- g. & h. Concur.

## V. Review of Zones in Plan:

### Residential Zone 1:

- basic concept of re-use of buildings, w/additions to dormitories, etc, looks promising;
- the linear development on south side w/ strip parking also may work, and keeps massing low;
- the Chapel site needs more definition and sense of place is there a definitive use proposal?
- the character of the 'avenue' needs some study, as does the need to have pedestrian links to the interior of the quadrangle;
- the 1-A site is not well integrated and should be re-thought, although there is nothing inappropriate about it *per se*.

### Residential Zone 2:

- the outline of a viable approach may be there but needs adjustment; specifically, the placement of tiers of new houses tight into the center of the square denies the space that is, and could be, the defining 'town center. The concept survives if the houses were placed more to the south east, straddling the road and occupying what now appears to be undefined leftover space.
- the critical thing that should happen here is a climactic sense of arrival at the intersection of the two dominant axes of the complex, dominance which should be acknowledged and reinforced in spatial and circulatory definition or access.
- the grandstand could then preside over the focal 'useable' space, which could and should have multiple potential uses, including even baseball occasionally.
- the parking tier and new building of indeterminate use together could be better integrated into the challenging landscape of the hill behind the former industrial buildings, and contribute more affirmatively to the central common space.

### Office Zone 3:

- Conceptual use seems to make good sense;
- dominance of the rest of the south courtyard by cars does not.
- if the corner blocks are absolutely necessary, then develop a more humanly scaled solution a diminish the expanse of asphalt;
- the prevalence of parking on the axial core destroys any sense of place for human use and renders meaningless the idea of reinforcing the axis towards the town center. If some parking must remain, subjugate it to the imperative of establishing a more positive spatial statement;
- the arcade as a character-defining element throughout the entire prison site needs to be given express recognition here, and on into Zone 4;
- the office area outside the wall might be given a more defined sense of relationship, and possibly another small building or two to balance the dense parking needs here.

### Office Zone 4:

- this area needs to have visual and circulatory relationship to the Silverbrook corridor, as well as to acknowledge and accentuate the cross-axis entry from the Greenway on the north end, the terminus to a major plan component at Laurel Hill;

- as such it has less direct affinity to the rest of the complex, but still must have a better defined pedestrian linkage, and possibly the architectural link of re-stating the arcade somehow;
- there are three critical elements to this plan here that need to be explored fully: the architectural statement that could and should be made by the new retail structures, the abatement of the most egregious aspects of the massive suburban parking lot model, and the retention of a clear sense of enclosure by having a wall with penetrations as opposed to no wall and no enclosure.
- first the architecture; given location, and the critical need to serve the broader community, there is no conceptual reason why these structures cannot be made into a more commanding presence and given some visual power to help identify itself and attract visitors/customers. Whether it is a more central building, with parking then distributed linearly, but still within the footprint of the walls, or something else, may be open to see. But the 'style' must not be imitative, as there will be no more plastic/EIFS drugstores that look like Independence Hall in the Fairfax HOD experience. Contemporary vocabulary that is compatible and respectful is the goal.
- the parking conundrum was noted above, and some thought to locating some spaces outside the walls should be looked at. Also, the axial arrival from Silverbrook should be more conscientiously embraced as this is the most visible extension of the formally dominant element in others parts of the site.
- Preservation of the wall is too important to maintaining an essential defining element of this property that it is something that should not be mentioned. Compromise, in the form of penetrations, is certainly achievable, as it is recognized that the wall will no enclose the prison yard, but it can continue to define it. The lonely towers shorn of the connective fabric of the wall will simply disappear among the cars and new shopping boxes that the plan suggests. If, by some implacable circumstance, some portion of the brick wall is lost, then the sense of spatial definition and enclosure may be partially recaptured with alternative materials (see picture).

**Keywords Summary Concepts:**

- Preservation: generally good, except for the north wall;
- Spatial Hierarchy: Incipient, needs to be reinforced more deliberately;
- Circulation: needs clarity and refinement;
- Housing: generally ok, needs to move in one zone;
- Axial definition: reinforce appropriately throughout the complex;
- Character-defining elements: retain and reinforce;
- Wall: Save it;
- New architecture: contemporary vocabulary, use its forms and placement more didactically, to add to and reinforce the conceptual underpinnings for the original facility.

**Robert Mobley**

- Are the numbers – square footage, units, etc. – flexible? They seem to only be going up from the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.
- Density needs to be more flexible; understand that the project needs to be economically viable, but now the draft plan has too much surface parking and only two story buildings;
  - Go vertical (increase the density) with a building or two
  - Place parking underground or in structures

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- Concern about driveway crossing the Reformatory courtyard
- Parking is destroying the site by taking up the open space areas
- Not comfortable with the knuckle idea (housing) at the Ballfield; perhaps terrace residential units into the hill
- Lacks cohesiveness; explore accommodating density in taller buildings
- Distressed that the walls are coming down – but sympathetic with the need to gain access
- Is the retail in the right place?
- Chapel – is best use residential? Perhaps a community use here?
- Appreciate what’s happening with the Ballfield and the idea of a green for concerts in the existing infield
- The site may need a sense of place associated with the retail – or place retail closer to the ball field area to create the sense of place there
- Consider residential at both ends – in the Penitentiary area near Silverbrook and at the ball field area
- Consider the idea of retail on the ground floor of buildings and residential uses above to create more activity; struggle with loss of the wall if retail only works in that corner
- Reston has some examples of retail that is not visible but some of it has succeeded (some has failed).

### **Susan Notkins**

- There’s as much parking in Zones 3 and 4 as there are buildings; the amount of surface parking should be reduced or built underground
- Be creative with parking like the Reston Town Center; park around the periphery, in structures, or underground (under the courtyard)
- Look at the pedestrian access in Zone 4; don’t want people to drive between points on the site; pedestrian routes are very forced
- You can create an exciting retail event inside the walls – perhaps put two buildings on axis; work on the design of the retail, seems too suburban
- Consider hiring an outside consultant with preservation experience to help with the retail
- Consider two-story retail
- Is retail supportable? There are retail opportunities in close proximity
- Consider running shuttle buses from parking on the periphery to the retail
- Can’t support a plan that removes this much of the wall
- Need a good visual axis such as terraced or stepped townhomes
- Make use of the grade changes for development
- The pedestrian routes feel very forced
- Make a stronger relationship with the adjacent Spring Hill via the Greenway
- P Street, DC, example of retail, office, and housing in one structure – could apply to Zones 3 & 4 to promote 24-hour activity
- There is a trend toward mom and pop shops – smaller scale & upscale restaurants
- It’s a big effort but it is coming along

### **Joseph Plumpe**

- The retail should be of a high quality; while there is retail in this area, it is not quality retail. The household incomes in this area allow for unique retail.
- Plan now looks like a traditional suburban strip center with seas of parking
- Consider terraced parking or parking on street

