



Testimony Before the Fairfax County Planning Commission
Regarding the Exxon/INOVA Development
June 21, 2018

Background here - <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/site-specific-plan-amendment-process/nominations/pc17-pr-001>

My name is Kris Unger, with the Friends of Accotink Creek, a local environmental non-profit dedicated to protecting, restoring, and promoting the Accotink Creek watershed. Our motto is "Find one other person who cares", and we work with local communities to lead stream cleanups, invasive removals, conservation projects, and educational programs.

We also work to speak for the Accotink watershed, and the remaining wildlife and nature. Which is what brings me before you today. We appreciate the Planning Commission's work to reduce negative impacts to Fairfax watersheds associated with development and encourage you to continue and strengthen these efforts. I particularly appreciated Commissioner Cortina speaking up on a stormwater issue earlier this evening.

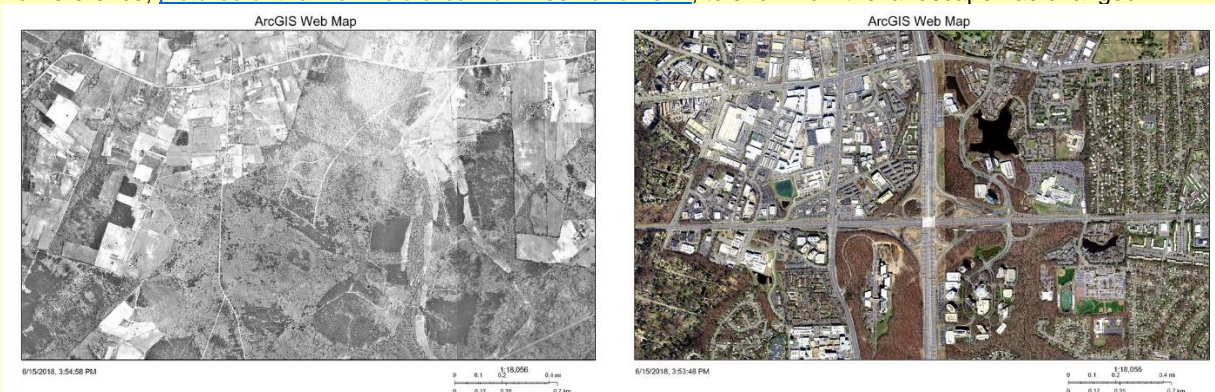
While we recognize that responsible planning and increased density can reduce watershed impacts associated with development, we are always concerned when remaining forested and natural areas are threatened by development. As you review the proposal for the Inova site on Gallows Road, as well as Fairview Park and other similar projects, we ask you to work to

- Minimize the loss of habitat and existing forested areas.
- Consider the impact of projects on wildlife corridors.
- Include stormwater impacts in the review process.
- Set a high standard for addressing stormwater impacts associated with the projects.

One of my favorite parts of my work with the Friends of Accotink Creek is when I get to bring students out of their classrooms and down to their local stream, taking them from paved surfaces and turfgrass into a wild natural forest, with ferns and fallen logs and birdsong and tall trees. We're lucky to still have these wild spaces, thanks to the passion and dedication of those who've come before us. Let's do what we can to protect what remains.

Kris Unger, Primary Conservator, Friends of Accotink Creek

For reference, [pictures of the Merrifield area from 1937 and 2017](#), to show how the landscape has changed...



Friends of Accotink Creek

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