

DOCKET ITEM #4

City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2010-0001
600 North Henry Street

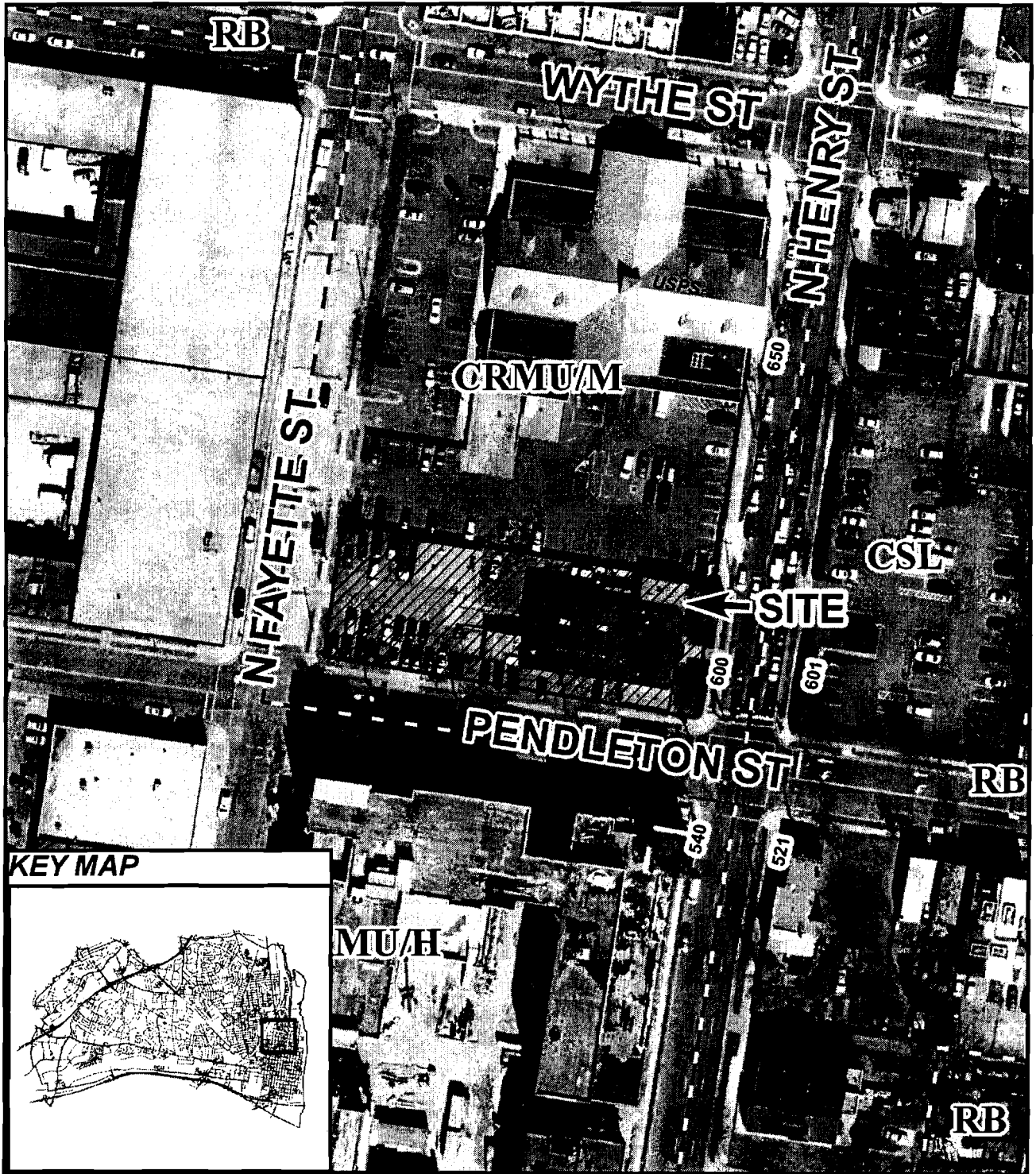
Issue: Acquisition of 600 North Henry Street	Planning Commission Hearing:	March 2, 2010
	City Council Hearing:	N/A
	Zone:	CRMU-M/Commercial Residential Mixed Use (Medium)

Description: Consideration of a proposal by the City of Alexandria to acquire the property at 600 North Henry Street, pursuant to the provisions of Section 9.06 of the City Charter.

Staff:
 Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
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 Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager, City Manager's Office
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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, MARCH 2, 2010: On a motion by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the Planning Commission voted to approve the request to acquire the property at 600 North Henry Street. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.