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- Consider street events that close off the street south of Spring Hill
- It appears that the retail is not for outsiders but only for residents of the site
- Not too concerned about the amount of the wall taken down
- Essential Green area needs to be expanded
- The proposed new entrance from Silverbrook might be tough
- Emphasize the Lorton Road entrance
- Note that the assisted living building will block much of the view of the retail area from Silverbrook Road
- Pedestrian connections need to be strengthened, especially along Silverbrook and from Spring Hill
- See examples of Easton, OH, Shirlington, Bethesda Row, and Katy's Alley (Georgetown); try to attract more young people to the site
- Opportunity for food court or restaurants – there isn't much in southern Fairfax County
- Can the Administration Building come down to create views toward the golf course?
- Allow flexibility, perhaps have a Plan A and Plan B that can be implemented based on market conditions; mothball some buildings in the meantime
- Need to raise the “wow” factor

### **Mark Searle**

- Not clear about the treatment of the ball field area; Zone 2 is a missed opportunity; it is usable open space for the greater community, but townhomes around an amphitheater is not compelling
- Zones 4 and 3 have a lot of parking and treatment of the wall needs to be examined
- The site needs a better sense of place; prefer to see retail in the center of the site with residential uses adjacent to the Penitentiary walls

### **Peter Juanpere**

- Too much vehicle orientation with little ability to walk through the site
- No integration of uses to allow people to walk through the space and be drawn into the site
- Opportunities for restaurants
- Should create a place for people to simply stroll and window shop, Fairfax Corner example
- Zone 3 (office) would be a ghost city in the evenings

### **John Boland**

- Needs to be a destination place – we're not there yet
- See Reston Town Center for example of restaurant and retail
- Retail is disjointed from the mixed-use buildings, need better opportunity to walk through site
- Flip housing from Zone 2 to Zone 4 – people could walk to retail at ballfield
- Zone 1; are there mixed use opportunities in this location; this area looks isolated

### **General**

- Replace the stigma with experience; the prison should be a hook
- Camden-yards type of development that looks over the ball field area
- Open up Reformatory quad by removing Central Administration building
- Ballfield area could be the draw as a larger community use (outdoor movies, etc.)

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**Citizen Comments – 1**

- Defer the plan to insure public input
- Consider townhouses that are terraced
- Explore development on topographic areas not environmentally sensitive
- Workforce and magnet housing should be part of the design
- Swap land with the Park Authority to provide development opportunities

**Citizen Comments – 2**

- Do not defer the plan
- Development on the slopes is an interesting idea
- Central Administration Building is on the National Register and demolition will be difficult
- This site will most likely not receive county investment like the Lorton Arts Foundation did
- Fairfax Corner, Reston Town Center and Bethesda Row are high-density, mixed-use sites with lots of parking and without the same historic preservation requirements
- Unlikely that additional land could be obtained from the Park Authority around the perimeter of the site
- Ability to go higher in density is good direction (taller buildings)

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**B. Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

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3 November 2008

Mr. Chris Caperton  
Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning  
Planning Division  
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 730  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5509

RE: Draft Master Plan for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Site  
Lorton, Fairfax County  
VDHR File No. 1998-1786

Dear Mr. Caperton:

We have received your request for our review and comment regarding the above referenced project. The materials provided to the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) consist of your 20 October 2008 cover memorandum, an outline of principles from the Laurel Hill Policy Advisory Committee, and draft site plans for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Program developed by Alexander Company.

Reviewing the draft site plans, we have great concerns with a number of the proposals being made. In what is described as Zone 3, a new parking lot is being planned for the courtyard area. The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) considers this courtyard an important landscape feature of the historic prison complex and its current configuration should be retained. It greatly alters the ability of one to interpret and understand the spatial relationships of the buildings surrounding the prison yard, and would represent an adverse effect to the historic property. Similarly, although to a lesser degree, the surface parking proposed on the western end of the courtyard in Zone 1 physically, functionally, and visually will segregate the large building that defines the western boundary of the quad.

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Tel: (540) 857-7585  
Fax: (540) 857-7588

Northern Region Office  
5357 Main Street  
PO Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Tel: (540) 868-7031  
Fax: (540) 868-7033

Page 2

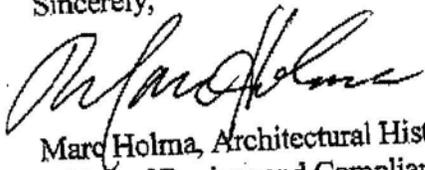
Mr. Chris Caperton  
3 November 2008

Also in Zone 1, the new hyphens between the buildings diminish the intended design of these structures and independent barrack and work areas. We do not support the parking arrangement or new construction between buildings as currently proposed for Zone 1. Further, in most of the zones planned surface parking lots are located in too close proximity to historic buildings. This arrangement removes the visual focus away from the collective elements that comprise the historic prison complex. We support moving the parking farther away from the existing buildings. Finally, it appears that development plan requires that the existing prison wall in Zone 3 be removed to a great extent. The DHR believes that the prison wall is a character defining feature of the historic property and should be retained to the greatest extent possible.

In conclusion, we believe that the adaptive reuse plan as now designed represents an adverse effect on the historic Lorton prison.

If you have any questions about our comments, please contact me at (804) 367-2323, Ext. 114.

Sincerely,



Marc Holma, Architectural Historian  
Office of Review and Compliance

C: Mr. Linda Blank, Preservation Planner, County of Fairfax

November 21, 2008

### **C. Fairfax County History Commission**

History Commission Meeting

11/5/08

DPZ staff presentation of Draft Master Plan for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Area

Meeting notes (prepared by DPZ)

The History Commission opened up the meeting to comments from the public before the History Commissioners provided comments.

#### Citizen comment #1

- Concern with residential density and location of townhomes; take advantage of topography and build homes into the sloped areas
- Use Workhouse artists colony housing as an example of housing type
- Remove road in front of Reformatory Administration building
- Housing and active ballparks do mix well together
- MVCCA/Fairfax County Tree Preservation-concern about new road off of Silverbrook Road and impacts to existing trees
- New access should be near silo off of Laurel Crest Drive, rather than a new entrance off of Silverbrook
- Dulles Corner Park example of a Ballfield surrounded by residential

#### Citizen comment #2

- Historic baseball field should be retained
- Field was built for prisoners to play teams from MD and VA and was used for Sinatra and Fitzgerald performances
- South County Hawks have full adoption of the field with the Park Authority and that is only a short history of the field
- Request for staff to present to the Fairfax County Baseball Council

#### History Commission comments:

- Lee District Area Pioneer field; competition in Lee District to play games at the prison b/c of the unique games (Commissioner has been called by 3 players and one coach in opposition to the development in the Ballfield area)
- Clarification of MOA requirements: MOA stipulates that the buildings will be treated as though they are in a Historic Overlay District, MOA includes provisions for demolition and the coordination with VDHR and LHS.
- What percent of the wall will be demolished with this plan? Not sure of the percentage; the wall was 25 feet in height and was brought down to 15 feet while the prison was still in operation.
- Concern that the historic part of the site is surrounded by new construction with this plan; loss of sense of place
- Opposition to housing in the chapel
- Commissioner noted that at the ARB workshop for the draft plan comments included that the draft plan had too much parking, was not yet there in terms of “far-reaching significance”, too much of the wall is proposed to be removed, and the site did not have a hub of activity
- Is there a need for medical facilities? Inova Healthplex planned south of the site at Silverbrook and Lorton Roads.
- Clarification that this project will apply for both federal and state historic tax credits

