

TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

MARCH 1, 2010

The Planning Commission met on Monday, March 1, 2010, in the Mary Ingram Council Chambers located at 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. Chairman Carl I. Sivertsen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Sivertsen asked the Recording Secretary to call the roll.

Ms. Tappan called the roll, as follows:

Commissioner Bettard:	Present
Vice Chairman Burk:	Present
Commissioner Burke	Present
Commissioner East:	Present
Commissioner LeReche:	Present
Commissioner Moses:	Present
Chairman Sivertsen:	Present

Ms. Tappan turned the meeting over to Chairman Sivertsen, who noted that a quorum was present.

Staff Present:

Elizabeth M. Gilleran, Director of Community Development
 Dana E. Heiberg, Senior Planner
 Richard B. Kaufman, Town Attorney
 Patsy Tappan, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Sivertsen presented the public hearing minutes of February 1, 2010, and the work session minutes of February 22, 2010, for review and approval.

MOTION: Commissioner East moved to approve the public hearing minutes of February 1, 2010, as presented.

Commissioner LeReche seconded the motion.

Chairman Sivertsen called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried, 6-0-1 (Commissioner Burke abstained.)

MOTION: Commissioner East moved to approve the work session minutes of February 22, 2010, as presented.

Vice Chairman Burk seconded the motion.

Chairman Sivertsen called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Vice Chairman Burk suggested that the agenda move forward with no changes.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Chairman Sivertsen commented that over the weekend, he and some of the other Commissioners, had attended a presentation regarding the Monroe-Herndon Park and

Ride. Before an audience of 50 to 75 residents, Fairfax County staff members and Herndon staff members briefly outlined the benefits and challenges of the Metrorail project. He noted that Fairfax raised similar challenges to those that Herndon had been discussing, such as zoning adjacent to residential properties, but he felt that Herndon had a better set of circumstances, since the land in Herndon was currently being used as industrial park or office park.

Vice Chairman Burk stated, “But they don’t have a pedestrian bridge to nowhere like we do.”

Chairman Sivertsen responded that the bridge will go somewhere, but they just did not know how far it would go, since it was still a work in progress. He added that later that week or the next week, he planned to meet with Fairfax County Commissioner Donahue and the Commissioner from the Hunter Mill District, so the Commissioners from the three districts could discuss issues at the Planning Commission level.

STAFF COMMENTS:

There were no staff comments.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS:

There were no citizens’ comments.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT, CPA #10-01, DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN. Amend the Town of Herndon 2030 Comprehensive Plan adopted August 12, 2008, to incorporate by reference a Downtown Master Plan. The plan amendment will also make minor changes to the appropriate plan text (mainly Chapter III: Land Use Plan) in order to reference a master plan. The Downtown Master Plan includes a map of specific planned land use and related information. The general purpose of the plan amendment is to carry out the vision, goals and objectives of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to encourage a vital downtown with a mix of land uses. The master plan depicts residential, commercial and public uses and parking facilities to support these uses; the plan displays the approximate height and level of density on each block of a core downtown area. The area is similar or equal to areas displayed as Sectors 1, 2 and 3 in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. 16 block areas are affected; they are located in the center of the Town of Herndon in the general area of Elden Street, Center Street, Vine Street, Lynn Street, Station Street, Spring Street, Pine Street, Monroe Street, Jefferson Street, Jackson Street, Van Buren Street and the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park. Downtown Master Plan maps and related information are posted on the Town of Herndon website at www.herndon-va.gov (click on Planning and Zoning and follow links). A descriptive summary of the proposed action is to update plan text and maps to reflect changed conditions and to incorporate land use policy based on the results of a major community planning process.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Dana Heiberg, Senior Planner, presented the staff report dated February 22, 2010, and the PowerPoint presentation dated March 1, 2010, both of which are on file in the Department of Community Development.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF:

Commissioner Bettard asked if staff’s recommendation was supporting Option A with the substitution of small-lot single-family homes. She asked for the reason staff did not support a mix of residential types in this area.

Mr. Heiberg responded that staff had looked at several options during the process, including townhouses, but the Steering Committee felt strongly that there should be

single-family treatment along the section, particularly small lot single-family houses, smaller than R-10 lots, perhaps 5,000 or 6,000 square feet. Staff tried to explore the options that the Steering Committee wanted to explore, and he stated that the plan could still work (and make sense) with this configuration.

