



Town of Vienna

Charles A. Robinson Jr.
Town Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna VA, 22180

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Thursday, October 4, 2018

7:30 PM

Charles Robinson Town Hall, 127 Center
Street, S.

Work Session

1. Regular Business

Present:

Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco
Council Member Tara L. Bloch
Council Member Linda J. Colbert
Council Member Pasha M. Majdi
Council Member Douglas E. Noble
Council Member Carey J. Sienicki
Council Member Howard J. Springsteen

Staff Present:

Michael D'Orazio, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning
Charles Lewis, Information Technology Coordinator/Network Administrator
Jim Morris, Chief of Police
Daniel Janickey, Deputy Chief of Police
Tony Mull, Director of Information Technology
Mercury T. Payton, Town Manager
Cindy Petkac, Director of Planning and Zoning
John Jay Sergent, Dept. of Public Works, Civil Engineer I
Carol S. Waters, Deputy Town Clerk

[18-1032](#)

Work session on proposed revisions and transportation improvements to the rezoning submission for 430, 440 and 444 Maple Avenue West from C-1 Local Commercial Zone and RS-16 Single Family Detached Residential Zone to Maple Avenue Commercial (MAC) Zone for the proposed 444 Maple project.

Attachments: [Illustrated Site Plans - 444 Maple - 9-27-18](#)

[444 Maple Transportation Improvements Summary](#)

[07036X-0017 Transportation 20180920](#)

[Maple Ave Final Renderings 20180927](#)

The Council work session meeting of Thursday, October 4, 2018 took place in the main Council Chambers of the Charles Robinson Town Hall in Vienna, Virginia. Town Manager Mercury Payton opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and thanked everyone for coming. The only topic was the proposed commercial zone redevelopment on the south east corner of Nutley Street and Maple Avenue West. Michael D'Orazio noted that the applicant, Vienna Development Associates, LLC, had received more feedback from the public and Town Council and had come back with more plan revisions and possible opportunities for transportation improvements around the project.

Chris Bell with Hekemian and Company handed out a list of revisions that they had made to the project since their last meeting with the Town Council on August 20, 2018. He indicated that their new set of plans reflected the latest feedback from Council and the public, and everything they had heard coming forward so far with all of those changes. Mr. Bell presented the new renderings while describing and pointing out the changes as follows:

Starting with architecture on the Maple Avenue façade, the big change we have made here was, we took the two plazas we had before and combined them into one, and then uncovered it from the top. The attempt was to try to make it into a two-building façade along Maple. We also tried to create a much larger public space that has green areas and is usable for more than just passing through and eating outside. It is a programmable space, to create a "people place." The open air part of it is 68 feet by 30 feet. The building façade on Maple Avenue went straight across, so we took out all the units in this area that were up here on the fourth floor so it is open to the sky. A portion of the open air space in the back is still covered and goes back to this wall here and still connects back through to the parking areas. The covered area has a deck on it and outdoor seating, so there are covered seating areas which are also programmable spaces. On the ground level we have added a hard edge out here, with hard seating and planting behind it to have a hard barrier before you get to the Maple Avenue sidewalk. Dimensions of this entire open area, the green space and the covered space, are about 55 by 68 feet. On the Nutley Street side, we basically just uncovered the plaza so that the façade is pushed back 30 feet above it, so we uncovered most of that as well. So here you have an outdoor space that is also open to the sky where it was not before, with a plaza that connects through to the parking. There is retail opening to that on both sides. We also changed the look of the façade on Maple Avenue. This has dormers, there are two story dormers here, and one story dormers up here, and then taking that all the way down to the street level, we have added awnings along here, and increased the bump-outs so that there is a lot of interest in the façade going in and out. Some of it goes all the way up and some of it doesn't. So it is a much richer façade all the way along on both sides. The original "read" to this was to try to make this feel like it was several buildings along Maple, and this is taking it another step further, really trying to create a big difference in the architecture itself. As you will note, the fourth floor up here is stepped back so there is a terrace, so you get a three story read right here. If you are standing on the street you can't see the fourth floor; you would have to get back in order to see it. We have also added some balconies along Maple Avenue up here. At the corner, we stepped the main façade of the building back and added a terrace up here, so it steps all the way back. We have also changed this façade in a huge way and added these heavier bands through here to make it much more horizontal in appearance. There were awnings out here before, but we have taken the awning language all the way around down Nutley Street from here. The Nutley Street façade was stepped back and opened up and that plaza helps create the look of two buildings along Nutley, with different architecture. We changed the roofing up here, stepped the corner back all the way around the edge here on this building, so we almost doubled the amount of terrace up here. So this looks like a three story all the way around the corner here. We have also changed the architecture over here. We had a court yard here before, but we took that out completely and opened it to the sky, and we also stepped the building back along here at the fourth floor, creating terraces up there and giving it the appearance of a three story building when viewed from the street. We have also added quite a bit of landscaping all the way through, including ornamental trees. A number of concerns were raised about the street scape along Maple, like the sidewalk was not wide

