

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF JAMES CITY, VIRGINIA, WAS HELD ON THE FOURTH DAY OF NOVEMBER TWO-THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARD ROOM, 101-F MOUNTS BAY ROAD, JAMES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

1. ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners

Present:

Robin Bledsoe
Rich Krapf
Tim O'Connor
George Drummond
John Wright, III
Heath Richardson

Staff Present:

Paul Holt, Planning Director
Jason Purse, Zoning Administrator
Maxwell Hlavin, Assistant County Attorney

Absent:

Chris Basic

Ms. Robin Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Bledsoe opened the public comment.

As no one wished to speak, Ms. Bledsoe closed the public comment.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes from the May 26, 2015 Board of Supervisors/ Planning Commission Joint Work Session

B. Minutes from the October 7, 2015 Regular Meeting

C. Development Review Committee

i. SP-0067-2015, Greensprings Vacation Resort Maintenance Building Master Plan Consistency

Mr. John Wright moved to approve the Consent Agenda.

The consent agenda was approved by voice vote, 6-0, Mr. Basic being absent.

4. REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION

A. Policy Committee

Mr. Wright stated that the Policy Committee met on October 15, 2015 to discuss the Planning Division Work Program for 2015 – 2016 and the prioritization of possible code amendments. Mr. Wright stated that staff presented nineteen items that the Planning Division believes will improve the development process by increasing the level of predictability and flexibility for Planning policies and ordinances. Mr. Wright stated that the Committee discussed each item briefly and provided comments and

recommended actions. The Committee generally agreed to proceed to the point where the Planning staff was ready to present a more thorough examination of each item so that the Committee could recommend changes, and provide a timeframe for those items requiring action by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

A. SUP-0005-2015. Clara Byrd Baker Elementary School Parking Addition and Improvements

Mr. Paul Holt, Planning Director, stated that the applicant has requested a one month deferral to allow time to consider the best way to move forward with implementation of the project. Mr. Holt stated that staff concurs with the request and recommends that the case be deferred to the December 2, 2015 Planning Commission meeting.

Ms. Bledsoe opened the public hearing.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that the public hearing would remain open until the December 2, 2015 Planning Commission meeting.

B. Mooretown Road Extended Corridor Study

Mr. Jason Purse, Zoning Administrator, stated that in 2009, the Mooretown Road extension was incorporated into the adopted James City County Comprehensive Plan; however, the Comprehensive Plan did not define a specific route for the extension. Mr. Purse stated that the Mooretown Road extension remained a recommendation of the adopted Comprehensive Plan update, *Toward 2035 Leading the Way*, and was included in a corridor vision section.

Mr. Purse stated that in October 2012, the Board of Supervisors appropriated \$400,000 in Federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds to conduct a feasibility study of the potential Mooretown Road Extended Corridor. Mr. Purse stated that in November 2013, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) was chosen as the consultant for the study. Mr. Purse stated that the study began in early 2014 with a data collection phase that included the three public meetings.

Mr. Purse stated that the final study document includes detailed discussions of existing conditions, traffic forecasts, development of alternatives, as well as recommendations. It should be noted that there are no existing plans to construct any of the potential alignments, and no funding has been identified. Mr. Purse noted that adoption of the study document does not dictate future decisions about a potential extension of Mooretown Road; however, all of the potential impacts of the various alignments will have already been evaluated should a proposal for the road be submitted in the future.

Mr. Purse stated that staff concurs with VHB that Alternative 2 limits the environmental impacts, leaves the most developable area acreage available, and also confines the roadway to those properties that originally "opted-in" to the Economic Opportunity designation area in 2009. Mr. Purse further stated that given uncertainty regarding ultimate land use needs surrounding the potential roadway, staff also understands the need to preserve a certain amount of flexibility with respect to final alignment options and believes it is important to keep the pro/con discussion of all three alignments should future conditions dictate the need for a modified design.

Mr. Purse stated that staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Mooretown Road Extended Corridor Study Report.

Mr. Keith Lewis, VHB, provided a presentation on the corridor study summarizing the study process; the public input; the three proposed alignments; and the development potential of the property.

Mr. Rich Krapf inquired, if funding were available, how long it would take to go from Step 4, Environmental Analysis, on the timeline to Step 7, Construction.

