

April 21, 2008

Via Email and U.S. Mail

Clark Tyler, Chairman, Tysons Land Use Task Force
and Members of the Tysons Land Use Task Force
Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 730
Fairfax, VA 22035

Re: Tysons Task Force Preliminary Findings
Commons of McLean

Dear Chairman Tyler and Members of the Tysons Land Use Task Force:

As the representative of the owner of property known as Commons of McLean identified as Tax Map 30-3 ((28)) B4, B5, 1, 5, 6, 8 (the "Commons Property"), I would like to offer my comments on the draft Summary of Findings dated February 27, 2008 as well as the Consultant Draft Preferred Concept dated April 9, 2008, both prepared by PB PlaceMaking. Please find attached a copy of a Tax Map with the property outlined.

The Commons Property is located in two districts as defined in the Summary of Findings. The northern portion of the Commons Property is located within the Tysons East District, partially within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the Metro station and partially between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ mile from the station. The southern portion (Parcel 1) is located in the East Side District between $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the proposed station entrance. All of the Commons Property is designated as Residential Focus in the Consultant Draft Preferred Concept with an exception of an area shown as park/open space.

The Draft Preferred Concept Intensity map proposes a 2.75 FAR for the most northern portion of the Commons Property, transitioning to a maximum 2.0 FAR for residential use. The southern portion is designated as the existing use or as planned in the existing Comprehensive Plan, which is residential use at 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre. The area between the northern and southern sections is owned by others and is currently developed with an older Safeway Shopping Center. It was designated as commercial focus in both Prototypes A and B, but is shown as residential focus in the Consultant Draft Preferred Concept.



1. ***The planned land use does not provide flexibility to redesign and rejuvenate this area.*** It maintains the existing uses, albeit with somewhat higher densities in the northern section. In recent years, efforts have been made to provide a new, more traditional urban design for this area with the possibility of relocating the existing Safeway retail area either to Magarity Road or elsewhere on the site in the overall redevelopment of the Commons Property and Safeway site into a mixed use community. Any ability to seek such a redevelopment is thwarted by the Residential Focus land use category.

It is evident in reviewing the Draft Land Use Map (a copy of which is enclosed) that in many instances existing uses are being maintained and thought is not being given to revising uses to create the vision for Tysons. For instance, property to the north and west of the Commons is designated as Office Focus. Why is the northern portion of the Commons which is just as close or closer to the Metro Station not provided with this Office Focus option?

It is suggested that flexibility be provided by designating this entire area as a Mixed-Use area, thereby allowing a predominance of residential use, but also permitting office and hotel uses in the northern portions, and supporting retail commercial uses in a proportion and location to be determined with the specific development proposal.

2. ***The proposed intensities are not sufficient to ensure redevelopment with the grid of streets, parks and community amenities envisioned.*** The A FAR of 2.75 within ¼ mile a metro station is low when compared to other successful transit oriented developments. Properties within ¼ mile of the station are very walkable and a higher intensity FAR is warranted. Outside the ¼ mile radius, a FAR of 2.0 or less provides little incentive to seek a rezoning and the expose the property to the myriad of proffers or conditions likely to be required.
3. ***There appears to be inconsistencies in the application of a grid of streets.*** Why is there a grid of streets shown on the northern portion of the Commons Property, but not on the Safeway site, the southern portion of the Commons Property, the property to the north and only shown in a minimal way on the property to the east? The grid is a key planning principle that needs to be applied equitably.



4. I am concerned over the language in the Summary of Findings found in the fourth paragraph on Page 28, which states: "*The neighborhoods supply a diversity of housing choices including affordable and family housing on safe, narrow, tree-lined streets with views terminating in open spaces and parks.*" Nowhere else in this report is a specific residential neighborhood cited to include affordable and family housing. I recognize that these are goals of the re-planning effort, as such it should apply to **all areas** and not be specifically referenced only in the Tysons East District narrative.

5. The same paragraph goes on to state: "*The Commons apartments are linked to the station by the enhanced street network.*" This statement leads one to believe that the Commons apartment complex will stay as is. When given its close proximity to the proposed Metro station, its age and density, it is a prime candidate for additional development. Again, nowhere else in this report is an individual housing development listed by name. It is suggested that this reference be deleted or rewritten so that there is no misunderstanding that this area may redevelop with higher intensity residential and support commercial uses.

I appreciate all the work the Tysons Task Force has undertaken in its efforts to re-plan Tysons Corner. Now that specific recommendations are being prepared, I urge you to seriously consider the input from the public including property owners when putting together your final recommendations. I would be available to meet with you to discuss this further in greater detail.

Very truly yours,



F. Russell Hines
Executive Vice President
Monument Realty

cc: GB Arrington, PB Placemaking
Ken Lawrence, Providence District Planning Commissioner
Sterling Wheeler
Leonard Wolfenstein
Martin D. Walsh
Elizabeth D. Baker





Map section in the top-left corner showing residential lots and streets. A circled number '12' is present. Street names include 'Doney Mabson' and 'Anderson'.

Map section in the top-right corner showing residential lots and streets. A circled number '7' is present. Landmarks include 'LEWISVILLE CHURCH' and '61'. Street names include 'Doney Mabson' and 'Anderson'.

Map section in the middle showing residential lots and streets. A circled number '1' is present. Landmarks include 'SCOTT RUN PARK' and 'WESTGATE PARK'. Street names include 'Doney Mabson' and 'Anderson'.

Map section in the lower-middle showing residential lots and streets. A circled number '1' is present. Landmarks include 'WESTGATE PARK' and 'WESTGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'. Street names include 'Doney Mabson' and 'Anderson'.

Map section in the bottom showing residential lots and streets. A circled number '1' is present. Landmarks include 'THE COLONIES' and 'PIRAMID HILLS'. Street names include 'Doney Mabson' and 'Anderson'.

Consultant Draft of Preferred Concept for Discussion with Task Force, April 14-15, 2008

Draft Preferred Concept: Land Use, Parks and Open Space Network

