

Cameron Station Civic Association
200 Cameron Station Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22304

March 28, 2024

Via Email

Members of the Planning Commission
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Re: Comments on the Vulcan Site Redevelopment (Docket Item #6)

The Executive Board of the Cameron Station Civic Association (Civic Association) is generally in favor of the Vulcan Materials redevelopment project as submitted by Lennar Corporation and Potomac Land Group II, LLC (Applicant), but has serious concerns about what, if anything, will be done by the City to ameliorate traffic congestion at the Courtney Avenue/South Van Dorn Street intersection before this project is completed. This matter is item #6 on the docket for the April 4, 2024, Planning Commission public hearing.

As most people who live in the West End know, South Van Dorn Street and, in particular, the portion from Edsall Road into Fairfax County is routinely jammed with traffic. The Civic Association is not aware of any improvements to South Van Dorn Street that have been made since the issuance of the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan (EWSAP). Accordingly, it is hard to imagine how the Vulcan site redevelopment project would not exacerbate existing severe traffic congestion, particularly at the intersection of Courtney Avenue and South Van Dorn Street.

The Applicant submitted a revised Traffic Impact Study prepared by Wells + Associates (Traffic Study) and it is unclear whether this study is accurate since it collected data on October 13, 2021ⁱ which was at the height of the pandemic. While the Traffic Study made some minor adjustments to the 2021 data collected, the baseline data from 2021 with adjustments is less than pre-pandemic levels and highly unlikely to be close to current traffic volumes.ⁱⁱ We recommend that, before this project is approved, a new traffic study be conducted with 2024 data as a baseline so as to more accurately predict future traffic conditions.

Even using the 2021 pre-pandemic traffic data to reflect current traffic conditions, the Traffic Study states that these fail: Edsall Road/S. Van Dorn Street during the PM peak hour

(LOS “E”); Farrington Avenue/Eisenhower Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street during the AM peak hour (LOS “E”); westbound left turn at S. Pickett Street/S. Van Dorn Street (AM/PM); northbound right turn at S. Pickett Street/S. Van Dorn Street (AM/PM); westbound left turn at Farrington Avenue/Eisenhower Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street (AM/PM); westbound through-right at Farrington Avenue/Eisenhower Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street (AM/PM); southbound left turn at Farrington Avenue/Eisenhower Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street (AM/PM); eastbound left-through-right at S. Pickett Street/Edsall Road/Cameron Station Boulevard (AM/PM); and northbound left turn at S. Pickett Street/Edsall Road/Cameron Station Boulevard (AM/PM). Moreover, charts the Traffic Study give LOS “F” and/or “E” ratings (the two lowest LOS ratings) in 2022 and 2026 for both AM Peak Hour and PM Peak Hour for certain approach/lane groups at “Edsall Road/S. Van Dorn Street – Signalized”, “S. Pickett Street/S. Van Dorn Street - Signalized”, “Courtney Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street – Signalized”, and “Farrington Avenue/Eisenhower Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street – Signalized”.ⁱⁱⁱ The Traffic Study also notes that these failing conditions occur with or without the redevelopment which strongly suggests that improvements need to be made to South Van Dorn Street now.^{iv}

Exacerbating the issue is that the Eisenhower West Transportation Alternatives Analysis Study does not recommend that the City go forward with the much needed multimodal bridge that would help pedestrians, bicyclists and the vast majority of Alexandrians who drive. The aforementioned study merely suggests that the multimodal bridge “be on the City’s radar for further study as additional development moves forward in the Eisenhower Valley”. There are a number of redevelopment projects in process and more soon to come within the EWSAP boundary. One of the key elements of the EWSAP as well as the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan and central to the transportation study done for the EWSAP is the creation of a “north-south multimodal bridge that will connect pedestrians, bikes, transit, and cars from South Pickett Street to the Van Dorn Metrorail Station, highlighted in the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan.” (See EWSAP, p. 7). The EWSAP transportation study also took into consideration the possibility that the multimodal bridge would not be created, but, under that scenario, assumed that “[i]f the multimodal bridge were not constructed under the 2040 Build scenario, it would require significant widening of Van Dorn Street to accommodate the intersection improvements ... in addition to dedicated transit lanes and an improved pedestrian and bicycle connection between South Pickett Street and Eisenhower Avenue. The resultant significant width of Van Dorn Street would be contrary to the urban and pedestrianized character that is envisioned within the plan area. In addition, a widening of Van Dorn Street still does not achieve improved multimodal connectivity to the extent that the multimodal bridge does and may not support the full 9.3 million square feet of proposed new development.” (EWSAP, p. 43)

Based on the foregoing, the Civic Association requests that:

- The Traffic Study for the Vulcan Materials redevelopment project be redone with more current data.
- City staff publicly disseminate a detailed report demonstrating that proposed changes that will be made at the Courtney Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street intersection

will ameliorate traffic on S. Van Dorn Street in spite of the increased car traffic that will be generated by the Vulcan Materials redevelopment project.^v

- The City commit to reevaluating the necessity for constructing a multimodal bridge prior to additional redevelopment being ready for occupancy along South Van Dorn Street.

If there are any questions concerning these comments, please contact the undersigned at charles.maynard@outlook.com, or by phone at (202) 230-2628.

Sincerely,

/s/

Charles Maynard
President
Cameron Station Civic Association

cc: Karl Moritz
Robert M. Kerns
Maya Contreras
Jared Alves
Ken Wire
Gloria Sitton

ⁱ Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at p. 346.

ⁱⁱ Traffic congestion in 2021 was only about half of what it was before the Covid-19 pandemic, but the Traffic Study only adjusted its results by 10% in the AM and 3% in the PM. See Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at p. 346 and <https://www.npr.org/2023/01/10/1148205765/traffic-congestion-got-much-worse-in-2022-but-is-still-below-pre-pandemic-levels>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at pp. 349 and 357. The Traffic Study also notes that these failing conditions occur with or without the redevelopment which strongly suggests that improvements need to be made to South Van Dorn Street now. See

^{iv} Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at p. 370.

^v The Traffic Study states that “the Applicant has committed to improving the intersection of S. Van Dorn Street/Courtney Avenue by removing the eastbound right turn channelization, installing marked crosswalks across S. Van Dorn Street, providing protected-only phasing for the southbound left turn movement, and split phasing timings for the Courtney Avenue approaches. This improvement will enhance the pedestrian connectivity and allow residents of the new development the ability to cross S. Van Dorn Street to utilize the sidewalk on the east side of the road.” See Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at p. 362. The Civic Association would be interested in knowing how these undertakings improve car traffic and if there are any other measures that can be undertaken to ameliorate traffic congestion at the intersection of S. Van Dorn Street/Courtney Avenue. It is worth noting that the Traffic Study states that “[d]elays would increase at the Courtney Avenue/S. Van Dorn Street intersection as a result of the multimodal improvements planned.” See Vulcan Redevelopment Staff Report at p. 378.

From: [Yasir Nagi](#)
To: [PlanComm](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Supporting Item #6 - Vulcan Site Redevelopment
Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024 10:17:05 AM

You don't often get email from yasirnagi@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi,

I'd like to express my support for the redevelopment plan of the Vulcan Site next to the van dorn metro. I currently live directly north of the site on edsall street, and I believe redeveloping the area to fit housing for the missing middle income bracket is an ideal way to address the lack of housing in Alexandria and in NOVA in general.

I would request that the redevelopment prioritize multimodal and public forms of transportation to areas of importance, such as to the nearby grocery store LA mart and other transfer points such as the van dorn metro stop and VRE backlick road stop.

My sole concern at the moment is what the impacts to traffic on van dorn street will be. Even as the Vulcan Site sits dormant, van dorn street is consistently backed up between the intersections of edsall and eisenhower. I'd be interested if additional roads that run parallel to van dorn street could be built, so that the street map of this area can resemble a grid of local roads like in old town alexandria rather than a heavily used single road as it currently is.

Excited to hear how the hearing goes on April 4th.

Thank you and have a good day,
Yasir Nagi

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4 April 2024

Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

As the Alexandria leadership team for YIMBYS of Northern Virginia, we enthusiastically support the redevelopment of the Vulcan Materials Site at 701 S Van Dorn St and 698 Burnside Place. Alexandria desperately needs more homes to support everyone who works and goes to school in our region. This project will transform an industrial site that is no longer in use into 323 new homes, including condos, townhouses, and stacked townhouses, providing more opportunities to live in our city. The project will contribute over \$3.5 million to Alexandria's affordable housing fund, and the increased supply of homes will help keep older condo buildings in Landmark affordable for first-time homebuyers.

