

August 30, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Buckley and Council Members
City of Annapolis
160 Duke of Gloucester
Annapolis, MD 21401
VIA EMAIL ONLY

Re: Public Works Maintenance Facility Task Force
Supplement to First Report dated August 20, 2019

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of Council:

On August 20, 2019, I sent to you the First Report of the Public Works Maintenance Facility Task Force. That report was an interim – emphasis on preliminary – report to share with you and the public the findings and pending questions from the eight subcommittees under the Task Force. In that report, two subcommittees had not yet completed their reports. I write to you today to provide those reports – the initial findings of the subcommittees on (1) Housing and (2) Land Use and Partnership with Other Governmental Agencies.

There are two notes of caution worth sharing with this supplement. First, because these reports were just received and I'm anxious to share them with you and the public before our public hearing on Tuesday, September 3 (7-9 PM at the PMRC), the day after Labor Day, the full committee has not had much or any time to review their peer's reports for constructive feedback, consistency, or questions. Second, there is no attempt in this supplemental report to address errors or new information which has been discovered since the First Report – those updates will be provided at and after the public hearing. With that context, I provide the following two reports.

Respectfully submitted,

Jared Littmann, Chair
Public Works Maintenance Facility Task Force

Impact on Housing

Subcommittee Chair: Clif Martin

Subcommittee Members: none [there was one member who has since withdrawn]

Report:

The need for additional housing (especially affordable) is common to both sites and there is a possibility for fulfilling that need if the Forest Drive option is selected for the public works building, as this would open the possibility for new residential development at the Spa Road site. Based upon the Land Use Subcommittee report, there is an understanding that housing is a far more complex issue that requires a long-term comprehensive plan after a study of all factors impacting the areas. However, that subcommittee has indicated from a broader perspective that the Spa Road location would potentially be preferable for additional residences although residential development at the Spa Road site will require a Special Exception (Source: Impact on Land Use Report). Both sites are in similar residential areas, and the new facility would have similar impacts on the residential areas that surround them. The choice of either site would result in the potential of additional housing resources at the other site which would require a comprehensive long-term plan to determine how the environment, infrastructure, schools and other impact areas are affected. The plan should include a detailed plan to increase and enhance affordable housing resources.

Feasibility of Residential at Spa Road and The MPDU Impact

Currently, legislation mandates that 12% of total units constructed are to be Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU) in the City of Annapolis. There is currently proposed legislation that would raise the threshold to 15%.

1. Therefore, if the City were to choose to sell the Spa Road location (8.25 acres) and develop the new facility at the Forest Drive location, there would be the possibility of adding up to 58 units (Source L. Farrow email of 8/5/19).
2. Using the current legislation, this could result in 7 additional MPDU units at that location. (Confirmed via email Theresa Wellman- August 29, 2019).

Feasibility of Residential at Forest Drive Location (Source L. Farrow email of 8/5/19)

The Forest Drive location is a far smaller parcel (3.59 acres), resulting in fewer residence and subsequently fewer affordable MPDU units.

1. The location and site is 3.59 acres (relatively small for residential in R2 and R3).
2. In R2, the requirement is 5,400 square feet per unit.
3. In R3, the requirement is 3,600 square feet per unit.
4. Based upon size and regulations, development would yield a very small number of residential units which is economically not feasible for many developers.
5. This small site would likely not yield any MPDU units without exceptions or density bonuses.

Impact on Land Use / Other Governments Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair: Phil Hager

Subcommittee member: Eliot Powell

Posted Information (<https://www.annapolis.gov/1562/Land-Use-and-Partnerships-with-Other-Sub>):



Posted Documents (<https://www.annapolis.gov/1562/Land-Use-and-Partnerships-with-Other-Sub>):

- [Critical Area Commission staff clarifications \(PDF\)](#)

Report:

The analysis performed by the Land Use Subcommittee is constrained – as dictated by the provisions of the authorizing legislation (Resolution R-37-19) – to only two possible outcomes: construct the DPW facility at its present site (Spa Road) or at 1701 Forest Drive. The aforementioned Resolution further stipulates that the Task Force examine specific issues, among these are: environmental impacts, land swap, cultural and historic resource impacts, housing issues, zoning requirements, traffic and transportation connectivity, intergovernmental coordination and partnering with other agencies/levels of government, quality of life considerations, economic development and commercial effects, influences upon tax revenues and city service provision, and impacts upon DPW employees.

A Public Works Maintenance Facility Task Force Memorandum provides further guidance. This document defines the purpose of the Task Force as being: “to provide the City Council with findings and recommendations on the benefits and detriments of (a) keeping the City’s Public Works facility in its current location on Spa Road or (b) selling the Spa Road land and purchasing designated property on Forest Drive to build the Public Works facility at that location.” The Memo further calls for the establishment of subcommittees and the assignment of roles to each subcommittee. Each subcommittee was then charged with producing a “mini-report”. It should be noted that purchasing the Forest Drive site will involve the re-purposing of the Spa Road site. The re-purposing of that site also triggers “benefits” and “detriments”.

The full Task Force met on 23 July; subcommittees were formed, and individual subcommittee chairs were selected. A Land Use Subcommittee comprised of Philip Hager and Eliot Powell was identified. Resolution-based issues for analysis by this subcommittee include: (1) zoning requirements, (2) environmental impacts (including Critical Area considerations), (3) cultural and historic resources, (4) housing, and (5) intergovernmental coordination (to include partnering with other agencies/levels of government). A second Task Force meeting took place on 13 August. Neither member of the Land Use Subcommittee was able to attend due to prior commitments.

