

E&R-2011-05

Resolution: Alignment of Lorton Arts Foundation Road

- 1) WHEREAS the construction of a service road parallel to Ox Road (Route 123) is a public-private partnership on Fairfax County land, and
- 2) WHEREAS the road has been planned without consideration of significant trees or the context they provide for the historic home that fronts on Ox Road just south of the Lorton Arts Center, and
- 3) WHEREAS the road was not included in early and mid-stages of re-zoning during 2008 so it did not receive thorough review from Urban Forest Management or from the Tree Commissioner, and
- 4) WHEREAS County policy requires preservation of trees over tree planting, particularly on County land, and
- 5) WHEREAS construction of the road in its proposed alignment will result in removal of four particularly desirable trees, including a 42-inch dbh (diameter at breast height) elm (*Ulmus americana*) that is estimated to be 90-100 years old and is a rare survivor of Dutch elm disease, a specimen 41-inch dbh red oak (*Quercus rubra*), an unusually large 55-inch American basswood (*Tilia americana*), and a 14-inch dbh red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and
- 6) WHEREAS two alternative possible placements of the road (under the power lines, and next to the landfill, where there is currently a roadbed) have been proposed that would not destroy the trees, and
- 7) WHEREAS, Dutch elm disease decimated elms throughout the United States, and scientists have searched for decades for specimens that survived Dutch elm disease and that may have genetic immunity to it, and
- 8) WHEREAS, if this elm tree is found to have genetic immunity, it would be not only a valuable and historic specimen tree, but a national treasure that could help reestablish this American native tree in its native range in the eastern hardwood forest, and
- 9) WHEREAS two arborists appraised the elm. One set the value at \$16,900; the other set it at \$43,300, and
- 10) WHEREAS preserving the elm would require its being cabled;
- 11) WHEREAS grant money or another source of funds can probably be found to fund care of the elm, and
- 12) WHEREAS existing proffers may require the developers to preserve these trees;
- 13) WHEREAS the builder instead proposes the planting of 43 quality trees and offers to put them in a conservation easement,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the MVCCA request that Supervisor Hyland direct staff to evaluate road alternatives that would avoid damage to the trees,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MVCCA request that Supervisor Hyland hold a meeting with all the stakeholders, including Lorton Arts Foundation, Lorton Heritage Society, South County Federation, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, MVCCA Environment and Recreation and Transportation Committees, VDOT, FDOT, and appropriate county staff, to discuss the results of the analysis and provide for community input on road placement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that approval of any site plan be postponed until after a meeting is held to determine appropriate actions related to the trees and road placement.