

Planning Commission Meeting  
December 8, 2011  
Verbatim Excerpt

SEA 2007-SP-001 – COSTCO WAREHOUSE CORPORATION

After the Close of the Public Hearing

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Okay, close the public hearing; recognize Commissioner Murphy.

Commissioner Murphy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the speakers who came out this evening and the points are well taken. Life was a lot simpler when this was the site of the Centreville drive-in theatre and a bar. You know – there were conflicts, but there weren't a lot of traffic conflicts at that particular time. I can't solve and I don't think this applicant can solve all the problems with Lee Highway. I think some of the problems – I think most of the problems I have with Lee Highway and I think some of them that spin off to Piney Branch Road and all the roads that go down towards Government Center Parkway and towards the other areas come from the design of that interchange. That causes a lot of problems. I have always said that is probably the worst designed interchange in Fairfax County and the accident rate alone on that interchange is just too high for me. They finally put some double lights in there so there weren't people running the red lights when you go over from the Parkway to West Ox Road, but I'm not going to get into all that. I will have someone from Supervisor Herrity's office check – call VDOT and check the timing on the light at Piney Branch Road to see what can be done and whether or not it's timed appropriately. But usually the timing going on a road like Lee Highway in the morning and during rush hours it – the timing the light is on green for a longer period – much longer period of time for the people commuting on the main road than it is for the homeowners in the association that abut that road. And that's one of the reasons why – but we'll check the timing and find out. I'm sorry to learn that Mr. Litzenberger had to give up his membership at Costco. I know that in the Sully District they're used to busy shopping centers, but I'm glad our traffic problems – I mean, you want nirvana? You can go up the road just a little bit more to the west and all the traffic up there is just – it's just delightful. But I'm glad to see he's still shopping in the Springfield District at BJ's. You know, we've danced to this bear three or four times it's come before us in one form or another. And I personally think, without going into any detail about the traffic analysis, that this is going to make the traffic flow internally on that site a lot better with the way the access roads have been constructed. And I think the staff doesn't have a problem. The transportation analysis in the staff report doesn't even mention a lot of these things. It's a very general treatment as to what should be addressed and the applicant did address that. It's a busy part of town. It's going to stay very busy and isn't nothing we can do about it. That's what Fairfax Center is all about. And this application is not only in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for Special Exception Uses, but it also is in conformance with the Fairfax Center checklist, which analyzes in a very different and unique way from all other analyses done in the County, what we should have in Fairfax Center to address the density, the traffic, and so forth. There's no universal solution, but I think in this particular case the way this site is being designed, with or without the gas station or the expansion of the building itself or the gas station as an entity onto itself, will make it a lot better. Time will tell. I was hesitant, quite frankly, about the BJ's gas station and that's open to everybody. You can go there as a member or not a member. You just don't get the discounts if you're not a member. And I'm sort

of a random sample. I'm not out in Fairfax – Fair Lakes, rather I should say, every day. But the times I've gone out there – I've been there in the early morning. I've been there in the evening. I've been there on weekends. I've been there on weekdays. It works. That gas station works out there and I'm confident that if we go with option – whatever it is, A or B – and the gas station is what goes on this site, that it will work on this site too. There will be time when you have to wait in line to get out of there. That's a sign of prosperity, not a traffic jam as far as I'm concern. And developments like this certainly add to the tax base of Fairfax County and we quite frankly need all the help we can get. But having said that, the three elements – the Comprehensive Plan, the standards of the Zoning Ordinance, and the Fairfax Center checklist – with a good proffer package makes this application approvable. I want to thank the folks from Windsor Mews that have been involved in this and right from the beginning, have worked with the applicant. They came to the community meeting. I'm pleased to say that – they might not know this or not – but I made the motion to approve Windsor Mews several years ago so I'm glad to see that you're still in the neighborhood and you came out in support of this application. So therefore, Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO APPROVE SEA 2007-SP-001, SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN APPENDIX 1 OF THE STAFF REPORT [sic].

Commissioners de la Fe and Sargeant: Second.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Motion's been made and seconded by Commissioner de la Fe and Commissioner Sargeant. Any discussion on that motion? All those in favor of recommending that the Board of Supervisors approve SEA 2007-SP-001, subject to the proposed development conditions in Appendix 1 dated November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011, please say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: All opposed? That motion carries. Commissioner Murphy?

Chairman Murphy: Yes, I would like to add one thing to the record, Mr. Chairman, that I forgot to do. I do have a letter –

Kristen Abrahamson, Zoning Evaluation Division (ZED), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ): Mr. Chairman?

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Hold on.

Brent Krasner, ZED, DPZ: The conditions were – there was a revision that was sent out to the CONDITIONS DATED NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup> that –

Commissioner Murphy: Oh no, I'm sorry.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Oh, we get it.

Commissioner Murphy: Okay, I did – I forgot to put that –

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Okay.

Commissioner Murphy: NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>. Thank you.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: All right, well without objection, THE MOTION WILL BE RESTATED AS “DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS DATED NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>.”

Commissioner Murphy: I would like to enter into the record a letter from Jacinta Mascarenhas, President of the Windsor Mews Homeowners Association, into the record in support of the application. I’m sorry I didn’t do that earlier.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Without objection.

Commissioner Murphy: Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS A REAFFIRMATION OF THE APPROVAL OF THE MODIFICATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL SCREENING TO THE EAST, IN FAVOR OF THE EXISTING VEGETATION AS SHOWN ON THE SEA PLAT.

Commissioner de la Fe: Second.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Seconded by Commissioner de la Fe. Any discussion of that motion? All those in favor of the motion as articulated by Commissioner Murphy, please say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: All opposed? That motion carries.

Commissioner Murphy: And Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS A REAFFIRMATION OF THE APPROVAL OF THE WAIVER OF THE BARRIER REQUIREMENTS TO THE EAST, IN FAVOR OF THE BERM SHOWN ON THE SEA PLAT.

Commissioner de la Fe: Second.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: Seconded by Commissioner de la Fe. Discussion of that motion? All those in favor of the motion as articulated by Commissioner Murphy regarding waiver of the barrier requirements, please say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Vice Chairman Alcorn: All opposed? That motion carries as well.

Commissioner Murphy: That's it. Thank you very much. Thank Mr. Gill –

Vice Chairman Alcorn: The Chair is yours.

Chairman Murphy: Thank you, citizens for coming out this evening. I want to thank Mr. Krasner and Mr. O'Donnell that worked together on this application. We appreciate it. And also thank – what is your name?

Daniel White, ZED, DPZ: Daniel.

Chairman Murphy: I'm sorry?

Mr. White: Daniel White.

Chairman Murphy: Daniel White. Daniel White is the guy that brought us the new technology tonight. Let's give him a round of applause. It worked. You remembered to plug it in and tune it up, so you know, what can we ask for? It was great. Thank you very much.

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(The motions carried unanimously with Commissioners Hall and Harsel absent from the meeting.)

JLC