

County of Loudoun
Department of Planning
MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 3, 2009

TO: Loudoun County Planning Commission

FROM: Nicole Steele, Project Manager

SUBJECT: December 10, 2009 Planning Commission Worksession – CMPT 2008-0020 & SPEX 2008-0061, White’s Ford Park

Background

At the November 19, 2009 Planning Commission Public Hearing, staff recommended denial of both the Commission Permit and Special Exception applications. After the staff and applicant’s presentations, there were a few clarification questions by the Planning Commission regarding splitting the applications and moving the Commission Permit forward separately, the condition of Hibler Road, and preservation of on-site Historic Resources. Following a short discussion, thirty-three members of the public spoke on the application; twenty-seven (27) were opposed to the park in its current form and six (6) supported the park in general. The general issues that were raised by the public, include the lack of adequate transportation facilities accessing the site, potential shoreline erosion caused by motorboats, impact of camping trailers on-site, status of historic preservation on-site, water safety, police patrol and staffing, general environmental degradation, and the need for wildlife protection. The Planning Commission commented individually on the major transportation concerns regarding accessing the site, the potential impact to the Potomac River, and limiting motorized boats and trailers from the site. The Planning Commission voted 8-0-1 (Ruedisueli absent) to forward both applications to a worksession for further discussion.

Following the Public Hearing, the applicant sent out a letter to the neighbors along Hibler and Limestone School Roads discussing proposed spot improvements to Hibler Road. The letter is attached to this memo and requested comments and suggestions regarding the proposal from the neighbors. Staff is aware the applicant has received a number of responses, but does not know the content of the responses.

Transportation Improvements

While the proposed use is generally consistent with the Revised General Plan; the Countywide Transportation Plan and the RGP link land use in the rural area to compatibility with

surrounding uses and safe access. Current conditions of Limestone School Road and Hibler Road do not offer safe access to the site, particularly for vehicles with trailers.

County Staff, VDOT and the applicant have continued to discuss the possibility of spot improvements along Hibler Road. Since the Public Hearing, VDOT stated that these types of spot improvements should be evaluated on a case by case basis and acknowledged that they have been approved in other locations in the past. However, it was also confirmed that spot improvements are not appropriate in this circumstance, due to the overall condition of Hibler Road. VDOT and OTS would continue to recommend an upgrade to the entire section of Hibler Road to create a safe access to the site, especially with the use of trailers. During this discussion, it was suggested by VDOT that a paved 20-foot section may not be sufficient to accommodate the type of vehicles expected to access the park site. Widening and paving Hibler Road would be in conflict with Revised General Plan policies to maintain and protect the rural character of our unpaved roads in western Loudoun.

Applicant Response

On December 2, 2009, the applicant submitted revised traffic analysis to reflect average daily trips, suggested conditions limiting the proposed uses further, and revisions to the Commission Permit plat addressing concerns brought up at the Public Hearing. The applicant has provided the revised traffic analysis to suggest that the average daily trips accessing the park are lower in context to the originally provided peak daily trip counts. The revisions made to the Commission Permit plat include; designating land conservation areas, increasing the buffer to the Potomac River, limiting special events during the Temple Hall Maize, limiting construction of the Potomac Heritage Trail to above the high water line, commitment to maintain black locust on-site, requiring lighting to only relate to structures, and a commitment to provide spot improvements to Hibler Road. Staff has not had an opportunity to review these materials and will provide an update at the Planning Commission worksession.

Recommendation:

Staff continues to recommend denial of both applications based on the lack of adequate transportation facilities accessing the site. Staff recommends that discussion focus on whether a solution to transportation access is viable before continuing discussion on other land use topics of the park proposal.

Suggested Motions:

1a. I move that the Planning Commission deny CMPT 2008-0020, White's Ford Park, and forward it to the Board of Supervisors for ratification based on the attached Findings.

AND,

1b. I move that the Planning Commission forward SPEX 2008-0061, White's Ford Park, to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of denial based on the attached Findings.

OR,

2. I move that the Planning Commission forward CMPT 2008-0020 & SPEX 2008-0061 – White's Ford Park, to an additional work session for further discussion.

Attachments:

1. NVRPA letter dated November 25, 2009
2. Responses to the Public Hearing dated December 2, 2009
3. Revised Traffic Analysis dated December 2, 2009
4. Findings for Denial
5. Revised CMPT plat dated December 2, 2009