November 21, 2008

- Has the traffic impact on surrounding roads been studied? A detailed traffic study would be included as a next step in the process, but a traffic engineering firm has been consulted about the draft plan
- Staff noted that according to a 1953 aerial photograph of the site, the Ballfield was not yet in use; the photograph shows ballfields within the Penitentiary walls and north of the Reformatory
- ARB Standards and Guidelines designate areas on the site that could be considered for new development, including the Ballfield
- Is development in the Ballfield needed to help pay for the project, to minimize county investment?  
Yes
- Staff noted that the suggestion to build into slopes may create environmental issues

#### History Commission Letter

The History Commission submitted a letter to DPZ following the November 5, 2008 meeting, which follows on the next page. The letter states the History Commission's support of preservation of the historic ball field and grandstand, suggests that the chapel be considered for other community uses such as a daycare center or similar use, and recommends minimal disruption of the historic walls.

November 21, 2008



## Fairfax County History Commission

Fairfax City Regional Library  
Virginia Room  
10360 North Street  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030-2514  
Tel. 703-293-6227

---

Robert E Beach, AIA Chairman  
Fairfax County History Commission  
Black Oak Drive  
Fairfax, Virginia 22032  
[robertebeachaia@earthlink.net](mailto:robertebeachaia@earthlink.net)

October 10, 2008

Mr. Chris Caperton, Laurel Hill Project Coordinator  
Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
12055 Government Center Parkway, Seventh Floor  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-0071

RE: Comments on the Laurel Hill Draft Master Plan

Dear Mr. Caperton:

The Fairfax County History Commission would like to thank you for your November 3, 2008 presentation on the Laurel Hill Draft Master Plan. The Commission strongly supports preservation of the historic ball field and grand stand as it is used due to its historic nature. The Commission suggests the chapel be considered for other community uses such as a daycare center or other similar use and that it not be adaptively reused as a residential structure. The Commission recommends minimal disruption of the historic walls as they are contributing historic structures.

The Commission would like to thank you for your continued commitment to the appropriate development of the Laurel Hill Master Plan.

Respectfully,

Robert E. Beach, AIA Chairman  
Fairfax County History Commission

Cc: Ms. Linda Cornish Blank, Historic Preservation Planner  
Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning

November 21, 2008

## **D. Lorton Heritage Society**

October 20, 2008

The LHS appreciates the Alexander Company's presentation to our membership and I think we had a very productive meeting. Many points remain to be ironed out but I believe that with some concessions from all parties involved we can come close to a viable plan.

Comments from the LHS meeting, October 20, 2008 are included along with the entire text of e-mails received by Irma Clifton after the meeting.

### **Comments from the LHS membership:**

Remove parking in courtyard (Quad) at the Penitentiary

Minimize any phasing that may have to be done.

Consider an outdoor café and farmers market.

There was a negative reaction to townhouses.

The wall is considered an asset and removing any portion affects the integrity of the site. However, having said that, if some portion must be removed it should be kept to a minimum. Members of the LHS recognize the need for access.

Redesign retail space at wall to increase visibility.

The ball field remains an item of great concern and the members of the LHS would like to see it remain.

### **E-Mail from member Caroline Blanco:**

I understand that Irma will be writing a document on behalf of the LHS stating that we appreciate the Alexander Group's efforts and we are willing to work with them in formulating a plan. I also suggest that the document state that, as signatories to the Memorandum of Agreement that was incorporated into the deed, any plan that is developed must, of course, be consistent with the intent of the statute authorizing the land transfer, the deed, the MOA, and the comprehensive plan. Along those lines, we strongly suggest that the Alexander Group consider revising its draft plan to do the following:

1. Reduce the number of townhomes so that the historic nature of the property can be enjoyed more fully by the community at large.
2. Restore the historic ball field to a reasonable size sufficient to allow community use of it.
3. Relocate the proposed new retail building so that it is not visible from the opening of the wall that is proposed. This would help to preserve the integrity of the site.

November 21, 2008

4. Maintain the historic wall to the fullest extent possible to increase the community's "sense of place" experience. Removal of appropriate portions of the wall to allow for reasonable access is, of course, acceptable.

5. Remove the proposed parking spaces within the quad; maintaining the green space will add to the "sense of place" experience of the community. It will also encourage a greater sense of community by allowing folks opportunities to visit while shopping in the retail areas, working in the office spaces, or simply visiting the site.

6. Consider revisiting the placement of the retail space to allow for unique shops, other types of special facilities, and walking areas that would allow for an increased community experience of this important historic property. (In other words, we would not like to see retail stores placed in this historic property that are akin to those in a typical strip mall. Allowing such stores would diminish the community's experience of the historic nature of the property.)

These are just some thoughts for LHS to consider as the document is being drafted. Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of these ideas (or others) more fully.

**E-Mail from member Joe Martocci:**

I am of the opinion that even though the LHS's mandate is as a "heritage preservationist group" we would be remiss in our stewardship if we did not have at least some cognizance of the negative impact that an additional 95 townhomes would have on the delicately balanced SCSS attendance area. Why shoehorn an additional 100 or so students into an already overcrowded facility?

**E-Mail from member Neal McBride:**

Per our general at-closing discussion re this subject at last night's LHS meeting, it is my --- and I think also Willie's, Dale's and probably Caroline's (and certainly Don Hakenson's and most others') --- opinion that LHS needs to state very strongly to Alexander that we are holding fast to our basic charter as a "heritage preservationist group" which translates vis-a-vis their current draft reuse plan for the Reformatory into our accepting nothing less than a major overhaul of their proposal ... especially with the end result being a new plan that has the following as its major results:

--- substantially fewer TH's (certainly on the Reformatory Ballpark's Ballfield), via the Company's compromising on the proposed size of the Ballpark's ballfield (needed for stacking their 95 TH's and their office building) by working proactively and creatively with the SC Hawks' suggested alternative design that will end up with a reduction in the currently way-over-sized outfield, thereby allowing the Ballpark to retain an appropriate youth/HS-sized ballfield;

--- removing/relocating the poorly-located retail building along the northern perimeter of the penitentiary campus so that it no longer blocks the historic viewshed into the site; and,

--- removing all parking spaces and other non-historic features (like the water-pond) located in the sacrosanct Reformatory and Penitentiary Quad-Greens.

There are probably several other demands or suggestion --- what some might consider somewhat less major issues (such as diminishing by either redesign or relocation or outright removal altogether of the

November 21, 2008

"looming-over/blocked view-shed" produced by the generally-appearing massive grouping of TH rows along the southern perimeter of the Reformatory, ensuring proper consideration of preservation/restoration of the LH House by a specific mention of such in the next/final-draft plan, etc.) --- that we could make to Alexander in our near-term LHS "Statement of Concerns/Recommendations" that you will be drafting, but I think that those can be covered in the more generalized "instructional verbiage" that you and Dale more or less developed as we were closing out the meeting at the very end.