As previously noted, the study’s outcomes are limited to (2) two: construction of the facility at Spa Road or re-location of the facility to the property on Forest Drive. There is no “No Option” option, nor is there the ability to identify new alternatives or to recommend further analysis. Given these limitations, this report focuses on “benefits” and “detriments” associated with both of the pre-identified outcomes in each of the five (5) above-noted issue areas.

Issue Area (1): Zoning Requirements

The necessary zoning approvals at the Spa Road location have already been obtained. Land Use at that site is identified as “Institutional” which is consistent with a public use (such as the DPW facility). The zoning classifications are residential which is not specifically consistent, however, the use is permitted via Special Exception. No further zoning-based approvals are required for the DPW facility at the Spa Road site.

Residential development on the Spa Road site will require a Special Exception, changes to the allowable coverage limits in the Critical Area, and an amendment to the Growth Allocation. Portions of the Spa Road site are in the Critical Area with both IDA and LDA designations. According to the Critical Area Commission (CAC) staff, a change in use is not grandfathered coverage; thereby limiting coverage in the IDA to 50% and in the LDA to 15%. Administrative relief to increase the coverage is possible through an amendment to the Growth Allocation. The Growth Allocation amendment (i) is estimated at 8 months, (ii) has not been granted by the City thus far, (iii) but, according to CAC staff, it would be supported by them. Coverages are not transferable between Critical Area designations.

Construction of the DPW facility at 1701 Forest Drive will involve obtaining a Special Exception. Land Use and Zoning designations are residential, however, the conformity of those uses will be evaluated as part of the hearing process. The granting of the Special Exception at

the Forest Drive site is possible – perhaps even probable – but it is certainly not a certainty. Even if the Special Exception application is approved, it will involve a time commitment that is not necessary if the Spa Road site is utilized.

If the Forest Drive site is selected as the future home for the maintenance facility, then the Spa Road site will be re-developed in a residential fashion. The Spa Road site is split zoned R2 and R3. Development approvals would be secured via the PUD process. While the PUD authorization and the Special Exception approval are entirely within the realm of feasibility, the fact that they will involve a process that will need to take place gives the nod to the Spa Road facility based upon an evaluation that is limited only to approvals needed and timeframes for securing those approvals.

Further analysis requires the review of detailed site development plans, including engineering schematics.

Issue Area (2): environmental impacts

If the Forest Drive site is selected as the future home for the maintenance facility, then the Spa Road site will be re-developed as a residential use. This re-use will trigger significant land use reviews; however, preliminary information appears to indicate that all Code-based requirements can be met at that site. Further, the new use has identified removal of existing impervious areas as well as the re-location of fuel dispensing facilities, so it may be possible to characterize this option as a “benefit”. It is unclear, however, why utilization of this site for the maintenance facility could not also incorporate the removal of existing impervious areas as well as the re-location of fuel dispensing facilities.

Regardless of which option is selected for the Spa Road property, significant stormwater management benefits (including sediment capture) would accrue. The physical constraints (size) of the Forest Drive site will serve to make desired stormwater management a challenge and may involve a more significant financial investment.

Removal of the DPW facility from such close proximity to the headwaters of Spa Creek is an unquestionable benefit but it remains unclear whether the benefits accruing from a residential re-use of the site could not be achieved through the design and construction of an effective stormwater management system in conjunction with the re-construction of the maintenance facility on Spa Road. One final consideration regarding stormwater should be noted. Not only is the Forest Drive site physically smaller in size and therefore limited in its ability to provide adequate storm water management, it is near the headwaters of Crab Creek. It would be important to avoid a situation where the negative consequences associated with contamination of Spa Creek were merely substituted for Crab Creek.

The Spa Road site lies within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay Zone. Consequently, development at that location will require conformance with the regulations associated with the Critical Area. Preliminary indications suggest that satisfying requirements associated with the Critical Area will be substantially easier if the maintenance facility remains at the Spa Road site. Changing the use from its present institutional use to a private-based

residential development may limit lot coverage and will necessitate Critical Area reviews and administrative processes. Even if all necessary approvals are secured, the timeframes will need to be adjusted by a substantial margin.

Further analysis requires the review of detailed site development plans, including engineering schematics.

Issue Area (4): cultural and historic resources

There are not formally documented historic or cultural resources site on the Forest Drive property, however, several credible private researchers have identified significant potential resources associated with this location, especially in connection with this area's role as a military installation during the Civil War. There is strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that the Forest Drive property is part of a 200-acre tract of land on which "Camp Walton" stood for the duration of the Civil War. This encampment (along with nearby Camp Harris) were secondary camps set up by the Union on private lands, which took overflow parolees from the Parole Camp and from St Johns College. Any concrete proposals for use of this site should proceed only following a Phase I Archaeological survey to identify the presence or absence of cultural resource artifacts from the Civil War era or previous occupation.

There do not appear to be any challenges regarding cultural resources at the Spa Road site, however, inquiries are pending.

Issue Area (4): housing

Decisions concerning housing need, type and affordability need to be more fully evaluated as part of the City's comprehensive planning process. As an inherently comprehensive planning-type issue, it probably exceeds the scope of this Task Force. Since it has not yet been established whether more or less housing is desired and that certain types of housing are valued over others, it is impossible to identify, analyze and produce recommendations in this issue area. From a broad perspective, Spa Road is less traveled than Forest Drive thereby making the Spa Road site preferable from a residential standpoint.

Issue Area (5): intergovernmental coordination

To be completed

Recommendations

Recommendations will be developed after subcommittee members have an opportunity to hear from the community at the September 3, 2019, public hearing and a chance to review the reports of the other subcommittees.