

Resolution on Proposed Redevelopment at North Hill Site, passed by MVCCA 12/22/10

- 1) Whereas the North Hill site, owned by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA), consists of 33 acres in three parcels – 11 acres that are currently zoned R-MHP (mobile home park, 6 units per acre), 5 acres along Route One zoned C-8 (commercial), and 17 acres zoned R-2 (residential, two dwellings per acre); and
- 2) Whereas the 33-acre North Hill site is planned for public park for passive recreational use in the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, a use that has been endorsed by the Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations (MVCCA); but
- 3) Whereas the Board of Supervisors decided to balance the needs for more affordable, workforce housing and for more parks by building 11 acres of affordable housing at North Hill and developing 22 acres as a community park; and
- 4) Whereas in 2007 the MVCCA supported construction of no more than 66 homes on 11 acres and developing a park on the remainder of the North Hill site, while reserving the right to evaluate the proposed plan when it became available, including with respect to environmental issues; and
- 5) Whereas a 22-acre wooded park is preferable to the possible by-right development of the 17 acres zoned R-2 or the 5 acres zoned C-8 that could occur if the property were sold to a developer; and
- 6) Whereas plans to finance the development of the 11-acre mobile home park are underway, while no source of funding is in hand or proposed for the development of a community park on the remaining 22 acres; and
- 7) Whereas the heavily wooded North Hill site could provide recreation and respite in a congested area that has no parks, and also serves as a buffer against stormwater runoff that would further damage the already impaired Little Hunting Creek watershed; and
- 8) Whereas the 33-acre site has been neglected and unmaintained for almost 30 years, and now hosts trash dumps and homeless encampments, with its many large native trees threatened by invasive exotic plants and trees; and
- 9) Whereas the preliminary site plan for the 11-acre mobile home park submitted by RHA includes a tree preservation plan based on a tree survey that was not conducted by certified arborists; and
- 10) Whereas the preliminary stormwater management plan proposes an underground control that will detain and filter the runoff from only about one-third of the mobile home park itself, plus additional runoff from the adjacent forest, while failing to control the runoff from two-thirds of the actual site to be developed; and
- 11) Whereas, because of the ongoing threats to water quality from past development, Fairfax County should set an example for private developers by achieving a higher environmental standard for its own projects and go beyond merely meeting the minimum requirements for control of stormwater runoff;

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- 12) Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations does not support the county's compromise plan to build affordable housing on 11 acres of the North Hill site and create a community park on the remaining 22 acres, unless and until the following conditions are met:
- a) RHA will work collaboratively and accept the recommendations of the Mount Vernon District's urban forester to identify the most appropriate trees for preservation and removal, to supplement information provided by the tree survey, and will modify the site plan to include a tree preservation plan that follows best practices and can reasonably be expected to save trees targeted for preservation.
 - b) RHA will collaborate with Fairfax County's Stormwater Planning Division to develop, fund and implement a stormwater management plan for the 11-acre site that exceeds minimum stormwater controls for the quantity, velocity and quality of runoff.
 - c) RHA will eliminate one or more of the 67 housing units from its preliminary site plan in order to better balance the need for affordable housing against the also-important environmental goals of:
 - i) Ensuring preservation of significant specimen trees, as determined by the county's urban forester, and
 - ii) Improving stormwater controls to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of runoff from the mobile home park.
 - d) Fairfax County will formulate and implement a plan to fund development of the 22 acres of community park, with funding to be identified before the groundbreaking for the mobile home park.