In any case, I want to add that I personally came prepared to make a motion last night that the LHS vote to tell the Alexander Company that its current draft reuse plan was unacceptable in its present form (with our mentioning more specifically at least the three major issue-concerns or objections noted above). And I feel strongly that such a motion would have easily prevailed --- even with Linwood's entreaties that "compromise must be made, especially by losing the ballpark's ballfield, due to the professed financial needs of the Company and/or the County" --- since I believe that the vast majority of the LHS members in the room (new or old) were essentially unhappy with not only the Company's definitive plan but also with its staff's (and their County helpers') rather pedestrian presentation and their subtly arrogant belief that we should simply forget our basic charter as well as void our responsibilities as set forth in the LH MOA itself. However, I held back on that motion with the hope-against-all-hope that maybe the Company and its County folks have seen the light and have finally gotten the message --- AFTER OVER NINE SEPARATE COMMUNITY MEETINGS SO FAR --- that they need to come back to us next time with a more responsive and responsible plan.

November 21, 2008

## E. Community Association of Spring Hill

Community Association of Spring Hill (CASH)

November 13, 2008

Chris Caperton  
Laurel Hill Project Coordinator  
Fairfax County Government  
Department of Planning and Zoning  
12055 Government Center Pkwy, Suite 730  
Fairfax, VA 22035

Subject: Comments from CASH on the Alexander Company Draft Plan for the Adaptive Reuse Area

Dear Chris:

Thanks for attending our meeting on October 23, 2008 on the subject of the Alexander draft plan for the Adaptive Reuse Area. Your comments and assistance provided us with greater insight and background.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the County and Alexander Company with comments, questions, and concerns from a Spring Hill perspective. While a formal vote was not taken on any issue, there was general consensus on some overarching issues that will be covered first. Following these items of **general** consensus, we have included **individual** items of concern that were expressed, in order to ensure that all Spring Hill comments are accounted for.

As such, here are issues that the **general body** expressed consensus for:

**1. Penitentiary Wall.** The draft plan shows that the wall will be retained between Spring Hill and the Adaptive Reuse Area. CASH concurs that the wall be retained as depicted. Direct pedestrian access from Spring Hill through the wall is not important; people can walk around the wall if necessary.

**2. Ball Field.** CASH requests that the ball field be modified/rezoned for park use as depicted. We do not want to retain the ball field, especially at the risk of creating a negative impact on the economic viability of the overall plan.

**3. Alternate Use Considerations.** Consider the merits of an over-55 community for the residential portions of the plan. Discussion of this topic pointed to several options for consideration.

- (a) Change Zone 2 new construction townhomes to over-55 single family homes or 4-plex villas as built in Spring Hill.
- (b) Change Zone 1 existing reformatory to over-55 or over-62 Independent Living to align with the plan for the Kettler buildings located in Spring Hill. The new construction townhomes planned for Zone 1 would become either over-55 single family homes or 4-plex villas.

Community Association of Spring Hill (CASH)

- (c) Change Zone 3 from office to Assisted Living, similar to the concept provided by companies such as Sunrise. In this concept, the Kettler land zoned for an Independent Living site in Spring Hill bordered by White Spruce and Silverbrook Road would be rezoned for single family homes. A number of Spring Hill residents considered the proposed Independent Living facility as one of the reasons to buy here.
- (d) Consider combinations of the options above for over-55 residential. For example, Zones 1 and 2 could be designated over-55 residential, but the office option for Zone 3 might be retained as-is.
- (e) Zone 4 should remain as retail in any approved plan.
- (f) Analyze the graduated living concept built in the River Ridge community in Prince William County to determine if that concept has potential for the Adaptive Reuse Area.
- (g) Over-55 residential is compatible with the adjacent residential mix, preserves the Alexander Company mixed use concept of retail/office/residential, and results in zero impact on school infrastructure.

**4. Traffic.** Please consider the following concerns about the impact of traffic relating to the draft plan:

- (a) The main entry for Zone 4 is so close to our back gate and could result in traffic following cars in our gates and into the community, particularly those who are unfamiliar with the area.
- (b) A traffic light on Silverbrook is needed if shoppers and residents are to be able to get into the area (off of Silverbrook onto White Spruce).
- (c) Shopping and office areas show parking for 500+ cars. Much of this traffic will be using the White Spruce entrance, thus affecting our (Spring Hill) traffic flow.
- (d) A traffic study should be conducted to consider the impact of the traffic volume: For example, 350 homes, at 1.7 automobiles per home equals around 600 automobiles. Retail and office stores with parking for 500 automobiles will probably account for 2,000+ additional automobiles entering and exiting the area, plus 600 residents entering and exiting at least once per day. Total: 3,000 + automobiles traveling around Spring Hill.

**5. Landscaping and Screening.** Concern was expressed about areas of the Adaptive Reuse Area that are not screened by the penitentiary wall. It would appear that consideration be given to adding dense landscaping between Spring Hill and Zone 1 or provide an alternative in order to avoid a view of the back of buildings and a parking lot. Note that at least three of the single-story, independent-living, Kettler-owned buildings are very close to Zones 1 and 2 with only the Greenway in between.

**6. Lighting.** Parking lot lights must blend into the area and not appear as "football stadium type lights." Retail and office area lighting should not have a negative impact on Spring Hill.

7. **Building Height.** What is the maximum planned height for buildings? Building height should be compatible with adjacent areas.

8. **Types of Retail.** There were several comments expressing concern about types of retail that may be selected:

- (a) Spring Hill should have a strong say in the type of retail that will be planted next door. This is not a topic that can be dictated by county residents who do not live in the area. For example, a movie theater would be out of character for the area as would another quick food/burger restaurant. There is one at the bottom of Silverbrook and several in the shopping center on the other side of the railroad track near Shoppers Food.
- (b) If the Alexander Company plans move forward, we would like to see a pharmacy such as CVS, Rite Aid with milk, shampoo, etc., Trader Joe's, Panero's Restaurant (no fast food) and as much green space to enjoy as possible.
- (c) Retail signs: Any large roadside sign would be out of place in this historic location. Note the way the BB&T bank is set back from Silverbrook and the signs blend in with the area (branch - Crosspointe 8920 Village Shops Dr Fairfax Station, Va
- (d) Please be more specific in explaining what "mixed use" means regarding retail applications.

The following are **individual comments** that were voiced, but not fully vetted with the general body. Alexander Company may find these comments useful and may be able to reinforce or negate their validity where applicable. The comments are provided by category:

### 1. **Traffic**

- (a) Not all that concerned about the traffic. It looks like most of the traffic will use alternate access points. We (Spring Hill) have no traffic issues; in fact it is rare to see more than a few cars moving at any given time. The increase in vehicles should be handled by the various new access roads in the adaptive reuse area as well as the widening of Lorton Road and a few lights on Silverbrook and Lorton Roads.
- (b) Determine the traffic impacts from the mixed use buildings.
- (c) What are the traffic generation numbers from Zone 1? Does the new collector road serve Zone 1?
- (d) Cut-through traffic or heavy surrounding density traffic is something we do not want for Spring Hill's future.

