

**MINUTES OF  
FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2021**

PRESENT: Peter F. Murphy, Chairman, Springfield District  
John C. Ulfelder, Vice Chairman, Dranesville District  
Timothy J. Sargeant, Secretary, Commissioner At-Large  
Julie M. Strandlie, Parliamentarian, Mason District  
Mary D. Cortina, Braddock District  
John A. Carter, Hunter Mill District  
Daniel G. Lagana, Lee District  
Walter C. Clarke, Mount Vernon District  
Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner, Providence District  
Evelyn S. Spain, Sully District  
Candice Bennett, Commissioner At-Large  
Andres Jimenez, Commissioner At-Large

ABSENT: None

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The Planning Commission conducted a wholly electronic meeting using Fairfax County's videoconferencing system because the COVID-19 pandemic made it unsafe to physically assemble a quorum in one location or have the public present. The meeting was accessible to the public via Channel 16, live online video stream, and live audio. Testimony from the public could be provided through a phone call, recorded video, or submission of written testimony by mail or electronic means.

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The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m., by Chairman Peter F. Murphy.

The attending Commissioners attended the meeting from the following locations:

- Murphy Peter F. Murphy participated from Conference Room 11 of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035;
- John C. Ulfelder participated from the Dranesville District office, 397 Herndon Pkwy, Suite 110, Herndon, VA 20170;
- Timothy J. Sargeant participated from his residence;
- Julie M. Strandlie participated from her residence;
- Mary D. Cortina participated from her residence;
- John A. Carter participated from the Hunter Mill District office, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston, VA 20190;

- Daniel G. Lagana participated from the Lee District office, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria, VA 22310. Commissioner Lagana was not present for the vote;
- Walter C. Clarke participated from the Mount Vernon District office, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mt. Vernon, VA 22306;
- Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner participated from his residence;
- Evelyn S. Spain participated from her residence;
- Andres Jimenez participated from Mason District office, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003; and
- Candice Bennett participated from Conference Room 11 of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Upon verifying the attendance of each Commissioner from their respective location, the meeting proceeded with Commission matters.

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#### COMMISSION MATTERS

##### SE 2020-DR-012 – TRI-STATE CHAIN BRIDGE, LLC

(Public Hearing on this application was held on March 3, 2021)

Commissioner Murphy MOVED THE FOLLOWING:

- THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVAL OF SE 2020-DR-012, SUBJECT TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS DATED MARCH 15, 2021; AND
- THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVAL THE WAIVERS AND MODIFICATIONS LISTED IN A HANDOUT DATED MARCH 3, 2021.

Commissioner Bennett seconded the first motions, which carried by a vote of 11-1.  
Commissioner Cortina voted in opposition.

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#### ORDER OF THE AGENDA

Secretary Sargeant established the following order of the agenda:

1. PA 2020-IV-MV1 CONC.W/ RZ 2021-MV-001 AND ZONING ORDINANCE  
AMENDMENT – PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A WELLINGTON AT RIVER FARM  
HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

This order was accepted without objection.

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PRELIMINARY MOTION TO WAIVE THE AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURES

PA 2020-IV-MV1 CONC. W/RZ 2021-MV-001 AND ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT  
– PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A WELLINGTON AT RIVER FARM HISTORIC OVERLAY  
DISTRICT

Commissioner Clarke MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION WAIVE ITS  
AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURES TO ALLOW FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE REVISED  
AFFIDAVIT AND REAFFIRMATION FORM.

Commissioner Sargeant seconded the first motion, which carried by a vote of 12-0.

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PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A WELLINGTON AT RIVER FARM  
HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT, WHICH CONSISTS OF A:

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT PA 2020-IV-MV1 –  
Concerns approx. 27.58 ac. generally located at 7931 East Boulevard  
Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308: Tax map # 102-2 ((1)) 20, in the Mount  
Vernon District. The amendment would retain the Private Recreation  
planned use and would modify the Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning  
District, section of the Comprehensive Plan to add (1) a notation for  
the Wellington/Washington River Farm Historic Overlay District  
(“HOD”) listing on the Inventory of Historic Sites; (2) reference to  
Washington’s River Farm in the Overview and the MV-4 Wellington  
Community Planning Sector, Character, (3) language to the MV-4  
Wellington Community Planning Sector, Heritage Resources,  
regarding the Wellington at River Farm HOD, including reference to  
the Architectural Review Board, protection of historic buildings, the  
landscape, viewshed, and potential archaeological features within the  
boundaries, and provides that the HOD’s zoning regulations take  
precedence over Plan text in the event of a conflict. PUBLIC  
HEARING. PUBLIC HEARING.

