



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of July 8, 2006

DATE: June 21, 2006

SUBJECTS: A. Adoption of the Fort Myer Heights North Plan.

B. GP-300-04-2 Adoption of General Land Use Plan amendments to add an Open Space symbol (triangle) to the following locations in order to encourage public open space (see Attachment):

- Northeast corner of the block bordered by 16th Street North, North Queen Street, 14th Street North, and North Quinn Street.
- Southwest corner of the block bordered by Clarendon Boulevard, North Quinn Street, North Rhodes Street, and 16th Street North (south of the existing public park).
- Northeast corner of the block bordered by 14th Street North, North Rhodes Street, Fairfax Drive, and North Rolfe Street.

C. Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Sections 13 and 15 of the Zoning Ordinance which amends, reenacts and recodifies regulations for development permitted under Special Exception Site Plan to include new provisions specific to properties located in the "Fort Myer Heights North Special District" (see Ordinance).

C.M. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Defer adoption of the Fort Myer Heights North Plan until the October 14, 2006, County Board meeting.

B. Defer adoption of General Land Use Plan amendments to add open space symbols to three locations until the October 14, 2006, County Board meeting.

C. Defer adoption of Zoning Ordinance amendments to Sections 13 and 15 related to development permitted by Special Exception Site Plan until the October 14, 2006, County Board meeting.

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Molly Just, CPHD, Planning Division

PLA-4392

ISSUES: A separate collaborative public process on affordable housing was completed in late 2005 year which refines the way increases in density are allocated in all site plan districts countywide. Staff has been reviewing the resulting recommendations from that process to determine whether or not additional changes to the proposed Fort Myer Heights North Plan are needed as it relates to the recommended tools and incentives to implement the Plan.

SUMMARY: Recommendations resulting from the public process on affordable housing to refine the way increases in density are allocated, could lead to changes to the implementation tools outlined in the proposed Fort Myer Heights North Plan. Staff requires additional time to determine what changes to the Plan are needed. Therefore, it is recommended that the County Board defer consideration of the Plan, GLUP amendments and Zoning Ordinance amendments to the October 14, 2006 County Board meeting. If additional changes to the Plan, GLUP amendments, and Zoning Ordinance amendments are needed, they would be brought forward for a Request to Advertise at the September 16, 2006 County Board meeting for public hearings in October.

BACKGROUND: During 2003 and 2004, a planning process was conducted to develop a plan for the Fort Myer Heights North neighborhood. The first phase of this planning process, approved by the County Board at its April 16, 2005 meeting, included: 1) adding a note to the General Land Use Plan that designated the boundaries of the Fort Myer Heights North Special District; 2) adding a paragraph under Special Planning Areas on the GLUP generally describing the vision for the neighborhood; and 3) an amending to the Zoning Ordinance to remove townhouses as a by-right use, but to continue permitting them through the site plan process. The second phase which is the subject of this report, includes: 1) adoption of the Fort Myer Heights North Plan; 2) GLUP amendments to depict the desired location for public open space in the neighborhood; and 3) Zoning Ordinance amendments to allow for an increase in density in the Fort Myer Heights North Special District in exchange for specified community benefits.

DISCUSSION: In order to realize the vision for the Fort Myer Heights North neighborhood, the Fort Myer Heights North Plan includes incentives to redevelop using the County's Special Exception Site Plan option for redevelopment. Given that the recommendations for allocating additional density and its relationship to the provision of affordable housing will impact site plan development, staff needs to examine how such recommendations and any resulting changes to the General Land Use Plan and/or Zoning Ordinance would impact the recommendations in the Fort Myer Heights North Plan.

CONCLUSION: Staff needs additional time to determine the appropriate implementation tools for the Fort Myer Heights North Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the adoption of the Plan, additional GLUP amendments and Zoning Ordinance amendments related to implementation tools be deferred until the October 14, 2006 County Board meeting.

ZONING ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE TO AMEND, REENACT, AND RECODIFY ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 13. “RA8-18” APARTMENT DWELLING DISTRICTS AND SECTION 15. “RA6-15” APARTMENT DWELLING DISTRICTS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ADD NEW ITEMS TO THE LIST OF SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE “FORT MYER HEIGHTS NORTH SPECIAL DISTRICT,” WHICH INCLUDES MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT REMINISCENT OF THE FIRST MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IN ARLINGTON COUNTY AND WHICH PROVIDES A SIGNIFICANT SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING; TO FACILITATE THE CREATION OF CONVENIENT, ATTRACTIVE AND HARMONIOUS COMMUNITY WITHIN THE “FORT MYER HEIGHTS NORTH SPECIAL DISTRICT.”

BE IT ORDAINED THAT, Sections 13 and 15 of the Zoning Ordinance are amended, reenacted, and recodified as follows in order to in order to preserve the character of the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District,” which includes multi-family residential development reminiscent of the first multi-family housing in Arlington County and which provides a significant supply of affordable housing; to facilitate the creation of convenient, attractive and harmonious community within the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District;” and for other reasons required by the public necessity, convenience and general welfare and good zoning practice.

