MINUTES OF
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 23, 1994

PRESENT: John R. Byers, Mount Vernon District
Judith W. Downer, Dranesville District
Patrick M. Hanlon, Providence District
Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
Ronald W. Koch, Sully District
Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District
John W. Palatiello, Hunter Hill District
Henry E. Strickland, Mason District
Alvin L. Thomas, Commissioner At-Large

ABSENT: Lawrence C. Baldwin, Commissioner At-Large
Robert v. L. Hartwell, Commissioner At-Large
Carl L. Sell, Jr., Lee District

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The meeting was convened at 8:23 p.m. by Chairman Peter F. Murphy, Jr.

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COMMISSION MATTERS

Chairman Murphy noted that a public hearing had been scheduled on April 5, 1994, regarding the Fullerton Road access. Due to legal problems, he MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION DEFER (THE HEARING ON) S94-CW-Tl, OUT-OF-TURN PLAN AMENDMENT, AND PCA-8l-S-075, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' OWN MOTION, FROM APRIL 5, 1994, TO A DATE CERTAIN OF JUNE 1, 1994.

Commissioner Byers seconded the motion which passed unanimously with Commissioner Palatiello not present for the vote; Commissioners Baldwin, Hartwell and Sell absent from the meeting.

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Commissioner Palatiello noted his intent to defer the public hearing on S93-III-UP2, Out-of-Turn Plan Amendment, from April 6, 1994 to April 20, 1994.

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TYSONS CORNER URBAN CENTER PLAN AMENDMENT (S93-CW-2CP) - WORK SESSION - The Planning Commission with members of the Tysons Task Force & staff of the Office of Comprehensive Planning will hold a public work session on the Tysons Study Plan Amendment.

TYSONS CORNER URBAN CENTER PLAN AMENDMENT (S93-CW-2CP) March 23, 1994
WORK SESSION

The Planning Commission, with members of the Tysons Task Force and staff from the office of Comprehensive Planning, held a public work session on the draft Tysons Corner Urban Center Plan Amendment.

Mr. Daniel Alcorn, Chairman of the Tysons Corner Task Force, presented the Task Force report, a copy of which is in the date file. He said that the task force was appointed by the Board of Supervisors in 1990 to evaluate how the Comprehensive Plan should be amended to encourage improved pedestrian environment and a more urban form of development within Tysons Corner. He explained that they looked at the existing conditions and trends in Tysons Corner, and formulated alternative land use concepts for testing purposes. Mr. Alcorn explained that the concepts represented a wide range of futures for Tysons Corner from low growth to high growth. He noted that each concept was based on parcel level land use and intensity assumptions. Mr. Alcorn also said that the task force evaluated the concepts and formulated a preferred concept for Tysons Corner. The analysis of the alternatives included transportation, sewer, environment, public facilities, and fiscal impacts. He explained that the findings indicated to the task force that a preferred concept should be formulated between the development levels of concept B and C. The preferred concept was developed within the parameters which resulted in less nonresidential square footage and substantially more housing than concept C. Mr. Alcorn explained that the area wide recommendations proposed encompassed the many transportation assumptions that were used in the analysis and urban design principles formulated over the previous two years. The major issues considered included the economic benefit of having a "downtown" in Fairfax County and having Tysons Corner as an urban center; the transportation capacity and development potential balanced with economic growth; and how to integrate a proposed future rail line that would run from the West Falls Church Metro Station to Dulles Airport. He added that the preferred concept for rail would run through Tysons Corner to provide service to those who live, work and shop in Tysons Corner. Mr. Alcorn said that the task force had considered a circulator system but thought it would not be practical. The task force also gave consideration to the redevelopment of existing uses in Tysons Corner, with a focus on residential and mixed use development and protection of existing low density residential areas.

In response to Commissioner Byers' questions, Mr. Alcorn said that the task force did not have time to comment on staff's document because they had not received it until Friday, March 22, 1994. He agreed to convene the task force again before the public hearing to review the additional items.

Mr. Sterling Wheeler, Planning Division, Office of Comprehensive Planning, stated that staff and the task force were not in agreement on all of the language submitted in the study plan.

At Commissioner Palatiello's request, Mr. Alcorn explained how the task force arrived at the 20% mode split. Mr. Alcorn then called on Sterling Wheeler to give an overview of the report.

With the aid of a viewgraph, Mr. Wheeler explained the following: core areas which would include three activity centers, Tysons 1, Tysons II, and the Greensboro Drive office area; non-

core areas to include Route 7, West Gate, West Park, and Tyco Road; and transitional areas which would form the Tysons boundary. Mr. Wheeler pointed out the guidelines concerning affordable housing, parcel consolidation, and how existing uses should be treated within Tysons Corner may not be consistent with the long term vision within Tysons Corner.