### 2. **Residential**

- (a) Will townhouse occupants own their homes?
- (b) How many students are generated from this development? What is the expected impact on the local schools?
- (c) Does BRAC bring the potential of young home buyers to this area?

Community Association of Spring Hill (CASH)

- (d) Will workforce housing be a part of the Zone 1 residential?
- (e) Will there be low-income apartments in Zone 1?
- (f) 350 homes will bring 700+ people, plus probably 200+ children. The area will be very congested and will place additional burden on existing and planned schools. It will also result in more temporary-for ever unsightly classroom trailers. Fairfax County underestimated the population for South County High School/Middle School by 83%, and this resulted in trailers the very first year of operation. Underestimating school population will also impact traffic. Apartment rentals may attract transient, lower income people, thus affecting the value of our homes.

**3. General**

- (a) Not in favor of making the 80 acres so “senior-centric.” Alexander Company’s plan is much more appealing. The idea of a “walking mall” concept so close is very appealing so long as it is attractive and we maintain our secure community space. We are somewhat concerned about the noise level of what Alexander Company calls a “traditional downtown.” But all in all, any businesses will have to be fairly small given the spaces in which they’ll be located.
- (b) What will the signage look like? It should be compatible with the historic theme and not be obtrusive.
- (c) Tower 4 is in bad shape and may constrain the budget. Give consideration to taking this tower down.
- (d) Who is responsible for maintenance of remaining portions of the wall towers?
- (e) Would it be possible to consider a public library in this plan?
- (f) Alexander identified (in the talk and handout) \$153-\$175 million in development and infrastructure costs, offset partially by \$14-\$18 million in tax credits. But of the net (splitting the difference) \$148 million, Alexander didn’t estimate what private developers would be accountable for and what government might be left with.

We hope that our comments, questions and recommendations will assist Alexander Company and the County in transforming the Adaptive Reuse Area into an economically viable and successful project that will benefit not only the adjacent communities but will enhance the reputation of Fairfax County overall. Thank you for allowing us to participate in the process.

On behalf of the members of CASH,



Dale Johnson  
President

November 21, 2008

**F. Neal McBride**

Statement before LHS re Alexander Company's LH Reuse Plan – 10/20/08

Ten years ago, I and others from the heritage sector and communities around the Lorton Prison had high hopes for the Lorton Technical Corrections Act (LTCA) of 1998. LHS members may especially recall that that law anticipated the adoption of future adaptive reuse plans that we back then believed would bring only great things to the former Workhouse and Reformatory sites, while avoiding damaging or otherwise overwhelming the future historic district or its adjacent neighborhoods with unwanted or inappropriate projects that could have very negative impacts.

In fact, *the first two major reuse plans have produced a well-crafted arts center and a high-value seniors-only community --- both of which have done a good job of historic preservation and certainly produced few if any new students who would have otherwise crowded into our then (and still-today) over-capacity schools. Additionally, that very first Reformatory Reuse Plan helped pay for our new high school and golf course, both of which now offer new public recreational facilities to local and county-wide residents.*

But now, it appears we have before us a somewhat flawed proposal. For with this new Alexander Company draft-plan, not only will we get 355 new residences that may bring 120 students into an ever-worsening school over-crowding situation, but it will also provide limited resources to help in minimizing that community impact. It would also actually **remove** one of our more historically-significant contributing structures --- one that also provides vitally-needed recreational facilities to area youth --- by effectively destroying the unique and amazingly beautiful Reformatory Ballpark and then replacing it with scores of totally out-of-context town-homes and an arguably quite misplaced office building.

As I told the Society's heritage-protection/oversight partner (the FC ARB) earlier this month --- by way of comments similar to those outlined in the marked-up review of Alexander's plan that I've distributed tonight --- we will do our best to help the Company improve upon their current draft-plan so that *the original promise of the LTC Act can finally be realized.*

Neal McBride   
Membership & Outreach Coordinator, LHS  
Past Co-Chair/Member, Laurel Hill Planning Task Forces 1, 2 & 3

