



PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

ITEM: PA 2020-00025
September 1, 2021

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwestern corner of the intersection of Lee Highway and Waples Mill Road

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Braddock

PLANNING AREA: Area III

PLANNING DISTRICT OR SPECIAL AREA:
Fairfax Center Area

SUB-DISTRICT DESIGNATION:
Sub-unit J3

PARCEL LOCATION: 56-2 ((1)) 37A, 39 and 56-2 ((34)) C

For additional information about this amendment call (703) 324-1380.

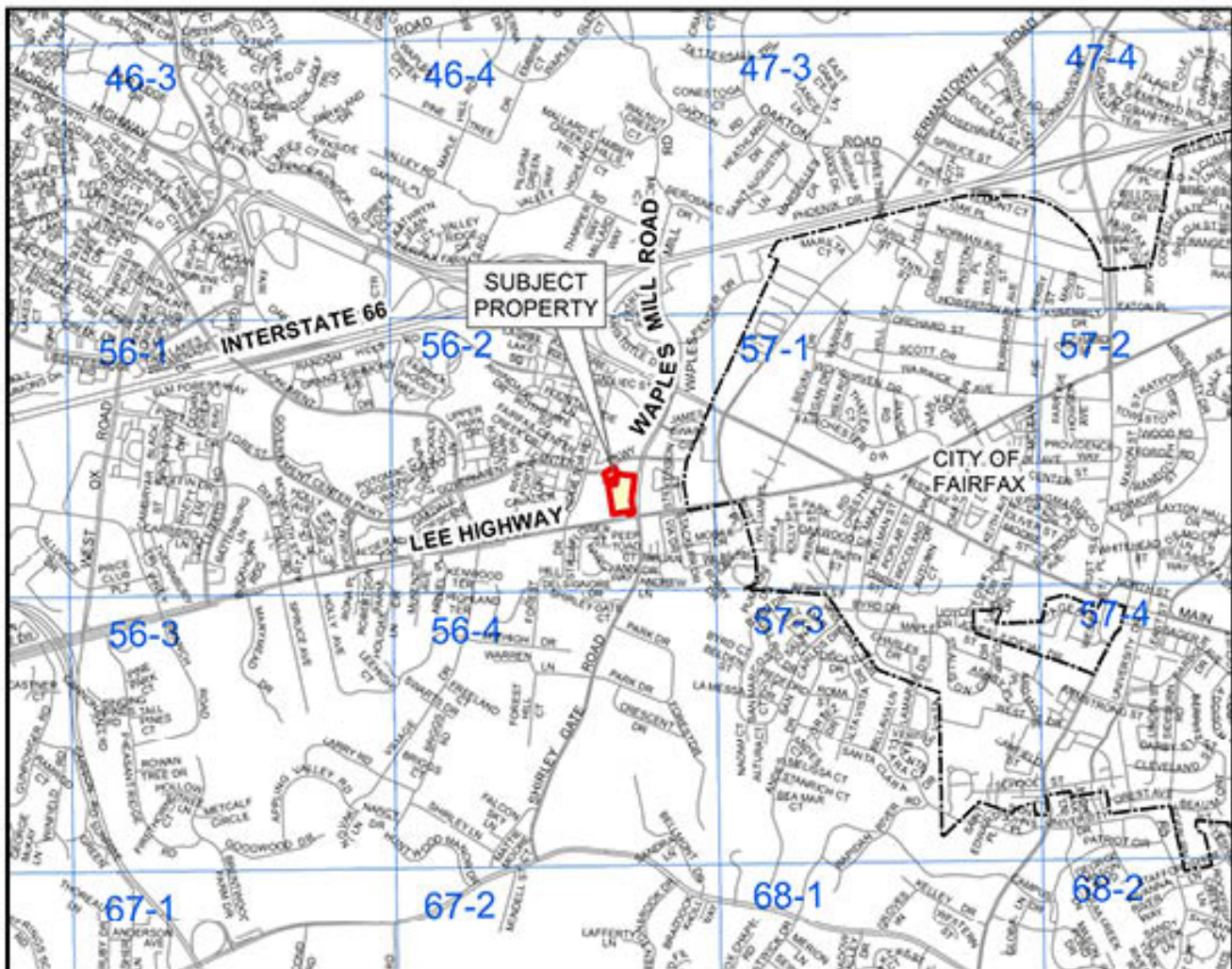
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING:
Wednesday, September 22, 2021 @ 7:30 p.m.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PUBLIC HEARING:
Tuesday, October 19, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.

**PLANNING STAFF DOES RECOMMEND
THIS ITEM FOR PLAN AMENDMENT**



Reasonable accommodation is available upon 48 hours notice. For additional information about accommodation call the Planning Commission office at (703) 324-2865, or the Board of Supervisors office at (703) 324-3151.



3000 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
2020-III-FC1 Fairfax Center, Sub-unit J3 (pt.)