In response to Commissioner Strickland's questions, Mr. Wheeler said that staff agreed with the task force which stated that the bonus should not increase intensity more than 50 percent because of impacts on the sewer system and the scale of development.

Mr. Wheeler then explained the land use concept map, page 31, with streetscape for major roadways. He noted that in conjunction with future improvements to the roads or redevelopment, there was a guideline for underground utilities. He also explained the building height map on page 33.

At Commissioner Hanlon's request, Mr. Alcorn agreed to have the task force address the issue of a gateway south of the Dulles Airport Access Road.

There was lengthy discussion between Commissioners Harsel, Strickland, and Mr. Wheeler regarding the height, or number of feet, between floors in an office building. Mr. Wheeler noted that the recommendations in the current Plan concerned building heights, with the only exception being Tysons II. Mr. Wheeler explained that higher heights were needed to encourage more vertical buildings.

Mr. Wheeler then discussed the Urban design section of the Plan Amendment, figure 11, page 41, concerning sub-areas within Tysons Corner; e.g. the core area design concept which would allow more flexibility in yard requirements and bulk playing which would encourage a more urban form. He added that the non-core area needed to encourage a wide variety of building which would provide streetscapes with minimum sidewalk widths and pedestrian links from the sidewalk to the buildings to improve connections. He noted that the task force had added a paragraph concerning the need to review the Zoning Ordinance again with an eye toward implementing the new approaches within Tysons. Mr. Wheeler then referred to the recommended transportation plan on map 14. He noted that the task force had identified three future facilities as well as an interchange improvement which had already been proffered through the West Gate rezoning; and, a suggestion that three rail stations be identified within the Tysons area on the transportation map.

In response to Commissioner Harsel's questions on the transportation map, Mr. Jaak Pedak, Office of Transportation, said that the proposed transportation map would be an amendment to the County Transportation Plan if it were adopted intact. He added that the collector roadways were an issue in the Area Plans and would not necessarily have to be reflected on the Countywide Transportation Plan map.

In responding to Commissioner Strickland's questions, Mr. Wheeler referred to the chart on page 20 of the staff report, and noted that the table needed to be adjusted since changes had been made

to the Plan during the review which were not the same as the preferred concept. He added that the rail numbers could increase. Mr. Wheeler said that the Plan maximum, with rail through the area or bypassing the area, would be greater than the current zoning envelope.

Mr. Wheeler referred to the map on page 58, figure 15, and explained that it represented an important aspect of the task force's vision. He added that the task force had emphasized the need for rail service throughout Tysons Corner to serve the core area. He then referred to the staff report supplement dated March 23, 1994, and noted that it illustrated what staff felt would be an official county land use map which represented the base level of the Plan.

Mr. Wheeler responded to questions posed by Commissioner Hanlon concerning the feasibility of housing in the Tysons area. He said staff was looking at stacking and mixed uses as well as the Plan's allowance for 100 percent housing on certain parcels. Mr. Wheeler also said that it was his opinion that the housing experts from the public and private sectors did not think that high-rise development was feasible unless the rail line was extended and was associated with a transit station. He added that without rail transit, a hybrid design, with structured parking beneath a three or four level apartment building, would appear to be very marketable in an area like Tysons and that was the type of density the task force was advocating.

Mr. Wheeler emphasized that staff disagreed with only a few of the items recommended by the task force with respect to land uses and intensities. He then called to the Commission's attention to three APR items included in the package, one of which was the Sherman property, a small parcel on Old Courthouse Road, and one on Old Meadow Road, so they could be considered at the public hearing on April 6, 1994, if desired by the Commission.

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The Commission recessed at 10:06 p.m. and reconvened at 10:22 p.m.

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Mr. Jaak Pedak, Office of Transportation, highlighted some key policy and implementation issues in the draft Plan. He said that the development potential in the Tysons Corner Urban Center rested on an assumption that the transportation capacity needed to support the future development could be achieved and that the transportation system would remain in balance. He noted that that concept rested on certain assumptions regarding future travel behavior and the accomplishment and implementation of several important policies endorsed in the Plan. Mr. Pedak explained that a Level of Service (LOS) "E" traffic standard would be required to keep land use and the capacity of the supporting transportation infrastructure in balance. He stressed that if traffic exceeded the forecasted levels or if the planned transportation improvements were not implemented in a timely manner, failing traffic conditions would be manifest. Mr. .Pedak noted that for those reasons, the implementation section of the draft Plan had set forth recommendations for developing a comprehensive transportation demand management program, establishing a transportation monitoring

program, and increasing public and private sector funding for needed transportation facilities. Mr. Pedak also said that the draft development review guideline section addressed the attainment of LOS standards and HOV mode split performance as well as policies for instances when such conditions could not be attained. He added that another key element of the draft Plan was encouraging and facilitating mixed use development.