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Section 13. “RA8-18” Apartment Dwelling Districts

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B. Special Exceptions

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3. When a site with an area of more than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, or with ten (10) or more existing dwelling units, is sought to be used in a manner inconsistent with existing regulations for height, setback, yard, coverage, or parking, or is sought to be developed using additional residential density, the county board may allow exceptions, after application for a site plan approval consistent with subsection 36.H. of this ordinance, in order to achieve a design which is appropriate for the site, project, and the surrounding area. Except in the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District,” (which is governed by subsection B.4 below) the county board may approve additional height and density based on the provision of low or moderate income housing as provided in Subsection 36.H.5.b. The county board, in its discretion, may modify regulations on height, setback, yard, coverage, or parking requirements and may approve up to a twenty-

five percent (25%) increase above thirty-six (36) units per acre in residential density for a project that provides low or moderate-income housing as provided in subsection 36.H.5, provided that:

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4. When a site within the area designated as the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” on the General Land Use Plan is sought to be used in a manner consistent with the *Fort Myer Heights North Plan*, and as generally described herein, then by Special Exception Site Plan approval pursuant to Section 36.H, development may be permitted at up to 72 units per acre. As a development proposal increases in density above what is otherwise allowed by-right, and approaches 72 units per acre, the proposal will be expected to make greater progress toward those goals, including by way of illustration and not limitation affordable housing, historic preservation and the provision of open space. The purpose of the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” is to: 1) promote the compatibility of new and existing development by coordinating building placement, orientation, scale, bulk, streetscape and pedestrian facilities; 2) provide for creative opportunities to encourage and retain affordable housing; and 3) promote opportunities for the preservation of historically significant buildings.
- a. When an on- or off-site building that is on the preferred buildings list is preserved and units inside the building are committed as affordable, that number of units shall not count toward the permitted density. In such case the County Board may approve additional density, above 72 units per acre when the height and site design recommendations of the plan are met.
- b. Building height shall generally be consistent with the building heights plan for the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” and shall in no event exceed 10 stories or 100 feet, exclusive of penthouse. Penthouses shall be minimized in terms of height, bulk and visual appearance.
- c. Externally oriented convenience retail and service uses such as a doctor’s office, neighborhood delicatessen, dry cleaner, neighborhood-scale library branch or small café may be approved, where the County Board finds they will not adversely affect the neighborhood and will otherwise be appropriate at primary intersections and/or locations that experience significant pedestrian traffic.

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Section 15. “RA6-15” Apartment Dwelling Districts

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B. Special Exceptions

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3. When a site with an area of more than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, or with ten (10) or more existing dwelling units, is sought to be used in a manner inconsistent with existing regulations for height, setback, yard, coverage, or parking, or is sought to be developed using additional residential density, the county board may allow exceptions, after application for a site plan approval consistent with subsection 36.H. of this ordinance, in order to achieve a design which is appropriate for the site, project, and the surrounding area. Except in the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District,” (which is governed by subsection B.5 below) the county board may approve additional height and density based on provision of low or moderate income housing as provided in Subsection 36.H.5.b. The county board, in its discretion, may modify regulations on height, setback, yard, coverage, or parking requirements and may approve up to a twenty-five (25) percent increase above forty-eight (48) units per acre in residential density for a project that provides low or moderate-income housing as provided in Subsection 36.H.5.b., provided that:

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5. When a site within the area designated as the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” on the General Land Use Plan is sought to be used in a manner consistent with the *Fort Myer Heights North Plan*, and as generally described herein, then by Special Exception Site Plan approval pursuant to Section 36.H, development may be permitted at up to 72 units per acre. As a development proposal increases in density above what is otherwise allowed by-right, and approaches 72 units per acre, the proposal will be expected to make greater progress toward those goals, including by way of illustration and not limitation affordable housing, historic preservation and the provision of open space. The purpose of the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” is to: 1) promote the compatibility of new and existing development by coordinating building placement, orientation, scale, bulk, streetscape and pedestrian facilities; 2) provide for creative opportunities to encourage and retain affordable housing; and 3) promote opportunities for the preservation of historically significant buildings.

- a. When an on- or off-site building that is on the preferred buildings list is preserved and units inside the building are committed as affordable, that number of units shall not count toward the permitted density. In such case the County Board may approve additional density, above 72 units per acre when the height and site design recommendations of the plan are met.
- b. Building height shall generally be consistent with the building heights plan for the “Fort Myer Heights North Special District” and shall in no event exceed 10 stories or 100 feet, exclusive of penthouse. Penthouses shall be minimized in terms of height, bulk and visual appearance.
- c. Externally oriented convenience retail and service uses such as a doctor’s office, neighborhood delicatessen, dry cleaner, neighborhood-scale library branch or small café may be approved, where the County Board finds they will not adversely affect the neighborhood and will otherwise be appropriate at primary intersections and/or locations that experience significant pedestrian traffic.