

Planning Commission Meeting
June 28, 2012
Verbatim Excerpt

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW OF TYSONS CENTRAL 123 SOUTH PAVILION (Providence District)

During Commission Matters

Chairman Murphy: Mr. Lawrence, please.

Commissioner Lawrence: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an item of Commission business regarding Tysons. It's one of the pavilions for the rail stations. I think everybody got one of these. It's a big long thing with pictures in it that show what the architectural treatment is. And what I intend to do tonight – this is an administrative review of that architectural treatment. I'm told that all the pavilions will be the same design. This is in recognition of a proffer that is peculiar to the Tysons Mall, but all the pavilions are supposed to be alike so, in fact, we're really talking about all when we're talking about one. We have, tonight, a guest – Mr. Van Zee, I believe. I hope he's here. And he's going to talk about an agreement that we came to in thinking about – about these stations in a 40-year plan. So, Mr. Van Zee, if you don't mind, could you come and tell us a little about how the future might unfold for these pavilions?

Commissioner Hart: Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Murphy: Yes, Mr. Hart.

Commissioner Hart: Excuse me, before we get to that, we don't have an affidavit on this and I don't know if this is important or not. I'm going to – I'm going to recuse myself on this. The law firm of Hart & Horan, PC, has a client, RTKL Associates, which is an architectural engineering firm which did one of the drawings in this handout. I don't know if it's – I don't – we don't have an affidavit so I don't know if this is part of something or if this is just an old drawing that's been incorporated, but as long there is a quorum, even though this is an administrative item, I'm going to – not knowing the nature of the involvement, I'm going to recuse myself on this matter.

Chairman Murphy: Okay, thank you very much. Jim, it's good seeing you again.

James Van Zee, Deputy Director, Project Development, Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Lawrence, members of the Commission, I'm James Van Zee, Deputy Director of Project Development with the Rail Project of Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. Yes, the application before you tonight is a coordination that we worked with Macerich on as we took over that part – originally, they were going to build the pavilion building as part of their Rezoning when the Airports Authority came in as the project manager for the rail project, it was worked out between the two that it was probably better for us – this way we'll keep building the entire facility. But we recognized that that was a proffered condition that Macerich had to the County and we said we will concur with that and bring that forward to the Planning Commission. As Mr. Lawrence noted, the whole Silver Line has a particular architectural theme that has been worked out over the – you know, the years that you've been

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involved with it – between the Metro Authority, the State, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Fairfax County, and others – that have it adopted and incorporated. And indeed we've talked about this before when I brought the Special Exceptions to you for the stations and the pavilions. And there were many – in most circumstances, there was a caveat or a condition that the – we would work and we would coordinate as best as we could to facilitate direct linkages and other treatments, particularly for the pavilions which are the interface between the station and the development that occurs around it. So the pavilion before you tonight is the South Pavilion of the – you know, I guess the technical term is the Tysons Central 123 Station. I guess officially it's now going to be the Tysons Corner Station. And yes, it is very similar in design to the other pavilions. The modifications to this one is a little larger. That was to accommodate the entrances that Macerich has planned in their development. There were two bridges to serve as one streamlined plan for what they called their Phase I development – the one that you – that they presently have under construction where La Madeleine used to be. And their future station – their future development for the parking garage back behind – that will be their Phase II development. So this pavilion is a little – has a slightly larger lobby at the top and the elevator is more directed towards the bus bay – you know, for visual purposes of the – you see the escalators, the steps, and the elevator from a – from a pedestrian management standpoint. But architecturally, the building before you is what's pretty much the architecture standard – the, you know, pressed concrete, the brick, the metal form roof which – you know, sort of – in some ways is similar to the swooth of the Eero Saarinen design out of Dulles Airport itself. The question that came when we met previously with Mr. Lawrence and working with Macerich was can this – you know, can this little building, which is basically elevators, stairs, and escalators, in the future be modified and, you know, if all parties agree and work in that direction – Metro Authority, County, and the developer in the case presuming to be Macerich? And the answer to that is “yes.” The buildings I just mentioned are concrete-formed brick. The buildings could be re-clad. They could be – you know, additional landscaping could be incorporated. The concrete form can be done. If you were to totally rebuild it, it's a possibility. It's somewhat more of a – a little bit more complicated because you have to keep pedestrian movement up at a second level still going to the station. And that would be – but that would be a burden that would be on whoever is proposing such a development. But in a simple form, yes it is. Metro has a process for this – you know, as that's – you know, they – it's their development standards and their adjacent development standards that they have spent quite a few years incorporating. And yes, this property will be eventually transferred to Metro in ownership. That's where the process of having it fully dedicated over to the County – that's part of the – you know, we're coordinating with Macerich and hope to have that wrapped up in the weeks to come. And, you know, that's the last property that's needed on Phase I and then would be incorporated. But Metro and the County and, I think, particularly if you had a County initiative to ask Metro – and since you're a compact signatory to it – would be a proposal. And we have seen other places where the stations and entrances have been modified over the decades – you know, the new canopies over pavilions and entrances where you have underground stations and even my own personal – I live in the City of Alexandria and the King Street Station has been expanded in the past - in seven or eight years to have another – another walkway across the road of Route 7 where they are very similar in style to the unique nature of those stations, looking more like a traditional train station as opposed to some of the others. So I was asked if – you know, if that's possible and the answer is “yes.” It is -

