

March 20, 2018

Board of Supervisors

Public Hearing Testimony

PA 2015-IV-MV1

Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment

EMBARC Richmond Highway

Cathy Ledec

President, Friends of Huntley Meadows PARK

3701 Lockheed Boulevard

Alexandria, VA 22306

Good afternoon Chairman Bulova and members of the Board of Supervisors. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon.

My name is Catherine Ledec and I am speaking on behalf of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park. We are located in Alexandria, Virginia in the Lee District sharing a boundary with the Mount Vernon District. Many of our members live in the Lee and Mount Vernon District.

I take this opportunity to thank you, the Board of Supervisors for authorizing this Plan Amendment. I especially thank Supervisor Storck and Supervisor McKay, and all of those involved including EMBARK AG and the dedicated Fairfax County Staff.

It is exciting for all of us who live in the Lee and Mount Vernon Districts to see the potential for what our community can become as it re-develops. This plan amendment tells us,..... that all of you ---- see this potential too.

As the Community Business Centers re-develop this development could impact HMP. We intend to continue to be involved in the redevelopment process to be sure that impacts are (1) avoided (2) minimized and (3) mitigated to the maximum extent possible to protect the sensitive, globally recognized, natural and historic resources there.

We support this Plan Amendment.

One challenge of realizing the vision of this plan amendment is funding for common area elements on an ongoing and consistent basis over the long term.

Funding is not part of the Plan Amendment.

However this is a challenge that we must figure out in order to achieve the vision of the Plan. We need to come up with a consistent and regular funding source to cover the maintenance of common area elements in these urban spaces that are not part of an HOA or owned privately, over the long term. This could positively impact not only development that

occurs as a result of this Plan Amendment, but development in other areas of Fairfax County.

In February 2017 the Virginia General Assembly re-enacted legislation authorizing localities to establish local development zones, opportunity zones, enterprise zones, green development zones. We should seriously look at this enabling legislation.

I look forward to hearing about the implementation of creative solutions in this regard.

I need to put in a plug for more parks, recreation, open spaces and natural areas. We need more of this.

At the beginning of the EMBARK Project much of the discussion of this plan amendment was focused on roads and buildings.

I say to you that development is not just about roads and buildings. It is about balancing these needs with open spaces, green spaces, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and improved environmental conditions in order to create developed areas that provide us with a high quality of life. With all of these elements we could attract the density that is proposed in this plan amendment.

Thank you to the staff and the EMBARK Advisory Group for listening to the recommendations we have made consistently over the past couple of years and including environmental components in this plan amendment. Thank you for hearing us when we say that we need to protect the parks and natural areas that we currently have. Achieving this will help but we still need more.

Lastly, I put in another plug for undergrounding our utilities. These overhead lines and poles, are simply ugly and do nothing to create a visually appealing community. We must figure out a way to underground our utilities. We deserve this investment in our neighborhoods.

We look forward to continuing to participate as the redevelopment occurs along the Richmond Highway Corridor.

I close by again thanking you the Board of Supervisors for the work you do on our behalf.

And thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.