

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2006**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Walter A. Alcorn, At-Large
John R. Byers, Mount Vernon District
Janet R. Hall, Mason District
Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
James R. Hart, at-Large
Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District
Laurie Frost Wilson, At-Large

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

None

OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District

STAFF PRESENT:

Lorrie Kirst, Deputy Zoning Administrator, Zoning Administration Division,
Department of Planning and Zoning
Ellen Gallagher, Acting Chief, Capital Projects and Operations Division,
Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT)
Robert O. Owolabi, Chief, Technical Analysis & Research Section, FCDOT
Bruce Nassimbeni, Director, Environmental and Site Review Division, Department of
Public Works and Environmental Services
Barbara J. Lipa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk, Planning Commission Office

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Chairman Janet R. Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

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Chairman Hall announced that tonight the committee would be briefed on the current results of the residential parking study and issues associated with it.

Ellen Gallagher, Acting Chief, Capital Projects and Operations Division, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), said that a memorandum dated January 30, 2006, from Katharine D. Ichter, P.E., Acting Director, Department of Transportation, had been distributed to Committee members. (A copy of the memorandum and attachments are in the date file.) She said in addition to a brief recap of the study process and results, she would also

comment on issues raised by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) Development Process Committee on January 30, 2006.

Ms. Gallagher stated that when the Planning Commission's Policy and Procedures Committee had last met on June 6, 2005, it had been suggested that additional field parking counts be conducted and that a public meeting be held. She explained that the public meeting had been held on September 19, 2005 with representatives from industry and community groups and that minutes of that meeting and comments made were included in an attachment to the memorandum previously mentioned.

Ms. Gallagher said on October 17, 2005 the BOS had asked staff to look at impervious surfaces and stormwater reduction, transit-oriented and non-transit-oriented development, and to consider maximum parking requirements in lieu of the current minimum requirements. She noted that this guidance had taken staff in a different direction from its original purpose which had been a review of townhouse parking requirements and later all residential parking requirements. She said that FCDOT staff had met with the Environmental Quality Advisory Council and on January 20, 2006 and had sent an item to the BOS on January 20, 2006 indicating that the expanded scope of the study required an additional level of analysis and the assistance of a consultant.

Ms. Gallagher explained that the study had excluded under parked developments and those built before the current parking requirements had become effective. She said various scenarios had been analyzed for assumptions on garage parking since it was not readily apparent how many cars were parked in garages and a 10 percent factor had been added for visitor parking because the sites had been counted at night when visitors may not have been onsite. She said Table 5 of the aforementioned memorandum contained the results from the study which indicated fairly significant increases in the number of spaces needed per unit.

Ms. Gallagher said that staff had met with the BOS Development Committee on January 30, 2006 to receive additional feedback on the evolution of the study. She noted other issues had major implications for parking in the County such as the global TDM program, parking issues associated with the Fairlee and Tysons developments, and the Dulles Rail Study. She indicated that parking enforcement issues had to be addressed also. She said information would be presented to the BOS on February 27, 2006 concerning parking cars in front yards and other enforcement issues. She said it had been pointed out to the Board that there were competing objectives that needed to be reconciled: on one hand the parking study clearly indicated a need for an increase in parking but on the other hand, initiatives such as TDM and transit-oriented development indicated parking should be decreased as favored by environmental groups. She commented that the BOS' committee had been very clear that the study needed to be continued because not all development in the County was near or planned for transit and perhaps different rates should be considered. She further stated that BOS Chairman Gerry Connolly had commented that this issue would have to be discussed with the County Attorney. She said the Committee directed staff to return to the Board with the results of the study but continue to review other issues associated with it. She said staff would report to the Board in March with the resource implications and request authorization for a public hearing to discuss revising Ordinance requirements for parking rates in the spring.

Ms. Gallagher and Robert O. Owolabi, Chief, Technical Analysis & Research Section, FCDOT, responded to questions from Commissioners Alcorn and Byers about the study results, specifically how the required number of spaces per unit had been determined and why visitor parking had been increased by 10 percent.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lawrence, Ms. Gallagher said that it had been assumed that the data used in the study was normally distributive because all previous studies in the County had utilized the same assumption.

Commissioner Lawrence commented that it was very important when determining parking rates to consider the type of housing and its proximity to existing or planned mass transit when determining parking rates. Chairman Hall commented that in the Mason District, for example, it would be difficult to determine parking rates based on that criteria because mass transit, except for busses, did not exist and was not planned. Commissioner Harsel said this was true for the Braddock District also. Mr. Lawrence said that a legally defensible classification system needed to be developed.

Ms. Gallagher responded to questions from Commissioner Hart about the assumption that there would be inadequate parking 16 percent of the time, as noted in Note 2 on page 13 of the Results of the Study.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Wilson, Ms. Gallagher said staff would further identify the Silverbrook, Lorton Town Center, and Laurel Hill developments and clarify the number of units and the number of available parking spaces as shown in the study results. Responding to another question from Commissioner Wilson, Mr. Owolabi said the number of available spaces included the garage spaces. Ms. Gallagher added that driveway and clearly marked on-street spaces had also been counted.

Mr. Owolabi and Ms Kirst responded to questions from Commissioner Wilson about study results for single family detached homes on private and public streets.

In response to a question from Commissioner Harsel, Mr. Owolabi defined the terms mean, median, and standard deviation. He said what was important to understand was that observations showed the demand for parking was higher than the current Zoning Ordinance rates. Commissioner Harsel pointed out that the number of vehicles per household changed over time. Mr. Owolabi noted that a 2004 American Community Survey conducted by the U. S. Census Bureau annually indicated the number of vehicles available per household in Fairfax County, as shown on page 17 of the study results.

Commissioner Alcorn said it would be helpful to: (1) obtain more information on the estimated amount of time parking would be inadequate; (2) capture in the analysis the fact that parking

requirements changed over time as children grew up, acquired cars, and moved out; (3) determine the relationship, if any, between the age of housing units and parking demands; and (4) determine the most sensitive data inputs and whether they had been based on assumption or observation.

Mr. Gallagher noted that the fact that parking requirements changed over time had been raised at the public meeting.

Ms. Kirst responded to questions from Commissioners Byers and Wilson about public and private street parking. Commissioner Byers commented that in almost every application both public and private street curb parking had been counted. Ms. Kirst said due to concern about adequate parking in P-Districts, staff had been requesting to see where all parking spaces would be located but that did not mean they would count toward meeting the minimum parking rate.

Commissioner de la Fe commented that he did not believe increasing parking requirements uniformly throughout the County was the answer because areas such as Great Falls and Reston Town Center had very different requirements. He also pointed out that reducing impervious surfaces and providing more parking were conflicting goals.

Ms. Gallagher said that the issues raised tonight would be addressed but she could not estimate at this time how long it would take. She reiterated the commitment to report back to the BOS in March with resource requirements needed to study parking requirements for transit-oriented development and maximum parking rates and to request authorization in the spring to advertise a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding parking rates.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Alcorn, Bruce Nassimbeni, Director, Environmental and Site Review Division, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, said staff was reviewing the use of low impact development practices to address the increase in impervious surfaces caused by parking. He said a brief analysis had indicated actual increases in runoff and impervious surface areas were not significant based on certain assumptions.

Ms. Kirst noted that representatives from the development industry were concerned about increased parking requirements because costs would rise, especially for high density developments with structured parking. She pointed out that increased construction costs would also have an impact on affordable housing.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.
Janet R. Hall, Chairman

For a verbatim record of this meeting, reference may be made to the audio recording which can be found in the Office of the Planning Commission of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: March 2, 2006

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission