

Planning Commission Meeting
December 11, 2014
Verbatim Excerpt

PA 2014-III-P1 (SILAS BURKE PROPERTY)

After Close of the Public Hearing

Vice Chairman de la Fe: I will close the public hearing.

Commissioner Murphy: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Hart said this is a very difficult situation and I think this is the classic between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place situation. Mr. Ulfelder is obviously more familiar with historic preservation than I am, and the National Register means a lot to a lot of people; but quite frankly, this land use is local. And all I know is the people in Burke, whether they are for or against the senior citizens home, do not want to destroy this house. That's fact number one. Fact number two is the current owners, of which the wife is a descendant of Silas Burke, cannot afford to maintain or pay the taxes on this house anymore. They have done it for many years. And the house - - I don't know. I'm not an engineer. I'm not an architect. I have been there for events that the Burke Historic Foundation has put on. You don't fall through the floor. It's well maintained inside. It's very attractive. It may need some rehab. That's going to be something the applicant of the rezoning will have to do. And I actually got confused as to whether we were actually doing Plan amendment or a rezoning. Mr. Lorenz, I respect your opinions and, sir, you have a very valid point, but those are issues that would be decided if the Board of Supervisors approves this plan and it went into a rezoning phase. But we want to save this house and the alternatives are very limited. I don't know much about vistas. All I know is we have a Fairfax County History Overlay District at Saint Mary's Chapel which overlooks a C-8 shopping center. Years ago we took Lake Anne in Reston and made it an historic overlay district because, again, the people wanted that. And there is a lot of history at Saint Mary's and there's a lot of history now at - at Lake Anne. So one size does not fit all. One size does not fit all. But if the object of this public hearing is to do something with land use that's acceptable to the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission to preserve this great house in Burke for the people of Burke, who want to keep it in Burke and well-maintained, we have to find an alternative. And I do believe we have to look and police up this language a little bit and I think we have an opportunity to do that because the Board of Supervisors' meeting is not until, I believe, the 27th of - of June. So I want to take a look at the language -

Commissioners Hart and Hall: January.

Commissioner Murphy: January. I said July before - - I've got these J months on. But I don't want to make a comment on the petition that was sent out. And I know how petitions work, and it was so misleading that people were calling me and those who I know were asking me, "are you going to destroy the Burke House," because it says please do not allow the destruction/development of Silas Burke House and property by Sunrise Development. There is nothing in this plan and a rezoning that's going to destroy the Burke House - the Silas Burke House. You can take that off the table. So, Mr. Chairman, having said that, I will MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION DEFER DECISION ONLY ON OUT-OF-TURN PLAN

AMENDMENT, PA-2014-III-P1, TO A DATE CERTAIN OF – January, Okay – JANUARY 15TH, WITH THE RECORD REMAINING OPEN FOR COMMENT.

Commissioner Lawrence: Second.

Commissioner Murphy: And I thank you.

Commissioner Lawrence: Second.

Vice Chairman de la Fe: Seconded by Commissioner Lawrence. Any discussion? Hearing and seeing none, all those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Vice Chairman de la Fe: : Opposed? Motion carries.

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(The motion carried by a vote of 12-0.)

JN