Mr. Lewis stated that it would depend on the type of environmental document required, but could be two or three years and that final designs would require approximately 18 months. Mr. Lewis further stated that the right-of-way phase would depend on the particular alignment and the amount of right-of-way required and could take two to three years. Mr. Lewis stated that for a project of this size, construction could take two to three years.

Mr. Heath Richardson inquired about which alternative was preferred by the greatest number of citizens.

Mr. Lewis stated that the greatest number of public comments opposed environmental or neighborhood impacts which guided the selection of Alternative 2 as the preferred option. Mr. Lewis further stated that of the small group participating in the voting exercise, the preference was for Alternative 1.

Mr. Richardson inquired if there was a sense of why the community preferred Alternative 1.

Mr. Lewis responded that owners of larger parcels felt that it allowed for better development of those parcels.

Mr. Wright inquired about the cost estimate for the project.

Mr. Lewis stated that the estimate was in the range of 60 to 65 million dollars.

Mr. Tim O'Connor inquired about the developable area affected by Alternative 3.

Mr. Lewis stated that it would lend to smaller development such as residential and retail. Mr. Lewis further noted that some of the area adjacent to the proposed road would not be developable due to the resource protection area.

Mr. O'Connor noted that Alternative 2 would impact development on the Northern side because of the cost to develop infrastructure to connect to the road.

Mr. O'Connor inquired about how much environmentally sensitive acreage would be impacted by Alternative 1 as opposed to Alternative 2.

Mr. Lewis stated that Alternative 1 would impact 3.5 acres of wetlands while Alternative 2 would impact 1.4 acres. Mr. Lewis further stated another factor would be the stream impacts. Mr. Lewis stated that Alternative 1 has 1,177 linear feet of stream impacts and Alternative 2 has 480 linear feet of stream impacts.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether the use of the proposed road as an evacuation route was a primary consideration.

Mr. Purse stated that there were three initial purposes for the road: to encourage economic development; to alleviate traffic issue along Route 60 in the area of Lightfoot Road; and to provide an additional evacuation route. Mr. Purse further stated that the previous County Administrator had noted flooding issues along Route 60 during storm events. Mr. Purse further noted that the exit at Route 199 and I 64 will be the first opportunity for anyone evacuating Southside Hampton Roads to exit the interstate.

Ms. Bledsoe requested that Mr. Lewis elaborate on the neighborhood impact of each alternative alignment.

Mr. Lewis stated that Alternative 1 was designed to be as far removed from the Pineridge neighborhood as possible. Mr. Lewis noted that the alignment also attempt to avoid impacts on some smaller residential areas and farmland. Mr. Lewis further noted that there are two residences that may be impacted.

Mr. Lewis stated that Alternative 2 may have impacts on the campground and the equestrian farm.

Mr. Lewis stated that the impacts for Alternative 3 would primarily affect the residences along Rochambeau Drive as the right-of-way is fairly narrow.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired if the impacted property owners have been involved in the study process.

Mr. Lewis stated that he was not certain if the individuals had been involved; however, at this stage the consultants usually do not contact specific property owners. Mr. Lewis noted that there was substantial input from the Pineridge neighborhood. Mr. Lewis further noted that the property owners along Rochambeau Drive and Maxton lane had been invited to meet with the consultants. Mr. Lewis further noted that the consultants had spoken with the owners of the equestrian farm at the last public meeting and that they were not in favor of the new road.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether the impact on adjacent property owner for the western third of Alternative 1 was less than the impact on adjacent property owners for the western third of Alternative 2.

Mr. Lewis stated that there would be fewer impacts with Alternative 1.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether there would be any benefit to blending Alternatives 1 & 2.

Mr. Lewis stated that there would be trade-offs between residential impacts and environmental impacts.

Mr. Richardson inquired whether recommending adoption of the Mooretown Road Corridor Study to the Board of Supervisors would eliminate the potential to make changes to the alignment at a later date.

Mr. Holt stated that these are just conceptual alignments and analysis of the alternatives.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that by recommending adoption of the Study, the Commission is stating that the three options are acceptable.

