



May 16, 2012

Ms. Mary Hynes, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan – Master Transportation Plan to add a new segment of North Tazewell Street at North Carlin Springs Road, and SP #72 site plan amendment (650 North Glebe Road)

Dear Chair Hynes:

I am writing to express the views of the Transportation Commission concerning the County Manager's recommendations (1) to approve the proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan – Master Transportation Plan – Map to add a new segment to North Tazewell Street extending approximately 210 feet south of the current terminus at North Carlin Springs Road, and (2) to adopt the proposed ordinance to approve a site plan amendment to SP #72 (650 North Glebe Road).

The Transportation Commission, by a vote of 9-0, approved two motions as follows:

- (1) To recommend that the County Board approve the County Manager's recommendation to amend the Comprehensive Plan – Master Transportation Plan – Map to add a new segment to North Tazewell Street extending approximately 210 feet south of the current terminus at North Carlin Springs Road, and**
- (2) To recommend that the County Board approve the County Manager's recommendation to adopt the proposed ordinance relating to site plan amendment #72 (650 North Glebe Road), subject to clarification that the County Board can count tandem parking spaces to meet the R-C parking requirement (site plan condition #51) and the addition of at least 4 street level bicycle parking spaces.**

The Commission heard this item at its meeting on May 3, 2012. The Commission received a presentation from County staff. There were three public speakers: Bernie Berne, representing Buckingham Civic Association; Mark Falcone, representing Hyde Park, and Steph Karas, representing Ballston Crest Homeowners Association. The speakers in general expressed concern about traffic and pedestrian safety, with two favoring construction of the formerly planned pedestrian bridge over North Glebe Road. Present and voting at the meeting were Commissioners Gearhart, Everline, Forinash, Grant, Hubbard, Lynott, Ortiz, Slatt, and Torma.

In discussion, Commissioners noted that the new North Tazewell Street segment would begin the process of enhancing the street grid in the large block to the south of the site, consistent with Policy 2 (6) of the Master Transportation Plan – Streets Element. Commissioners also noted that it would allow garage and service entrances for the new building to be from the new street segment as opposed to North Carlin Springs Road or North Glebe Road, eliminating the need for curb cuts and sidewalk crossings on those two streets.

Commissioners noted the comments of the speakers, including the support of two speakers for a pedestrian bridge over North Glebe Road. Commissioners noted that the bridge had previously been on the Master Transportation Plan and had been removed because it was no longer consistent with County policy, which favors safe at-grade crossings. Commissioners also noted that such bridges pose a number of problems, including the loss of sidewalk space to accommodate the bridge structure and the long ramps needed to reach the bridge. None of the Commissioners expressed support for revisiting the idea of a pedestrian bridge at that location.

In the course of discussion of the site plan amendment, Commissioners proposed a number of minor changes to the site plan conditions, including conditions 6, 11, 26, 39, and 51, which were accepted by the applicant and are reflected in the staff report dated May 9, 2012. The changes include the addition of 6 on-street bicycle spaces.

I would be glad to answer any questions (703-522-2276).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Gearhart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bill Gearhart
Chairman

From: Bernard H. Berne [<mailto:bhberne@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 1:18 AM

To: CountyBoard

Subject: May 19, 2012 County Board Meeting: Goodyear Site Plan (SP #72 - 650 N. Glebe Road) and amendment to Master Transportation Plan for N. Tazewell Street extension

Board members:

As President of the Buckingham Community Civic Association (BCCA), I request that you note the following objections to the proposed amendments to Site Plan #72 (Goodyear site at 650 N. Glebe Road) and to the Master Transportation Plan, which the County Board will consider on May 19, 2012 (Agenda Item #39). This site is within the BCCA area.

1. **Zoning:** The site is in an R-C zoning district. The Arlington County zoning ordinance states in Section 16A. "R-C" Apartment Dwelling and Commercial Districts in the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance at http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CPHD/planning/zoning/pdfs/Ordinance_Section16a.pdf states that a site, or a major portion of the site of an R-C District "*shall be within one-quarter (1/4) of a mile radius of a Metro-rail station entrance.*" However, the entire area of Site Plan #72 is more than one-quarter of a mile from the nearest Metrorail station entrance (Ballston). Less than 10% of the entire R-C district is within a quarter of a mile of the entrance to the Ballston Metro station.

