

Docket Item #7
CITY CHARTER SECTION 9.06;
CASE #2006-0004
4630 Raleigh Avenue

Planning Commission Meeting
October 3, 2006

ISSUE: Consideration of a proposal by the City of Alexandria to purchase a 6,223 square foot (.14 acre) property at 4630 Raleigh Avenue to expand Holmes Run Park as part of the Open Space Master Plan and pursuant to the provisions of Section 9.06 of the City Charter.

LOCATION: 4630 Raleigh Avenue

ZONE: R-12/Single Family Residential
Seminary Hill/Strawberry Hill Small Area Plan

RECOMMENDATION: That the Planning Commission **approve** the request to purchase the .14 acre undeveloped parcel, which currently is under private ownership, and will continue to be used as open space as an expansion of the Holmes Run/All Veterans Park. The Open Space Fund will be used for the purchase of this property.

DISCUSSION

The City proposes to purchase the .14 acre property at 4630 Raleigh Avenue for continued use as open space and as an expansion of the Holmes Run/All Veterans Park. The property is immediately adjacent to the Park and lies within the Holmes Run watershed area. Purchase of this acreage will augment the City's parkland and help to achieve Goals 1,2, and 4 of the Open Space Master Plan.

Section 9.06 of the City Charter

Section 9.06 of the City Charter requires that the Planning Commission review and approve any acquisition or sale of public land and any change in streets, squares, parks, public buildings, or spaces in order to ensure that any such acquisition, sale or change is consistent with the City's Master Plan.

Descriptions of Property and Proposed Use

The subject property is located at 4630 Raleigh Avenue on the northeastern perimeter of Holmes Run Park and within the Holmes Run watershed. It is also adjacent to the Foxchase development to the south and single family residential units to the north.

The parcel falls within an area adjacent to natural intermittent streams, and therefore requires protection under the Chesapeake Bay Code by a 50 foot buffer, limiting any development options. With community input, the City may therefore consider the parcel as a possible stream restoration site in future efforts to restore the Holmes Run watershed. The property's location is an area where a piped storm becomes daylighted which is a good location for such improvements and possible future restoration.



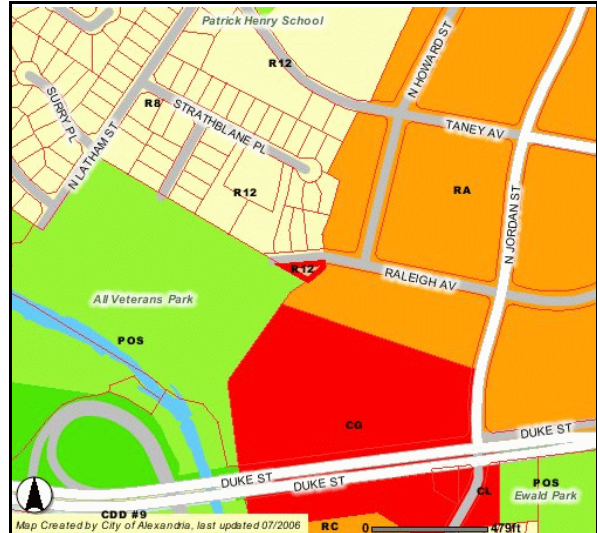
4630 Raleigh Avenue

Zoning and Master Plan

The subject property is currently undeveloped and is located in the R-12/Single Family Residential Zone. Due to it's size, the lot cannot be developed without a variance per the Zoning Ordinance for this zone. The Ordinance requires 12,000 square feet per lot, and it is unlikely that such a variance (for a 5,777 square feet reduction) would be approved.

Significance of the Property

Purchase of this property helps to meet Goals 1,2, and 4 of the Open Space Master Plan. Goal 1 of the plan is protecting and enriching existing parks. As a parcel adjacent to Holmes Run/All Veterans Park, this site will expand City parkland. Goal 2 of the plan is developing innovative opportunities for creating additional open space, including privately owned land near or adjacent to existing parks and trails. Goal 4 of the plan is to protect and expand stream valleys and other environmentally sensitive areas, which include the Holmes Run stream valley where this site is located.



Fiscal Impact

The property would be purchased with the Open Space Fund. Maintenance of the site would be included with the maintenance of Holmes Run/All Veterans Park.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the 9.06 case to purchase this .14 acre vacant parcel as open space in accordance with the Open Space Master Plan.

STAFF: Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Richard Josephson, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Zoning