Elizabeth Gilleran, Director of Community Development, added that staff may also want to point out that the blocks that incorporated that option (the Pines Shopping Center) continued to incorporate other housing types, because of the fact that there were multi-family residential units along the parking garages and to the side of the parking garages.

Mr. Heiberg concurred, stating that there were multi-family units and townhouse units, so there was truly a mixed-use with the retail and office components.

Vice Chairman Burk noted that the housing units appeared to be very small, and he asked if the consultant had planned for these “smallish” houses.

Mr. Heiberg responded that he did not recall whether they discussed specific square footage for the proposed housing units. He deferred to Commissioner LeReche for more insight from the Committee.

Commissioner LeReche, who served as the Chairman of the Steering Committee, responded that there were comparisons made to existing developments in the Town, and they found that there needed to be limitations on the square footages, given the sizes of the lots, so that the units did not overshadow what they were trying to accomplish as far as the design. They realized that the developers would have to take that into account, consider the different housing styles, because this project could not happen unless it was economically feasible. He commented that the small houses on small lots were acting as a buffer between the existing residential units, which were in a small-scale residential community, and blending into apartments, townhouses, and parking structures, which would be necessary to support this development.

Vice Chairman Burk commented that they wanted to make sure the proposal was economically feasible, because the tendency for single-family houses, at least those built in the past 10 to 20 years, was to be rather large. They want to make sure that they were not proposing a project that no developer would ever consider building.

Commissioner LeReche commented that in the two schemes along Elden Street, A & B: A was shown as two-story and B was shown as three-story. He noted that the second option was actually Scheme A, the residential option and Scheme B was the option with more commercial units.

Mr. Heiberg responded, “That’s correct, you see it in the spreadsheet with the specific figures and the unit numbers. This [indicating Scheme B] would be an office-type use above retail and then this [indicating Scheme A] would be residential. That is correct.”

CONSULTANT COMMENTS:

Chris Gay, AICP of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. of Vienna, Virginia, introduced the Traffic Impact Study Memorandum dated December 9, 2009, which is on file in the Department of Community Development.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CONSULTANT:

Vice Chairman Burk asked for the best way, as far as signal timing, to handle the situation that arose from having the W&OD Trail signal so close to the Center Street signal.

Mr. Gay responded that he was not a signal timing expert, but the signals could be programmed so that when a bicyclist pressed the button, it would not immediately trigger the light to change, particularly when the signal had just changed. He explained that

there was an algorithm that would space the signal changes for a certain number of seconds, so that it would not repeatedly change every time a cyclist pressed the button to cross the street.

Chairman Sivertsen asked if the study revealed that much of the traffic on Elden Street was “cut through” traffic, and if so, could they improve the situation by doing a more aggressive job to encourage motorists to use Herndon Parkway to avoid and/or prevent the congestion on Elden Street.

Mr. Gay surmised that a lot of the traffic on Elden Street was probably “through traffic.” He guessed that the traffic that had been diverted to Herndon Parkway was probably one of the main reasons they had not seen a steady increase in the traffic on Elden Street. He added that one of the benefits of having mixed-use options for the future was that it would offer “internal capture of the non-work trips”, such as shopping or people going out to eat. They did not see those types of trips in the 2003 scenarios, which were more commercially oriented trips.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Justin Britt of 106 Fortnightly Square, stated “I think you guys have done a great job. I’ve seen both of the options and I really just wanted to echo Vice Chairman Burk’s sentiments about creating something that is economically viable. I think we can talk until we’re blue in the face about two stories versus three stories; single-family versus townhomes, but in the end if a developer is not willing to step up to the plate because it’s not worth his time, then we’ve done all this planning and talking for nothing.”

Charlotte Pappageorge of 131 Fortnightly Square stated, “My concern is...there was talk about the traffic not increasing, and it seems to me that maybe that’s because it’s saturated, not because we have such a great area and the road is O.K. It’s saturated, and if we’re planning to increase the number of residences in this area and not change the traffic, my concern is that I will no longer be able to get home very quickly. An advantage to me, in living in Herndon, is that I work near Dulles Airport and I have very little, in terms of commuting, to deal with. I don’t know if that traffic pattern takes that into account, or if it takes into account people who are trying to parallel park. Anybody who’s driven in Downtown D.C. knows that, while you may have nice open road, if somebody is parallel parking, everybody can be backed up behind them.”