CITY CHARTER
SECTION 9.06 #2010-0001 03/02/10



I. DISCUSSION

The City has entered into an agreement to purchase the property at 600 North Henry Street in conjunction with the City's Open Space Master Plan and the recently approved Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan. Section 9.06 of the City's Charter requires that the Planning Commission approve any acquisition or sale of public land. The Planning Commission is charged with ensuring that any such acquisition, sale or change is consistent with the City's Master Plan.

When acquired, this will be the twelfth parcel purchased by the City with open space funds. All eleven other parcels were subject to 9.06 actions. Three of the previously approved parcels are located on Strand Street, four parcels are along Four Mile Run on Mount Vernon Avenue, and there are individual parcels located on Raleigh Avenue, South Early Street and East Del Ray Avenue. The Planning Commission voted to approve each of those acquisitions, finding such acquisitions consistent with the City's Master Plan.

Property Description:

The property under consideration is located at 600 North Henry Street, at the corner of Pendleton Street. The 20,995 square foot property is zoned CRMU/M and is currently occupied by a 10,328 square foot office/commercial warehouse building. To the north of the property, and on the same block, is the Wythe Street United States Post Office and its parking lots. The site is part of the Braddock Metro Small Area Plan and is not in a historic district.

Alexandria Master Plan:

In context with the recently approved Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan ("the Braddock Plan"), staff received Council guidance last fall to negotiate with the owner of the parcel located at 600 North Henry Street regarding acquisition of this property. The property is one parcel within a larger block that is identified in the Braddock Plan as the location of the preferred community park/open space for the neighborhood. (Attachment I).

The Braddock Plan was adopted by City Council in March 2008. It includes a series of public amenities, such as streetscape improvements and the approximately one-acre park in the 600 block of North Henry Street, to be implemented as redevelopment occurs in the neighborhood.

During the planning process, the community supported locating the park on the block currently occupied by the Post Office, and warehouse/office building at 600 North Henry Street that is bounded by Fayette, Wythe, Henry and Pendleton Streets (Attachment II). This future park location is in the heart of the neighborhood, bounded by Wythe and Fayette, which are two "walking streets." This block also is located close or adjacent to existing (Braddock Lofts, The Monarch) or future (Erkiletian) residential uses. The criteria for the Park established in the Braddock Plan reflects a size of at least one acre;

easily accessed by the community; uses that contribute to the park's viability; and the provision of safety and visibility to public view.

Funding

Since the adoption of the Braddock Plan, in June 2009, City Council established two dedicated funds and a formula for developer contributions to ensure that the necessary funding is available for improvements required by the Plan. The Plan also describes how developers within the Braddock neighborhood will contribute half of the cost of the improvements required by each fund based on each development's pro rata share, and the City will provide the matching half of the cost of the improvements. The dedicated funds were created, but development has not yet provided an open space contribution. The current acquisition proposal will thus require funding from the City's general Open Space Fund, which then can serve as the planned match to future developer open space contributions.

The City's Open Space Plan, adopted in 2003 as a chapter of the City's Master Plan, defined fifteen goals as the framework for open space protection and preservation. Acquisition of this property helps the City to meet the second goal of the plan:

- Goal #2 recommends that the city seize opportunities quickly when land suitable for open space usage becomes available, including developed commercial or industrial land that could be converted to open space uses.

Acquisition of this property for use as open space will thus enhance the City's ability to meet the goals of both the Braddock and the Open Space Master Plans.

II. ANALYSIS

The proposed purchase of this property for use as open space represents a continued commitment by the City to the implementation of the Open Space Plan, the Braddock Plan and to Council's Strategic Plan, which envisions serious efforts to ensure a quality of life for all its citizens. The City will be financing the acquisition of the property through the City's Open Space Fund.