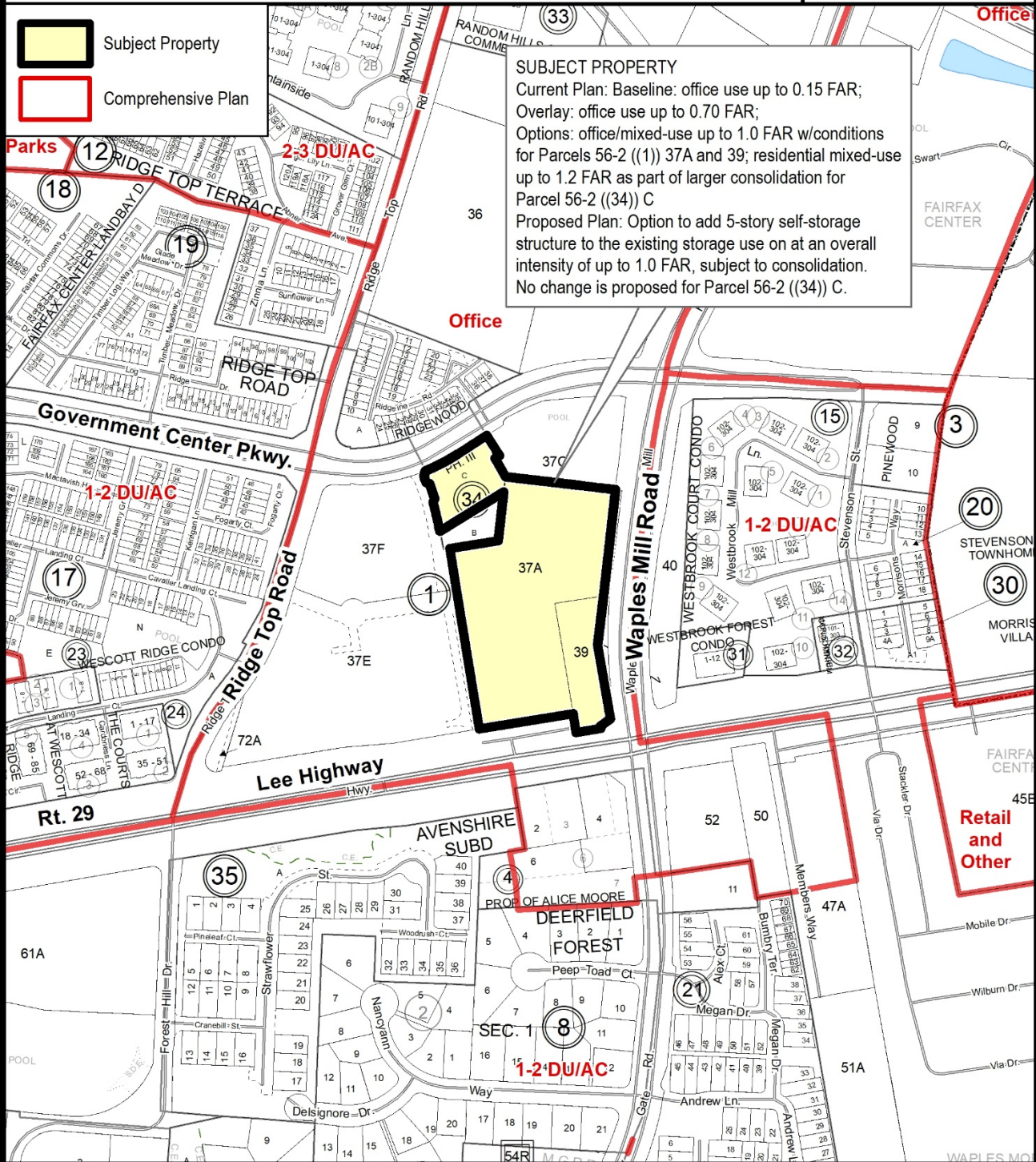


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CURRENT PLAN AND PROPOSED CHANGE

PARCEL LOCATION MAP SHOWING CURRENT PLAN AND PROPOSED CHANGE FOR
SUBJECT PROPERTIES AND CURRENT PLAN MAP FOR ADJACENT AREAS

ITEM:
PA 2020-00025



400 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
PARCEL INFORMATION CURRENT TO APRIL 2021

Document Path: G:\projects\ocp\OTPA_GRAPHICS\IS20_items\2020-III-FC1 Fairfax Center, Sub-unit J3 (pt.)\Fairfax Center, Sub-unit J3 (pt.) CURRENT & PROPOSED.mxd

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STAFF REPORT FOR PLAN AMENDMENT 2020-00025

BACKGROUND

On January 28, 2020, the Board of Supervisors (Board) authorized Plan Amendment (PA) 2020-00025 for Tax Map Parcels 56-2 ((1)) 37A, 39 and 56-2 ((34)) C (Parcels 37A, 39 and C, respectively), a 6.9-acre area located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of Lee Highway (Route 29) and Waples Mill Road. The subject properties are planned within Sub-unit J3 of the Fairfax Center Area Suburban Center and are located in the Braddock District. The proposed Plan amendment would add an alternative land use option that would support self-storage use at an intensity of up to 1.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) on Parcels 37A and 39, subject to consolidation and other conditions, in order to facilitate intensification of the existing self-storage use by constructing an additional five-story self-storage structure.

The review of this Plan amendment is concurrent with Rezoning application [RZ 2020-BR-003](#), which requests to rezone Parcels 37A and 39 from the I-5 (General Industrial) and R-1 (Residential, One Dwelling Unit/Acre) Zoning Districts to the I-5 Zoning District, with a proffered development plan for the consolidated property which includes the addition of the five-story self-storage building at an overall intensity of up to 1.0 FAR. Any recommendation for this Plan amendment should not be construed as a favorable recommendation by the Board, the Planning Commission, or staff on the proposed zoning application and does not relieve the applicant from compliance with the provisions of all applicable ordinances, regulations, and adopted standards.

Parcel C was rezoned in 2006 ([RZ 2005-SP-019](#)) for 35,000 square feet (SF) of professional office use, as part of the consolidated rezoning of much of the sub-unit, but remains undeveloped. While Parcel C was included in the Board's authorization of this Plan amendment, the currently proposed self-storage development and associated rezoning application do not include Parcel C; as a result, Parcel C has been excluded from further consideration with this Plan amendment and the currently adopted Plan recommendations for that parcel will be retained. For the remainder of this report, the terms "subject area" or "subject property" is meant to indicate the 6.1-acre consolidated land area of Parcels 37A and 39 only.

CHARACTER OF THE SITE

Parcel 37A consists of 5.14-acres, zoned I-5 and currently occupied by approximately 110,000 SF of single-story self-storage use. The existing storage structures consist of four narrow 300ft-to-400ft-long one-story warehouse-style buildings constructed in approximately 1980, with individual outside unit access, occupying the central portion of the parcel, and one 200ft.-by-200ft L-shaped one-story warehouse constructed in approximately 1999, with both externally and internally accessed climate-controlled units, fronting onto Waples Mill Road north of the residential parcel. Parcel 39 is a residentially zoned 0.95-acre parcel containing a vacant single-family structure dating to approximately 1925. The properties are planned within Sub-unit J3 of the Fairfax Center Area for office use up to 0.15 FAR at the baseline level, office use up to 0.70 FAR at the overlay level, and office mixed-use up to 1.0 FAR, per an additional option for

parcels within the sub-unit that were not included in a prior consolidated mixed-use development that resulted in the surrounding residential and hotel development. The Fairfax Center Area Plan defines office mixed-use as predominantly office and supporting commercial uses, with housing as a dominant secondary use – with a goal of a 2 to 1 ratio of primary uses to residential uses.

Both parcels front on Route 29, to the south, and Parcel 39 forms the northwest corner of the intersection of Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, as shown in Figure 1. A service drive within the public right-of-way extends along the Route 29 frontage of Parcel 37A and provides access to both parcels from that roadway. The existing service drive has become an area where commercial vehicles such as food trucks and contractors' equipment routinely park, which creates undesirable visual clutter along the Route 29 frontage. The Plan currently recommends the study of a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Route 29 and Waples Mill Road that would utilize the right-of-way occupied by the service drive, as well as an additional strip of Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) right-of-way that lies between Parcel 39 and Waples Mill Road; however, an interchange has not yet been designed or funded, so the full nature of such an improvement remains unknown.