Chairman Sivertsen commented, “In my experience growing up in New York and New Jersey, folks down here are really poor at parallel parking.”

Richard Downer of 216 Herndon Station Square stated, “I know it’s unusual for a Town Council member to come up and testify, but I won’t be on the Town Council as of June 30th, and what we are talking about today is going to live way beyond that time. The Town knows everything about me, including my social security number, so I don’t know if this is necessary [to sign in]. I share your concern with Elden Street [Chairman Sivertsen]. The pictures look beautiful and you see things happening along the sidewalk on either side. When you visualize that, with the volume of traffic that goes up and down Elden Street, particularly in the a.m., at lunch and evening times, it just concerns me if it will work. We’ve talked for a long time about encouraging the use of Herndon Parkway for through traffic, but unfortunately, we’ve got this big round circle and the quickest way to get across the circle is to go straight through it, instead of around it. That will be the trick. I also share the concern that was mentioned in your [Chairman Sivertsen’s] remarks the other week about traffic calming and crosswalks. We’ve got about as many different versions of crosswalks as you can imagine, in the Town of Herndon, if you look around at what’s been done...different textures, different styles. In Fortnightly Square, we’ve got three different bands along the edge of the brick, which I haven’t understood. We did do an experiment out near the Giant Food Store, with a new type of sidewalk texturing that is flush, but I did not notice how that weathered the storm. We do need to think about traffic calming through Elden Street; even a big sign as you come in that says **If You Go This Way It Will Be Slower Than If You Go That Way**. Another concern is the one large parking garage. I haven’t taken time to study this closely, but my concern is that when you have just one big garage...is that going to serve Pine Street? I

don't think people are going to walk that far. Do we need to break up some of the parking? Maybe we do. Regarding the community arts center: there have been a couple of vociferous critics about the arts center in the Downtown and I think they're absolutely wrong. I think we need a community arts center. When you look at every successful downtown that Linda and I have been to...where we want to go back someday and spend some time; there is an arts component to that downtown. If it is run as a community arts center like we're seeing in miniature at ArtSpace in Herndon. I'm on the Board there and it still amazes me to go by and see how much activity is being created around that building. If the center was in a more urban setting with restaurants real close by, you'd see a lot of interaction there. The concern I've had with small towns for years is when you get above one story, and particularly when you get above two stories, the buildings need some kind of elevator to be practical and to get people to live up there. When looking at the sizes of some of these buildings, you realize that an elevator can be a very expensive option for those buildings. I've often wondered if there was a way to serve multiple buildings, through a common elevator towards the back of the buildings...where you are coming off parking. I saw this in Carrollton, Georgia, where they built the parking garage adjacent to their downtown square. The garage levels actually serve the upper levels of the older buildings. They actually tie them into the buildings. That immediately made the buildings, at least from an access standpoint, ADA compliant. I don't know if there's a way to look at that or think about that in the development process, where you could spread that cost of getting to the second or third floors. I know Dana said it was a three-story option, but there were a couple of buildings that were four stories. It's uncertain whether a building of that size can sustain an elevator, just for that one building. Just a couple of thoughts in the process...and I'll get a crack at this before I leave the Council. The parking garage in Georgia ended up being driven by the arts center. They have a 20,000 square-foot arts center that is literally one block off their traditional southern town square and that center is run as a community arts center. It created so much activity that it made the difference in the town adding a parking garage. It's a beautiful garage."

(Submitted via e-mail)

From: Jason Trust [mailto:jtrust@ctpartners.com]
 Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2010 3:53 PM
 To: Clerk, town
 Subject: RE: Mayor, Fortnightly HOA, RSVP

Regarding the upcoming Planning Commission Public hearing on CPA #10-01 I would like to provide a letter of support for both options.

I will be unable to attend that night but wanted my letter to be placed in the record in support of the options presented.

Thanks,
 Jason Trust

Jason Trust
 124 Fortnightly Blvd
 Herndon, VA 20170

February 24, 2010

Dear Herndon Planning Commission Members:

I am writing to express my full support for both proposals (Option A, B) presented in the CPA 10-01 Downtown Master Plan for your review tonight. As a resident and daily user of the downtown area and its amenities I am encouraged with the steps the Town of Herndon is taking to provide development guidelines through a relatively open and thoughtful process with its residents, business owners, and elected / appointed officials. The Town of Herndon has taken significant steps to provide a means for citizen input and address concerns for residents.

