

Excerpt – Fairfax City Citizens for Smarter Growth

Environmental impacts:

We believe that the proposal should provide a more robust amelioration of the potential impact on Accotink Creek from removing so many trees and adding large areas of impervious surfaces. The applicant should plant additional native Virginia canopy trees, and restore the stream and woodlands in the northwest corner of the project.

● **Ecological Harm from Culverting Streams:** Two small streams that are headwaters of Accotink Creek flow through the site of the proposed project. One stream enters from the Cobbdale neighborhood and flows southeast before entering an existing culvert that conveys water under Route 123, near the intersection of Route 123 and Route 50. The stream continues in a culvert system under the Point 50 shopping center, and is ultimately discharged into the Mosby Woods tributary. A smaller, seasonal stream begins at a culvert outlet near the southwest corner of the project site and flows into the larger stream. Both are subject to extensive erosion. These streams are currently degraded, potentially harming the quality of downstream Accotink Creek, and the habitat is highly fragmented.

The proposed project would pipe the two streams under the proposed mixed-use development to tie into the existing twin box culverts near Route 123 (installed by the City and VDOT). To compensate for changes to these streams, the applicant has proposed to make improvements to another branch of Accotink Creek, near Van Dyck Park.

The City of Fairfax is committed to becoming an environmentally sustainable “green city,” which means, among other things, preventing ecological harm. The proposed project will cause further ecological harm to the already degraded streams that flow through the project site. Removing the streams and the wooded area surrounding them will eliminate wildlife habitat. However, as discussed Apex Company’s Major Water Quality Impact Assessment provided by the applicant, the downstream quality of Accotink Creek and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay, will be improved by the project and the required compensatory mitigation. We consider the localized ecological degradation with larger-scale environmental improvement to be a valid trade-off for the other benefits of the proposed project.

● **Trees:** Construction of the proposed project will require removal of more than 400 trees from a three-acre woodland. In addition to removing existing trees, the applicant is requesting modification to the requirement for four canopy trees per 100 feet on the north, west, and southern property lines and reduction in the requirement for street trees in selected areas of the development. If the council approves these modifications, the deficit in property line and street trees should be made up by requiring the applicant to plant additional Virginia native canopy trees (e.g., tulip poplar, red maple) elsewhere in the development, where tree cover is not currently planned.

● **Undisturbed corner, between Perry Street and Assembly Drive:** The proposed project will leave the northwest corner of the site undeveloped, including the stream before it is piped underground. This area is currently overgrown with invasive plants. After consultation with Cobbdale and Assembly neighborhoods, this area should be restored, including removing invasive plants and improving the stream banks as necessary, and installing a path of crushed stone or other pervious material, graded to direct runoff away from the stream.

● **Green roof:** We commend the applicant’s proposal to provide a green roof on a portion of the Brightview senior living building. When properly installed and maintained, and with the right selection of plants, green roofs are an effective way to manage stormwater. Constructing a green roof has up-front costs of up to \$30 per square foot, but over time saves money by naturally absorbing and filtering runoff. The quality of a green roof depends on the experience of the contractor, as well as the property owner’s commitment to maintenance. We recommend that City staff review the green roof plans and consult with other jurisdictions, such as the District of Columbia, Arlington and Fairfax County, to ensure that the applicant follows appropriate standards for a successful green roof. In addition, the planned 2,000 sq. ft. coverage of the green roof is small, both in relation to the overall roof area and to comparable local green roof projects on commercial buildings. We recommend that the green roof coverage be expanded.

Contributing to a more environmentally sustainable pattern of growth	Y	N	N/A	Notes
Minimizes disturbance to and enhances protection of:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource protection areas 		N		Does not enhance. A culvert will be constructed for the on-site stream in order to move the 100-year flood plain and RPA from the site. Given that this area is a prime spot for redevelopment, and the consistency with what the City has already been doing to improve stormwater management at Northfax, the re-engineering of the RPA and floodplain seems justified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established woodland and meadow areas 		N		Will pave forested area immediately south of Orchard. Underdetermined what effect the pedestrian path to the NW will have. Applicant will mitigate impacts through doing 2,190 feet of stream restoration at Van Dyck Park, and contributing \$950K in stream mitigation credits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specimen and native trees 		N		400+ trees will be removed. Also, the applicant is requesting modification to the required 4 canopy trees

				per 100 feet on the north, west, and southern property lines and requests reduction in the requirement for street trees in selected areas of the development. The deficit in property line and street trees should be made up by planting Virginia native canopy trees elsewhere in the development, e.g., the SE corner.
Minimizes impermeable surface area through the use of parking garages, underground parking or permeable surface parking.	Y			Parking garage for senior living building. Applicant proposing green roof on senior center, which will reduce somewhat impermeable surface.
Improves the overall condition of stormwater or stream flow through the site.	Y	N		Removal of floodplain from Orchard Street important to redevelopment of this area and creation of an urban street grid.
Reduces the amount of impervious surface area on the site from existing conditions		N		Increases impervious area by replacing wooded areas with buildings and pavement.
Includes innovative stormwater management measures such as green roofs, constructed wetlands, pervious paving, rain gardens, water cisterns	TB D			Developer states that rain gardens, green roof, pervious pavement, and "manufactured treatment devices" will be used. However these are not

				specified in MDP and would not come until site planning, after approval of the entitlements. Does Brightview have experience maintaining green roofs at other buildings it manages?
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