Figure 1: Subject property and surrounding area.

CHARACTER OF THE AREA

Sub-unit J3 of the Fairfax Center Area consists of the area bordered by Route 29 to the south, Waples Mill Road to the east, Government Center Parkway to the north and Ridgetop Road to the west, with an additional area extending north of Government Center Parkway along Ridgetop Road, as shown in Figure 1. This sub-unit includes the subject property, as previously mentioned, and the areas to its north and west. This portion of the Fairfax Center Area is designated as a Suburban Center, which is planned to contain a complimentary mix of employment, residential, and commercial uses at moderate-to-high development intensities; however, it is outside of the designated Suburban Center Core Area, which is centered on a planned Metrorail station in the vicinity of Fair Oaks Mall, Government Center and Fairfax Corner.

The core area is generally planned for the highest intensities within the Fairfax Center Area, with the planned intensity of development diminishing with distance from the core area. Non-core areas of the Suburban Center, including the area of Sub-unit J3, are envisioned with a complimentary mix of residential uses, office/commercial uses, and recreational opportunities, including additional activity nodes that include residential, retail, office, hotel and/or civic uses, connected by an extensive network of multimodal facilities and high-quality streetscapes that encourage pedestrian and bicycle access. All development within the Suburban Center is expected to exhibit high-quality building design and include landscape and streetscape amenities that foster an attractive, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use environment.

The majority of Sub-unit J3 to the north and west of the subject property has previously been developed under an existing Plan option for the area, which planned for residential mixed-use development up to an intensity of 1.2 FAR with substantial consolidation and subject to conditions ensuring both residential and commercial uses, inclusion of ground-floor retail and parks/recreation spaces to create an active pedestrian environment, substantial roadway improvements, including the extension of Government Center Parkway, and the creation of an internal street grid with provisions for future interparcel connectivity, vegetative buffering along Route 29, and other conditions. The resulting development includes the 4-story, 480-unit Ridgewood at Windsor apartment buildings, with ground-floor retail, directly west of the subject property along Route 29 and Ridge Top Road, as well as a 5-story hotel along Waples Mill Road, north of Parcel 37A. Parcel C, which was included in the authorization for this Plan amendment, is a 0.8-acre parcel located along Government Center Parkway, in the north center of the sub-unit, which was approved for office use with the consolidated development but is constrained in size and remains undeveloped.

Route 29, to the south of the subject area, forms the southern boundary of the Suburban Center portion of the Fairfax Center Area, with the area south of Route 29 consisting of the Suburban Neighborhood portion of the planning area. The Suburban Neighborhood portion acts as a transitional area to lower-density residential uses farther to the south. Directly across Route 29 to the south are vacant, commercial parcels, zoned C-8 District (Highway Commercial), and the eastern edge of the Avenshire development of single-family detached homes, zoned PDH-3 (Planned Development Housing, Three Dwelling Units/Acre). The commercially zoned parcels are planned for office use up to .25 FAR, with an option for residential use up to 3 dwelling-

units-per-acre (du/ac). Across Waples Mill Road to the east of the subject area is Westbrook Court Condominiums, developed at the planned density of 20 du/ac.

Though not directly adjacent to the subject property, another self-storage facility, consisting of one four-story, 108,000 SF building, exists along Waples Mill Road, north of Government Center Parkway on an I-5-zoned property, as shown on Figure 1. A 61,000 SF two-story self-storage building is also located diagonally across Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, southeast of the subject area, on property zoned C-8.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY

Parcel 39 has been in residential use for over 100 years, whereas Parcel 37A was rezoned from low-density residential (RE-1) and commercial (C-G) uses to an industrial zoning district (I-L) in 1976 (RZ 74-2-95), along with the majority of the surrounding properties. The rezoning included several proffers related to building setback and buffering from Route 29 and construction of a service drive along Route 29.

In 1978, a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) redesignated the I-L zoning district as I-5 and established the maximum intensity at 1.0 FAR. The self-storage use on Parcel 37A was subsequently developed in approximately 1980. In 1989, another ZOA reduced the maximum intensity in the I-5 District to 0.50 FAR with a potential increase to 0.70 FAR with a Special Exception. Because the self-storage use pre-dated the 1989 amendment, the 1.0 FAR of the approved rezoning remains permissible on Parcel 37A. The 1989 ZOA also redesignated Parcel 39 from the RE-1 to R-1 District.

In 1982, the Board adopted the Fairfax Center Area Plan, which is an areawide plan for a 5,500-acre mixed use center surrounding the interchange of Interstate 66 and Route 50, which was intended to be a central node of development and activity in the county. The area has evolved to include a variety of uses including office, residential, public facilities, and regional-, community- and neighborhood-serving retail uses. The Fairfax Center Area Plan, which continues to guide development in this portion of the county, is divided into land units and sub-units for purposes of small area or site-specific recommendations. The subject property was originally designated within Sub-unit Q5, which generally consisted of the area bordered by Route 29; tributaries of Upper Difficult Run, west of Ridge Top Road and north of Government Center Parkway; and Waples Mill Road. This area was initially planned for residential development at 1 du/ac with an option for office mixed-use up to an intensity of 0.4 FAR.

On February 27, 2006, the Board approved Plan Amendment S04-III-FC2, which revised the Plan recommendation for the area generally between Waples Mill Road, Government Center Parkway, Ridgetop Road, and Route 29. This portion of Sub-unit Q5 was redesignated to Sub-unit Q9, and given a base recommendation of office use up to 0.15 FAR with an overlay recommendation of office use to 0.70 FAR. The main purpose of the amendment was to also include an additional option for the consolidated mixed-use development of much of the sub-unit with residential, office, hotel and ground-level retail uses up to an intensity of 1.2 FAR. Approximately 18 acres was subsequently consolidated and rezoned ([RZ 2005-SP-019](#)) to develop 750,000 SF of residential, office, hotel, and ground-level retail uses. The subject

property remained unconsolidated and was not included in the rezoning and development, which now occupies the majority of the sub-unit. The Plan option did include a provision for unconsolidated parcels to develop with office mixed-use at a later date, but at a reduced maximum intensity of 1.0 FAR rather than the 1.2 FAR that was supported for the initial development in the sub-unit.

The Fairfax Center Area Plan has subsequently undergone two phases of an areawide update: PA S13-III-FC1 in 2014, and PA 2013-III-FC1(B) in 2016. Phase II included a renumbering of the Fairfax Center Area sub-units, at which time the subject property was redesignated from Sub-unit Q9 to Sub-unit J3. Otherwise, neither phase of the areawide update significantly affected the site-specific recommendation for the subject property. An additional Phase III study is authorized for the Fairfax Center Area Core Area.

