



Statements to Planning Commission - AT&T Site [PR-004](#)

In Person Statement before Planning Commission, March 23, 2023

“Development proposals in general present the opportunity to advance environmentally sound practices– things like:

- Solar on rooftops,
- Geothermal,
- Electric vehicle charging spaces,
- Bicycle parking,
- Bird safe glass,
- Green roofs,
- Robust stormwater facilities,
- Dark sky lighting,
- Large shade trees to mitigate heat islands,
- Staying out of streamside Resource Protection Areas,
- Preserving and enhancing contiguous forest and habitat corridors
- and additional common goals that should not be overlooked when these opportunities arise.



[Video on Fairfax County Channel 16](#)

Regarding this proposal in particular, we would like to thank EYA for its concern for environmental values, including tree preservation.

We would also like to ask EYA to:

- Please find an understanding with Options for Oakton and concerned neighbors to right-size the project
- Please maintain maximum tree canopy, permanently protected
- Please maintain some areas beneath the trees as natural habitat plantings
- Please maximize use of native plant species and avoid planting of invasive species.
- Please partner with Borge Street Park for invasives control
- Please seek ways to enhance stormwater controls beyond legal minimums
- Please preserve the stream. It can become a cherished amenity.

Here we see historic maps and aerial photos showing the stream on this property [\[SLIDES\]](#)

- In 1915
- In 1944
- In 1953
- In 1976, just before the AT&T building arrived
- Today, with the County map showing a thin blue line that indicates the stream
- And the stream can flow on into the future, as a valued part of the tree preservation and open space plan.
- Here are a couple examples from other areas of how good a stream amenity can look.

This stream is small and incised, nameless and without legal protections, but it is still living water. It deserves to be cherished as an amenity and not buried as a nuisance.”

**Regarding Site Specific Plan Amendment – AT&T Site [PR-004](#)
Written Comments of the Friends of Accotink Creek**

Thank you to EYA, for a thoughtful proposal to turn this expanse of asphalt into a neighborhood while preserving and expanding tree cover with "potential extension of the Borge Street Park natural space" ([p.3](#)) and enhanced stormwater treatment. All of this can only be to the benefit of the Accotink Creek watershed.

We hope EYA's environmental commitment will further benefit Accotink Creek by preserving the small stream running alongside White Granite Drive from near the Post Office driveway to Flagpole Lane. It is small and in a degraded condition. It has no legal protection. Still, it is a living stream. The opportunity presents itself to preserve the stream as an amenity in the new neighborhood, rather than lose it forever.

This same little tributary has lost so much to I-66, which recently buried the formerly fish-filled portion that ran through the Chain Bridge Road cloverleaf. Other portions were buried by less enlightened developments of decades past. The egregious [Northfax West](#) project has buried a nearby section of Accotink Creek itself. In this nomination, EYA has expressed its understanding that a higher standard is called for.

The vision of this "highly-amenitized gathering place for the community" ([p.11](#)) deserves one additional amenity in the form of an attractive and engaging little stream, restored to improved health and freed of the invasive vines that now obscure its banks. Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division would be available to collaborate on conservation of the stream, or even restoration of former portions now dry.

We would also request EYA to:

- Please find an understanding with Options for Oakton and concerned neighbors to right-size the project
- Please maintain maximum tree canopy, permanently protected
- Please maintain some areas beneath the trees as natural habitat plantings
- Please maximize use of native plant species and avoid planting of invasive species
- Please partner with Borge Street Park for invasives control
- Please seek ways to enhance stormwater controls beyond legal minimums
- Again, please preserve the stream. It can become a cherished amenity.

This is a worthwhile project with promise and potential worth making even better. The preservation of this stream and EYA's goals for this project seem to be made for each other.

**"I was born upon thy bank, river, my blood flows in thy stream,
And thou meanderest forever at the bottom of my dream." – Henry David Thoreau**

Stream Maps and Photos - [AT&T site stream, past, present, and future](#)

Friends of Accotink Creek

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