



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Leanna O'Donnell, Planner III  
Department of Planning and Zoning

**FROM:** Kelly Davis, Project Manager *KDD*  
Special Projects Branch

**DATE:** September 8, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Laurel Hill Adaptive Re-use Site  
Tax Map Number: 107-1 ((1)) 0009

### BACKGROUND

The Park Authority staff has reviewed the proposed Master Plan dated April - May, 2009, for the above referenced site.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS

**1. Park Services and New Development (The Policy Plan, Parks and Recreation Objective 6, p. 8)**

**“Objective 6: Ensure the mitigation of adverse impacts to park and recreation facilities and service levels caused by growth and land development through the provision of proffers, conditions, contributions, commitments, and land dedication.”**

“Policy a: Offset residential development impacts to parks and recreation resources, facilities and service levels based on the adopted facility service level standards (Appendix 2). The provision of suitable new park and recreational lands and facilities will be considered in the review of land development proposals in accordance with Residential Development Criteria - Appendix 9 of the Land Use element of the Countywide Policy Plan.”

“Policy b: To implement Policy a. above, residential land development should include provisions for contributions, or dedication, to the Park Authority of usable parkland and facilities, public trails, development of recreational facilities on private open space, and/or provision of improvements at existing nearby park facilities.”

“Policy c: Non-residential development should offset significant impacts of work force growth on the parks and recreation system.”

“Policy h: On development adjacent to park property, encourage designs that minimize the potential for encroachments and adverse environmental impacts on parkland and that augment the natural resource values of the parkland.”

**2. Park and Recreation Needs (Comprehensive Plan, Area IV, Lower Potomac Planning District, LP1 Laurel Hill Planning Sector Land Unit Recommendations / Land Unit 3, p. 45-6)**

Area-wide Guidelines:

- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems (trails and sidewalks) should be provided adjacent to all arterial and collector roads within the property (i.e., Silverbrook Road, Hooes Road, Lorton Road, Ox Road and Furnace Road), thus becoming integral elements of the overall transportation network. These trails should provide linkages with the new residential neighborhoods north of Silverbrook Road, the adaptive reuse areas, the EQC areas and the Occoquan Regional Park.
- Laurel Hill house should be preserved as a heritage resource area within a public park to ensure conservation.
- Within the proposed residential neighborhoods, recreational facilities should be provided that are sufficient to serve the neighborhood recreational needs of the residents.

## **ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Proposed Plan Evaluation

The Master Plan shows 352 new residential units (181 townhomes and 171 historic apartments) and 131,400 square feet of commercial space located on an 80-acre parcel. Based on an average occupancy of 3.19 per dwelling unit for townhomes and 1.91 per dwelling unit for multi-family in the Lower Potomac Planning District, the development could add 904 new residents (181 new units x 3.19 = 577 units and 171 x 1.91 = 327) to the Mt. Vernon Supervisory District. Nearby parks, include Laurel Hill Park and Newington Heights. Some local serving facilities exist at Newington Heights Park such as playgrounds and courts. Laurel Hill Park is a 1200-acre park that surrounds the subject property and is planned for a diverse mix of facilities; resource protection and open space, but is currently mostly undeveloped. The recreational facilities in greatest need in Laurel Hill include athletic fields, sport courts, playgrounds, indoor gym space, skate parks, off-leash dog areas, and trails. Existing parks will serve only a fraction of the recreation facility needs generated by the proposed new development. New residential and commercial development in Laurel Hill must contribute to the recreation and leisure needs of the people who will live and work there.

The Master Plan shows a “village green” as well as a swimming pool on the development plan. It is not clear how the village green will be furnished or programmed to meet residents’

recreation needs. The selected developer should provide more details to describe how local recreation needs will be met on site during the development review process.

The Master Plan proposes to remove the existing 90' diamond field located within the Re-Use Area. The Park Authority programs the use of the ballfield under a 2003 interim use agreement. An Adopt-A-Field agreement exists for the use of the field. The selected developer should work with the Park Authority to identify alternatives for continued access to a baseball field in the South County area.

In addition, the applicant proposes to eliminate a parking area that serves Giles Run Meadow in Laurel Hill Park. This parking area is owned by the Board of Supervisors as part of the Adaptive Reuse site, and is currently being used temporarily by the Park Authority. The selected developer should work with the Park Authority to address parking needs for Giles Run Meadow Park.

The Laurel Hill Greenway Trail corridor passes through the Re-Use site. Trail connectivity is an important component of the overall Laurel Hill plan. As the design progresses, every effort should be made to have trail access from various points within the Re-Use area that connect to the Greenway.

#### Recreational Impact of Residential Development:

The Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance requires provision of open space and recreational features within Planned Development Districts (see Zoning Ordinance Sections 6-110 and 16-404). The minimum expenditure for park and recreational facilities within these districts is set at \$1,500 per residential unit for outdoor recreational facilities to serve the development population.

Whenever possible, the facilities should be located within the residential development site. With 352 units proposed, the Ordinance-required amount to be spent onsite is \$528,000. Any portion of this amount not spent on site should be conveyed to the Park Authority for recreational facility construction at one or more park sites in the service area of the development.

The \$1,500 per unit funds required by Ordinance offset only a portion of the impact to provide recreational facilities for the new residents generated by this development. Typically, a large portion if not all of the Ordinance-required funds are used for outdoor recreational amenities onsite. As a result, the Park Authority is not compensated for the increased demands caused by residential development for other recreational facilities that the Park Authority must provide.

Using the Countywide Comprehensive Policy Plan as a guide (Appendix 9, #6 of the Land Use section, as well as Objective 6, Policy a, b and c of the Parks and Recreation section), the Park Authority requests a fair share contribution of \$893 per new resident with any residential rezoning application to offset impacts to park and recreation service levels. This allows the Park Authority to build additional facilities needed as the population increases. To offset the additional impact caused by the proposed development, the applicant should contribute \$807,272 to the Park Authority for recreational facility development at one or more park sites located within the service area of the subject property.

Recreational Impact of Commercial Development:

In addition to the residential development impact on recreational services and facilities, there will also be impacts from the proposed commercial development. Employees have a need to access recreational amenities at lunchtime or after work. Retail customers benefit from combining shopping trips with recreational activities. The Comprehensive Plan for Lower Potomac calls for a combination of private and public funding to contribute toward new facilities to serve both residents and workers. Recent monetary contributions to offset the impacts of commercial development in Suburban Centers have averaged \$0.27 per square foot. Applying this rate to the proposed 131,400 square feet of new non-residential uses proposed, the Park Authority requests a contribution of \$35,478 for recreational facility development at one or more park sites located within the service area of the subject property.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The section summarizes the recommendations included in the preceding analysis section. Following is a table summarizing required and recommended recreation contribution amounts:

<b>Proposed Uses</b>	<b>P-District Onsite Expenditure</b>	<b>Requested Park Proffer Amount*</b>	<b>Total</b>
Residential units	\$528,000	\$807,272	\$1,335,272
Commercial use	-	\$35,478	\$35,478
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$528,000</b>	<b>\$842,750</b>	<b>\$1,370,750</b>

\*Average of \$2527 per dwelling unit and \$0.27 per sq. ft. of commercial use

In addition, the selected developer should work with the Park Authority during the development review process to address the following issues.

- Provision of an overall Recreation Plan to show how the proposed development will meet the recreation and leisure needs of its future residents.
- Coordinate with the Park Authority and the County to address Giles Run Meadow parking needs.

cc: Sandy Stallman, Branch Manager, Park Planning  
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