enough. We have increased the width of the sidewalk by a foot, bringing it to six feet, and changed it all to brick.

Mr. Bell stated that overall, through the changes, the building is about 12,000 square feet smaller and the open space has been increased by quite a bit. He cited that technically, open space on the site is about 24,000 square feet. The two pieces of covered plazas are about 3,800 square feet. There is about 11,000 square feet of court yards which is not counted because it is not open to the public, but it is open to the residents. The court yards are heavily landscaped and full of amenities. Mr. Bell said if you add all that up it is just under an acre of overall open space on the site.

Council Member Springsteen reported that he had concerns about this intersection being one of the busiest in Town, and that the building was too massive for Vienna. He said that the applicant had done a good job with some of the revisions, but asked if a corner could be pushed back another 10 or 15 feet from the intersection. Council Member Springsteen questioned whether there would be adequate space for the intersection to be modified, if needed. Mr. Bell stated that even if the Town wanted to put a traffic circle at this intersection it would fit without moving the building. He said that a traffic circle was one of the constraints given to them two years ago, and they made sure a traffic circle could fit in there. Mr. Bell further remarked that they had been working with this for a long time. Attorney Sara Mariska added that the building was about 45 feet back from the corner at that intersection.

Mayor DiRocco asked about telephone poles and the developer's conversations with Dominion Power. Mr. Bell reported that in a meeting the previous week, Dominion Power brought six people to go over the pricing and the scope of the changes. He reiterated that it was a very difficult set-up there with the poles, boxes, and switches on property that they do not own, but they would be meeting with Dominion again to try to come up with the costs. Mr. Bell said that his Company was already proffering to take one pole underground.

Council Member Springsteen pointed out that the applicant would be digging for the underground garage and that there is a natural water problem in Town. He questioned how they would make sure water run-off would not affect the neighboring properties. Mr. Bell responded that his company had a geotechnical engineer who started working on this site some years ago when they bought it, and they have monitored it. Initially they had considered going two floors underground, but changed it to one level below grade. Mr. Bell stated that there is a drainage system which handles it well, their engineer has addressed it, the Town had another engineer address it, this is something that is done all over, and this building will not have any drainage effects on its neighbors. Mr. Bell further confirmed that they would be addressing storm water management on the site. Council Member Noble pointed out that on-site stormwater management is a current state requirement, and any water flow has to stay on site. Mr. Bell acknowledged that.

Council Member Bloch asked for more details about the density. Mr. Bell reiterated that they had cut out about 12,000 total square feet and with that, the project would probably be around 151 units. He stated that they could not get to 160. He commented that they had been really working on trying to make the building do what they thought Council was asking for. Mr. Bell added that for this project to work, they just could not go below 150 units.

Council Member Bloch asked to hear more about criteria for the proposed transit

plan, for the shuttle. William Johnson, P.E., Traffic Consultant, reported that for the proffers, they were looking at tying the shuttle commitment to that 25% trip reduction associated with the residential component, based on Fairfax County policy. He said it was basically based on the assumption that a portion of that 25% would be destined for metro, so a portion of that portion would use the shuttle. Typically that would be measured annually after an establishment period, or once a certain build-out was reached.