Mr. Krapf noted that if the Board adopts the Study, it means that there is a lot of valuable data in the report in the form of analysis of the alternatives and that it has merit for future application. Mr. Krapf stated that the Study provides a starting point for future work, knowing that there are many variables such as available funding, and tweaks to the final design of the road before it becomes an approved plan.

Mr. Holt noted that Board adoption would recognize that the Study provides three potential alignments which have been vetted in public forums and has analyzed the pros and cons of each option. Mr. Holt further stated that at this time, it is unknown what the future land use may be and that the land use would ultimately drive the final design of the road.

Mr. Holt stated that staff recommends Alternative 2 based on the analyses; however, what the Commission chooses to recommend to the Board is completely their decision.

Mr. Richardson suggested that the Commission could recommend adoption with the caveat to ensure minimal impact on property owners.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that the Commission should hear the public comment before considering the content of a motion.

Ms. Bledsoe opened the public hearing.

Mr. Frank Polster, 420 Hempstead Road, stated that the Commission should not consider a recommendation on the Mooretown Road Extended Study until the Strategic Plan is completed in October of 2016. Mr. Polster noted evaluating the Study at that time would place it in the context of the County's future direction and allow for properly assessing its impacts on the environment, quality of life for the existing residents and transportation priorities. Mr. Polster further noted that the road must be designed to address the expected increases in congestion on Croaker Road, and Lightfoot Road.

Mr. Polster recommended looking at the project from a regional perspective and exploring innovative ideas such as a revenue sharing agreement so that the County benefits from businesses which may locate and generate revenue in an adjacent locality because of the County's investment in the transportation infrastructure. Mr. Polster further suggested exploring the potential for shared cost for infrastructure.

Mr. Polster noted that the County only owns 13.5 acres of land for economic development and suggested that the County seek to obtain additional land along the proposed corridor for economic development or for a school site.

Mr. O'Connor requested that Mr. Polster clarify whether the 13.5 acres was owned by the EDA.

Mr. Polster confirmed that the land is owned by the EDA.

Mr. Jack Fowler, 109 Wilderness Lane, stated that the majority of property owners were opposed to the road and that it would only benefit specific property owners.

As no one else wished to speak, Ms. Bledsoe closed the public hearing.

Ms. Bledsoe opened the floor for questions by the Commission.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired where the 13.5 acre EDA property is located.

Mr. Purse responded that he believed it might be located in the James River Commerce Center in the Grove area.

Mr. O'Connor stated that he believed the speaker was referring in general to property owned by the County available for economic development and not to a parcel within the Study area.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that if the parcels were developed, the benefit to the County would be revenue from taxes unless the development was housing which would result in a deficit. Ms. Bledsoe inquired if the parcels were zoned for housing.

Mr. Purse responded that the parcels are Zoned A-1, General Agricultural, and that if the parcels owners wish to develop without going through legislative action the uses would be agricultural or residential. If the property owners wanted to do more intense development and follow the Economic Opportunity zoning district, they would need to go through the rezoning process which would allow for consideration of all aspects of the proposal.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether it was intended for the developer to be responsible for the cost of extending water, sewer and other infrastructure.

Mr. Purse stated that it would be part of the conditions associated with a rezoning process. Mr. Purse stated that right-of-way acquisition could also be included in the associated proffers.

Mr. Krapf requested clarification that the requirement for a master plan for the Economic Opportunity zoning district was not connected to and not part of the process for the Mooretown Road Corridor Study.

Mr. Purse stated that they are entirely different processes. Mr. Purse further stated that, under the Economic Opportunity designation land use description in the Comprehensive Plan, if the land designated Economic Opportunity is developed a regional master plan must be developed to ensure cohesive development. Mr. Purse further stated the master plan would be developed at the time a rezoning application is submitted.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired if the road was based on development.

Mr. Purse responded that one of the aspects considered was impact to areas that are designated Economic Opportunity that would need to be served by the roadway but the actual land uses and development patterns would be a different process. Mr. Purse noted that in considering the potential alignments, it would not preclude any type of development addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Richardson stated that in essence the Study is a sketch that will ultimately be filled in by the Strategic Plan and any master plan for development of the Economic Opportunity parcels.

Mr. Purse noted that the Comprehensive Plan envisions the Mooretown Road Extension as a private road. Mr. Purse stated that if a developer comes forward for the Economic Opportunity parcels, they would be directed to the study as a guide.

