

DOCKET ITEM #11A

**City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2011-0002**  
**401 East Braddock Road - Sale of Property**

Application	General Data	
Request: Approval for the sale of property.	Planning Commission Hearing:	June 7, 2011
	City Council Hearing	N/A
Address: 401 East Braddock Road	Zone:	CSL/Commercial Service Low
Staff: Department of General Services	Small Area Plan:	Braddock Road Metro

**Staff Reviewers:** Gwen Wright, P&Z, [gwen.wright@alexandriava.gov](mailto:gwen.wright@alexandriava.gov)  
Gary Wagner, P&Z, [gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov](mailto:gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov)  
Timothy Wanamaker, DGS, [timothy.wanamaker@alexandriava.gov](mailto:timothy.wanamaker@alexandriava.gov)

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve sale of parcel at 401 East Braddock Road

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, JUNE 7, 2011:** On a motion by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Ms. Fossum, the Planning Commission voted to **approve** 9.06 case #2011-0002. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0. Mr. Robinson was absent.

Speakers:

Duncan Blair, representing the applicant and other individual speakers present at the hearing (Joel Silverman, Maria Wasowski and Pat Miller) spoke in support of the proposal.

Philip Matyas, 219 N. Pitt St., asked what negotiated contract price had been agreed for the sale of the City-owned land. Tim Wanamaker, deputy director, General Services advised that the price was \$280,500. Planning staff advised that the land is not being rezoned as part of the proposal.

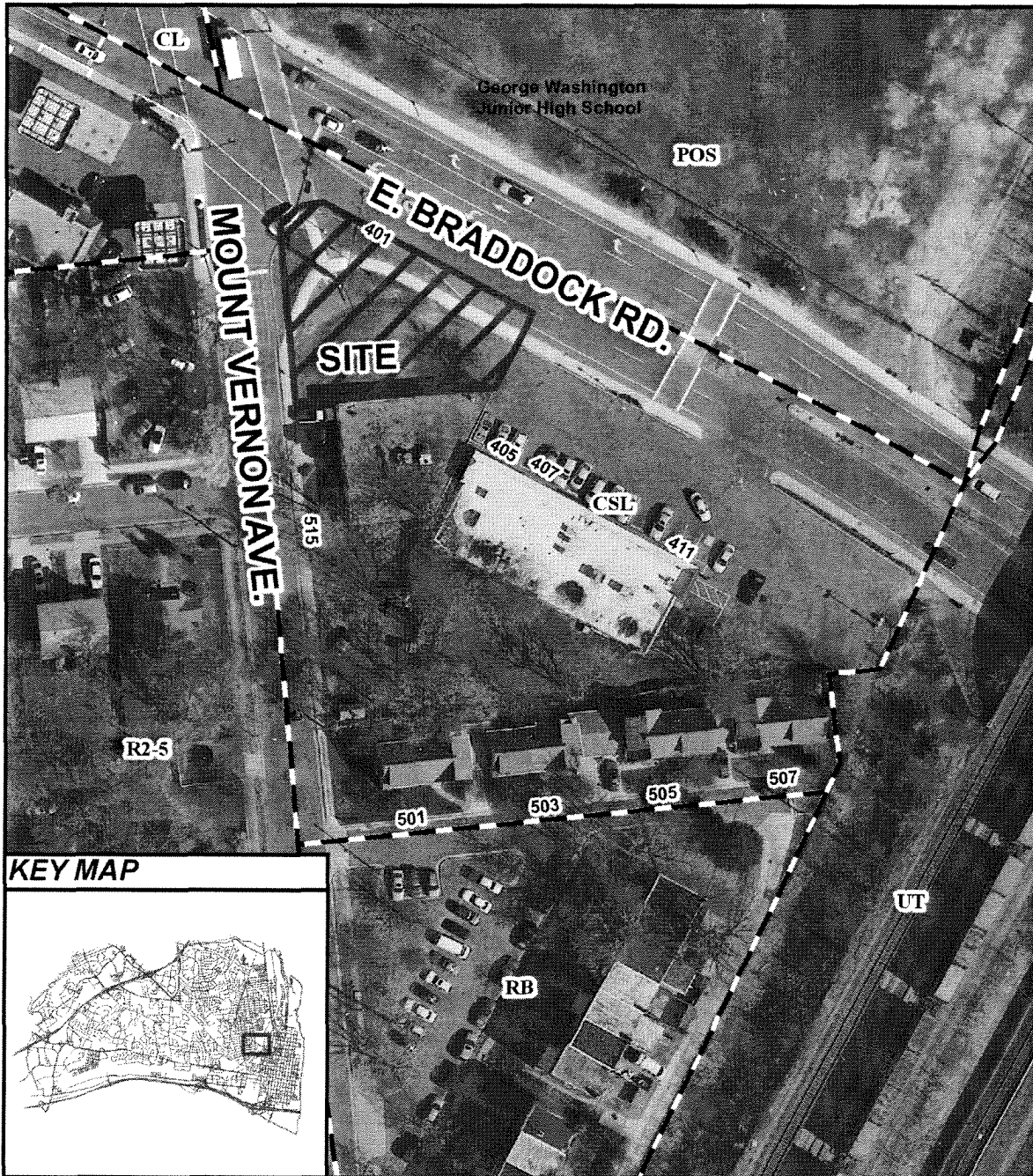
Katy Cannady, 20 E. Oak St., spoke in support of all aspects of the proposal.