RZ 2021-MV-001 - THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF FAIRFAX  
COUNTY – Appl. to add a Historic Overlay District on property zoned  
R-2. Located on the East side of East Boulevard Drive, South of Kent



Road and North of Arcturas On The Potomac, on approx. 27.58 ac. of land. Comp. Plan Rec: Private Recreation. Tax Map 102-2 ((1)) 20. (Concurrent with PA 2020-IV-MV1 and a Zoning Ordinance Amendment). MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT. PUBLIC HEARING.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDEMENT –

1) Amend Appendix One, Historic Overlay Districts, by adding a new Part 14, A1-1400 Wellington at River Farm Historic Overlay District (“HOD”).

(2) Add new provisions to establish:

a. The purpose and intent of the HOD, including to protect the Wellington at River Farm Manor House, associated structures, landscape and viewshed and potential archaeological resources and to encourage uses consistent with that purpose.

b. Permitted, special permit (“SP”), and special exception (“SE”) uses, including all uses permitted by right in the underlying zoning district, and allow the Board of Supervisors to approve by special exception any special exception or special permit use permitted in the underlying zoning district, subject to the additional standards for those uses and to proposed use limitations.

c. Use limitations for the HOD, including: (i) applying Part 2 of Article 7, historic overlay districts, to all land in the HOD; (ii) requiring any use approved by the Board to use existing historic resources on the property, requiring the use and any new improvements or structures to be in harmony with the district’s purpose, and requiring the use to be compatible with the existing structures, site, and surrounding properties; (iii) requiring that off-street parking and loading spaces be outside required minimum side and rear yards that abut a residential district; (iv) allowing the Board to impose conditions to ensure compatibility of the use; and (v) requiring any improvement or addition to be designed and installed to be compatible with the design guidelines for this HOD and designed to protect the HOD’s resources and historical character.

d. Establishing a maximum building height of 35 feet and establishing lot size and all other bulk regulations to be the same as specified in the underlying district.

e. Establishing maximum density, open space, and additional regulations to be the same as specified in the underlying zoning district.

An amendment to repeal Chapter 112 of the County Code and replace it with Chapter 112.1 of the County Code (“zMOD”) is scheduled for a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors in March 2021. At its public hearing on March 17, the Planning Commission will therefore also consider the proposed language below, which is consistent with the proposed zMOD changes and is proposed to replace the language provided above in the current Zoning Ordinance format, if and when the zMOD changes take effect:

(1) Amend Section 3101 Historic Overlay Districts by adding a new Subsection 19 to establish the HOD and re-number all affected subsections.

(2) Add a new District-Specific Purpose provision to, among other things, protect the Wellington at River Farm Manor House, associated structures, landscape and viewshed and archaeological resources and to encourage uses consistent with that purpose.

(3) Create regulations to allow all uses permitted by right in the underlying zoning district and to allow the Board to approve by special exception any use permitted by special exception or by special permit in the underlying zoning district, subject to applicable standards.

(4) Establish Additional Standards to require that: (a) any use approved must use the existing historic resources on the property and demonstrate that the use, including any proposed new improvements or additions, will be in harmony with the HOD’s purpose; (b) all off-street parking and loading spaces must be located outside of required minimum side and rear yards that abut a residential district, unless modified by the Board; (c) the Board of Supervisors may impose conditions and restrictions that it deems necessary to ensure the use will be compatible with and not adversely impact any adjacent residential areas; and (d) any new improvement and addition must conform with the HOD’s design guidelines and must be designed to protect and preserve the existing historic resources, viewshed, archaeological resources, and historical character of the area.

(5) Set a maximum building height of 35 feet. MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT. PUBLIC HEARING.

Laura Arseneau, Applicant’s Agent, reaffirmed the revised affidavit dated March 16, 2021.



Laura Arseneau, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Development, presented the staff report, a copy is in the date file. She recommended adoption of PA 2020-IV-MV1.

Lily Yegazu, Zoning Administration Division, Department of Planning and Development presented the staff report, a copy is in the date file. She recommended adoption of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment to amend Appendix 1, to establish a Wellington at River Farm Historic Overlay District, and approval of RZ 2021-MV-001.

Ms. Arseneau presented the staff's draft of the Design Guidelines recommendation for the Wellington at River Farm Historic Overlay District (HOD), as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

There was a discussion between Ms. Arseneau; Ms. Yegazu; Leanna O'Donnell, Division Director, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Development; and multiple Commissioners regarding the following:

- Virginia General Assembly Senate Bill Number 1457, introduced by Scott A. Surovell, for the preservation of historic sites by localities utilizing the urban county executive form of government (Fairfax County);
- Whether Senate Bill Number 1457 expanded the County's authority in connection with any attempt to subdivide a property;
- A request that staff and the Office of the County Attorney review Senate Bill Number 1457 for any changes applicable to these proposed items;
- Correspondence received from property owners that expressed concerns that this was the only HOD limited to one property; and
- Whether this was the first time the County imposed a HOD on a privately owned property without the support of the underlying property owner.