Mr. Pedak went on to explain how increased development would have an adverse affect on transportation and noted that if the Tysons area was unable to maintain a Level of Service "E" traffic standard, the land use and the transportation system would begin to be significantly out of balance.

Mr. Pedak explained that achievement of the goal of a 20 percent mode split, as referenced in the Comprehensive Plan, would result in the doubling of the current 10 percent HOV mode split. He said that measures to achieve those goals needed to be identified and committed to by any applicant. He noted that the need for funding improvements and outlining conditions for rail related development at higher mode splits was also included in the Plan.

In response to Commissioner Hanlon's questions, Mr. Pedak said that the proffer mechanism system currently in the Plan, and the extension of the current practice to have individual employers proffering certain performance, was based on the assumption that once there was a commitment to rail through Tysons, the parcels close to designated rail stations would be able to perform at better than a 20 percent mode split level and the ones further away would be able to attain a 20 percent HOV mode split. He then referred to the table on page 18 which summarized the expected commitments.

Mr. Pedak concluded his presentation by addressing funding. He noted that the transportation improvements needed to support the Tysons Corner Urban Center Plan would require substantial increased capital investment. He added that previous staff analysis indicated that a reasonable set of assumptions was that highway improvements serving the Tysons area would cost approximately $300 million in 1.990 dollars, and the incremental cost of the rail extension directly serving Tysons could vary between $100 to $250 million or more depending on the alignment selected. Mr. Pedak said that the draft Plan recognized the funding need and called for increased funding commitments by both the public and private sectors. He advised that options for further consideration could include a transportation tax district, contributions formulas, or an impact fee program; however, due to the complexity of issues involved, further study would be needed before a preferred approach could be endorsed. Mr. Pedak concluded that the development review guidelines in the draft Plan called for continuation of voluntary contributions toward transportation improvements until such time as revised procedures were adopted.

There was a lengthy discussion between Commissioners Strickland, Murphy, Palatiello and Mr. Pedak on the funding for rail within Tysons. Mr. Alcorn noted that the Task Force report did discuss increased public funding and also included private funding. He added that if the rail line were to go through Tysons, landowners would be attracted to it and want to participate.

Commissioner Palatiello requested that Mr. Pedak provide some indication as to whether the proposed plan compared to the sub-regional plan before the public hearing.

In response to Commissioner Harsel's questions, Mr. Wheeler stated that the staff had specifically identified those items of disagreement between the task force and staff; advised that the land unit maps would be more clearly marked in the final document; and, explained the terms used in the land unit recommendations section.

In response to Commissioner Palatiello's questions, Mr. Wheeler explained that if development intensification were considered on Sub-unit A-3, provisions should be made for a connection to the future road; and Sub-unit C-1 was currently planned for 5 to S units per acre and the task force had decided not to change that recommendation.

Ms. Lynda Stanley, Planning Division Director, OCP, said that under the APR nomination guidelines, areas currently under study should be referred to a task force. She noted that the task force had completed its deliberations before receipt of the three nominations in question. She added that the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors could do one of the following: act on them as part of this process; move the public hearing dates up; or, not act and allow staff to write a report at the end of June stating that they had considered the proposal. Ms. Stanley said that staff would prefer to have the nominations heard along with S93-CW-2CP so they would not have to bring back them for review in the Fall.

Commissioner Hanlon suggested that the Policy and Procedures Committee should make the decision as to whether the nominations should be accepted at this time or be returned with the request that they be resubmitted at a later date.

Chairman Murphy thanked staff, Mr. Alcorn, and members of the Task Force for the time and effort they put into the Tysons Corner Urban Center Plan. He noted that the public hearing would be held on Wednesday, April 6, 1994 and the markup on Wednesday, April 27, 1994.

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The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.
Peter F. Murphy, Jr. Chairman
Suzanne F. Harsel, Secretary

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

Minutes By: Sandra L. Stever
Approved On: July 28, 1994

Mary A. Pascoe

Mary A. Pascoe, Clerk to the
Fairfax County Planning Commission