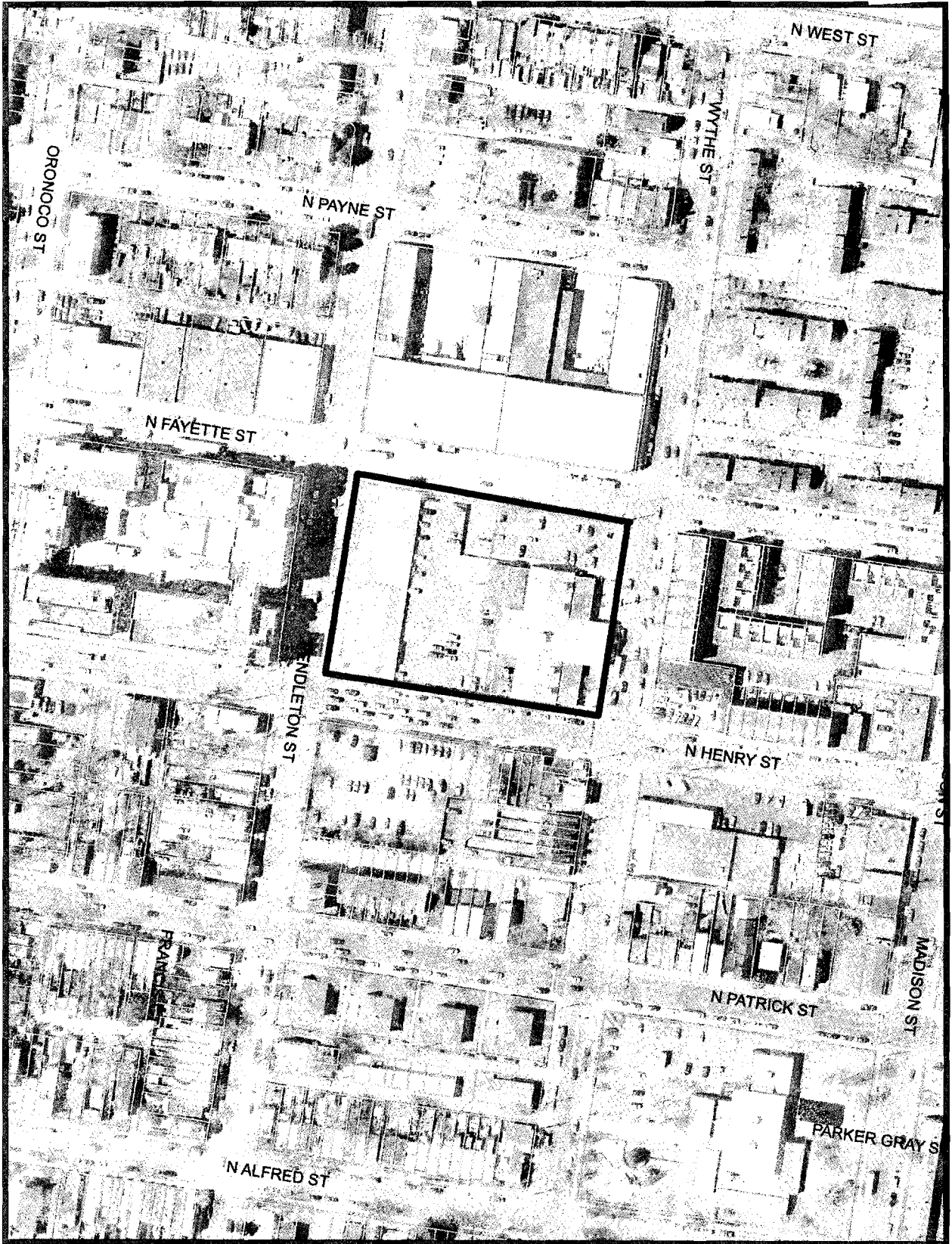
After the City purchases the property, staff will initiate the planning and design process for the open space. The public will be invited to participate in this process, with review from the Park and Recreation Commission. The City's contract for the purchase of this property requires satisfactory assessment of all necessary environmental remediation.



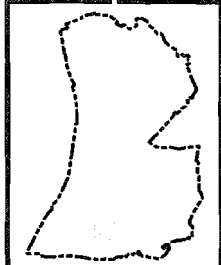
III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve this request, finding that the proposal is consistent with Section 9.06 of the City Charter of Alexandria, Virginia, for the acquisition of public land. The acquisition is consistent with the Master Plan, including specifically the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the Alexandria Open Space chapter of the City's Master Plan.












- Attachments: 1) Braddock Metro Neighborhood and Braddock East Map
2) Open Space Framework

STAFF: Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Faroll Hamer Director, Planning and Zoning
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator



<p>1:2,245 1 inch = 187 feet</p> 			<p>Braddock Metro Neighborhood and Braddock East</p>
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Open Space Framework

-  Existing public open space
-  Proposed open space location
-  Existing/proposed plaza space
-  Potential secondary open space location
-  Public art location/gateway
-  Designated "Walking Street"
-  Potential future Ped/Bike connection
-  Braddock Metro Small Area Plan boundary
-  Parker-Gray Historic District boundary
-  Potential walking route connection to Northern Gateway
-  Potential tunnel connection to west side of tracks