Mr. Richardson noted that having initial studies such as this will help in determining the future needs for the County.

Ms. Bledsoe opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Wright stated that, considering the timetable and the estimated cost, he believes other needs identified in the Strategic Plan will take precedence over development of the Mooretown Road

Extension. Mr. Wright further stated that he could support recommending the Study because he believes that ultimately the right priorities will be chosen and the right development decisions will be made.

Mr. Richardson stated that he can support recommending the Study to the Board without any caveats or stipulations.

Mr. O'Connor stated that he considers the Study to be one tool in a toolbox. Mr. O'Connor stated that it is necessary to look at the potential impacts early on in order to move forward promptly when funding becomes available. Mr. O'Connor stated that he understands the concerns of the residents who oppose the road; however, if a plan is not identified and piecemeal development is allowed, the design options will be more limited and have a greater impact. Mr. O'Connor noted that this is an opportunity to analyze options and to look at a plan as a first step in looking at the future of the area. Mr. O'Connor stated that he could support forwarding the Study to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Krapf stated that he believes that the study should be viewed as a database, an analysis of options and as a starting point for future decisions. Mr. Krapf further stated that he concurs with the idea of tying the study into the Strategic Plan. Mr. Krapf noted that the study is flexible and can be adapted to an approved strategic plan. Mr. Krapf concurred that avoiding piecemeal development is necessary and that the study is a tool to provide for orderly development.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that she does not believe that recommending approval of the Study at this time would be in conflict with the Strategic Plan process. Ms. Bledsoe stated that the Study gives the County the opportunity to plan ahead for potential economic development. Ms. Bledsoe noted that the County needs to attract businesses that will generate a greater revenue stream and that they will need substantial parcels of land. Ms. Bledsoe stated that she does have concerns about the impact on the residential properties. Ms. Bledsoe stated that the residential impacts are comparatively minimal, but that she believes impact to even one home is too much. Ms. Bledsoe stated that hopes that a plans move forward there will be ways to eliminate the residential and small business impacts. Ms. Bledsoe stated that she supports moving the Study forward.

Mr. O'Connor stated that when the equestrian center brought their proposal before the DRC, staff ensured that they were well aware of the potential for a road to be built in that area.

Mr. Krapf moved that the Commission recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Mooretown Road Extension Corridor Study.

On a roll call vote, the Commission voted to recommend adoption of the Mooretown Road Extension Corridor Study (6-0).

6. **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Holt stated that there was nothing more to add other than what was submitted in the Planning Commission packet.

6. **COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND REQUESTS**

Ms. Bledsoe stated that she wanted to ensure that everyone received the information provided regarding the Strategic Planning Advisory Group. Ms. Bledsoe stated that she was impressed by the group and that it will be very beneficial to the Strategic Plan process.

Mr. Wright inquired about the other advisory groups.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that there is an advisory group consisting of people within the community that have an interest in the future development of the County or experience that they bring to the discussion and a more technical advisory group consisting of staff that reviews the finding of the advisory group.

Mr. Wight inquired if the meetings were open to the public.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that all meeting except for the technical advisory group are open to the public.

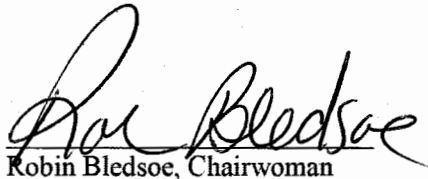
Ms. Bledsoe stated that Mr. O'Connor will cover the Board of Supervisors meetings for November and Mr. Drummond will have December.

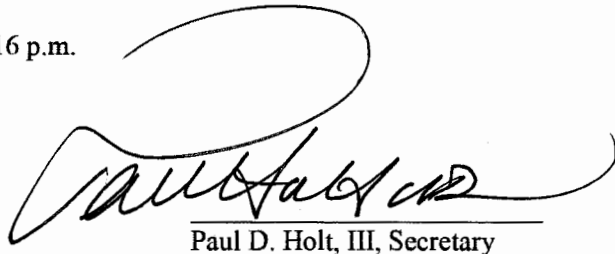
8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Bledsoe called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Krapf moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:16 p.m.


Robin Bledsoe, Chairwoman


Paul D. Holt, III, Secretary