



Ms. Patty Nicoson
Chair, Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force
Department of Planning & Zoning
Planning Division, Suite 730
10255 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035-5505

July 13, 2010

Dear Ms. Nicoson:

This is the first of several recommendation letters that the Reston Association Board of Directors will be sending to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force over the next several months.

Reston is an ever-changing community with a plethora of qualities and unique characteristics. With the Metro-to-Dulles project underway, and anticipated phased-in redevelopment along the Corridor, the Reston Association (RA) Board respectfully submits the following comments and recommendations with regard to the preservation and enhancement of Reston's essential design and planning elements for consideration by the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force.

Did You Know, Reston Is

- Listed in the July 2008 issue of Money Magazine as one of the top 100 Best Places to Live in America.
- Listed in September 2008 edition of US News and World Report as one of the top 10 Best Places to Retire in the country.
- Named in the April 2007 issue of Washingtonian Magazine as a Best Place to Live.
- A "Communities in Bloom" International Champion for its environmental beauty.
- A Certified Community Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.
- A Tree-City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- Certified by the White House Millennium Council for its outstanding trail system.
- An "America in Bloom" Champion Award Winner for community wide beautification efforts.
- An Award winning United States Tennis Association (USTA) Community Tennis Partner.

Environmental Stewardship

Reston is a place where nature is valued and protected. Our trees are abundant and our natural areas are right next door, no matter where in Reston we live. It is RA's goal to preserve, protect, and enhance our natural and built environment for current and future residents. This includes, but is not limited to, streams, trails, community pavilions, outdoor plazas, and open space areas, whether natural or developed. Open space is more than just the natural areas, outdoor community gathering pavilions, and our beautiful trees – open space is the aesthetic and valued quality of nature so prevalent in our community and throughout our neighborhoods. Open space is also close to virtually all residences and within walking distance of commercial businesses. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- Any new development or redevelopment project must take into consideration the site’s existing and surrounding natural flora, fauna, and water resources; with the goal of preserving undisturbed natural areas to the greatest extent possible.
- All current state and county stormwater management regulations must be adhered to and enforced.
- To maintain continuity with the surrounding community, all new development and/or redevelopment must include green space, trees, and to the extent possible, undisturbed natural areas.
- Projects must be environmentally sensitive, compatible with, and considerate of, their surroundings; including consideration of building heights and placement.
- Concerted efforts be made by Fairfax County and others to preserve in perpetuity the Sunrise Valley Wetlands Nature Park and that the Park be donated to the Reston Association for its continued use and management for benefit of the community.

Commitment to the Arts

Reston is known for its eclectic style and appreciation for the arts. It is apparent in the architecture of the homes, the village centers, and even in surrounding commercial buildings. RA continually works to promote and encourage art, cultural diversity, and education for all levels. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- Public art must be integrated in all future development in Reston and should be consistent with the guidance in the Initiative for Public Art (IPAR) as found in the Public Art Master Plan for Reston.

Accessibility

Reston is a connected, “walkable” community. The trails and pathways make it easy for residents, including those with disabilities, to get from their neighborhoods to places of employment, recreation areas, and retail centers. In addition, access to Reston transportation infrastructure – *pedestrian, bicycling, metro rail, bus and motorized vehicles* – is a key element to moving the community forward. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- Resources for sufficient transportation infrastructure systems – *pedestrian, bicycling, metro rail, bus and other motorized vehicles* - must be allocated for future growth.
- Developers be required to implement and/or adhere to recommendations outlined in Reston on Foot and from the Reston Metrorail Access Group.

Planning & Design Excellence

Essential to Reston is the goal of excellence and innovation in all things – from architecture to pathway maintenance to aquatic facilities. The procedures in place to maintain the overall quality of life in Reston are essential to this community – from the Design Review Board (DRB), Architectural Board of Review (ABR) to the community advisory committees. These processes and procedures must be honored. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- The requirement that all future residential developments, outside of the Reston Town Center Association boundaries, be made a part of the Reston Association.
- A more comprehensive community review process, which includes RA, be incorporated into the Reston Master Plan and other applicable provisions of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan for any new development or redevelopment.

- The tenets of excellence and innovative design must be embodied in the revised Reston Master Plan and made a requirement for all future development plans. Specifically, Low Impact Development (LID) techniques must be a requirement for all future development or redevelopment projects.
- New or redeveloped areas shall respect, protect and enhance Reston's established residential neighborhoods by focusing density increases to areas nearest the metro stations and village centers.

Recreational Amenities

Reston is known for its abundance of quality and well-maintained active and passive recreational facilities, which are open and available to all Reston Association Members and even those who work in Reston, whether or not they live here. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- Applicable provisions of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan and the Reston Master Plan both be amended to include language that requires an impact evaluation and analysis of RA's current recreational facilities and services to determine capacity and demand for future indoor and outdoor amenities.
- The provision of recreational amenities be coordinated with the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and Reston Community Center (RCC) as part of the process recommended in Planning and Design Excellence above.

Housing Opportunities

A variety of housing, including but not limited to affordable and workforce housing, is one of the cornerstones of the Reston community. Reston offers "affordable living", stable neighborhoods, and a sense of community within each neighborhood. As such, the Reston Association recommends that:

- Existing stable neighborhoods be preserved.
- Future new and redevelopment projects be required to: 1) provide a broad selection of housing types to meet the needs of existing and future residents of Reston; 2) incorporate neighborhood gathering or meeting areas to encourage social interaction; and 3) promotion of socio-economic diversity.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these recommendations. Please contact me at 703-476-9181 or via email at kathleendriscollmckee@gmail.com, if you have questions, comments or would like to further discuss this request.

On Behalf of the Reston Association Board of Directors,



Kathleen Driscoll McKee
President

cc: Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force
Reston Association Board of Directors