Marguerite Lang, 14 W. Rosemont Ave., President, Rosemont Citizens Association, spoke in support of the proposal and noted the unanimous support from the Association.

Sarah Becker, 1200 Princess St., spoke regarding the 7-Eleven case and pointed out a mistake in the police condition prohibiting single sales. Staff agreed that it was a mistake and Condition #5 of the 7-Eleven case reflects the corrected language.

Leslie Zupan, 1309 Queen St., President, West Old Town Citizens Association, spoke on the 7-Eleven case, and suggested that 7-Eleven be required to tag or stamp or otherwise label each container of alcohol sold from the store in order that the source of empty bottles in the neighborhood can be identified.

Michael Vanderpool, attorney for 7-Eleven, responded to Ms. Zupan's suggestion and represented that he would investigate the feasibility of such a program before the Council hearing. He also argued that it would be unfair to impose such a requirement on one store or on all 7-11 stores and not on all convenience stores as well as all retail sellers of alcohol containers.



City Charter Section 9.06  
Case #2011-0002

6/7/2011



**I. Background:**

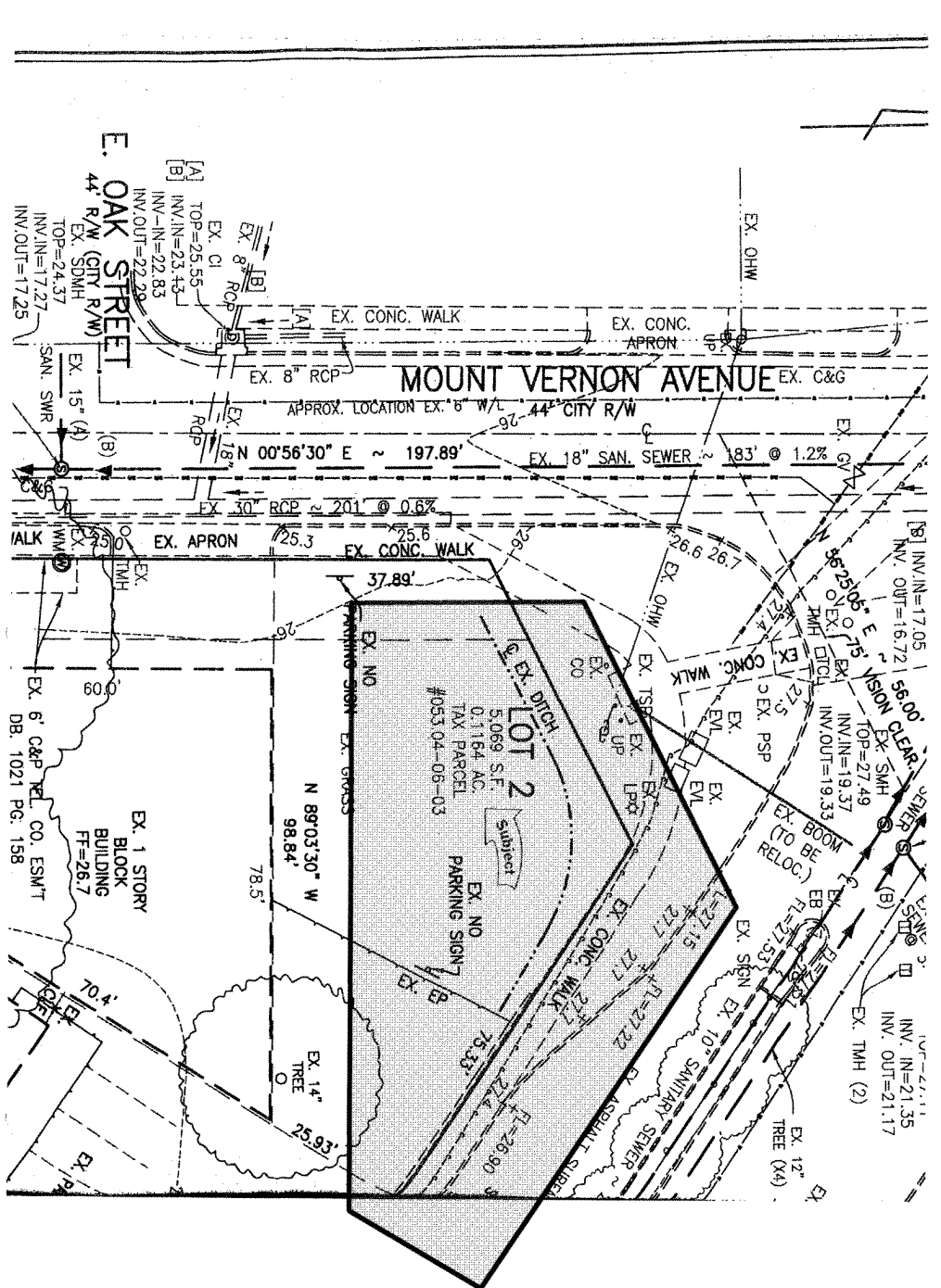
The property at 401 East Braddock Road was the site of a gas station since at least the 1950s. The City acquired the site in the mid-1980s. In 1988, the City removed four underground storage tanks (three 4,000 gallon and one 2,000 gallon). In January 2002, HP Environmental Inc. was contracted by the City to perform a limited site assessment to determine the presence of hazardous materials in the building and abandoned fuel tanks on site. The executive summary indicated that demolition of the building could be safely accomplished by mechanical means. Based on the report, it was further recommended that additional exploratory efforts should be performed prior to or during demolition to confirm there are no remaining underground storage tanks. In March 2002, the building was demolished. It was confirmed that no underground storage tanks remained at the site. Soil samples were taken while performing exploratory digging for fuel tanks. Results of samples from the west side of the property indicated gas/diesel contamination. The soil sampling results indicated there was contamination although not inordinately high. Based on these test results, staff decided to remediate the area as anticipating that the contamination was not extensive.