Parcel 39 is also located within an area designated as the Water Supply Protection Overlay District, which was established to preserve and to protect the environmental integrity of public water supply reservoirs and increases the water quality control requirements for development within this area.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, amended through 2-23-2021, Land Use Plan Recommendations – Suburban Center Non-Core Areas, Land Unit J, Recommendations, Land Use, page 69-72:

“Sub-unit J3

Baseline: Office use up to .15 FAR

Overlay: Office use up to .70 FAR

Sub-unit J3 consists of the area between Ridge Top Road and Waples Mill Road, north of Lee Highway. It is planned for office use at an intensity up to 0.70 FAR at the overlay level. As an option, residential/mixed-use at an intensity up to 1.2 FAR was planned and approved with consolidation of approximately 18 acres. The approved 750,000 square feet of residential, office, hotel, and ground-level retail uses are to be provided under the following conditions:

- The character of the development should be primarily mid- or high-rise buildings with retail use integrated within the ground floor of residential and office buildings. Restaurants and ground-floor retail should help create an activity center for residents, visitors, and office workers. A defined and dynamic streetscape should be created along Ridge Top Road, Government Center Parkway, and all internal streets. Pad sites are not allowed.
- Buildings at the corner of Government Center Parkway and Ridge Top Road should be designed to incorporate ground floor retail. It is anticipated that at least 20,000

square feet of a variety of retail, restaurant, and community-serving uses should be located in the vicinity of this intersection.

- A minimum of a 50 foot vegetated buffer should extend from the planned right-of-way line to minimize noise and visual impacts of development along Lee Highway;
- The office component should total at least 200,000 gross square feet. However, up to 50,000 square feet of office use may be replaced by hotel use;
- The planned extension of Government Center Parkway to Waples Mill Road is to be constructed as a four-lane divided roadway within the first phase of development. Dedication of land, construction or contribution to the Fairfax Center Area Road fund should be made for the planned transportation improvements, which includes the Lee Highway and Waples Mill Road interchange;
- Land uses along the periphery of the development should complement the design and orientation of the neighboring land uses. In general building heights should taper towards the south and east, or landscaping should offset and soften the transition of the building heights if this tapering is not feasible. Development also should provide substantial buffering and interparcel access to any unconsolidated parcels;
- A high quality, pedestrian-oriented living environment with recreation spaces, such as open lawn areas, urban parks, plazas and courtyards, should be provided to help meet the recreation needs of residents. Appropriate landscape features and pedestrian amenities, such as shading, seating, lighting, public art, bus shelters, trash cans, and other street amenities should be provided. A contribution should be made to offset the impact of this development on the active recreation facilities;
- Sidewalks and trails should safely connect the land uses within the development and to the surrounding area. These pedestrian pathways should be part of the overall circulation plan that should include continuous sidewalks, attractive pavement treatments, safe crossings, and bicycle facilities;
- An effective transportation demand management (TDM) program should be provided with each phase of development. It should encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation to reduce the number of vehicular trips. It should be based on the number and type of residential units and nonresidential square footage, as deemed appropriate by the Department of Transportation. Any development should establish and implement strategies for the centralized management of the program. The TDM program could include staffing, resources, and dedicated areas for these services. Resources for telecommuting, transit subsidies, and “live where you work” incentives could be provided. Other programs could include, but would not be limited to, rideshare, vanpool, and carpool matching services or guaranteed ride home programs;

- The majority of the required parking should be structured or underground. Attractive façade treatments that are consistent with the overall architectural design should be used for any portion of a parking structures that is visible from the street;
- A geotechnical study should be completed to identify the depth of the asbestos soils and provide appropriate abatement and public safety measures during construction;
- Prior to any development, a survey should be conducted to determine the presence of significant historic archeological resources, using the scope of services approved by the county. The sub-unit has a high potential for these resources as it is known to have contained World War II Prisoner of War camp. Should any significant resources be found, then those resources should be conserved or the adverse impacts of any development mitigated. If resources are present, the applicant should work with the History Commission to write and fund the creation and installation of a historic marker on site;
- Affordable housing should be provided through compliance with the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance, an appropriate proffer of land or units for affordable housing, or a financial contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund. In addition, the provision of workforce dwelling units to accommodate the needs of individuals or families with low and moderate incomes is encouraged consistent with the countywide WDU Policy; and,
- Any development should mitigate the impact of the residential component on public schools;

Any remaining, unconsolidated parcels may develop at an intensity up to 1.0 FAR office/mixed-use, if all relevant conditions above are achieved and appropriate inter-parcel access is provided to the adjacent development.”

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

The Board requested that staff consider a Plan amendment for the subject area for self-storage or alternative uses that would be compatible with the vision for Fairfax Center and recent developments that surround the sites. The amendment should factor in land use, design, park space, and transportation improvements, among other considerations. The owner of the Public Storage mini-warehouse facility on Parcel 37A has proposed an expansion of the existing self-storage facility by demolishing the house on Parcel 39 and one warehouse building on Parcel 37A and constructing a new multi-story self-storage structure. Rezoning application [RZ/FDP 2020-BR-003](#) has been filed on Parcels 37A and 39 to implement such a facility. The most recent rezoning submittal includes a proposed new five-story 147,750 SF self-storage structure and modifies one of the warehouses to create a new one-story 1,215 SF office building, resulting in an overall building square-footage of up to 265,460 SF (1.0 FAR) on the site, as shown in Figure 2. The development plan remains subject to change as the review of the rezoning proposal continues. Parcel C is not included in the application.