The County Board approved the rezoning of the area from C-2 to R-C in September 1989. The County Manager's August 1989 report that recommended the rezoning failed to state that no part of the area was within 1/4 of a mile of a Metro station entrance. As a result, the County Board was not aware of this fact when it approved the rezoning.

The zoning for the site is illegal. The requirements for an R-C District (parking ratio, amount of landscaped area, etc.) are intended to apply to sites that are closer to Metro than is that of Site Plan #72. The County Board needs to rezone the site before it considers the site plan. Please therefore ask the County Manager to provide you with a report on the options for a rezoning of the R-C district that contains this site.

2. **Landscaping:** Language in the Section 16.A. (R-C District), Paragraph B.1.e., for apartment projects with site plan approval: "Landscaping: A minimum of ten (10) percent of the total

site area is required to be landscaped open area in accordance with the requirements of Section 32A" The applicant is requesting a reduction in the landscaping requirement to 8.9%. Section 32A requires that 25% of a landscaped area must be covered by trees and shrubs when they reach maturity.

However the "Overall Landscaping Plan" in the site plan does not show any open area with a sufficient number of trees and shrubs to cover the 25% of the area. Further, it appears that it would be difficult for any shrubs or trees to reach maturity, as there will be only two feet between the surface of the "landscaped area" and the top of the underground parking garage. The depth of the soil will be too small to permit any sizable trees or shrubs to reach maturity and cover 25% of the "landscaped area." Please therefore revise the site plan to require the applicant to guarantee that a canopy of trees and shrubs will cover 25% of the landscaped area when the trees and shrubs reach maturity. This may require the applicant to increase the distance between the surface of the landscaped area and the top of the underground parking garage.

3. **Site Usage:** The site plan describes a six-story residential building. However, the site is within the Ballston Business Improvement District (BID), which the County Board established in December 2010. Owners of commercial properties in the Ballston BID pay a special tax to support community improvements in the BID. Owners of residential buildings are exempt from this tax.

The County subsidizes the BID. A residential building on the site will reduce the BID's revenues. The reduction will either reduce the BID's ability to provide community improvements or will require an increase in the County's subsidy. Neither of these options is desirable.

The Concept Plan in the 1980 Ballston Sector Plan (<http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CPHD/planning/docs/pdf/file67524.pdf>) recommends that the area along Glebe Road, including the area that contains Parkington (now Ballston Common) and the Goodyear site, should be redeveloped for commercial uses (page 8, Figure 1; page 12, "Commercial Development"). The proposed residential building therefore contradicts the Concept Plan.

Please therefore deny approval of the site plan until such time as the applicant changes the use of the site from residential to commercial.

4. **Existing approved site plan:** The existing approved site plan #72 shows a four story commercial building that occupies about half of the site's area. Most of the remaining area is a public plaza at the corner of N. Glebe Road and N. Carlin Springs Road. The proposed site plan amendment eliminates this major public amenity, which could contain trees, shrubs, benches and other features that would enhance the urban environment. Please therefore deny approval of the site plan until such time as the applicant provides this amenity.

5. **N. Tazewell Street Extension:** The amendment to SP#72 proposes an extension of N. Tazewell Street onto the site. The building's loading dock will be near this street. Delivery trucks and garbage trucks will make noise on this street, especially when backing up. This will disturb residents of The Carlin, which would be adjacent to the street. The Carlin is an affordable housing building for the elderly. This is a vulnerable population. The County needs to assure that residents of The Carlin are not disturbed by such noise, which can occur early in the morning.

The Carlin has a loading dock that is adjacent to N. Carlin Springs Road. Trucks using the dock do not impede traffic on the road very often when entering using the dock, because not many trucks use the dock. This would also be true for the new building, which is smaller than The Carlin.

Please therefore deny approval of the site plan until such time as the applicant relocates the loading dock to the Carlin Springs Road side of the site.

6. **Bonus density:** The applicant is requesting bonus density for in exchange for its conveyance of its property to the County for the N. Tazewell Street extension. This bonus density is unjustified. The applicant proposes to eliminate the planned plaza and its landscaped area. There is no justification for bonus density, considering the proposed elimination of all of the site's approved public open space.

Please deny approval of the site plan until such time as the applicant removes this request for bonus density.

