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Comments on Town Center North vision Paper

Since comments inevitably entail some criticism, I would like to start out with the all the stuff that I think is right in this paper:

- *The general concept of urbanizing TCN*
- *The grid of streets*
- *The mall connection to TC*
- *The overall density relationship to TC*
- *The emphasis on residential development*
- *The civic center proposal*
- *"Lockwardization" of New Dominion*
- *Library expansion*
- *Tackling the police station issue*
- *Banning the fuel dump*
- *Protecting an Embry Rucker type shelter*
- *Calling for a diverse population*
- ***Supporting the presence of housing for able seniors***

I think the Sub-committee should be commended for coming up with a sophisticated proposal in such a short time.

Current conditions

The paper could benefit from a brief statement of current conditions (perhaps as an annex).

Key points

- Two owners
- Current uses (just ticks)
- 8 1/2 acres of park and protected area

(One approach might be to use the two maps on current facility uses and property boundaries provided by DPZer David Marshall; **I believe Terri Phillips will shortly be distributing copies.**)

Parks and Open Space

As noted "open space in town center is at a premium." This provides and opportunity to compensate. While the mall is a good idea, **it appears that within TCN to is 2.8 acres based on Rae Noritakes figures.** So we are losing 5-6 acres of parks and protected forest.

I do not think this is the "equivalent exchange" the FCPS has called for.

I have suggested a "Cascade Park", others have suggested different ideas.

The key point is that more parkland is needed. Note that the "mall idea" should have the dimensions necessary to support field athletics and **to provide athletic fields for a likely** new elementary school.

It would be helpful to think about the County protected forest land to see if any of it can be incorporated into and utilized in your grid plan.

What about "Diamond Park" (the open space just North of Paramount). This is outside the technical TCN area and is now assigned to the library. Keep as park land or develop as commercial?

(Note: Saying that the Library and Library Park should be counted toward an "equivalent exchange" to me does not hold water. Library Park is already designated for parkland and the library is outside the 42 acre TCN areas)

(Note: Once again the Reston Town Green is described as "somewhat rocky and steeply sloped." This is developer talk for land they wish to acquire. I have walked this three times. No rock out crops has been found. There is a "steep slope" immediately adjacent to Fountain North of Sunrise. Otherwise it is rolling and easily walk able. It might be better to describe this area as "rolling and not suitable for traditional recreation activities such as ball fields").

Bus Connector

This is timorously refereed to as something that future land development "could benefit from." In my view a connector bus is essential. BC is a mile from the station, the proposed civic center $\frac{3}{4}$ miles. While you do a good job of outlining pedestrian- bike connectivity, the hard fact is that most will not walk the distances involved, particularly in inclement weather.

The grid structure should be designed from the start to accommodate a connector service. This will require a clear plan in advance.

One approach, endorsed by Rae Noritake, would employ a direct bus service loop, keep the connector off Baron Cameron, utilize Explorer Street and designate bus pull off slots.

Civic Uses

One thing that is not clear from the paper is the amount of land to be dedicated to civic purposes. The county now has 40% of the area (about 18 acres including parks and protected area). **The draft is vague; in one interjection it states that "TCN cannot accommodate all**

civic functions needed to serve the area" In committee discussion on 1 June it was left that a "guess" would be that the county section would be "roughly equivalent" but side discussion indicate that some county land might be sold off for private development.

This issue is important because there is little in the way of county owned undeveloped land in Reston and civic needs will increase. Baron Cameron is available but probably should be continue to be reserved for a potential high school if not parkland.

I think the county (Dave Marshall) needs to again weigh in with what its anticipated needs are.

Specific Facilities

I believe it is a mistake to set aside discussion of specific types of facilities (someone else can wrestle with the issue of specific sites. They are needed to serve all of Reston and will set the character of NTC.

School: Such timorous language! At least one new elementary school will be needed given the RCIG/TC/TCN development envisioned (not to mention Fairways and Spectrum). I also note you latter mention demographic diversity which means kids. A site adjacent to the NTC Mall/Cascades would be an ideal site for an urban school.

Civic Center: The purpose and functions of the civic center need to be clarified. Is a performing arts center envisioned here? Some argue that this should be located nearer Metro.

Recreation Center: Again TC North would be an ideal site for a county financed recreation center.

County interest is to retain and possibly expand the existing and relatively new **Health and Human Services Building** on Baron Cameron.

Fire station: Space should be designated for a possible new Fire Station given the overall Reston growth envisioned and possible movement of the Herndon station westwards.

Assisted Living: Although mention is made of senior housing for active adults no mention is made of the two existing assisted living facilities. INOVA has characterized these as 'residential," implying they could be incorporated in future residential development. It might be a good thing to not appear to be casting these residents off somewhere else.

The Affordable Dwelling Units (ADU) area: This would seem the appropriate site of a new publicly assisted affordable high rise.

Density and Height

Surprisingly, the committee on 1 June seemed to endorse the idea of height limits in TCN equivalent to Town Center. .

I think the area should follow the approved design of Spectrum in terms of heights and tapering off as it approaches Baron Cameron.