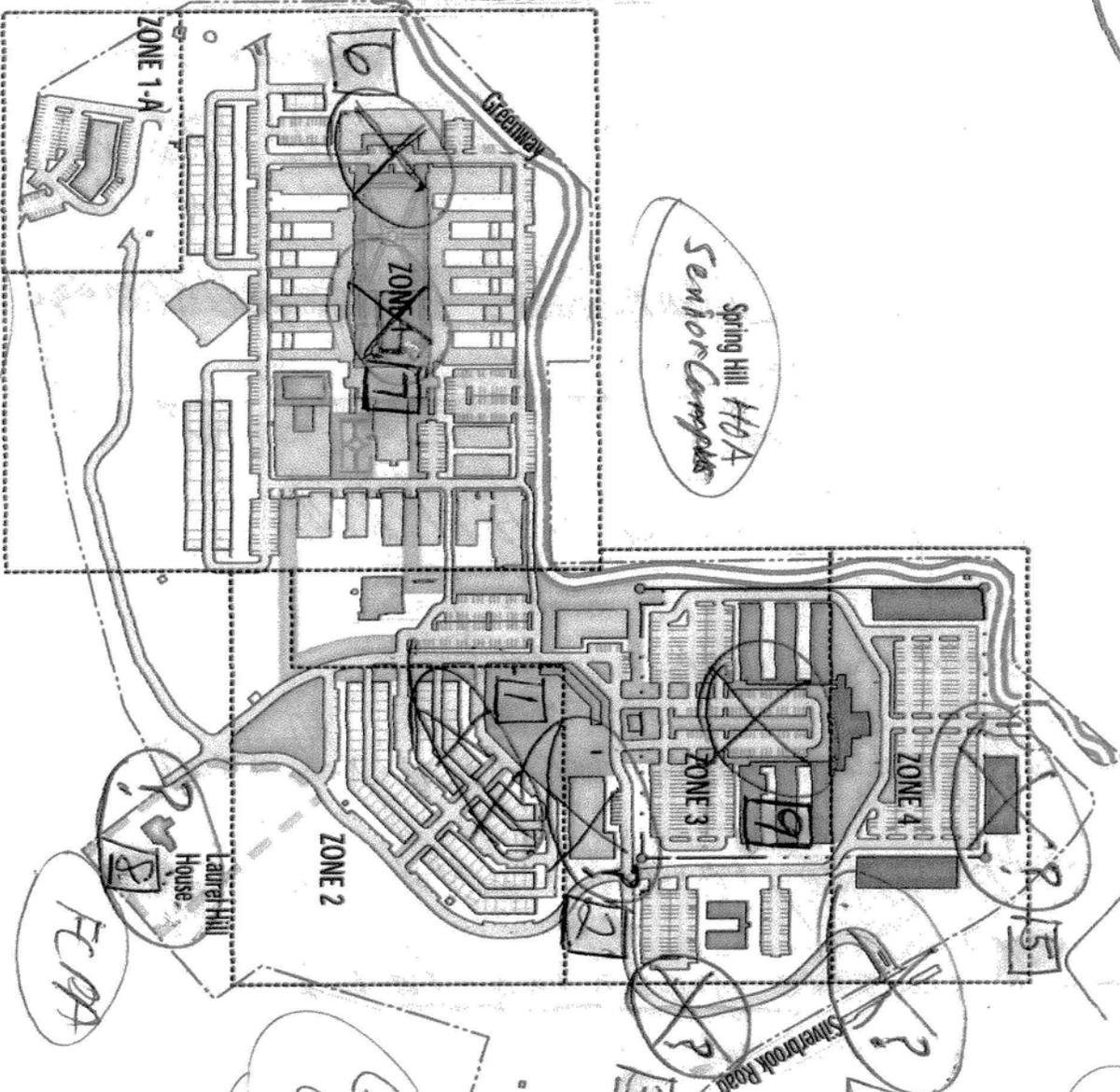
SCSS site

LHES site

LH HOA

See Over

Future Connector Road



- Legend**
- Regional Greenway Trail
  - Community Green
  - Open Space
  - Residential
  - Retail
  - Mixed-use
  - Office
  - Existing Building

May add BO new! students to scss pyramid!

355 units

Laurel Crest HOA

Gunston Corner HOA

Reuse Area Boundary

Laurel Hill House

DRAFT: Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Program Diagram

From and Modified Plan

FCRA

FCRA

To Longbay

As of 9/29/02

Alexander Group



November 21, 2008

Legend-Code Comments Re LH Reuse Plan Issues (see circled-numbered items over):

- 1 --- Need to retain historic ballpark's baseball field (Remove/relocate at least first two rows of TH's - about 35+/- units).
- 2 --- Need to retain historic ballpark's baseball field (Remove/relocate commercial building located along 3<sup>rd</sup>-base/left-field side of diamond).
- 3 --- Need to preserve/protect at least some of environmentally-sensitive wooded areas that also provide visual and noise buffers for historic sites and adjacent communities (Redesign and if necessary relocate or remove new roadway alignment).
- 4 --- Need to provide for safer traffic ingress/egress via Silverbrook Road (Redesign and if necessary relocate or remove new roadway alignment and/or intersection).
- 5 --- Need to open up view-shed into historic penitentiary area (Remove/relocate new retail building facing Silverbrook Road).
- 6 --- Need to retain/preserve "sanctity" of original open-space plan for Reformatory Quad-Green Area (Remove/relocate parking lot).
- 7 --- Need to retain/preserve "sanctity" of original open-space plan for Reformatory Quad-Green Area (Remove/relocate water-pond feature).
- 8 --- Need to preserve/restore Laurel Hill House and its D.A.R.-designated Lindsay Family Graveyard (Identify specific proposals for such within master reuse plan).
- 9 --- Need to retain/preserve "sanctity" of original open-space plan for Penitentiary Quad-Green Area (Remove/relocate parking lot).

Med McBride (10/20/08)  
[ Member/Outreach Coord. (Lrt'n. Heritage Society) ]

November 21, 2008

**G. Mike Grasso**

The following suggestion was made at a previous meeting to the Alexander Company and Fairfax County as a plan to keep the historic ball field and allow development at the same time.

The revitalization of this historic field has the potential to return more revenue to the people that have businesses in the area and the future businesses being built, by providing more exposure to the area with such a “diamond in the rough”.

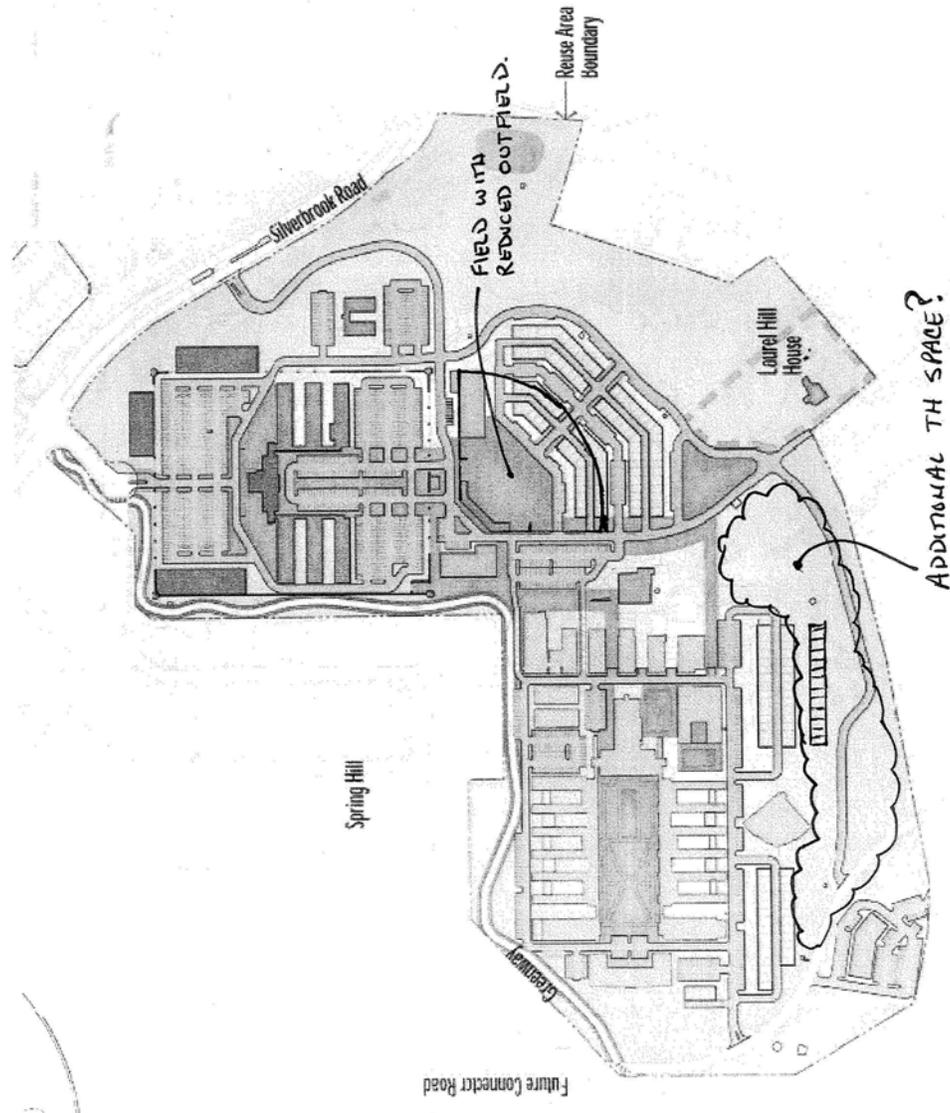
What can be done?

1 – Decrease the outfield size to a traditional sized outfield. This would still allow 55 out of the 90 currently designed townhouses to be built. We recommended an outfield retail loop similar to Camden yards. The business would experience additional revenue with the ball field intact.