7. **Amendment to Transportation Master Plan:** The County Manager is supporting an amendment to the Master Transportation Plan (MTP) that will permit the extension of N. Tazewell Street into the site. This amendment contradicts the Concept Plan in the 1980 Ballston Sector Plan. The Concept Plan illustrates a large landscaped open space in the center of the block that contains SP#72 (page 11, Figure 2). The landscaped area is part of a planned "Neighborhood Preservation" area (page 8, Figure 1). No streets are needed to access this open space or the Neighborhood Preservation Area.

As part of the N. Quincy Street long range planning process, County staff is proposing a replacement of the landscaped open space with high density development containing a proposed street network. This major land use change would have many negative effects on neighboring properties and on the surrounding residential community. Please defer consideration of the MTP amendment until such time as the County Board has considered the plans that County staff is proposing for the center of the block.

8. **Pedestrian Bridge:** The applicant is not proposing to provide an entrance to the previously planned and funded entrance to a pedestrian bridge over N. Glebe Road. The Buckingham community has always supported the construction of this bridge. The bridge would allow pedestrians to avoid the intersection of N. Glebe Road and N. Carlin Springs Road, which is one of the most hazardous intersections in the entire County.

The County redirected State funding for the bridge when it became apparent that the owner of the Goodyear site had no intention of redeveloping the site. However, now that redevelopment is imminent, the County Board needs to re-evaluate the need for the bridge and perhaps submit a new application for State funding.

The County will soon construct some pedestrian "improvements" to this intersection. However, these improvements will accomplish little, if anything. The major problem at the intersection is that drivers frequently ignore traffic signals and signs, make illegal turns, and violate traffic laws in other ways. The planned improvements will not alleviate this problem.

The Pedestrian Element of the MTP discourages pedestrian bridges. The purpose of this is to increase pedestrian traffic on

streets. This may be desirable in Rosslyn and Crystal City, but is not needed in Ballston.

When the County Board approved the site plan for Ballston Tower (attached to Ballston Common Mall on the northeast side of Glebe Road), the Board required the developer to construct an entrance to the pedestrian bridge. If the Board does not require the applicant to provide an entrance to the bridge on the west side of Glebe Road, the County will not receive the benefits that it expected when it approved the site plan for Ballston Tower.

Ballston has two pedestrian bridges. Although these receive heavy use, nearby streets have a large amount of pedestrian traffic. A bridge over Glebe Road would divert only a small percentage of this pedestrian traffic.

In the past, the MTP showed the pedestrian bridge. The current MTP does not contain a specific map of this area. Therefore, the current MTP neither supports nor opposes a pedestrian bridge at this site.

Please therefore defer approval of this site plan until such time as the County Board considers amending the MTP to add the pedestrian bridge to the MTP.

9. Buckingham Community Civic Association Neighborhood

Conservation Plan: The 2006 BCCA Neighborhood Conservation Plan (NCP)

(<http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/CPHD/Documents/9309Buckingham.pdf>) recommends that the County make no plans that would change any part of the Concept Plan in the Ballston Sector Plan (page 44, Recommendation #4). The Concept Plan shows that the Goodyear site will remain commercial. The NCP further supports the construction of a pedestrian bridge over N. Glebe Road near N. Carlin Springs Road (page 60, Recommendation #20). In April 2011, the BCCA membership voted to endorse these recommendations during the planning process for SP#72 and the long range planning process for the addendum to the N. Quincy Street Plan.

The County Manager's report for the MTP amendment states that the BCCA NCP is silent on whether the block containing the site should have any streets. This is not correct. The BCCA NCP recommends that the County make no plans that would change the Concept Plan in the Ballston Sector Plan. The Concept Plan does not illustrate any

streets within the block, which contains a large central landscaped open space that needs no streets. Therefore, the BCCA NCP opposes the construction of any streets within the block, including the N. Tazewell Street extension.

The attachment to this message contain the Buckingham Community Civic Association's position on the N. Quincy Street Plan (American Service Center special planning study) and the Goodyear site. Please endorse the Civic Association's position.

