

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
PARKS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2007**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
James R. Hart, At-Large
Ronald W. Koch, Sully District

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District

OTHER COMMISSIONER PRESENT:

Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District

PARK AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

William Bouie, Hunter Mill District
Ken Quincy, Providence District
Winifred S. Shapiro, Braddock District
Hal Strickland, Chairman, Sully District
Frank S. Vajda, Mason District

STAFF PRESENT:

Timothy White, Deputy Director, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA)
Sandra Stallman, Manager, Park Planning Branch, FCPA
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission
Jeanette Phillips, Associate Clerk, Planning Commission Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

John R. Byers, former Mount Vernon District Planning Commissioner
Onita Islia, South Lakes High School Student

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Chairman Frank de la Fe convened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035, and said the purpose of tonight's meeting was to continue discussions on the park proffer formula.

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Chairman de la Fe noted that the first order of business was approval of minutes.

Commissioner Hart MOVED THAT THE PARKS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MARCH 15, 2007 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion which carried by a vote of 3-0-1 with Commissioner Koch abstaining; Commissioners Harsel and Lusk absent from the meeting.

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Chairman de la Fe stated that the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment to update P-District regulations to increase park fee contributions from \$955 to \$1,500 per unit had been adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 7, 2007.

Sandra Stallman, Manager of the Park Planning Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), indicated that she had distributed a handout, "Planning Commission Parks Committee Park Proffer Update Summary," dated May 30, 2007, a copy of which is in the date file. She explained that FCPA and Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) staff both supported implementing a contribution amount for offsetting park impacts derived from the current per capita cost of \$303 calculated using the 10 benchmark facilities, which included courts, playgrounds, athletic fields, and trails, and the per capita park land cost per acre of \$590 based on total capital park land assets. Ms. Stallman stated that the combined value of the impact on park facilities and park land was \$893 per new resident that FCPA would request for all new rezonings. She noted that staff would make presentations at the June meetings of the Engineers and Surveyors Institute (ESI) and Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA) and she would brief the entire Planning Commission at its June 21st meeting. She said once the Commission recommended approval of the new per resident amount, staff would send a Not-In-Package item to the Board of Supervisors and a letter from Hal Strickland, Chairman and Sully District representative, FCPA Board, to Gerry Connolly, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, explaining how staff had finished the directive the Board had given staff in March 2006. (A copy of the letter is in the date file.) She indicated that following implementation, FCPA would begin requesting the new contribution amount in development review memorandums to DPZ.

In response to a question from Chairman de la Fe, Winifred S. Shapiro, Braddock District representative, FCPA Board, said the contribution amount allowed new residents to buy into the existing park land base.

Mr. Strickland commented that the proposed park proffer formula would help FCPA acquire additional facilities to accommodate population growth, incorporate the actual cost paid for park land over the last 55 years, and represent a fair share contribution from developers to offset the impacts to park facilities. He said that since the formula did not include the cost to acquire park land, staff would request park and recreation facilities to help offset development impacts. He suggested that the formula be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it was attainable.

Chairman de la Fe pointed out that one of the major reasons County citizens voted for park bonds was to acquire land and said if the formula added in the cost of trails and land it could create unintended consequences. Mr. Strickland replied that park proffers provided incidental assistance to the County to offset growth impacts.

Commissioner Hart recommended that staff implement a periodic reevaluation of the park proffer formula and the newly-approved park amenity fees in P-Districts to determine if increases were needed to address escalated construction costs. Ms. Stallman agreed with this recommendation.

Responding to questions from Commissioner Hart, Ms. Stallman noted that the dedication of stream valleys to FCPA were addressed under an already-established policy and were unrelated to park proffers; therefore, developers would not receive credit for this type of dedication since stream valleys could not be developed. She said proffers were negotiable and staff could consider the dedication of land for a playground outside a stream valley as a credit. Ms. Stallman pointed out that when developers proffered to build park facilities on land dedicated to FCPA, they were not required to pay an additional amount for park facilities.

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Mr. Strickland called attention to the "Park Needs Summary" chart that was based on the 2004 Park Needs Assessment data, a copy of which is in the date file. He noted that within the next 10 years, based on the number of County residents and their expectations, FCPA would need capital improvements totaling \$376 million. He explained that funding from the 2004 and 2006 park bonds and the park proffers received between 1990 and 2006 had reduced the park needs balance to approximately \$286 million. Mr. Strickland stated that FCPA had requested that the scheduled parks bond amount in 2008 be increased to \$150 million in order to adequately fund the escalated costs for 10-year parks capital needs, maintain existing park land and facilities, and reflect community-wide support. He indicated that there would be a park needs balance of approximately \$323 million by 2013 with the implementation of the increased proffer amount per new resident. He said proffers were projected to contribute approximately \$12 million between 2008 and 2013.

Chairman de la Fe pointed out that the proposed park proffer formula would not change the order of preference for staff to request land first, facilities second, and cash last, as defined under the Residential Development Criteria.

In response to a question from Chairman de la Fe, Ms. Stallman said requests for park contributions were based on the number of residents per dwelling unit as defined by the County.

Responding to a question from Mr. Strickland, Chairman de la Fe noted that a new issue to be considered was a park contribution amount per square feet to offset impacts from commercial and office developments. He said he did not think it would be unreasonable to request such contributions since people working in those types of development used County park and recreation facilities. Ms. Stallman pointed out that the recently-amended Park and Recreation Policy Element of the Comprehensive Plan included a proffer formula provision for offsetting commercial developments in three areas: Dulles Suburban Center, Merrifield Suburban Center, and Fairfax Center Area.

Chairman de la Fe expressed concern about whether the Planning Commission should take a formal vote on this proposed increase in voluntary park proffer contributions. Mr. Strickland pointed out that the proposed letter to the Board of Supervisors stated that the Commission recommended implementation of the new amount. Ms. Stallman said staff would edit the letter to address Chairman de la Fe's concern.

Commissioner Hart suggested that the letter be reviewed by the County Attorney's Office to ensure that the language would be permissible legally. Chairman de la Fe and Ms. Stallman concurred with this suggestion. Mr. Strickland said the letter should be revised prior to staff's presentations at the ESI and NVBIA meetings in June. Ms. Stallman replied that the presentations might be deferred to their July meetings.

In response to a question from John R. Byers, former Mount Vernon District Planning Commissioner, Chairman de la Fe noted that staff used the statistical average to determine the number of residents in new developments. Mr. Byers said staff should also upgrade the County's demographic data during the periodic reevaluation of the park proffer formula and amenity fees in P-Districts. Ms. Stallman replied that staff always used the current data when performing the park contribution calculations.

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Ms. Stallman provided an update on the process to create district park plans. She said staff planned to present the proposed Park Area Plan Amendments to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2009. She explained that from now until then, staff would develop existing conditions reports for each district, identify preliminary recommendations, conduct public workshops and outreach, use public input to draft and refine the district park plans, and acquire FCPA Board approval. She said the purpose of this process was to update the park classifications so that they aligned with the Policy Plan adopted last year.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.
Frank de la Fe, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available at the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Meeting taken by: Linda B. Rodeffer
Minutes by: Kara A. DeArrastia

Approved: February 20, 2008

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission