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Jackie Henderson

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To: William Euille; Del Pepper; Paul Smedberg; Jackie Henderson; Tony Castrilli; Craig Fifer; JoAnn Maldonado; Elaine Scott; Allison Silberberg; Justin Wilson; Timothy Lovain; John Chapman
Subject: COA Contact Us: City Council Public Hearing, January 12, 2013, Comments Docket Item 8
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COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

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Subject: City Council Public Hearing, January 12, 2013, Comments Docket Item 8

Enclosed are comments for the City Council Public Hearing, January 12, 2013

regarding Docket 8, Proposed Ordinance 13-0891, incorporating provisions of

the Transportation Master Plan into the Master Plan for the City of

Alexandria. My comments relate primarily to Corridor C. The proposed

Comments: changes should not be approved because they are too prescriptive, too

preliminary, would reduce flexibility to account for changes and limit

further public discussion of other reasonable alternatives. In addition

the proposed changes have not been coordinated in a meaningful way with

adjacent jurisdictions and are inconsistent with previous direction

provided by the City Council. Adoption of the

changes as part of the

City's Master Plan would limit flexibility due to changes in future market

conditions.

1. Inexplicably, the City has not completed a transit study

on ridership between Van Dorn Metro Station to Shirlington. There is

currently very little ridership between Van Dorn and Mark Center where

current buses enter the I-395 HOV lanes at Seminary Road. Even in the

future, with the exception of the Landmark area and development at Mark

Center and along Seminary Road west, there is little economic justification

for 4.7 mile Corridor C from Van Dorn Metro to Shirlington as currently

planned.

2. A number of road projects have already been approved and

little is known as to the potential impact of the projects on a BRT line.

VDOT is in the process of constructing toll lanes near Edsall Road, a north

bound HOV ramp is slated for construction on I-395 at Seminary Road, short

and long term improvements are being made at I-395 and Seminary Road, Mark

Center Station will likely become a regional transit hub for commuters

living further south and the City is proposing that Southern Towers would

become a transit hub on Corridor C. In addition, the City Transportation

Staff continues to advocate for a traffic ellipse at Seminary Road and

Beauregard Street. Proposed changes to the City's Master Plan are

premature, should await better clarity and deferring action would provide a

better handle on alternatives and eventual costs. 3. The direction by

the City Council to optimize service to the Northern Virginia Community

College has not occurred. Consequently, in my

judgment it is unnecessary

to include previous City Council guidance in the City's Master Plan.

4. The City's proposal for Corridor C has not been coordinated with

regional planning efforts. The City's Master Plan should reflect efforts

to coordinate transportation (streets) and transit with adjacent

jurisdictions. Arlington and Fairfax Counties have ambitious plans for

town center and transit development serving the Bailey's Crossroads and

Skyline areas. These plans could include improving access to NVCC via

Dawes Street as well as to BRAC and Mark Center Station. Without some

level of mutual coordination with regional planning efforts, the City of

Alexandria may end up wasting money and need to later amend the master plan

to incorporate necessary changes. Not coordinating efforts causes delays

and increases the cost for developers as well as for the City. Also, by

not coordinating our efforts, we may end up not getting the quality type of

development that will sustain economic growth.

5. The general language in

Section 3 is both sweeping and unclear. This makes it very difficult for

citizens to provide reasonable comments with lawyerly language hinting at

potential conflicts.

6. The Docket Item includes an Information Sheet,

Working Draft, Standard Practices/City-Wide Policies and Practices. This

briefing should be deferred to a later time and is not germane to the

proposal to amend the City's Master Plan. In addition, City-Wide Policy:

Figure 1 shows a map with a secondary road adjacent to townhouses and

single family homes paralleling North Beauregard Street. The road would

reduce traffic on North Beauregard, provide direct access to the proposed

town center, and increase traffic at both John Adams and William Ramsey

Elementary Schools. I suggest no action be taken by the City Council

regarding approval of any framework streets in the Beauregard Small Area

Plan until issues regarding traffic next to the residential neighborhood

and at the schools have been adequately resolved.

In conclusion, I

believe the proposed changes are unnecessary, too prescriptive, limit

further consideration of other more cost effective alternatives. Much of

the transportation and transit planning in the Seminary and Beauregard area

has been piecemeal and reactive. With all the changes that have been

approved and currently under discussion, a more comprehensive plan is

necessary to ensure redevelopment will be transit, pedestrian and bike

friendly.

Thank you