2 – The area known as Zone 1 still has sufficient space for additional townhouses not shown and could possibly have space for the 40 removed in order to keep the field.

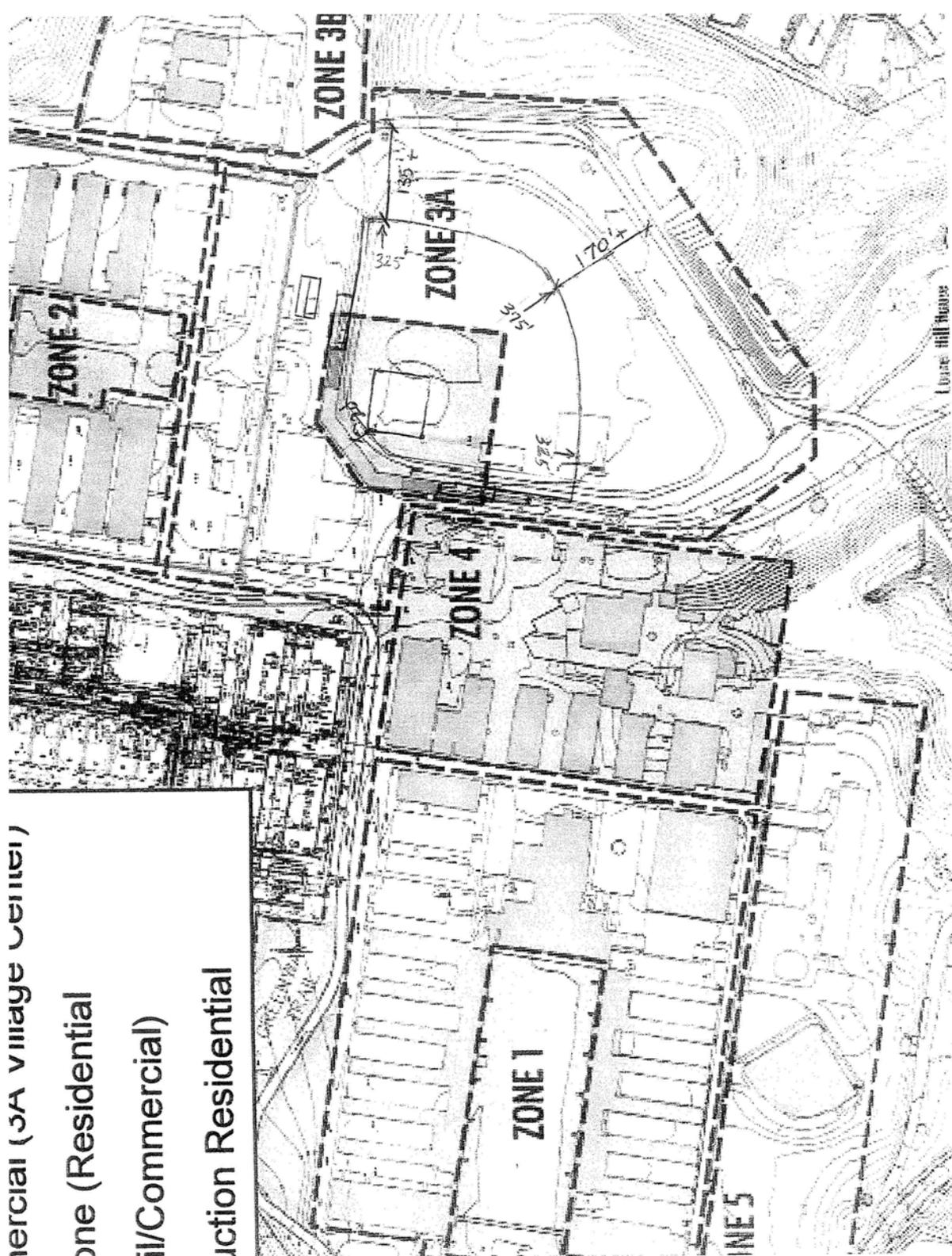
3 – The cost to restore the field would be less than the cost of 2 townhomes or \$500,000.00. This would include lights and irrigation.

- Legend
- Regional Greenway Trail
  - Community Green
  - Open Space
  - Residential
  - Retail
  - Mixed-use
  - Office
  - Existing Building



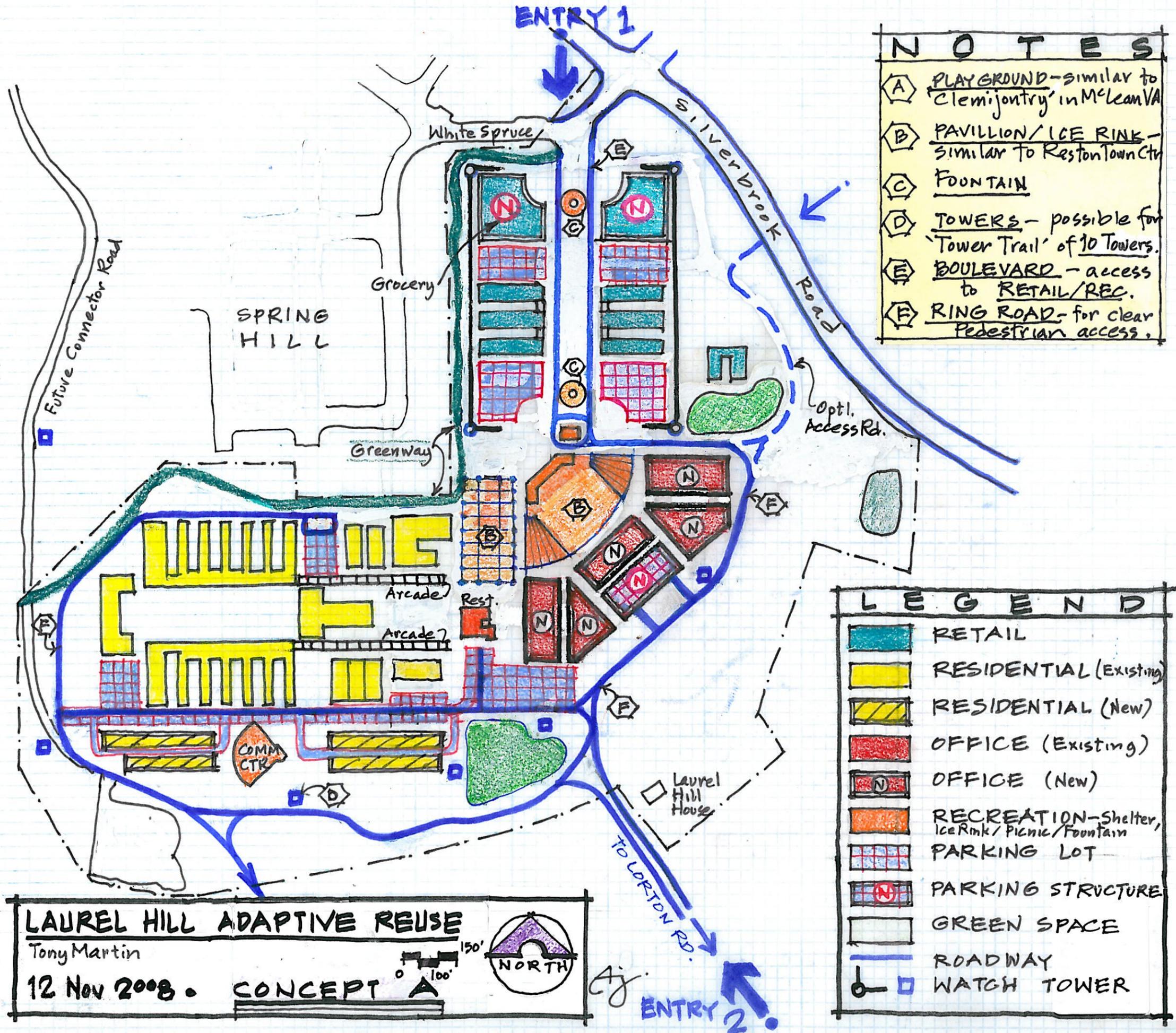
DRAFT: Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Program Diagram