The discussion resulted in staff's agreement, upon direction of the Board of Supervisors, and once enacted, to review the Virginia General Assembly Senate Bill Number 1457 and proceed with any applicable changes to these proposed items.

Chairman Murphy called the first listed speaker and recited rules for testimony.

Katherine Ward, 1029 Gladstone Place, Alexandria, representing the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Ward's statement is in the date file.

Leslie K. Paige, 1125 Cameron Road, Alexandria, representing Wellington Civic Association, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Paige's statement is in the date file.

Keister Evans, 218 N. Morris Street, Oxford, supported these proposed items. A copy of Mr. Evans' statement is in the date file.

Anne Wilson Fafara, 1706 Hackamore Lane, Alexandria, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Fafara's statement is in the date file.

Paul Krizek, 2201 White Oaks Drive, Alexandria, representing Office of Delegate Paul Krizek, supported these proposed items because of the following:

- The Office of Delegate Paul Krizek's and colleagues that represented the property and surrounding community received overwhelming support from the constituents who donated their time, resources, and talents to River Farm and the American Horticultural Society over the years;
- A coalition of local, state, and federal elected officials, and local preservation organizations collectively pursued a joint effort to save the proposed property;
- Numerous community meetings, led by Mount Vernon Supervisor Daniel G. Storck, were held to discuss these proposed items;
- River Farm operated for decades in the public space as an events venue for the community;
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to preserve green open spaces became more critical for the physical and mental health of its residents. River Farm also had a rich cultural history, a diverse array of gardens, wildlife, and green open space;
- Over 1,000 petition signatures were collected from the constituents to urge the American Horticultural Society to work with the Office of Delegate Paul Krizek and their coalition to ensure the preservation of the River Farm property;
- Senator Scott Surovell's office, collected 3,000 names from Fairfax County residents who also sought to preserve the farm;
- Delegate Krizek and Senator Surovell's office ensured that \$2,000,000 was included in the biennial budget for the purchase of River Farm; and
- Virginia General Assembly Senate Bill Number 1457, introduced by Scott A. Surovell, that addressed the protection of overlay districts, was passed by the General Assembly, and awaited Governor Ralph Northam's signature.

Ethel Eaton, 138 The Maine, Williamsburg, supported these proposed items because of the following:



- River Farm was renovated to a Colonial Revival building style model, by Malcolm Matheson in 1920;
- Valued County staff’s focus on the Colonial Revival period for both the house and landscape;
- EHT Tracerics, Inc. provided the draft Design Guidelines, which included all contemporary photographs of the structure. The report addressed the exterior of the property and encouraged the County to also request a report on the original structure;
- There were several historically known trees that remained on the property and its outskirts;
- The Matheson family made several changes to the property’s landscape in 1919, which included formal gardens, brick garden walls, and the aesthetic feel of an English country garden; and
- In 2004, River Farm was designated a horticultural landmark by the American Society for Horticultural Science.

Anna Smith Lacey, 414 Prince Street, Alexandria, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Lacey’s statement is in the date file.

Louise Watts, 751 Thornton Way, Alexandria, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Watt’s audio recording is in the date file.

Scott Surovell, P.O. Box 289, Mount Vernon, representing the 36th Senate District, supported these proposed items. A copy of Mr. Surovell’s YouTube video is available upon request through the Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services, Communications Productions, (Channel 16).

Douglas Cobb, 820 Crooked Crow Lane, Great Falls, supported these proposed items. An e-mail reiterating Mr. Cobb’s support is in the date file.

Laura Francis, 3217 Woodland Lane, Alexandria, representing the Hunting Creek Garden Club, supported these proposed items. A copy of Ms. Francis’ statement is in the date file.

Katherine Tobin, Ph.D., P. O. Box 7470, Alexandria, supported these proposed items because of the following:

- The preservation and enhancement of views of the land, gardens, and wildlife;
- Was a member and donor of the American Horticultural Society;



- Appreciated the support of local citizens, County staff, state, and business leaders to preserve site; and
- Requested the Planning Commission recommend approval.

Tammy Mannarino, 1059 Dalebrook Drive, Alexandria, Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society, supported these proposed items because of the following:

- Wellington at River Farm was one of the first properties identified when the inventory of historic sites in Fairfax County was created in 1969;
- The Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society applauded representatives and government officials for their swift action in preserving the history of the site, which included the enhancements made to public access;
- Wellington at River Farm provided a complete picture of the area's development from the era of native American habitation to present day;
- The groups of people who lived and worked on the property were leaders and members of the community and contributed to the development of the Mount Vernon District;
- The Snowden family, the Quakers who purchased the land from the Washington family prior to the civil war, had a strong presence in Fairfax County government;
- One of the first public schools in the independent Mount Vernon School district originated at the Wellington home between 1872 to 1878;
- Stacy Snowden was one of the first Mount Vernon District Supervisors from 1883 to 1885;
- The River Farm property continued to reflect the history of Fairfax County, as it was used for dairy farming as the transportation system developed;
- The River Farm property had access to the Mount Vernon railway station;
- Malcolm Matheson transformed the farm into a country estate in 1919, used his skills as a developer to transform the greater Washington area from farm land to suburbs, supported the construction of the George Washington Parkway, and donated land and money for the construction of local churches; and
- Requested the Planning Commission recommend approval of these items and undertake additional measures to preserve Wellington at River Farm for the future of the community.