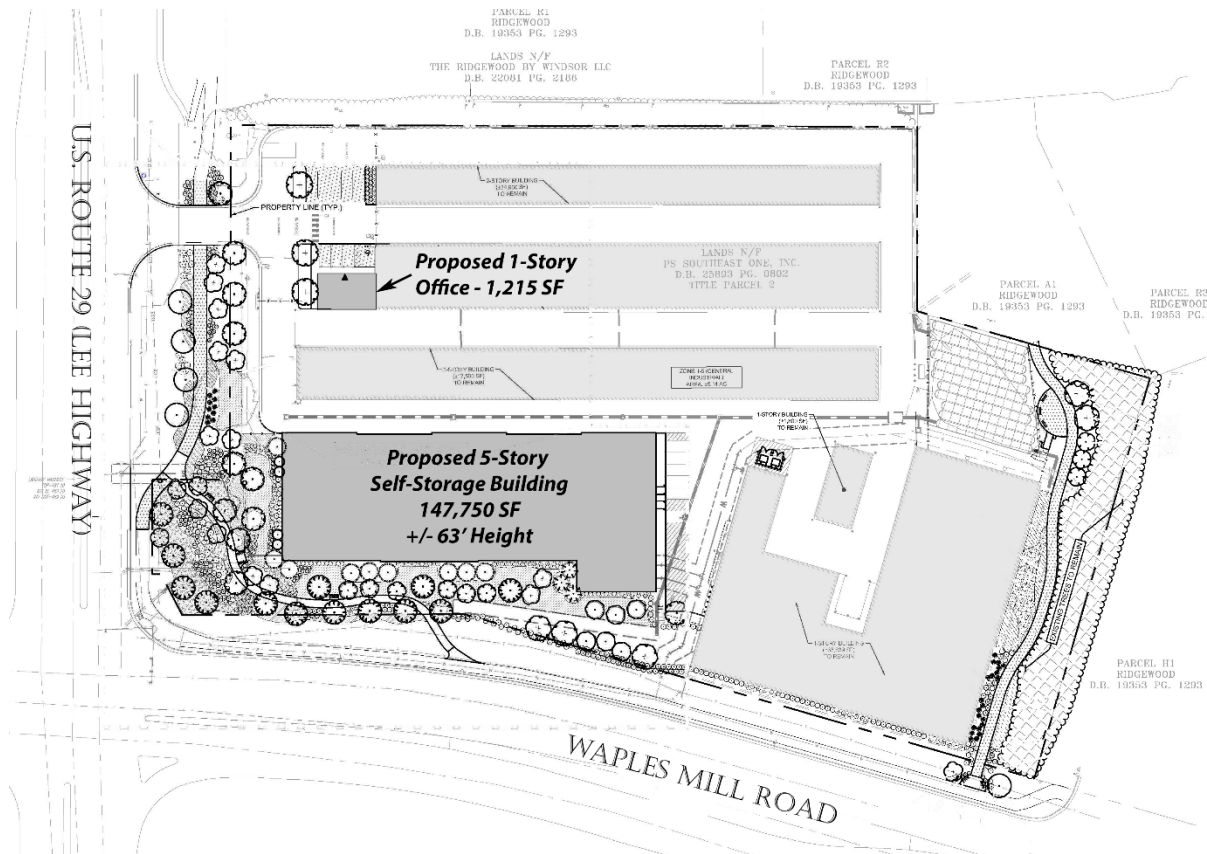


Figure 2: Concurrent rezoning development plan (dated June 30, 2021).

ANALYSIS

Land Use

Land Use Pattern

As previously described, Sub-unit J-3 of the Fairfax Center Area plan is planned at the overlay level for office use up to 0.70 FAR, with options for higher intensity mixed-use or office development. With the exception of the subject property, all of the properties in the sub-unit were consolidated and rezoned to the PRM (Planned Residential Mixed-use) District to permit development under the Plan option for mixed-use development at an intensity of 1.2 FAR. The resulting development consisted of multifamily residential, office, hotel, and ground floor retail uses. A subsequent zoning action rezoned a portion of the PRM District to the PDC (Planned Development Commercial) and PDH-12 (Planned Development Housing, 12 Dwelling Units/Acre) Districts, which resulted in the townhomes north of Government Center Parkway, and the private park that now occupies Parcel B, adjacent to the subject property. The subject parcels were not included in the consolidation but remained in use as a storage facility and contractor's office/vacant residential parcel. Per the option recommendation, any remaining, unconsolidated parcels may develop at an intensity up to 1.0 FAR for office/mixed-use if all relevant conditions of the option are achieved and appropriate inter-parcel access is provided to the adjacent development. Within Fairfax Center, office/mixed-use is defined as predominantly

office use with associated commercial uses and housing as a dominant secondary use (a ratio of 2:1 between commercial and residential uses is assumed).

The Comprehensive Plan considers self-storage an industrial use, which is generally not supported in a mixed-use area such as the Fairfax Center Area; however, the existing self-storage use on Parcel 37A is in conformance with the provisions of the I-5 industrial zoning district that currently governs the property and may continue as a by-right use under the existing zoning. Further expansion of that use on Parcel 37A would also be permissible by-right within the limitations of the I-5 District regulations.

Parcel 39's low-density residential zoning is also not consistent with the current Plan recommendations for the area since the surrounding area has grown into a mixed-use suburban center and the property borders on the intersection of two heavily-traveled arterial roadways (and potential site of a future interchange pending further study). The parcel also has limited commercial or office development potential on its own, due to its size and access constraints. Logical redevelopment of Parcel 39 would rely on consolidation with Parcel 37A, as envisioned by the Plan for the sub-unit.

While the Plan recommendation for office/mixed-use would not generally support the further expansion of an existing industrial use, the current proposal does satisfy the consolidation objectives for the remaining parcels within the sub-unit and would allow vehicular access to Parcel 39 from the neighboring property, as the Plan intends rather than requiring independent access on the adjoining roadways or service drive. It would also facilitate the connection of pedestrian facilities across the site, community amenities, and the potential for new parkland on the site.

Intensity

The proposed 1.0 FAR level of intensity remains consistent with the maximum intensity of the preferred Plan option.

Compatibility and Design

In order for the self-storage use to successfully integrate into the vision of the mixed-use Suburban Center context, the proposed multi-level structure should be designed with the general size and appearance of an office building, rather than a traditional industrial use, and should adhere to the design guidance of the Fairfax Center Area Plan intended for office or mixed-use development, rather than for industrial uses. The height and dimensions of the structure should not exceed that of a typical 5-story office building (approximately 65 feet). Further, the street-facing building setbacks may be reduced to be comparable to the adjacent development in the sub-unit, rather than maintaining larger suburban-type setbacks typically required of industrial uses. The development would also be expected to provide a similar level of landscaping and streetscape amenities as a typical office or mixed-use development in the Fairfax Center Area would be expected to provide in the same context and should follow all other areawide guidance and the Use-Specific Performance Criteria applicable to those uses.

The subject site is at a visible location, which acts as a gateway to the Fairfax Center Area for northbound travelers on Shirley Gate/Waples Mill roads. The proposed multi-story structure should present an image that is consistent with the intent of the Fairfax Center Area Plan and may be considered a positive addition to the area. Extensive landscaping should be considered along the major street frontages to further that goal and to provide additional interest along the building facades. Furthermore, the industrial nature of the existing self-storage structures that are to remain on the site should be de-emphasized, especially along the major street frontages and along pedestrian pathways, by utilizing enhanced façade treatments and vegetated screening to present an attractive appearance and add visual interest. Signage should be well-integrated and compatible with the surrounding area, contribute to the gateway character, and avoid adverse visual impacts to the adjacent residential uses.