10. **Proposed parking along Glebe Road:** The County Manager proposes to permit motor vehicles to park on N. Glebe Road near the Goodyear site during non-rush hours. This will create a hazard to cyclists who will need to avoid parked vehicles whose doors may open suddenly. Although Glebe Road is a major cycling route, it has no bicycle lanes. As a result, motor vehicle operators and passengers will not expect to encounter cyclists when they open their doors. Please therefore do not permit motor vehicles to park on Glebe Road until such time as the Bicycle Advisory Committee has had an opportunity to evaluate the hazards to cyclist associated with such parking.

Summary:

As President of the Buckingham Community Civic Association, I ask the County Board to deny approval to the proposed amendment to SP#72 and to the amendment to the MTP that would extend N. Tazewell Street into the block that contains the SP#72 area.

Bernard H. Berne
President
Buckingham Community Civic Association

BUCKINGHAM COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

AMERICAN SERVICE CENTER SPECIAL PLANNING STUDY

Position Adopted April 25, 2011

The Buckingham Community Civic Association requests that any planning documents for the block containing the American Service Center site on the west side of N. Glebe Road include the following elements:

1. Adhere to the maps and text of the “Concept Plan” of the 1980 Ballston Sector Plan and the 2006 Buckingham Community Civic Association Neighborhood Conservation Plan. These documents contain the following desirable features:

Ballston Sector Plan

- Neighborhood Preservation Area throughout the block, except for a narrow strip adjacent to Glebe Road and the site containing the Hyde Park building.
- Commercial strip adjacent to Glebe Road, except for the site containing the Hyde Park Building.
- No more than three new buildings, all of which would be near Glebe Road.
- Large open space with canopy trees between all new buildings and the existing low residential buildings along the east side of N. Thomas Street and the south side of N. Carlin Springs Road.
- Double row of trees along Glebe Road.

Buckingham Community Civic Association Neighborhood Conservation Plan

- No further exceptions to the Neighborhood Preservation Area that the Ballston Sector Plan's Concept Plan describes. Any new high-density

construction along North Glebe Road should taper downwards toward the adjacent existing residential buildings along N. Thomas Street, N. Henderson Road and N. Carlin Springs Road and should contain a wide landscaped buffer between the neighborhood's existing buildings and all new buildings.

- Construct a pedestrian bridge across North Glebe Road at the Goodyear store site or another site near N. Carlin Springs Road.

2. Additional requests:

- The General Land Use Plan (GLUP), zoning and any site plans on the block under study should seek to preserve existing residential buildings and should not permit any increased heights and densities on the sites that those buildings occupy. There should be no increases in planned densities on the sites of any existing residential buildings in the study area.
- The GLUP, zoning and site plans on the block should encourage the development of open space buffers between any new development and all existing residential buildings. Planning for open space within the block should concentrate open space to the greatest extent possible in areas that are adjacent to existing residential buildings, including The Carlin, Hyde Park and smaller buildings.
- Transfer planned building heights and densities from the west side of Glebe Road to the east side of Glebe Road.
- Do not provide height or density increases or bonuses for any special purposes, such as affordable housing.
- Locate any new streets within the block near commercial buildings, rather than near existing residential buildings.

EXPLANATIONS OF REQUESTS

1. Adhere to the maps and text of the “Concept Plan” of the 1980 Ballston Sector Plan and the 2006 Buckingham Community Civic Association Neighborhood Conservation Plan. These documents contain the following desirable features:

Ballston Sector Plan

- Neighborhood Preservation Area throughout the block, except for a narrow strip adjacent to Glebe Road and the site containing the Hyde Park building.

Explanation:

The Concept Plan shows a “Neighborhood Preservation” area between a strip of development along the west side of Glebe Road and the existing residential buildings along N. Carlin Springs Road and N. Thomas Street.

- Commercial strip adjacent to Glebe Road, except for the site containing the Hyde Park Building.

Explanation:

The Concept Plan shows a strip of commercial development adjacent to the west side of Glebe Road on the block between N. Carlin Springs Road and Hyde Park.

The Sector Plan recommends commercial and office development (rather than residential development) along the Sector’s major thoroughfares, especially near the Parkington Shopping Center (now Ballston Common) to aid the County’s and the Sector’s economic development. Ballston’s development has largely adhered to this recommendation.

- No more than three new buildings, all of which would be near Glebe Road.

Explanation

The Concept Plan shows only three new large buildings within the block. The Carlin, which is located in the Neighborhood Preservation area, should count as one of these buildings, although it is not near Glebe Road.