On March 19, 2002, four truckloads of petroleum-contaminated soil were removed from the site for proper disposal. Further excavation revealed the contamination to be more extensive. Additional test pits at other locations on the property indicated the area of soils contamination to be larger than originally indicated. A decision was made to suspend removal of the soil and notify the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), as required. The excavation areas were backfilled and disturbed areas were covered with soil of high clay content. In August 2002, a site characterization report ordered by the City was completed by Marshall Miller & Associates, which included a risk assessment, remediation assessment and recommendations. The report was submitted to VDEQ. On December 17, 2003, the City received a Petroleum Impacted Site Development closure letter for the site. The property remained vacant from that point forward.

On March 22, 2011, the City Council received notice of an unsolicited offer from Yates Holdings LLC, to purchase the 401 East Braddock Road property. The City Council declared the property as surplus on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, which allowed the City Manager to enter into negotiations with Yates Holdings LLC. On April 13, 2011 the City advertised a solicitation for additional offers for the property. The solicitation was open for 30 days and no responses were received.

**II. Property Description:**

The property for sale is located 401 East Braddock Road, Alexandria, Virginia. The property is a vacant parcel of land located at the intersection of East Braddock Road and Mount Vernon Avenue. The size of the parcel is 5,069 square feet in size (by survey) and is zoned CSL.



**III. Analysis:**

Yates Holdings LLC is interested in purchasing the parcel at 401 East Braddock Road so as to consolidate it with two other privately-owned parcels and build a new commercial project on the assembled site. This project will require demolition of the existing strip center.

The development plan proposed by Yates is a retail and commercial use development comprised of two buildings together with surface and structured parking, landscape and streetscape improvements. The first of the buildings is a two-story commercial structure with a basement, measuring approximately 23,706 gross sq. ft. This building will accommodate a combination of uses. On the first floor, a number of retail units front onto both E. Braddock Rd., and onto the prominent E. Braddock Rd./Mt. Vernon Ave. corner location. Presently, the exact type of retail on the first floor is still to be determined, except for a dry cleaner's establishment which is proposed at the eastern end of the building. To the rear of the building's first floor, a light auto repair facility is proposed. This use will also be accommodated in the building's basement and is an extension of the applicant's Yates Automotive Center business, located directly across Mt Vernon Ave. The entire second floor of the building is proposed as office space, and has access via a stairwell and elevator located at a doorway to the rear of the building, facing the structured parking area.

The second building is a detached, one-story convenience store which will accommodate the 7-Eleven which operates within the site's existing commercial space.

Parking for the site is located primarily at two locations: in a surface parking lot between the two buildings and in a two-level parking structure close to the site's southern boundary. There will also be landscape treatments to the streetscapes of E. Braddock Rd. and Mt. Vernon Ave. including street trees and planters. A small plaza area is proposed at the corner of the two streets, which has the potential to accommodate seating or outdoor dining partially screened from the surrounding street environment by a low wall and ornamental planting. To the rear of the parking structure, and continuous along the site's southern boundary, evergreen screen planting material is proposed as a buffer from neighboring properties, including the residential properties to the south of the site.

Staff believes that consolidation of the parcel at 401 East Braddock Road with the nearby properties and construction of the new retail and commercial development in this location will significantly benefit the neighborhood, both in terms of streetscape and architecture, as well as introducing compatible, neighborhood-serving businesses that will be of use to the community.

**IV. Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the sale of the subject property under section 9.06 of the City Charter.

STAFF: Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager  
Timothy Wanamaker, Deputy Director, Department of General Services  
Gwen Wright, Division Chief, Development, Planning & Zoning  
Gary Wagner, Principal Planner, Development, Planning & Zoning