Figure 3: Conceptual east building elevation included on the most recent rezoning submittal, dated June 30, 2021.

The existing mixed-use option for the sub-unit included several design-oriented conditions, many of which remain applicable to the current proposal. While ground-floor retail is not envisioned at the corner of Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, there remains an expectation for a high-quality, pedestrian oriented environment that includes trail improvements and connections, pedestrian amenities, lighting, and public art. Parking areas should be screened from view from the roadways, and vegetated buffering should be included along both street frontages. The accommodation of planned transportation improvements should be provided, as should typical contributions towards areawide transportation improvements.

Affordable Housing

The loss of potential affordable or workforce housing units that would otherwise be expected with office mixed-use development is of concern. All development within the Fairfax Center Area is expected to comply with applicable Affordable and Workforce housing regulations and guidance, and a condition associated with the current Plan options at the sub-unit level specifically recommends that development under those options either proffer land or units for affordable housing or provide a financial contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund.

The areawide guidance assumes a 2:1 ratio of office/commercial and residential uses with office mixed-use development. Applying that ratio to the 300,000 SF of development potential at the planned intensity of 1.0 FAR would result in 100,000 sf of residential use – or approximately

100 residential units (using 1,000 sf/unit as a conversion factor). A percentage of those residential units would be considered affordable or workforce housing units. In order to offset that loss of potential affordable/workforce units, development under the proposed self-storage option should satisfy the intent of the existing Plan condition by providing a financial contribution in lieu of providing residential units.

Transportation

Existing Transportation Conditions

Existing transportation conditions in the area are auto-oriented, providing high levels of mobility and comfort for drivers but low levels of service for pedestrians and transit users. Bicycle facilities are present along many road segments, but do not form a connected network. Most trips in this area are vehicle trips.

The subject property fronts on Route 29, which is currently a six-lane “Other Principal Arterial” road per the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, generally providing east-west connectivity, with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour (MPH). The property also fronts on Waples Mill Road/Shirley Gate Road (Route 665), which is a Minor Arterial Type-B road per the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, generally providing north-south connectivity, and with a 35 MPH posted speed limit. According to the Shirley Gate Road Extended Corridor Planning Study (2015), the intersection of Route 29 and Waples Mill Road currently has substantial vehicle delay, which is expected to worsen slightly and remain at a substandard level of service in the future.

Transportation Plans

The Comprehensive Plan recommends construction of a full interchange at the intersection of Lee Highway-Waples Mill Road/Shirley Gate Road, pending further study. A study to determine capacity needs for the Route 29 corridor, which would include an assessment of whether the interchange is needed, or if traffic demand could be accommodated without one, has not been completed and is not currently funded. It is therefore conceivable, based on current plans, that an interchange could be built adjacent to the subject site. Right-of-way needs and access impacts associated with the planned interchange, particularly as it pertains to the site’s Route 29 and Waples Mill Road frontages, should be considered. A westbound ramp from Waples Mill Road to Route 29 may be part of a future interchange design and could significantly impact the site. Alternative access points further from the interchange may also be needed.

In order to implement the areawide transportation improvements envisioned by the Plan, any development in the Fairfax Center Area above baseline intensities should contribute a proportional share of transportation improvements and/or funding to meet the transportation needs of the area by contributing to a Fairfax Center Area Road Fund established by the Board for that purpose. Such commitments are determined at the time of entitlement review for any subsequent development proposal.

Site Access

Parcel 39 currently has one driveway access onto Route 29. The main entrance to the self-storage site (Parcel 37A) is via a separate driveway access onto Route 29, which also provides access to a service drive in this location. The existing self-storage site is completely fenced; pedestrian and bicycle access is therefore limited to the driveway entrance on Lee Highway. There is currently no access from either parcel onto Waples Mill Road, but there may be the potential for an alternative access along that roadway in the future, if access onto Route 29 is ever limited due to a future interchange or other improvement. The neighboring mixed-use development also created a private street, with necessary provisions for interparcel access, along the west boundary of Parcel 37A, which could also serve as an alternative future access point, if necessary.

Trip Generation

The proposed 1.0 FAR of self-storage use would result in an estimated one-fifth of the daily vehicular trips to/from the site as compared to development of the currently planned 1.0 FAR of office mixed-use development, resulting in a reduced impact to the local road network. The proposed use would also be unlikely to result in a significant number of pedestrian or bicycle trips; however, an enhanced pedestrian environment, including both crossings and linear facilities, is an important part of the Fairfax Center Area vision, and planned transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements would improve conditions for users of those modes significantly.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

The Fairfax Center Area Plan recommends continued development of a comprehensive multi-modal network of trails and bikeways, including intra-and interparcel pedestrian circulation, and improving pedestrian conditions throughout the area. The connection of pedestrian access through the consolidated property is also an essential element of the Plan for the sub-unit and could be accomplished under the proposed plan amendment. While not fulfilling the ultimate Plan option in terms of land use, the pedestrian connections and park improvements that are possible under this scenario would be a welcome addition to the area.

The Fairfax County Bicycle Master Plan, also a component of the Comprehensive Plan, currently recommends a shared use path along the north and south sides of Lee Highway. The Plan also recommends a Paved Trail along the west side of Waples Mill Road/Shirley Gate Road, which currently exists along the site frontage. Shared use paths should be a minimum of ten feet in width, based on VDOT standards, are paved, and are to be used by both pedestrians and bicyclists. There is currently an eight to 10-foot-wide asphalt trail along the site's Waples Mill Road frontage and an eight-foot-wide asphalt trail along the site's Route 29 frontage. Curb and gutter infrastructure is present along both, but the landscape panels are four feet or less, significantly less than the 8-foot VDOT standard for shared use paths. Improvement of these trails to meet applicable standards would be expected with redevelopment of the site. The conformance of any development plan to these recommendations and standards will be determined during the zoning review process.

Schools

The proposed expansion of an existing self-storage use would result in no increase to local school enrollment numbers and would also eliminate any potential student yield generated from the current mixed-use plan.

Parks and Recreation

All development within the Fairfax Center Area is expected to contribute to creating new parks, adding park facilities, constructing trails, and protecting natural areas and cultural features, in accordance with the Urban Parks Framework included in the Parks and Recreation element of the Comprehensive Plan's Policy Plan. The Fairfax Center Area Plan seeks to locate park facilities in close proximity to residential and employment uses within the Suburban Center Area to provide a full range of facilities to accommodate active and passive recreational needs of the community. Development on the site would present an opportunity to expand the existing park to the west in the Ridgewood development on Tax Map Parcel 56-2((34)) B.

