

Planning Commission Meeting
June 16, 2011
Verbatim Excerpt

APR 09-IV-13MV – SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW ITEM

During Commission Matters

Commissioner Flanagan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Planning Commission public hearing held on May 26, 2011 - the Planning Commission voted to defer decision on APR Item 09-IV-13MV and the specificity of the transportation recommendations were of particular concern. Since then, I have been working, I think, non-stop with staff who have given me quite a team of people to work with, the INOVA representatives, and the community to develop more general recommendations that address the impacts the proposal will have on the transportation network in the area and on the surrounding residential communities in particular. As shown in my handout below, the five numbered transportation recommendations in the staff recommendation have been deleted. And staff has agreed to that. These recommendations called for the installation of traffic signals and turn lanes at specific intersections and at hospital entrances, the future widening of Sherwood Hall Lane from two to four lanes, and proportional monetary contributions by the hospital for transportation mitigation measures. My recommendation tonight proposes to replace the five numbered transportation recommendations with the staff recommendation – from the staff recommendation with a more general language that recommends that there be a review of traffic impacts – of the traffic impact study at each phase of the development, which shall then be coordinated with the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, and the surrounding residential communities. My proposal – proposed alternative also recommends that the hospital participate in the implementation of the transportation mitigation measures identified by the traffic impact study that is proportionate to development impacts. Therefore, I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NOMINATION 09-IV-13MV AS SHOWN IN MY HANDOUT DATED JUNE 16, 2011. MY PROPOSED LANGUAGE REFLECTS THE STAFF ALTERNATIVE FOUND IN THE STAFF REPORT, DATED MAY 26, 2011, BUT WITH THE CHANGES THAT REFLECT MORE GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION IMPACT MITIGATION, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AND MINOR EDITS.

Commissioner Litzenberger: Second.

Chairman Murphy: Seconded by Mr. Litzenberger. Is there a discussion of the motion?

Commissioner Sargeant: Mr. Chairman? Just a –

Chairman Murphy: Mr. Sargeant.

Commissioner Sargeant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are deleting one reference, which I know probably is to the relief of some area residents regarding the section, the future widening of Sherwood Hall Lane from two to four lanes. But I'd like staff to review that just to say what

the concern is there. We heard some mighty big traffic numbers during public hearing on this and the four-laning of Sherwood Hall was designed to mitigate some of that. Does staff have some comment on this?

Thomas Burke, Department of Transportation: We did find that the - - Sherwood Hall needed to be reconfigured from a two-lane to a four-lane facility in order to offset the impacts not only from the hospital but from background traffic. The entire section from Richmond Highway to Parkers Lane is currently operating below the Level-of-Service D threshold. Much of it is at E, but we expect that it would go to Level-of-Service F within eight years, I guess, maybe more; or maybe earlier if the hospital were to start developing as they plan to. So we would like to maintain the flexibility to be able to widen – or reconfigure and add capacity to the Sherwood Hall corridor.

Commissioner Sargeant: Your use of the word “flexibility” may be the point there. Can you retain that flexibility in language that allows you to consider that and allows the community to consider that in the future if it becomes helpful and appropriate, rather than just say: “It must be four lanes?”

Mr. Burke: Well, I think it helps that the corridor is already pretty much wide enough for the four lanes. That’s why we don’t necessarily need to use the word “widening” which is more traditional – “reconfiguring” – DOT staff looks at it and we feel that four lanes are necessary but at the very least we’d like to be able to expand the intersections, perhaps at Fordson and at Parkers, and Richmond Highway, but as to the question, I would think we could add language that would maintain that flexibility without overtly saying that it has to be widened to four lanes.

Commissioner Sargeant: I know that is a concern to so many in the community, especially with the intersections, but given the traffic level, the flexibility to use that language in the future may be helpful. If we can – if we can - - I hate to completely delete that option as we currently have.

Mr. Burke: We - - I mean, we have a note at the end – we had a note at the end that stated that the – the map – the Transportation Plan Map would be shown as four lanes.

Chairman Murphy: Mr. Flanagan.

Commissioner Flanagan: Yes, I’d like to respond to your concern. I agree with you. I was kind of ambivalent about that myself. I’m comfortable with the language that’s in here now with that out of there because, first of all, the APR guidelines frowned on transportation – changes to the transportation text. And it had to be related to the internal use of the site for which the APR was being nominated. And so I did question staff about that, whether actually it was violating the guidelines for the APR, you know, recommendations in there for the – related to changes to the Master Plan for Transportation. And I’m quite comfortable that the first phase will not trigger, you know, a consideration for widening and that the language we’ve got in there that requires a review at the end of each phase before the next phase is started will prompt and reveal, you

know, whether there should be a change to the Master Plan, you know, at some subsequent point, which can always be – – In fact, it might even come up with the APR for transportation. I don't know when we've got that scheduled to change the Comp Plan as it relates to transportation. May the staff can fill us in on that as well.

Commissioner Sargeant: Mr. Chairman, yes, to Commissioner Flanagan's point –

Chairman Murphy: We're on verbatim, gentlemen.

Commissioner Sargeant: – thank you, I'd like to see if staff can comment on –

Chairman Murphy: We're on verbatim. You want to hear staff now?

Commissioner Sargeant: If I could, please.

Chairman Murphy: Sure.

Marianne Gardner, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning: Marianne Gardner with the Department of Planning and Zoning. As Tom said, we would like to designate that section of Sherwood Hall Lane for four lanes just because we understand that additional capacity is needed and it does tie in with the hospital development. And since we're on verbatim, that's all I'll say. Thank you.

Commissioner Sargeant: Okay, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman Murphy: Further discussion of the motion? All those in favor of the motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that it adopt APR 09-IV-13MV, say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Murphy: Opposed? Motion carries. The Chair –

Commissioner de la Fe: I abstain. I was not here for the public hearing.

Chairman Murphy: Yes, Mr. de la Fe and the Chair abstain. We were not here for the public hearing.

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(The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-2 with Commissioners de la Fe and Murphy abstaining; Commissioner Alcorn not present for the vote; Commissioners Hall and Hart absent from the meeting.)

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