

Planning Commission Meeting
July 11, 1996
Verbatim Excerpts

CPA-89-C-025-2 - RESTON LAND CORPORATION

Administrative Review During Commission Matters

Commissioner Palatiello: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I indicated last evening, we have before us this evening for an administrative review an application by Reston Land Corporation for a concept plan amendment in the Reston Town Center. Under the proffers for Reston Town Center, the owner has the discretion in terms of how he exercises their rights under permitted uses, and proffered to come back to the Planning Commission with an instrument known as a Reston Town Center concept plan. And we have before us this evening a revision, an amendment to a concept plan that this Commission unanimously approved -- it's hard to believe, but it was a year ago. April of '95. And with that I would ask Ms. Murray, if she would, to give us a brief summation of the salient points on this amendment.

Ms. Regina Murray: Thank you, Commissioner Palatiello. Reston Land Corporation has submitted this conceptual plan amendment on a 49.5-acre parcel which is zoned PRC and known as the West Market community. The site is bounded by the W&OD trail on the south, Town Center Parkway to the east, the future extension of New Dominion Parkway to the north, and the future extension of Fairfax County Parkway to the west. This conceptual plan amendment has been submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Reston Town Center proffers. This amendment application proposes to change the mix of residential units to allow between 185 and 220 traditional townhouse units, between 94 and 108 stacked townhouse units, and between 96 and 122 multi-family units. The previously approved density of 7.6 to 9.2 dwelling units per acre and minimum open space of 30 percent are proposed to remain unchanged. This application is in conformance with the both the Comprehensive Plan map, which shows the application property as planned for planned residential community, and the Reston Master Plan which shows that the property is shown for town center uses. It is important to note that on April 27, 1995, the Planning Commission did approve a conceptual plan for this site which allowed residential development consisting of 375 to 475 townhouse units. That mix, that number of units still remains unchanged. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Vice Chairman Byers: Ms. Murray?

Ms. Murray: Yes.

Vice Chairman Byers: I have a couple of questions. On the -- I guess the blob map, it shows 1, 2, 3, 3A, 2A, 3B, then 4 spaces -- it shows single family attached residential and parking, five stories maximum height. And then when I turn over two pages and I look at the elevations that you have, those buildings are only four stories high. Where is the fifth story?

Ms. Murray: I think that the reason the applicant felt it important to note that the townhouse units could potentially be five stories is because if you look at the units from the rear, counting garages and certain loft space that may be a part of some of the taller townhouses, that they felt more comfortable using five stories as opposed to four. I think the applicant might be a little bit better able to address the architecture of the proposed units.

Vice Chairman Byers: Okay, because I'm looking at this thing and I'm looking at the elevation view and it shows the garage on the first floor and it shows the windows up in the attic and there's still only four floors, so I want to know if you're counting a basement as a fifth story and is that proper? And you want the applicant to respond to that, so I'll defer to Mr. Palatiello and he can sort it out.

Commissioner Palatiello: Okay. Ms. Murray, I do have one question. Just for clarification then, the only change in this versus the previously approved concept plan is that this replaces the previously approved and contemplated range of 129 to 153 condominiums to a combination of between 35 and 45 townhouses and between 94 and 108 stacked townhouses? Am I correct?

Ms. Murray: Yes.

Commissioner Palatiello: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I think the applicant wants to make a brief presentation and can certainly respond to questions from the Commission.

Vice Chairman Byers: Okay.

John Bellaschi, Esquire: For the record, I'm John Bellaschi, with the law firm of McGuire, Woods, Battle and Boothe. Since what we're talking about are changes to two quadrants of West Market, perhaps this might clarify where they are. Under the prior plan, the top of this quadrant here was condominiums and that is being changed to townhomes. And this bottom quadrant, these units previously were also condominiums and too are being changed to urban-style townhomes. That essentially is the only change we're talking about here. In terms of the stories which he raised, Ms. Murray was correct in pointing out that the reason for that was to accommodate the chance of having a loft and also garages. Al Hagelis, who is the Director of design and architecture is here and he could answer any more specific questions regarding the design of it, but I think the sole purpose for showing five is to allow the possibility of having a loft or garage space. I'd like to add that we have worked with the Reston Planning and Zoning Committee. I've received their support for this provision. We also have received the support of staff and in light of those recommendations, we would respectfully ask for your support as well. If you have any further questions of me or Al Hagelis, we'd be happy to answer them.