I understand that some in our community have voiced concern over the density of one or both plans as they were presented. I think the Town of Herndon should be cognizant of these concerns and try to apply reason for areas that meet up directly with homeowner's properties.

Overall I found the density to be of significant nature such that foot traffic and residents in close proximity could provide sufficient support to local businesses. The current state of the downtown lacks sufficient residents and density and is what is making local business struggle. Attracting the right sort of businesses and clientele has to be addressed through appropriate zoning changes and development options.

I would like to make a suggestion which I am not sure is addressed in the Downtown Master Plan options. That would be to encourage or write into the plans requirements for # of bedrooms or size of the spaces provided. To encourage the upper middle class residents to live in our downtown (who I might add would have the resources to support our downtown) we should encourage the building of residential high density spaces that appeal to those folks (lofts, large condos, large apartments, etc.).

I urge you to move forward on the decision to approve either option. If I were to make a choice on either option, I would pick Option A. It keeps the Town facilities close together (future Art or Theatre space) as well as more appropriate space along Center St. near Vine St. (senior living space option). Regardless, either option is acceptable and we should move the planning process along and into developers' hands to start crafting some doable projects.

I am looking forward to your decision.

Sincerely,
Jason E. Trust

Chairman Sivertsen closed the public hearing.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION:

Chairman Sivertsen advised the Commission that copies of an article entitled "It takes more than stores to build a winning town" from the Washington Post dated February 28, 2010, had been distributed at each station and left out for the public.

Commissioner LeReche commented, "I served as the Chairperson for the Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee and I appreciated the opportunities and challenges. The eleven man Steering Committee was made up of a cross-section of the Town, and as such, we heard from all aspects...all sides. Through that experience, I have a deeper respect for what the Town Council does on a repeat basis to get consensus and to be able to pull it together. We had members of this Commission...Kevin East and myself, but I also wanted to recognize Robert Walker, board member from the Heritage Preservation Review Board, who also served as a member of the Steering Committee. I appreciate your involvement. Do you have anything to add?"

Robert Walker responded that he did not have any comments at that time.

Commissioner LeReche continued, "One of the purposes of the presentation was to present the Traffic Analysis that was requested by our Steering Committee. I thank you for getting that done."

Chairman Sivertsen thanked Commissioner LeReche and Commissioner East for their service on the Steering Committee. He noted that Commissioner East also served on the APR Task Force during the same period of time as the Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee.

MOTION: Vice Chairman Burk moved to continue the public hearing and defer COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT, CPA #10-01, DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN until the public hearing of April 5, 2010.

Commissioner Bettard seconded the motion.

Commissioner LeReche stated, “I think the Town is always reaching out to get more input from the Town citizens, so we are taking, I guess, a 30 day sabbatical to get this done. I would appreciate anyone in the Town who has anything to say about the plans as presented, or as found on the website, to please bring it to us or to the Town Council. Thank you.”

Commissioner Moses stated, “I think that each one of us has been approached by citizens of the Town about this, generally outside of this forum. Unfortunately, if you don’t come down and speak here, we don’t get it on the public record. We really encourage whoever is out there listening to come down and speak here, so that we can get it on the record. We don’t necessarily remember everything we are told, so we would appreciate everyone to come in.”

Chairman Sivertsen stated, “I think the public participation is critical. There is a lot going on here – more than just a little Pac-man thing going around. We are evaluating the traffic, and thinking about the future. I guess there is a certain bit of “I don’t want to do this again.” Not too long ago, we moved forward with a Master Plan or Comprehensive Plan for the Downtown, and one application came in and now we’re changing it. So I would like to make sure that we don’t get another application that may be controversial and we change it again. I’d rather have it last well beyond election cycles, life cycles, or whatever, so that people (both developers and residents) can say “this is what my expectations are for this community and it’s binding for a pretty good period of time.” I thought we did a great job on the Comprehensive Plan that this went with and I think this is a nice plan as well, but we need to make sure that we...well, that we don’t have to do it again. That is one man’s opinion and I think there are a few other people on the Commission who subtly agree with that. Hopefully, we’ll come out with a real good project and hopefully, we’ll get more citizen and property owner participation here in the public forum, or in writing. They can contact the Town, via the website, and once we pass it forward, it goes to the Town Council and it would nice for them to have a complete record of people’s opinions and thoughts before it goes to that body.”