Jon Kandel, 5903 Mount Eagle Drive, Alexandria, representing the Montebello Condominium Unit Owners Association, supported these proposed items because for following:

- Wellington at River Farm had 370 years of history, including 100 years of ownership by the George Washington family;
- In 1973 the sale of River Farm was financed by a donor who maintained its heritage;
- Recognized the efforts of the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors planning improvements for the surrounding area;
- The Embark Richmond Highway and North Gateway projects were added improvements to its residents and would provide a better work-life balance;
- The area's green open spaces should be protected; and
- The application to create a HOD was logical and applicable to community's future.

Cheryl-Ann Repetti, 5415 Goldmoore Court, Centreville, representing the Fairfax County History Commission. A copy of Ms. Repetti's statement is in the date file.

Alexandra Suess, 834 South Ivy Street, Arlington, supported these proposed items because the 27.58-acre parcel was a part of the local and national history. The historic, cultural context, and ecological beauty of the property was greater than most green and open spaces. The habitat of the property was important to both current and future wildlife, plants, and one's ability to experience the area's historic landscapes. Ms. Suess recommended that River Farm be kept intact, the HOD designation be adopted, and that the adaptive reuse of the current structures within their current height be the extent of any future development, renovation, or alternative use of the property.

Nancy Owen, 8010 Washington Avenue, Alexandria, supported these proposed items and concurred with the previous testimonies. Ms. Owen added that her only concern was the impact from infill and flooding as a result of the proposal. She stated that widespread infill affected properties and suggested there were missed opportunities to address those issues. Ms. Owen added that the safety of the George Washington Memorial Parkway should be part of the discussion.

There being no further speakers, Chairman Murphy called further discussion from the Commission and staff.

Commissioner Bennett reiterated her support for these proposed items and stated the support from property owners were compelling.

There was a discussion between Ms. Arseneau, Ms. O'Donnell, and multiple Commissioners regarding the following:



- The appropriateness of government to designate historic properties and the conditions within the purview of government where protections of those sites were not applicable;
- The suggested purchase price of the site; and
- Whether the property owners were obligated to allow public access to the site after its designation as a HOD.

There were no further comments or questions from the Commission, and staff had no further closing remarks; therefore, Chairman Murphy closed the public hearing and recognized Commissioner Clarke for actions on this amendment.

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Commissioner Clarke MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, THE ADOPTION OF THE WELLINGTON AT RIVER FARM HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT, REFERED TO AS WHOD, TO INCLUDE APPROVAL OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISH THE OVERLAY DISTRICT AND ITS APPLICABLE ZONING REGULATIONS, INCLUDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE USES, AND USE LIMITATION APPLICABLE TO THE WHOD. AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT PA 2020-IV-MV1, TO ESTABLISH THE WHOD, AND REFLECT THE HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT DESIGNATION. AND THE REZONING APPLICATION RZ 2021-MV-001, TO ADD THE WHOD TO THE PROPERTY AND DEFINE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE WHOD OF THE ZONING MAP, AS ADVERTISED, AND AS SET FORTH IN THE STAFF REPORT DATED MARCH 3, 2021, EXCEPT FOR THE PATIOS/TERRACE DESIGNATION. I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE ADOPTING OF A PROPOSAL, THE BOARD INCLUDE A DECLARATION THAT BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, AND SITES TO BE PRESERVED, ARE IN FACT OF THE HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL FOR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, REQUIRING PROTECTION AGAINST DESTRUCTION AND ENCROACHMENT.

Commissioner Ulfelder seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 12-0.

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.  
Peter F. Murphy, Chairman  
Timothy J. Sargeant, Secretary

Audio and video recordings of this meeting are available at the Planning Commission Office,  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 552, Fairfax, VA 22035.

Minutes by: Samantha Lawrence

Approved on: September 29, 2021

*Jacob Caporaletti*

Jacob L. Caporaletti, Clerk to the  
Fairfax County Planning Commission

County of Fairfax  
Commonwealth of Virginia

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 12 day of October 20 21, by  
Jacob Caporaletti.

*Dorothy M. Steele*  
Signature of Notary

Notary registration number: 711413

Commission expiration: January 31, 2024

