

**County of Fairfax, Virginia
Planning Commission Meeting
October 6, 2021
Verbatim Excerpt**

PA 2020-00029 (PA 2020-II-M1) - 7700 LEESBURG PIKE – concerns approx. 6.73 ac. generally located on the north side of Leesburg Pike, across from George C. Marshall High School at 7700 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22043 (“Tax Map # 39-2 ((1)) 57”) in the Dranesville Supervisor District. The area is planned for Office Use. The amendment will consider adding an option for residential use at a density of 12-16 dwellings per acre (du/ac) for single family attached dwellings with the provision of high-quality open space as a priority. (Dranesville District)

During Commission Matters

(Decision Only) (Public Hearing on this application was held on September 29, 2021)

Commissioner Ulfelder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We held a public hearing last week on this matter and on this proposed plan amendment. The property at 7700 Leesburg Pike on the edge of Pimmit Hills is currently planned for office, is currently an office building constructed there and it’s zoned C-2 Commercial. The Board approved a consideration of a possible plan amendment for an alternative for this site for use for residential development at up to 12 to 16 units per acre. Staff has submitted their report and their recommendation on this. At the hearing last week, there was one issue that came up that was discussed extensively and that was the language in the proposed – the condition and the language in the proposed new Comprehensive Plan language that dealt with stormwater. And the concern was triggered in part by the staff report which made it clear that there are stormwater drainage and flooding issues throughout Pimmit Hills. Some of them in the subwatershed that this particular property feeds into. And – and in fact there have been water problems in Pimmit Hills since it was first started to be constructed back in the 1950s. And people had muddy yards and so on. And today people with some of the extraordinary rain events we’ve had and real problems with their basements and with their yards. And the feeling was that maybe the language that was being originally – initially proposed didn’t go far enough in spelling out how we should proceed in order to try to reduce runoff. It did say that the applicants for a residential development, should consider – or should have to go beyond the current minimum requirements, but there was a feeling that wasn’t enough guidance to get us to where we really needed to go at in – in on this property and in this watershed. The applicant – I mean not – not the applicant but county staff – it is also a parallel rezoning application it’s been going through the process as well for this site to actually change the zoning in order to redevelop it for residential. So, the – the potential residential developer and staff and Commissioner Cortina and I met, and we discussed the issue and what has come up at the hearing and the questions and concerns and the basis for it. As a result, staff went back, they considered the comments and questions and were what – aware of what the applicant for the residential rezoning is planning to do. And they came back with some new language for that provision in the proposed Comprehensive Plan. That was sent around late this afternoon to the Commissioners with – with part of the motion that I’m gonna make this evening in connection with this plan amendment. So that at least you would have a chance to see what the original language was and what the new substituted language concerning stormwater would be. So, I think – I think we’re at a place where we need to be in terms of strengthening that language and beefing it up so that as the rezoning proceeds, we have some clear guidance based on the particular issues and problems that this site and this subwatershed presents. So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THE

ADOPTION OF A PLANNING COMMISSION ALTERNATIVE FOR PLAN AMENDMENT 2020-II-M1, AS SHOWN ON MY HANDOUT DATED OCTOBER 6, 2021.

Commissioners Cortina and Niedzielski-Eichner: Second.

Chairman Murphy: Seconded by Commissioner Niedzielski-Eichner.

Commissioner Ulfelder: And Cortina.

Chairman Murphy: And Commissioner Cortina.

Commissioner Cortina: Thank you.

Chairman Murphy: Is there a discussion of the motion? All those in favor of the motion to adopt PA 2020-PA-2020-2-M1 [sic], say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Murphy: Opposed? Motion carries.

Commissioner Sargeant: Mr. Chairman, abstain. Not present for the public hearing.

Chairman Murphy: Commissioner Sargeant abstains. Not present for the public hearing.

The motion carried by a vote of 10-0-1. Commissioner Sargeant abstained from the vote. Commissioner Bennett was not present for the vote.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ALTERNATIVE

PROPOSED PLAN LANGUAGE

OCTOBER 6, 2021

Plan Amendment 2020-II-M1

Text to be added is underlined and recommended modifications to conditions provided in the staff report are shown as *underlined and in bold italics* .

ADD: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area II, McLean Planning District, as amended through 2-23-2021, M2-Pimmit Community Planning Sector, Recommendations, Land Use, Page 94:

“3. Tax Map Parcel 39-2 ((1)) 57 is planned and developed with office use. As an option, residential use up to a density of 12-16 du/ac with single-family attached or stacked townhouses may be appropriate if the following conditions are met:

- Building heights do not exceed four stories, including any optional features such as lofts or accessways to rooftop level decks or terrace;
- A system of high-quality, well-designed, and attractive open space and site amenities is provided to adequately serve needs for recreation, tree preservation and buffering for adjacent homes in a well-designed network of green spaces distributed throughout the site;
- Active open space area(s) is provided as an integral and publicly accessible feature of the site. This space should be usable, well-designed, and attractive while allowing for a variety of amenities such as flexible community gathering space, natural and landscaped gardens, adequate space for outdoor seating, and active recreation facilities that are appropriate to a residential neighborhood context. These areas should be accessible by an internal pedestrian “loop” or similar network of well-connected trails and walkways that are also linked to external paths providing safe and convenient access to residences from the adjacent community;
- Visual impacts to the adjacent residential neighborhood are minimized through site and building design, effective landscaped screening buffers and appropriate barriers;
- Existing healthy and mature trees are preserved in areas adjoining property boundaries to the greatest extent possible and land disturbing activities managed to minimize the risk for damaging trees in buffer areas and adjacent open areas, in consultation with the Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division. Buffer areas should be supplemented with appropriate evergreen deciduous, and understory vegetation, to provide year-round visual screening to adjacent

residences as well as to improve the general effectiveness of existing vegetation;

- ~~Stormwater management controls for the new development above the minimum standards are provided to the extent possible.~~
- ***Provide stormwater management controls above the minimum standards to the greatest extent possible to reduce runoff to good forested conditions; provide for an adequate outfall as informed by the Middle Potomac Watershed Plan; and to help mitigate downstream flooding.***
- The existing office building has potential to be a significant resource due to its award-winning design. Prior to demolition, documentation should be provided for the building. The specific type of documentation should be coordinated with county heritage resources staff;
- The widening of Leesburg Pike, from four to six lanes to accommodate Bus Rapid Transit and a potential station, needs to also accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Pedestrian and bicycle connections should be safely accommodated to enhance connectivity from the site to adjacent properties. Supportive active transportation facilities, should also be considered;
- Public transit facilities, such as bus stops, are accessible from the site via paved walkways that should be lighted for safety and security;
- Access to Leesburg Pike is consolidated to the extent possible due to the planned Bus Rapid Transit System; careful consideration should be given to access that enhances site circulation and multimodal mobility.

MODIFY FIGURE:

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area II, McLean Planning District, as amended through 2-23-2021, M2-Pimmit Community Planning Sector, Figure 17, “Land Use Recommendations, General Locator Map,” page 95, to add the new recommendation (#3) to the figure for Tax Map Parcel 39-2 ((1)) 57.

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.