Chairman Sivertsen called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

2. TOWN OF HERNDON FY2011 – FY2016 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. Descriptive Summary of Proposed Action: The Planning Commission will review and make recommendations to the town’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP is a financial planning document that establishes a six-year schedule for public improvements and serves as a companion policy document to the Town of Herndon 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Herndon Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2016 draft will be under consideration at the March 1, 2010, public hearing. *Deferred from the February 1, 2010, public hearing.*

STAFF COMMENTS:

Dana Heiberg, Senior Planner, presented the staff memorandum dated February 19, 2010, which is on file in the Department of Community Development.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF:

Commissioner East asked, without the Tiger Grant, what would be the fate of Downtown Utility Relocation.

Mr. Heiberg responded that with \$2.2 million in grant funding, the Town had a nice amount of funding to pull in several blocks and create a coherent project together.

He stated that with only \$800,000, it would be a real challenge to craft a project and a block area that could be done effectively.

Ms. Gilleran added that they had started to utilize the \$800,000 for a plan and to get some conduit underground. To really start to see the removal of the number of wires that would really be considered an improvement of the visual impact, they would need additional dollars. She stated that staff would keep their eyes open for additional grants, and although things are tight with the economy, they are finding some additional grants in part because of the Federal Stimulus. She added that the Department of Public Works has been working with a consultant to create a plan. The consultant has been asked to look at ways to reroute the wires, which would, in itself, reduce the number of wires above ground. There would be some change, but it would not be the complete removal of the wires that they had hoped for.

Commissioner East noted that they were previously planning for 2011, but asked if there would be no action taken until some unknown date in the future.

Ms. Gilleran responded, "Correct."

Mr. Heiberg responded, "The \$800,000 is approved, but the additional funding is unknown. The placement of significant conduits underground, really sets the stage, so if we did get additional funds you have a solution in place for certain geography. That's a big help."

Vice Chairman Burk asked, regarding the Sport Field and Park Improvements, if there was only \$50,000 out of Town of Herndon general funds that would be expended.

Mr. Heiberg responded, "We're projecting zero for FY2011, but if you are making reference to FY2012, then \$50,000 from general funds and \$350,000 grant funding or intergovernmental aid, \$100,000 from sports contributions and \$100,000 from recreational cash proffers. That is the package that we believe can be put together."

Vice Chairman stated that it was an amazing leverage of funds.

Chairman Sivertsen asked, "Regarding the infamous W&OD trail crossing and the CMAQ grant, is that grant specifically for that location, or could that grant money, if applied for and secured, be used for other traffic mitigation issues for air quality?"

Mr. Heiberg responded, "It should be used for the general purpose that it was created for, and what we described when we went to the region and got approval. We have, in the past, and other jurisdictions have done this, and we may even have done this in past years, where, if there's a good, qualified project and there is an allotment from the region to the Town of Herndon, and the Town communicated with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority its desires to reprogram to another project, typically, the other jurisdictions will consent to that in a cooperative way. Usually, every year, there are one or two jurisdictions that are doing that type of thing, so I think it's a reasonable possibility."

Chairman Sivertsen stated, "I guess the reason that I ask is because \$563,000 is the number of dollars in the document before us, and maybe in my book that's a lot of money, but it seems like a lot of money for some bikes to go across the road. Stop signs are cheap, and rumble strips to slow people down. Sometimes I look for the simple solution versus the gold-plated solution. It's a lot of work to put a bridge over top of Crestview, so the folks can speed through Town on their bicycles. I just have a problem with that, but I can support the CIP. If we can put that money to a better use for more effective air quality controls, that would be fantastic. Talking about the roundabout at Dranesville Road and Park Avenue; that would be by the Elementary School, in that unique intersection where Dranesville Road makes that hard left turn. In the transmittal memo with my comments last time, I talked about raised crosswalks and sidewalks, and other, inexpensive traffic calming devices. The suggestion was that Public Works did not like it and we should contact the Town Manager directly, because these are small priced items. To get cars onto the Parkway, we need to make the Parkway more desirable than