The project will also benefit the whole community with a new 4.4-acre public park in a location without many nearby parks. It will also include a new hotel where visitors to Landmark can generate tax revenue for Alexandria rather than Fairfax County.

We hope Alexandria will continue to welcome new homes of all types, all price points, and in all parts of our city to address our regional housing crisis and make our city better for everyone.

Phoebe Coy, Alex Goyette, Luca Gattoni-Celli, Peter Sutherland, Stephanie Elms, and Trip Hook
YIMBYS of Northern Virginia Alexandria leads



Holmes Run

Civic Association

April 4, 2024

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We write in support of the proposed redevelopment at Vulcan Materials site and to highlight some concerns related to medium and long-term traffic impacts.

Let us start with the positive elements. We are very excited about the addition of housing in our area and we look forward to welcoming new neighbors to the community. Additionally, we are very supportive of the new 6-acre park and other planned park improvements.

However, we believe that the current plan does not address the traffic challenges created by this project. Van Dorn Street is already a high-volume road and the Vulcan site is near three high-crash intersections. **We strongly encourage the Planning Commission to require traffic studies**, including the potential for a multimodal bridge, **to understand the impacts before, during and after construction.**

Current traffic counts and modeling of the impact of the post-build scenarios is imperative.

As you know, Van Dorn Street is a major commuting route. It provides access to multiple businesses, serves as a critical emergency corridor and connects our community to the Van Dorn Metro Station. We believe it is imperative that new developments improve the conditions on the roadway. These traffic studies and the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans that they inform provide residents with assurances that the project will not worsen the situation on the corridor.

Sincerely,
James Lewis
President, Holmes Run Civic Association

From: alcox@comcast.net
To: [PlanComm](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments on Vulcan Redevelopment for 4/4/24 Planning Commission Hearing (Docket # 6)
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 4:24:06 PM

You don't often get email from alcox@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Chair and Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing this email to note my general support for the Vulcan Materials redevelopment project, but I am extremely concerned about traffic congestion along South Van Dorn and the lack of plans to mitigate traffic. We need the City to do something now to mitigate traffic along South Van Dorn Street to accommodate the increased traffic that will be coming from the Vulcan redevelopment as well as from the many other projects already approved and sure to come along South Van Dorn Street.

Sincerely,

Al Cox, FAIA emeritus
311 N Alfred St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
202-531-7955

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WEST END BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Alexandria Planning Commissioners,

We write in support of the proposed redevelopment at Vulcan Materials site and to highlight some concerns related to medium and long-term traffic impacts.

Let us start with the positive elements. We are very excited about the addition of housing in our area and we look forward to welcoming new neighbors to the community. Additionally, we are very supportive of the new 6-acre park and other planned park improvements.

However, we believe that the current plan does not address the traffic challenges created by this project. Van Dorn is already a high-volume road and the Vulcan site is near three high-crash intersections. We strongly encourage the Planning Commission to require traffic studies, including the potential for a multimodal bridge, to understand the impacts before, during and after construction.

It is our understanding that Transportation and Environmental Services staff have the internal expertise and modeling tools to conduct traffic counts (using today's volumes) and model the impact of post-build scenarios.

As you know, Van Dorn Street is a major commuting route, provides access to multiple businesses and serves as a critical emergency corridor. We believe it is imperative that new development improves the conditions on the roadway and these studies will provide residents with assurances that the project will not worsen the situation on the corridor.

We are grateful for your consideration of our view on this matter.

Respectfully,

 dotloop verified
04/04/24 3:56 PM EDT
D8V3-0FF6-CQNG-MLNP

Mary Ann Burstein
President
West End Business Association
3213 Duke St Box #128, Alexandria, VA 22314

From: [Martin Menez](#)
To: [PlanComm](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments on Vulcan Redevelopment for 4/4/24 Planning Commission Hearing (Docket # 6)
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 4:26:00 PM

You don't often get email from martin.menez@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Alexandria Planning Commission,

Good afternoon.

I am writing this email to note my general support for the Vulcan Materials redevelopment project, but I am extremely concerned about traffic congestion along South Van Dorn and the lack of plans to mitigate traffic. We need the City to do something now to mitigate traffic along South Van Dorn Street not just to accommodate the increased traffic that will be coming from the Vulcan redevelopment as well as from the many other projects already approved and sure to come along South Van Dorn Street.

Martin Menez
Director
Cameron Station Civic Association
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Email: Martin.Menez@att.net

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