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this is the plan and it's coordinated with the Silver Line right now. But yes, these entry buildings could be re-clad and reconfigured. Nothing in the present design precludes that as an opportunity in the future.

Commissioner Lawrence: Any questions for Mr. Van Zee?

Chairman Murphy: Are there any questions? Okay, Mr. Lawrence.

Commissioner Lawrence: Mr. Van Zee, I just incidentally – I think we sent you – I think Ms. Byron's people sent you some examples of the –

Mr. Van Zee: Yes.

Commissioner Lawrence: Kinds of enhancements that presently are – are invoked. But we're talking about a 40-year plan, so I think both of us understand that this – this is an evolution.

Mr. Van Zee: Right, yes and Metro has evolved the – you know, the existing system. But – and we said – as we said, we looked at those. I think our confidence was – they look great and I think Macerich is going to incorporate some of those into their facility. I think there's going to be some really dynamic buildings in that particular complex there. And they could – some of that is simple cladding. You know, it's plantings that would be in the walls. And think back to the – you know, the Metro as part of this whole project has – has an art and transit program and each of the stations has art. This station is going to have some – a major – over on the wall that's on the – off 123 – basically facing, you know, towards the Tysons Corner Center – it is a – Mr. John King was the artist and it's a combination of – you know, sort of a mobile glass and mirrors. It's going to be, I think, a very dynamic look actually. And Lerner has utilized them too so they'll probably incorporate some similar architecture. Things like that could – you know, he or other architects could incorporate other embellishments to that facility at a future time. And Metro is very much aware that – you know, there's a desire for some of the modification. I think that I've said very candidly – what we need to do first is get the thing up and running. Get the escalators – get up the escalators and get people across the bridges and I'm certain – you know, when you see the new plans, there will be the opportunities for some – some changes in these.

Commissioner Lawrence: Thank you very much.

Mr. Van Zee: You're welcome.

Commissioner Lawrence: And I think we understand that this is a future project under future resources and future schedule, so what we have here is the beginning. So I'd like to make a motion for the Commission, with that, for the record. **WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT MAY BE REVISITED IN A FUTURE PROJECT DURING THE REDEVELOPMENT OF TYSONS CORNER, THE PLANNING COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT NOW PROPOSED BY THE RAIL PROJECT FOR THE TYSONS STATION.**

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Commissioner de la Fe: Second.

Chairman Murphy: Seconded by Mr. de la Fe. Is there a discussion of the motion? All those in favor of the motion as articulated by Mr. Lawrence, say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Murphy: Opposed? Motion carries. Thank you, Mr. Van Zee. Mr. Saxe, thank you.

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(The motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Hart having recused himself.)

JLC