the other roads. Are we looking at the blue-ribbon traffic enhancement devices versus the basic ones, which I think, can work. I think Van Buren Street and Grant Street, Park Avenue and Monroe Street, Grant Street and all those streets along there are four-way stop signs, with some raised crosswalks, would be encouraging for people to slow down, from a safety perspective, and then maybe get onto the Parkway, but unfortunately, then you have to go down to Worcester Street and put some other stuff to control that. I just see that the bike one is like overkill for a solution to a problem, and the last one or two CIP's that we sent forward recommendations to Council, we said let's look at the low end changes and maybe now that the budget is so tight, they will be given more consideration. I'd rather see those dollars go somewhere else to improve air quality, but I don't know if a bridge over there is going to make the air so much better around Crestview that it's going to be a marked improvement in the ozone and the particulates in the air. That's just one man's opinion."

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Richard Downer of 216 Herndon Station Square stated, "The reason I'm commenting as a member of Council is because after June, I'm not going to be here, and this is extending way beyond when I will be here, and even be a resident of Herndon. Although, I will still own property in Herndon and my heart is here, because this is where I grew up. I was on the Town Council from 1971 to 1973, when under Tom Rust's leadership; we started the undergrounding of all the utilities north of the W&OD Trail. It's too bad that we didn't have enough money to do it south of the Trail. It's amazing, the amount of money it costs, but Lisa's absolutely right, I think we're going to see some dirt turned this summer, I believe. Isn't that the goal, to lay conduit in the streets, along Elden Street and Spring Street, and several different places, as part of that study that we did? You're going to see a lot of traffic disruption, which by the way, is one way to get people to use Herndon Parkway. Hopefully, the Town will use that as an advantage as people come into Town, because it is going to be disruptive. That will be the place to put the utilities, but getting the wires down off the poles and hooking them up to all the buildings is another matter...but it's a start. That's where the \$800,000 is going. The Department of Public Works and Engineering...I love the Department of Public Works, but they always want to do things in the most efficient way. You would have no median strips...everything would be so you could run a conga line of trucks right down the street to get all the snow off, but it, unfortunately, doesn't make...You may remember up on Monroe near Tom Hanes' house, where we had the Engineering solution to the drainage situation, which were these gigantic rip-rap rocks that were not attractive. That was the most efficient way to do it, but that's not what worked and it did not look nice in a residential area. I think that's where the Council and Planning Commission have to come in and say that's nice, but we want it to look a certain way. I think that's particularly important in residential areas, so we have to bear that in mind. I did raise the other night, your question [Chairman Sivertsen] if we really need to put a bridge at Crestview Drive and the W&OD Trail and how many megabucks that would cost? Mr. Boxer did say that they want to have someone study it to see what the most reasonable solution is. You know, the Trail is actually elevated along there...you go up to the Trail, so you could even look at taking the Trail lower."

Vice Chairman Burk asked if there used to be a bridge in that location.

Mr. Downer responded, "That would go back before my time. It's always been...the old W&OD right-of-way is elevated through there, so they were going to take a look at that and see what the better solution would be. I tend to agree with you, Carl, that there are a lot of places where we could spend this money more wisely. For years, I've wanted to see the W&OD Trail lit, pedestrian-wise, from at least Van Buren Street up to Crestview Drive. That would take some cars off of the roadway, because it would be a friendlier way to walk back and forth into Town. But actually, the reason why I came down here was not for the 2011 FY, but for the 2016 FY. It's not up there, but it's on the original one. You look at the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station; you see TBD, TBD, TBD all the way out. I'm very concerned...Carl and Bob were there on Saturday, and we realize that this Town's got a lot of work cut out for it in figuring out, between now and the time that station opens in 2016. That's not a very long period of time. We've not had any conversations with the County that I'm aware of, regarding how

