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Citing Major Leap for Route 1 Revitalization, Unanimous Board Greenlights Riverside Station

In an unusual sign of unity from a frequently divided group, members of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors unanimously and enthusiastically voted to approve what they called a potentially transformative mixed-use project proposed for a rundown swath of the Route 1 corridor in North Woodbridge following a September 13th public hearing.

Plans for the project, known as Riverside Station, call for a 10-year phased build-out of more than 900 apartments and about 140,000-square feet of retail space surrounding a central plaza at the corner of Route 1 and Occoquan Road. The vision for the 19-acre assemblage is for a vibrant, walkable, town center-style community, connected to multiple transport modes, consistent with the intent of the North Woodbridge Small Area Plan.

The ambitious project represents a partnership between two respected and experienced developers, IDI Group Companies and Boosalis Properties, both with long and deep connections to the area. IDI, a leading multifamily developer, will handle the residential aspects of the project while Boosalis, a prominent commercial developer, will take charge of the retail and other commercial elements.

Combined, the two companies' investment in the project is valued at about \$380 million, according to Boosalis. It's a part of the county long in need of redevelopment, according to officials, but until recently, no concrete action has taken place. "I can't stress enough how important this is for Woodbridge," said Woodbridge Supervisor Margaret Franklin.

The two applications associated with the project include a request to rezone 6.3 acres from B-1, General Business, to PMD, Planned Mixed Use, to enable the construction of up to 330 multifamily units and about 40,000-square feet of commercial uses on what the developers are calling Land

Bay A (REZ2022-00007), and a request to rezone 13 acres from B-1 to PMD, to enable the construction of up to 640 multifamily units and about 90,000-square feet of commercial uses on what the developers refer to as Land Bay B (REZ2022-00008). The commercial sites will include a mix of existing businesses, relocated from the Station Plaza Shopping Center—a Boosalis property—as well as new businesses.



Riverside Land Bays A and B Aerial Map;
Source: Prince William County Planning Documents

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Food Lion has indicated an interest in building out one of the sites as a grocery store, according to Sherman Patrick (Compton & Duling), the applicant's representative. The developers are looking to attract other businesses that would meet residents' needs, including a day care center and a pharmacy, along with other retailers and restaurants, he said.



North Woodbridge Town Center Illustrative Plan;
Source: Prince William County Planning Documents

\$97 Million Proffer Package. Residential amenities include a fitness center, an outdoor pool, co-working spaces, lounges, a rooftop terrace, and courtyards. Public amenities include an 18,000-square foot central plaza, along with parks, outdoor play areas, a dog park, and indoor and outdoor civic uses.

Among the significant proffers: a \$4.7 million commitment to build or pay for a pedestrian bridge over Route 1. This will connect the development to the Virginia Railway Express station on the other side of the highway, which is also a stop along Amtrak's Northeastern route. "Residents and the larger community will gain the benefit of being

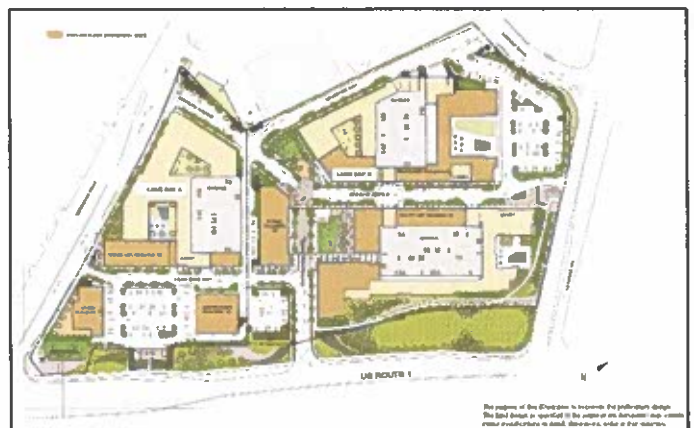
able to cross Route 1 safely," Patrick noted. The project creates important opportunities for transit-oriented development with a layout, including an internal street and sidewalk grid, that facilitates walkability and use of public transportation, he said.

The developers also designated 78 apartments in the development at below-market rates to enable affordability for county employees such as teachers and first responders.

Staff: Riverside Station "A Prototype." In his presentation to the board, county planner Stephen Gardner said that the county's planning staff supported the project, noting that it meets the objectives of the North Woodbridge Small Area Plan and puts into practice the theoretical development ideals that staff frequently reference: a vertically mixed-use, compact, walkable, and "amenitized" development with common open spaces, structured parking and access to multi-modal transit.

"Staff is very excited about this application. The key concepts check a lot of the boxes we want to see and it is a prototype that can be emulated in the future."

Gardner added that the project will trigger additional, complementary development. "One application alone does not fully implement the small area plan," he said. "No application is perfect, but this is a pretty good start" towards realizing the goals of the plan, he told supervisors.



Riverside Station Illustrative Plan;
Source: Prince William County Planning Documents

Supervisors Praise Plan. In her brief remarks following the conclusion of the public hearing, Franklin praised both the project and the development team. "Revitalization is one of the hardest things to do," she said, noting the expense involved.

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She highlighted the importance of the affordable units and the proffers that ensure the continued viability of Station Plaza businesses. “I love that we aren’t pushing anybody out but instead we are bringing these businesses into the new development.”

Franklin also noted the other positive activity happening in the area, including the recent rezoning of the Jefferson Plaza shopping center to enable an all-affordable, 240-unit apartment community, the renovation of a nearby Shell gas station, and the construction of a new elementary school—all of which will contribute to the revitalization effort.

“I am so happy to get this underway,” she said.

Her colleagues agreed. “This is a great project,” said Brentsville Supervisor Jeanine Lawson. “It is exactly what smart growth is supposed to look like.”

Added Potomac Supervisor Andrea Bailey, “It will set a precedent for other projects. Job well done.”

Board Approves Elm Street’s Independent Hill Village in Coles

Also on the September 13th board agenda: a rezoning application (REZ2018-00026) to enable a new village-style neighborhood on a 69-acre site near the intersection of Dumfries Road and Independent Hill Road in the Coles district.

With the support of Coles Supervisor Yesli Vega, the board voted 6-1 to approve the rezoning for Independent Hill Village, which will allow for the construction of 197 residential units and 219,000-square feet of commercial and office space and associated waivers and modifications. The approval changes the zoning designation of the acreage from A-1, Agricultural, to PMR, Planned Mixed Residential. The project, by Elm Street Development, falls within the boundaries of the Independent Hill Small Area Plan.

During his presentation to the board, Elm Street vice president Joseph Jacobs noted that the project underwent some changes since the planning commission’s negative recommendation following that group’s May public hearing.

Among the key changes: a reduction in residential density, with 13 fewer units, as requested by commissioners. Jacobs

explained that his team worked to mirror the goals of the Independent Hill Small Area Plan, which the board approved in March 2021. “The idea is to create a sense of place,” he said.



Independent Hill Locational Map;

Source: Prince William County Planning Documents

Entry into the residential area is by way of a stately boulevard, lined with parks and landscaping. The residential component includes 137 single-family homes, 50 townhouses, plus 10 townhomes affordable for families earning 80-percent of area median income (AMI).

Amenities include walking trails, bike paths, and sidewalks, a community clubhouse, and a splash park. The new village’s shopping center will be located at intersection of Route 234 and Independent Hill Road, with 75,000-square feet of retail, 30,000-square feet of office, and a 10,000-square foot day care center.

Elm Street will install about 2.5 miles of sewer and invest \$4 million to upgrade the road network, including Route 234, Bristow Road, and Independent Hill Road, totaling