Environment

Problem Soils

The subject property is in an area of the county where rock formations may contain naturally occurring fibrous asbestos. Asbestos bearing soils may pose a health risk to construction workers that requires special precautions during excavation. The Environment section of the Policy Plan recommends that new development either avoid problem soil areas or implement appropriate engineering measures to ensure against geotechnical hazards. Areawide recommendations also expect proposals for development in these areas to detail how these concerns will be mitigated. Final determination regarding any geotechnical requirements for the proposed development would be assessed by the Department of Land Development Services at the time of site plan review.

Green Building

The Environment section of the Policy Plan recommends formal green building certification for new developments within Suburban Centers through Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for New Construction (NC), LEED for Core & Shell (CS), or equivalent rating system. Fairfax Center Area guidance reinforces the expectation for high quality, innovative green building practices that employ sustainability in planning and design, consistent with the countywide expectations for green building practices applicable to Suburban Centers. The adequacy of proposed green building certifications and practices would be evaluated as part of the zoning application review.

Water Quality and Stormwater Management (SWM)

The subject property is located primarily within the Difficult Run watershed; however, a portion of the site is located within the Popes Head Creek watershed and associated Water

Supply Protection Overlay District (WSPOD). The property was previously developed without any SWM measures, but new development would be subject to current SWM regulations, as well as the SWM guidance found within the Fairfax Center Area recommendations and Environment portion of the Policy Plan. In addition, development within the WSPOD area is required to satisfy more stringent water quality measures, in order to further protect the quality of the public water supply watershed.

Any new development or redevelopment should apply Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and pursue commitments to reduce stormwater runoff volumes and peak flows, to increase groundwater recharge, to increase preservation of undisturbed areas, and improve water quality. Any zoning application would need to provide a stormwater quantity and quality proposal consistent with these Plan recommendations.

There are no mapped Resource Protection Areas (RPA) or Environmental Quality Corridors (EQC) on the subject property.

Heritage Resources

The Comprehensive Plan realizes the importance and vulnerability of historic resources and archeological sites within the County, and it acknowledges the value of survey and assessment of these sites during the earliest stages of development. The Fairfax Center Area Plan further encourages evaluation of potential resources to determine if a property qualifies as an identified heritage resource.

Parcel 37A has previously been identified as being a portion of the site of a World War II era German prisoners of war camp. In conjunction with development of the neighboring properties, a historical marker commemorating that historical significance was erected in the park area on neighboring Parcel 56-2 ((34)) B. In anticipation of the potential development of Parcel 39, a Phase I archaeological survey was performed on the property in August 2019. The existing single-family home on the parcel, dating to 1925, was evaluated and documented, but was determined not to be of sufficient historical interest to warrant inclusion on the county's Inventory of Historic Sites or further protection. Archaeological test pits also yielded no significant historical content and suggested no need for further investigation.

CONCLUSION

The existing self-storage use on Parcel 37A is permissible by-right in the I-5 Zoning District that governs the property, and expansion of that use up to 1.0 FAR on that property would also be permissible by-right. Consolidation of that property with the adjacent R-1-zoned Parcel 39 and expansion of the self-storage use onto that parcel, however, requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment. While expansion of the industrial use onto a non-industrial property would not generally be supported by the current Plan, there are unique circumstances in this case that justify consideration of the proposed expansion.

Consolidation of the subject parcels is essential to the achievement of many of the Plan's ultimate goals for Sub-unit J3. The prospect of achieving that consolidation through the proposed

Plan option, as well as gaining many of the streetscape, pedestrian trail connections, and onsite park improvements that are expected with the current Plan option, as well as aspects such as stormwater management improvements and contribution to the Affordable Housing Trust fund that would address immediate Countywide priorities, makes the proposed option a viable alternative to consider. Without this option, there would likely be no redevelopment of the lone residential parcel and/or improvements to the self-storage parcel for some time, which would further delay the achievement of those Plan objectives.

RECOMMENDATION

For the above reasons staff supports adding a limited option supporting the proposed expansion of the existing self-storage use. Staff recommends the current Plan options for the subject properties remain as the ultimate vision for the sub-unit, but an additional option be included for the consolidated land area of Parcels 56-2 ((1)) 37A and 39 for the expansion of the self-storage use up to 1.0 FAR, subject to conditions.

Staff recommends that the Comprehensive Plan should be modified as shown below. Text proposed to be added is shown as underlined and text proposed to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough. Text shown to be replaced is noted as such.

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area III, Fairfax Center Area, amended through 2-23-2021, Land Use Plan Recommendations – Suburban Center Non-Core Areas, Land Unit J, Recommendations, Land Use, page 69-72:

“Sub-unit J3

Baseline: Office use up to .15 FAR
Overlay: Office use up to .70 FAR

Sub-unit J3 consists of the area between Ridge Top Road and Waples Mill Road, north of Lee Highway. It is planned for office use at an intensity up to 0.70 FAR at the overlay level. As an option, residential/mixed-use at an intensity up to 1.2 FAR was planned and approved with consolidation of approximately 18 acres. The approved 750,000 square feet of residential, office, hotel, and ground-level retail uses are to be provided under the following conditions:

- The character of the development should be primarily mid- or high-rise buildings with retail use integrated within the ground floor of residential and office buildings. Restaurants and ground-floor retail should help create an activity center for residents, visitors, and office workers. A defined and dynamic streetscape should be created along Ridge Top Road, Government Center Parkway, and all internal streets. Pad sites are not allowed.
- Buildings at the corner of Government Center Parkway and Ridge Top Road should be designed to incorporate ground floor retail. It is anticipated that at least 20,000

square feet of a variety of retail, restaurant, and community-serving uses should be located in the vicinity of this intersection.