- Large open space with canopy trees between all new buildings and the existing low residential buildings along the east side of N. Thomas Street and the south side of N. Carlin Springs Road.

Explanation

An illustration in the Concept Plan shows that the Neighborhood Preservation area should contain open space with many trees. The Preservation area therefore protects and enhances the adjacent residential neighborhood.

- Double row of trees along Glebe Road.

Explanation

The Concept Plan shows a double row of street trees along much of the west side of Glebe Road.

Buckingham Community Civic Association Neighborhood Conservation Plan

- No further exceptions to the Neighborhood Preservation area that the Ballston Sector Plan's Concept Plan describes. Any new high-density construction along North Glebe Road should taper downwards toward the adjacent existing residential buildings along N. Thomas Street, N. Henderson Road and N. Carlin Springs Road and should contain a wide landscaped buffer between the neighborhood's existing buildings and all new buildings.

Explanation

Recommendation #4 in the Buckingham Community Neighborhood Conservation Plan summarizes and supports those elements in the Ballston Sector Plan that serve to protect the existing residential buildings from the impact of planned high-rise buildings on the block.

The Arlington County Board made an exception to the Concept Plan when it approved the construction of The Carlin, a high-rise building on N. Carlin Springs Road that is adjacent to a three story garden apartment building (Ballston Gardens) and that is not adjacent to N. Glebe Road. The Carlin is located within the Concept Plan's Neighborhood Preservation area. The recommendation expresses the neighborhood's desire to have no further incursions into the Neighborhood Preservation Area that the Concept Plan illustrates.

- Construct a pedestrian bridge across North Glebe Road at the Goodyear store site or another site near N. Carlin Springs Road.

Explanation

Recommendation #20 in the Buckingham Community Neighborhood Conservation Plan states that Arlington County planners should continue to pursue plans to build an overhead walkway across N. Glebe Road at either the Goodyear store site or a nearby site, such as the one on the side of N. Carlin Springs Road that contains an Exxon station.

The site plan for Ballston Tower (attached to Ballston Common) provides an entry to a pedestrian bridge across Glebe Road at N. Carlin Springs Road. This would permit pedestrians to avoid the hazardous crossing of Glebe Road when accessing Ballston Common and the Ballston Metro Station. The County allocated funding for this bridge, but later used the funds for other projects. A new commercial building at the Goodyear store site constructed in accordance with the Ballston Sector Plan can serve as an entry point to the bridge.

2. Additional requests:

- The General Land Use Plan (GLUP), zoning and any site plans on the block under study should seek to preserve existing residential buildings and should not permit any increased heights and densities on the sites that those buildings occupy. There should be no increases in planned densities on the sites of any existing residential buildings in the study area.

Explanation:

Demolition of residential buildings will displace tenants of those buildings.

- The GLUP, zoning and site plans on the block should encourage the development of open space buffers between any new development and all existing residential buildings. Planning for open space within the block should concentrate open space to the greatest extent possible in areas that are adjacent to existing residential buildings, including The Carlin, Hyde Park and smaller buildings.

Explanation:

Open space buffers enhance views from residential buildings and minimize invasions of privacy by occupants of new buildings. The Ballston Sector Plan provides for these buffers near the smaller buildings. Hyde Park and The Carlin should also contain these buffers.

- Transfer planned building heights and densities from the west side of Glebe Road to the east side of Glebe Road.

Explanation:

The transfer would decrease building heights and densities near existing residential buildings on the west side of Glebe Road and increase building heights and densities on the east side of Glebe Road. The east side of Glebe Road in the American Service Center area is closer to

Metro stations and is further from existing residential buildings than is the west side of the Road.

- Do not provide height or density increases or bonuses for any special purposes, such as affordable housing.

Explanation:

The County has already permitted increases in planned building heights and densities for affordable housing in the Buckingham area at The Carlin and at Buckingham Village I. These increases have adversely impacted surrounding residential areas by removing open space buffers. It is important to recognize that Buckingham contains a larger concentration of existing affordable housing than do most other neighborhoods in Arlington County.

- Locate any new streets within the block near commercial buildings, rather than near existing residential buildings.

Explanation:

Delivery trucks and waste disposal vehicles will utilize any new streets within the block. Residents of existing buildings need protection from the noise and air pollution that these vehicles and others will create.

Bernie Berne
President
Buckingham Community Civic Association