Planning Commission Meeting
May 21, 2008
Verbatim Excerpt

CPA 86-C-121-2-3 – RESTON SPECTRUM, LLLP

After Close of the Public Hearing

Chairman Murphy: The public hearing is closed; recognize Mr. de la Fe.

Commissioner de la Fe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank everyone for coming out. And actually this discussion, I think, has been educational for all of us. The public hearing we have just held is a step in the process whose latest phase began two years ago. However, some of us link the start of this process back almost 15 years when the first concept plan for Spectrum was approved by the Planning Commission after a rather spirited community dialogue. At that public hearing, there were 17 speakers. Though there were a variety of issues involved, the most fundamental one was that the concept at that time was almost exclusively retail rather than mixed use. That plan was approved and the current existing development has by most accounts been quite successful. The concept plan before us tonight is different from what exists. In many respects it mirrors what many of the speakers wanted to see 15 years ago. In fact, some of those speakers – some of those folks on the speakers list at that public hearing have told me that we are considering – what we are considering tonight is in many ways, indeed, what they were looking for back then. Somewhat ironically, the major questions that I have heard from the community concerning the proposed concept plan relates to the ability of existing major retailers to remain after redevelopment. And I think that we are going to try to accomplish that. When the concept plan before us tonight was first proposed in the spring of 2006, it was significantly different. It was mixed use, but its orientation was inward. Through community dialogue it has become more open and inviting to pedestrians. Fountain Drive is designed as an axis that welcomes folks, the folk that live and work in the urban core of Reston Town Center, and is envisioned to function in a similar fashion as Market Street. The plan included – the original plan included only one owner's property. Now it includes both owners of the land developed, subject to the original concept plan. There is a provision for pedestrian circulation not only along the periphery but also through the development itself. There is improved site access and egress as well as enhanced inducements for public transit use. There are plazas and open areas. The open space is double the original amount. There is a commitment to workforce housing units with the stipulation that if the type of construction eventually used for residential – for the residential portions is of a nature that would generate affordable housing requirements under the Ordinance, the workforce units committed to by the notes would be in addition to any Ordinance requirements. The Reston Planning and Zoning Committee has reviewed the plan extensively. A quick review of the Committee's minutes show that at least four occasions – show at least four occasions on which the plan was analyzed. The concept plan we are considering tonight reflects the Committee's input throughout that process. At its April 9th, 2008 meeting, the Committee, with one abstention, recommended approval, subject to the applicant and staff reconciling any outstanding differences and the applicant successfully addressing pedestrian mobility issues within the development. Mr. Chairman, I believe that this Town Center concept plan, including the notes dated May 5th, 2008, has reached a point that merits moving forward. Under the Reston Town Center proffers and the PRC Ordinance requirements at the time of their adoption, the Planning Commission has the

final say in Town Center concept plans. And after PC action on a concept plan, further development actions would be purely administrative. However, under the PRC Ordinance change adopted last year, PRC plans developed under – to implement the Town Center concept plans are subject to public hearings and action by both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. So we will see this again. At the PRC Plan stage, we will get the opportunity to dot the I's and cross the T's on this redevelopment. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE CPA 86-C-121-2-3.

Commissioners Alcorn and Lawrence: Second.

Chairman Murphy: Seconded by Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Alcorn. Is there a discussion of the motion? All those in favor of the motion to approve CPA 86-C-121-2-3, say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Murphy: Opposed? Motion carries.

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(The motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Litzenberger and Lusk absent from the meeting.)

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