Commercial (3A Village Center)  
Zone (Residential  
Office/Commercial)  
Action Residential



November 21, 2008

**H. Tony Martin (see following page)**



- ### NOTES
- (A) PLAYGROUND - similar to 'Clemijontry' in McLean VA
  - (B) PAVILLION / ICE RINK - similar to Reston Town Ctr
  - (C) FOUNTAIN
  - (D) TOWERS - possible for 'Tower Trail' of 10 Towers.
  - (E) BOULEVARD - access to RETAIL / REC.
  - (F) RING ROAD - for clear pedestrian access.

- ### LEGEND
- RETAIL
  - RESIDENTIAL (Existing)
  - RESIDENTIAL (New)
  - OFFICE (Existing)
  - N OFFICE (New)
  - RECREATION - Shelter, Ice Rink / Picnic / Fountain
  - PARKING LOT
  - N PARKING STRUCTURE
  - GREEN SPACE
  - ROADWAY
  - WATCH TOWER

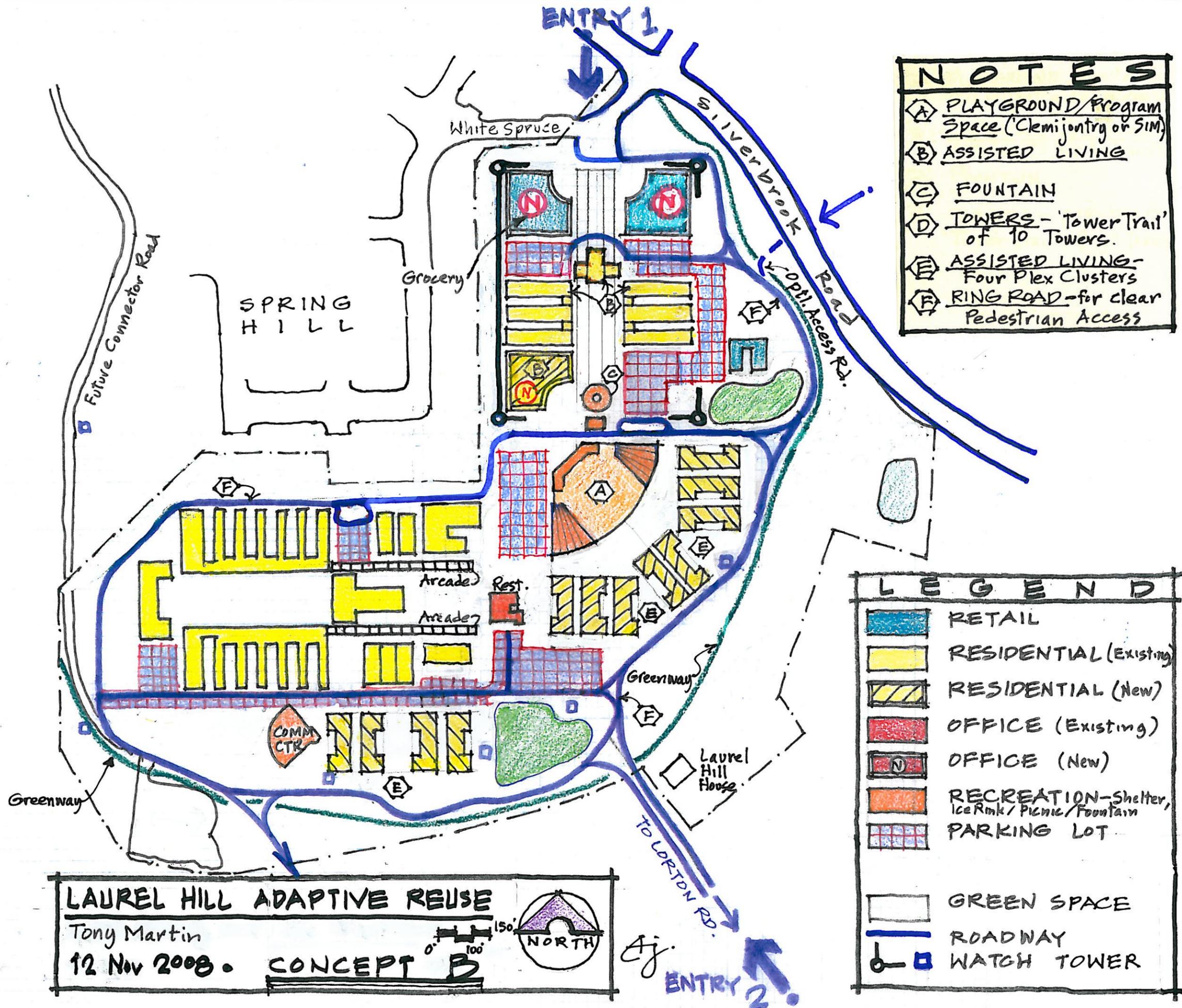
**LAUREL HILL ADAPTIVE REUSE**  
 Tony Martin  
 12 Nov 2008 • **CONCEPT**

150'  
100'

NORTH

Aj.

ENTRY 2



# NOTES

- (A) PLAYGROUND/Program Space (Clemijontry or SIM)
- (B) ASSISTED LIVING
- (C) FOUNTAIN
- (D) TOWERS - 'Tower Trail' of 10 Towers.
- (E) ASSISTED LIVING - Four Plex Clusters
- (F) RING ROAD - for clear Pedestrian Access

# LEGEND

- RETAIL
- RESIDENTIAL (Existing)
- RESIDENTIAL (New)
- OFFICE (Existing)
- N OFFICE (New)
- RECREATION - Shelter, Ice Rink / Picnic / Fountain
- PARKING LOT
- GREEN SPACE
- ROADWAY
- WATCH TOWER

**LAUREL HILL ADAPTIVE REUSE**  
 Tony Martin  
 12 Nov 2008 • **CONCEPT B**



Aj  
**ENTRY 2**



Image © 2008 Commonwealth of Virginia  
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38°56'40.68" N 77°09'24.08" W

elev 76 m

Feb 2007

Eye alt 253 m