Vice Chairman Byers: I have a question of staff. What's the height limitation on a townhouse in the Zoning Ordinance?

Ms. Murray: There is no height limitation within the PRC District, but if you were in a conventional district, single family units are limited, I believe, throughout, to 35 feet in height, is generally, I believe -- is that true? I believe generally in most conventional districts, that's the height limitation.

Vice Chairman Byers: But if there's no limitation in PRC, then the applicant could, in fact, build a townhouse that had five floors above grade regardless of the pictures they've shown and the elevation views that they've shown here.

Ms. Murray: I think it's important to note that the notes that are associated with this conceptual plan basically refer to those architectural elevations to be as illustrative and that the final architecture and design will be subject to final approval by the Town Center Design Review Board.

Vice Chairman Byers: That's just what I said. They could build five stories above grade then, couldn't they?

Ms. Murray: They could, yes.

Vice Chairman Byers: With no elevator.

Ms. Murray: I guess, theoretically, they could.

Vice Chairman Byers: Okay.

Commissioner Palatiello: Mr. Chairman? Mr. Bellaschi, do you have some renderings of these? Maybe that would help illustrate --

Vice Chairman Byers: They're in the staff report.

Commissioner Palatiello: I understand, but they have some color renderings that I think better describe and I think better illustrate.

Mr. Bellaschi: Yes, we do. I think that would be helpful. In fact, I would -- maybe Al Hagelis could address maybe a little more directly --

Commissioner Palatiello: In terms of the housing type and the architectural style.

Mr. Al Hagelis: I'd be happy to.

Commissioner Palatiello: I think what we have in the staff report in terms of the layout is pretty clear, but in terms of the housing type and the architectural style, it might be helpful.

Mr. Hagelis: Regarding the question about the height of five stories, the potential exists for a walk-out situation where there would be a garage on the lower level. There would be a three-story townhouse with a possible loft.

Commissioner Harsel: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. We need the name.

Mr. Hagelis: I'm sorry. I'm Al Hagelis, with Reston Land Corporation.

Commissioner Harsel: We need a spelling. This is for the clerk.

Mr. Hagelis: H-A-G-E-L-I-S.

Vice Chairman Byers: Those are the same ones in the staff report, and those are all four stories.

Mr. Hagelis: Yes. Exactly. There is a possibility of a walk-out situation which would have a garage on the lower level and a three-story townhouse. The builder has indicated the possibility of a loft which would be another half story, possibly another story for a total of five. The intent is not to have five story townhouses.

Vice Chairman Byers: All right. Is that all?

Mr. Hagelis: I'd be happy to answer any other questions you might have.

Vice Chairman Byers: Mr. Palatiello.

Commissioner Palatiello: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As was indicated, this revision has gone before the Planning and Zoning Committee of the Reston Citizens Association. It has their support. The applicant has worked very closely with me throughout this process. They went through a very interesting sort of design competition with several different builders on this application subsequent to getting their first approval and they received some very innovative proposals which they were interested in. And, that is, they are adopting some of those proposals and are awarding contracts for them and that necessitated this revision to their concept plan. With that, Mr. Chairman, I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE CPA-89-C-025-2, TITLED SECTION 933 CONCEPTUAL PLAN, SHEETS 1 THROUGH 4, PREPARED BY URBAN ENGINEERING AND ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED, REVISED THROUGH JULY 2, 1996.

Commissioners Thomas and Hunter: Second.

Vice Chairman Byers: Seconded by Mr. Thomas and Mr. Hunter. Any discussion? Before we vote, I would like to sort of concur with Mr. Coan's remarks. This is a little bit of heavy reading to be done late at night. There's a lot of stuff passed off to us at the last minute for a 24-hour turnaround. All in favor of the motion to approve CPA-89-C-025-2, say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Vice Chairman Byers: Opposed? Motion carries.

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(The motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Murphy absent from the meeting.)

GLW