we're going to pay for a Kiss and Ride facility. We're just starting down the planning trail, and it's not the Planning Department's fault, by the way, that we haven't started this sooner. That's going to be a real job for the Planning Commission in working on how we're going to make the most of what's over there. We have the unique opportunity of... actually it's a challenge...of having all of that land over there owned and occupied. Talk about redevelopment! There are a lot of empty buildings over there. I think it has the potential for being the most beneficial project to the Town of Herndon as a whole, that we'll probably ever see again...in our lifetimes or beyond, because if that stop is done well...We're so fortunate that all of the parking is on the south side. All the public land that has to be taken up for these enormous parking garages is on the south side. We don't have to deal with that. We can really do something in redeveloping the other side. Lisa showed, offhand, a little sketch that originally came from Henry Bibber, showing how Worldgate Drive could be extended through that area and come around near Exchange Place. Now that's thinking out of the box, but that's something that we need to look at. I just wanted to say that those TBD's are going to have to be filled in sooner than we think, and in some cases, we don't know where that funding is going to come from. I know there are a lot of good, young people in Town who are really anxious to see the Town be pedestrian friendly, bike friendly and the most we can actually have over there is a Kiss and Ride. We really need to magnify the ease of getting there. I also think it's absolutely vital to the Downtown, from the day that station opens; there's got to be an easy way to get from the station to the Downtown. There are a lot of people living Downtown and if we want them to use that facility they need to have transportation. Ed Stirewalt should have a bigger monument to honor him, because when you look at the plan, Herndon Parkway comes right around to serve that facility. In my opinion, anybody who is within a quarter-mile of Herndon Parkway will walk over and get on a little bus and go over and use the Metro. That service, again, should be functional the day this station opens. That's going to take conversations. I think one of the big things is...we've got to work with Fairfax County. We send over \$50 million a year to Fairfax County in tax revenues. It's probably more than that now. We pay taxes just like everyone else in Fairfax County, but I think sometimes we forget about that, as a community. We are an independent Town, but it's rightful for us to go to them and say, look, we need to work with you. A lot of the folks that are going to use that station...well all of them are going to be Fairfax County residents, and a lot of them are going to be north of Herndon. Anything that you can do to keep the ball rolling in that area would be greatly appreciated."

Chairman Sivertsen thanked Mr. Downer for his comments and noted that Commissioner Bettard also attended the presentation on Saturday morning, as well. He advised Mr. Downer that he may have missed the opening comments, when he stated that in the next week or two, he would be meeting with Commissioner Donahue and the Commissioner from the Hunter Mill District.

Mr. Downer responded, "Oh, I heard that...very well spoken, sir."

Chairman Sivertsen agreed, "We need to work closely with Fairfax County. We have the pleasure of paying both sets of taxes, so we should get some return on the investment that goes to the County."

Mr. Downer stated, "I think what Kevin and the others have done on the APR Task Force has created a good atmosphere with the Fairfax County Planning Department and with Loudoun County. We've got to take that goodwill that's been extended and bring it one station closer."

Chairman Sivertsen closed the public hearing.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION:

MOTION: Vice Chairman Burk moved to recommend approval of the Town of Herndon, Virginia FY2011 – FY2016 Capital Improvement Program Draft January 20, 2010, as submitted by staff.

Commissioner East seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bettard commented, “One of the Planning Commission’s charges is to ensure that the projects that have been proposed are in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. I am satisfied that that is the case, so I support the motion.”

Commissioner East commented, “I would like to extend some appreciation to Town staff, starting with the Town Manager and the Department Heads, and of course, Lisa Gilleran and Bob Boxer, for using their collective creativity to get the most out of a very, very lean budget.”

Chairman Sivertsen commented, “Most certainly. Felice Hubbard did a great job before she left us and Dana Heiberg and Lisa Gilleran had to pick up “mid-stream” to get us to where we are. I have a feeling when this gets to Council; hopefully, some more numbers will be in place than there are today. Just as a point of information as to the raised crosswalks and the bicycle air pump that we talked about before, I will send a note to the Town Manager, as recommended by the Department of Public Works and Town staff, to say that these are small change items and he can make them happen. When I come back next year and say that we should put them in the C.I.P., we will find out if they really were small change items.”

Chairman Sivertsen called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

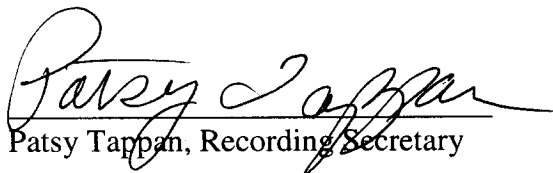
COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION:

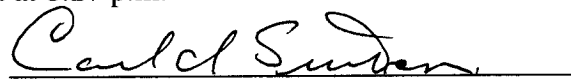
Commissioner LeReche moved to adjourn.

Commissioner East seconded the motion.

Chairman Sivertsen called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:27 p.m.


Patsy Tappan, Recording Secretary


Carl I. Sivertsen
Chairman, Planning Commission

Minutes Approved: 04/05/2010