- A minimum of a 50 foot vegetated buffer should extend from the planned right-of-way line to minimize noise and visual impacts of development along Lee Highway;
- The office component should total at least 200,000 gross square feet. However, up to 50,000 square feet of office use may be replaced by hotel use;
- The planned extension of Government Center Parkway to Waples Mill Road is to be constructed as a four-lane divided roadway within the first phase of development. Dedication of land, construction or contribution to the Fairfax Center Area Road fund should be made for the planned transportation improvements, which includes the Lee Highway and Waples Mill Road interchange;
- Land uses along the periphery of the development should complement the design and orientation of the neighboring land uses. In general building heights should taper towards the south and east, or landscaping should offset and soften the transition of the building heights if this tapering is not feasible. Development also should provide substantial buffering and interparcel access to any unconsolidated parcels;
- A high quality, pedestrian-oriented living environment with recreation spaces, such as open lawn areas, urban parks, plazas and courtyards, should be provided to help meet the recreation needs of residents. Appropriate landscape features and pedestrian amenities, such as shading, seating, lighting, public art, bus shelters, trash cans, and other street amenities should be provided. A contribution should be made to offset the impact of this development on the active recreation facilities;
- Sidewalks and trails should safely connect the land uses within the development and to the surrounding area. These pedestrian pathways should be part of the overall circulation plan that should include continuous sidewalks, attractive pavement treatments, safe crossings, and bicycle facilities;
- An effective transportation demand management (TDM) program should be provided with each phase of development. It should encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation to reduce the number of vehicular trips. It should be based on the number and type of residential units and nonresidential square footage, as deemed appropriate by the Department of Transportation. Any development should establish and implement strategies for the centralized management of the program. The TDM program could include staffing, resources, and dedicated areas for these services. Resources for telecommuting, transit subsidies, and “live where you work” incentives could be provided. Other programs could include, but would not be limited to, rideshare, vanpool, and carpool matching services or guaranteed ride home programs;

- The majority of the required parking should be structured or underground. Attractive façade treatments that are consistent with the overall architectural design should be used for any portion of a parking structures that is visible from the street;
- A geotechnical study should be completed to identify the depth of the asbestos soils and provide appropriate abatement and public safety measures during construction;
- Prior to any development, a survey should be conducted to determine the presence of significant historic archeological resources, using the scope of services approved by the county. The sub-unit has a high potential for these resources as it is known to have contained World War II Prisoner of War camp. Should any significant resources be found, then those resources should be conserved or the adverse impacts of any development mitigated. If resources are present, the applicant should work with the History Commission to write and fund the creation and installation of a historic marker on site;
- Affordable housing should be provided through compliance with the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance, an appropriate proffer of land or units for affordable housing, or a financial contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund. In addition, the provision of workforce dwelling units to accommodate the needs of individuals or families with low and moderate incomes is encouraged consistent with the countywide WDU Policy; and,
- Any development should mitigate the impact of the residential component on public schools;

An option to replace a portion of the approved office use has been developed with single-family attached units. The remaining office component should be designed as professional office to serve the community with at least 35,000 square feet of development. The conditions achieved under the approved development should be maintained and enhanced, particularly those related to design and open space, as follows:

- The front façades of the single-family attached units are oriented toward Ridge Top Road and the Government Center Parkway or internal courtyards and pedestrian pathways. The façades should contribute to a defined and pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Internal courtyards and pedestrian pathways should be well-lit and useable with pedestrian- friendly elements such benches and shade trees. Garages and driveways should be oriented to the rear of the units, and sufficient visitor parking should be provided. The units should be sufficiently buffered and screened year-round from the office uses and structured parking facility to the north;
- The approved pedestrian plaza at the corner of Ridge Top Road and Government Center Parkway should be maintained near the single-family attached units. The plaza should complement the park on the south side of the Parkway and function as coordinated gateway features to the development. The plazas should be useable, well-

landscaped, provide seating, and include distinctive elements, such as a fountain or public art; and,

- A community park is envisioned near the office use. The park should be well-lit and well-landscaped with shade trees and include elements that encourage public usage, such as a gazebo, plaza, and playground. This park may be an appropriate location for an historic marker regarding the World War II Prisoner of War camp. Other recreational amenities and open spaces designed to serve residents and guests are encouraged, including roof-top areas.

Any remaining, unconsolidated parcels may develop at an intensity up to 1.0 FAR office/mixed-use, if all relevant conditions above are achieved and appropriate inter-parcel access is provided to the adjacent development.

With consolidation of Tax Map Parcels 56-2 ((1)) 37A & 39, expansion of the exiting self-storage use may be considered on the consolidated property up to an intensity of 1.0 FAR. Any conditions of the previous options that remain applicable should be achieved, including those related to design characteristics/intent, pedestrian and landscape amenities, and geotechnical and archaeological studies, as well as areawide guidance and the following additional conditions:

- The properties should remain consolidated with any additional future redevelopment;
- Development should include a multi-story structure up to a maximum height of 65 feet at the corner of Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, with a minimum setback of 40 feet from each right-of-way. The multi-story structure should meet established County use standards for such uses located in mixed-use areas, including screening or fully enclosing loading and unloading areas, ensuring that no storage bay doors or lighted hallways are visible from the outside of the structure, and other requirements or standards;
- The architecture of the multi-story structure would be in a highly visible and prominent location and should not present the appearance of an industrial use but should resemble an office building with high-quality building materials, façade articulation, and roof variation. Exterior building materials should consist primarily of neutral or muted colors. The use of bright colors or other architectural elements for corporate branding is discouraged. Signage should be well-integrated, contribute to the gateway character, and avoid visual impacts to adjacent residential uses. Any existing buildings to remain visible from the rights-of-way should be enhanced with similar building materials and/or public art;
- Pedestrian-oriented streetscapes and landscaped buffers should be included along the frontages of both Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, sufficient to soften the mass of any new building and to buffer the view of the remaining single-story structures, and any parking or loading areas, from the adjacent roadways. The buffers should include ornamental and screening landscaping along the rights of way and within the VDOT

rights-of-way of both Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, to the extent permissible by VDOT. The provision of pedestrian-oriented streetscapes and landscaped buffers should include the removal of the asphalt service drive along Route 29 in favor of additional landscaping.

- Major paved trails along both Route 29 and Waples Mill Road, as called for on the County Trails Plan Map, should be provided or improved to current standards, to the extent feasible, given the constraints of the site.
- A community park should be developed on the subject property as an extension of the community park located on Tax Map Parcel 56-2 ((34)) B. The new park should include amenities such as a dog park or other community-serving features. An underground stormwater management facility to accommodate the new development may be located within the park area. A pedestrian walkway should extend from Waples Mill Road, across the subject property and the new park, and terminate at the existing off-site park. The facades of remaining single-story storage buildings adjacent to pedestrian areas, walkways, and parks should be reimagined to add visual interest and animate the pedestrian experience, through improvements such as the addition of decorative art panels to storage doors, or similar building treatments.
- Provision of or readiness for charging stations and related infrastructure for electric vehicles is encouraged, as is the provision of or readiness for roof-mounted solar charging systems.
- A contribution should be made to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund commensurate with non-residential use contributions in other mixed-use areas to compensate for the loss of potential affordable or workforce housing units that may have been realized with development under the alternate Plan option for the area.”

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN MAP:

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map will not change.

COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP:

The Countywide Transportation Plan Map will not change.