



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of June 17, 2008**

DATE: June 3, 2008

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Arlington County Comprehensive Plan – Master Transportation Plan Map – to add new segment of 9th Street South between South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive and to delete a segment of South Arlington Mill Drive from Columbia Pike to a point approximately 200 feet to the north

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Amend the Arlington County Comprehensive Plan – Master Transportation Plan Map – to add a new two-lane neighborhood-minor-street segment of 9th Street South between South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive, and to delete a segment of South Arlington Mill Drive from Columbia Pike to a point approximately 200 feet to the north.

ISSUES: These amendments will bring the Master Transportation Plan into conformance with the street system envisioned for the proposed development of the new Arlington Mill Community Center.

SUMMARY: The Arlington Mill Community Center project includes a new street connecting South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive along the north side of the project site. This new street segment, to be named 9th Street South, will provide access to the parking and loading for the new Arlington Mill Community Center and its associated residential development as well as access to the Park Glen condominium development along South Arlington Mill Drive. Also, as a part of the community center project, a segment of South Arlington Mill Drive from Columbia Pike to about 200 feet north is proposed to be abandoned, vacated or closed as a street for motor-vehicular traffic (except for emergency vehicles) and incorporated into a public plaza for the community center. (See Attachment A.)

BACKGROUND: The Arlington Mill Community Center, a former grocery store at 4975 Columbia Pike, has been owned by the County for about 10 years. In 2006, the County decided to seek a development partner to develop a new community center and other uses on the site. In May 2007 the County selected Public Private Alliances, LLC, (PPA) as the development partner. Citizens and staff on the Arlington Mill Steering Committee have been working with PPA to plan the development of this site. In January, 2008, the County Board approved a concept plan for a mixed-use development incorporating a community center, some retail space and

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Richard Hartman, DES Transportation

approximately 200 housing units in two buildings located above a common parking garage. The concept plan includes a new street at the north end of the site connecting South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive, which provides access to the parking and the loading docks for the development. Also as a part of the project, South Arlington Mill Drive, from Columbia Pike to a point approximately 200 feet north, is proposed to be abandoned, vacated or closed as a street for motor-vehicular traffic, except for emergency vehicles, and made a part of a new public plaza.

DISCUSSION: The new street segment, to be named 9th Street South, will be constructed as a part of the proposed Arlington Mill development. It will provide the sole access to the project's parking garage, loading dock and trash pickup, which will be accessed from South Arlington Mill Drive on the east side of the building. The new 9th Street South will also provide the sole access to the Park Glen condominiums, which are located along South Arlington Mill Drive to the north of the community center. The Park Glen condominiums can currently be accessed via South Arlington Mill Drive off of Columbia Pike. Since the intersection of South Arlington Mill Drive and Columbia Pike is not signalized, some Park Glen residents currently prefer to use the employee parking lot to the north of the existing community center to reach South Dinwiddie Street and its signalized intersection with Columbia Pike.

During the concept planning for the Arlington Mill project, several options were considered for access to the project. Among the options were:

1. Keeping South Arlington Mill Drive open and using it for vehicular access to the development;
2. Partially abandoning, vacating or closing South Arlington Mill Drive, providing a new street connecting South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive through the middle of the site, and using the new street for vehicular access to the site and to the Park Glen condominiums; and
3. Partially abandoning, vacating or closing South Arlington Mill Drive, constructing a new road connecting South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive at the north end of the site, and providing vehicular access to the site from South Dinwiddie Street or from South Arlington Mill Drive.

Option 3 was ultimately chosen. As proposed, it would close about 200 feet of South Arlington Mill Drive north of Columbia Pike to motor-vehicular traffic, incorporate the right of way into the public plaza, and construct a new road at the north end of the site that would provide access both to the project's garage and to the Park Glen condominiums. This option has several advantages:

- It provides additional space for the public plaza;
- It keeps the façade and streetscape along the length of South Dinwiddie Street free from curb cuts and driveways;
- It allows an undivided level of parking to be constructed below the entire site;
- It provides a parking garage entrance directly to the first level of parking from Arlington Mill Drive; and
- It allows all traffic from the community center, the apartments and the Park Glen condominiums to reach Columbia Pike from the signalized intersection with South Dinwiddie Street.

A traffic impact analysis, undertaken by the County, assessed this preferred concept. The analysis showed that the capacity of the new 9th Street South and the South Dinwiddie/Columbia Pike intersection would be adequate to handle the existing traffic and projected traffic generated by the Arlington Mill development.

CONCLUSION: Staff recommends that the County Board amend the Master Transportation Plan Map to add the new segment of 9th Street South connecting South Dinwiddie Street and South Arlington Mill Drive in the location depicted on Attachment A and to delete a segment of South Arlington Mill Drive from Columbia Pike to a point approximately 200 feet to the north. This section of Arlington Mill Drive would be deleted from the Master Transportation Plan Map because it would no longer be planned as a street, but would be planned for other public uses, such as part of the plaza. It would be designed to be accessible to fire trucks and other emergency vehicles, both from Columbia Pike and from the remaining section of South Arlington Mill Drive. The section of South Arlington Mill Drive would be depicted in the green color used for public parks on the Master Transportation Plan Map. If changing priorities in the future made it desirable to reconstruct and open this segment of Arlington Mill Drive to all vehicular traffic, the Master Transportation Plan Map could be amended in the future by the County Board.

FISCAL IMPACT: The new segment of 9th Street South will be constructed by PPA as a part of the Arlington Mill Community Center project.