Council Member Noble had more questions about the shuttle. Mr. Bell detailed that they could consider a one year commitment for the shuttle, but he thought typically one would look at several surveys to see how the TDM (Transportation Demand Management) program was working and whether or not the goal was being met. He subsequently said that they would run it for a full year and do surveys and whatever, and if people were riding it, they would run it forever; it would be an amenity to the property. More strategies were discussed as part of the TDM.

Council Member Majdi asked whether they would measure the TDM every year. Mr. Bell said they were proposing a similar condition where they commit to a goal of 25% trip reduction.

Council Member Colbert remarked that she liked the new architecture and the way the fourth floor was set back in some places. She then asked about the back of the building and if it could be set back more. Mr. Bell answered that they had tried to keep the architecture varied, they had done a lot of work trying to take off the tall corners and soften the edges, and it would be problematic to step it back further.

The Mayor asked about the bike share location being moved. Mr. Bell said it was moved in order to be more accessible to the central plaza area and the Maple Avenue entrance.

Mayor and Council Members discussed the dedicated left turn lanes at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Nutley Street. They examined such issues as the length of the turn lanes, the relative impact of longer turn lanes on delays and queues at the intersection, whether longer turn lanes could interfere with entry to other businesses, and the potential for creating conflict places which could affect traffic safety. The discussions also delved into ways to make pedestrian crossing safer.

Council Member Majdi raised concerns about drivers being unable to turn left on Maple Avenue out of the proposed new project because of too much traffic. He worried that motorists would go through the neighborhood behind the project making right turns to get to Nutley. It was noted that traffic volumes would not be high enough to warrant a traffic light and it could be too close to the traffic light at Nutley. Ms. Petkac reported that in plans they were also proposing access to the adjacent parcel where Purple Onion is, and if that parcel was redeveloped, and if the corner lot up on Wade Hampton Drive was redeveloped, there might be a potential to provide some access management along the rear to Wade Hampton Drive. She suggested that in the future, there might be enough criteria to warrant a traffic signal at Wade Hampton Drive.

Council Member Springsteen indicated that he was not ready to talk about a traffic light at Wade Hampton Drive. He reiterated that the proposal was a pretty massive structure, and asked whether the developer could reduce the project to three stories. Mr. Bell stated that he could not do that; it was not financially feasible. He went on

to say that his company did not build condominiums. He further related that the market dictates the rents and his company would be squeezed between what the market would pay and what the project would cost to build. Mr. Bell projected that the units overall would be smaller because of the square footage reductions, or there would be small units and larger units without much in the middle. He said they would end up with some odd units because of how the plan was squeezed and pushed around, especially on the fourth floor.

Council Member Sienicki commented that she appreciated the amount of work that the developer had done and the changes that they had made. She thanked the applicants and said she could really see a big difference, especially in that center area and open space area, and she thinks it will be much more successful.

Mr. Payton also thanked the applicants for the presentation and for fielding questions, then noted that the project was scheduled for a Town Council action on October 29, 2018.

Mr. Bell noted that they had been talking about this project for 10 years, they had had a lot of feedback from the public through all this process, and had read social media and saw everything that was going on.

Ms. Petkac told Council that they would receive an updated list of the entire proffer set and all the updated materials before October 15, 2018.

Council Member Colbert asked Mr. Bell what monthly rental rates he was estimating, and he said that the smallest units would probably be a little under \$1,500 per month and the most expensive ones would probably go for a little over \$3,000 a month.

2. Meeting Adjournment

The Town Council Work Session of Monday, October 4, 2018 adjourned at approximately 8:58 p.m.

Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco

Signed / Dated: _____

Attest: _____
Deputy Town Clerk

THE TOWN OF VIENNA IS COMMITTED TO FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS. TRANSLATION SERVICES, ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE TO BE REQUESTED NOT LESS THAN 3 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE CALL (703) 255-6304, OR 711 VIRGINIA RELAY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED.