MEMORANDUM

TO: Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission

FROM: Matthew Ladd

DATE: September 25, 2020

SUBJECT: GLUP Public Facility Amendments for Dominion Energy Substations

The purpose of the upcoming Tuesday, September 29 LRPC meeting is to review a proposed General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendment to identify existing Dominion Energy electrical substations, and the proposed expansion of an existing substation located at 1720 S Fern St. in the Pentagon City/Crystal City area (“Crystal City Substation”), to the Public Facility map and table. Staff will be bringing a Request to Advertise on this amendment for County Board consideration at its October 17 meeting.

Should the County Board approve staff’s request to authorize the advertisement, the Planning Commission and County Board would hear this item at their respective November meetings. Also in November, the Planning Commission will consider a rezoning request related to the proposed improvements at the South Fern Street substation, and the County Board will consider multiple real estate and land use actions for this facility. These other actions are briefly described in the Background section of this memo. More information is available at the project site: https://projects.arlingtonva.us/neighborhoods/crystal-city-development/crystal-city-sector-plan/

Background

In summer 2019, Dominion approached Arlington County with a desire to acquire an approximately 12,000 sq. ft. portion of a County-owned parcel (“County exchange parcel”) adjacent to the Crystal City Substation. Dominion has determined that substation expansion is needed to replace older equipment, improve safety and reliability, and accommodate increased electrical demand from planned future development in Pentagon City, Crystal City and surrounding neighborhoods. Dominion’s site feasibility analysis concluded that the County-owned site, located at South Hayes Street, was the only logical location for their planned expansion.

In exchange, Dominion is offering to convey a 10,000 square foot parcel, previously used as a substation, at the intersection of South Ives Street and 18th Street South, approximately three
blocks west of the substation on South Fern Street ("Dominion Exchange parcel"). This parcel is identified as a potential acquisition site in the County’s Public Spaces Master Plan, and, if acquired, the Department of Parks and Recreation would lead a community planning process to generate specific ideas for its uses. In addition to conveying the Dominion exchange parcel, Dominion has agreed to dedicate in fee simple a portion of South Hayes Street right-of-way that currently exists as an easement.

To facilitate this, Dominion has filed a rezoning application for a portion of the existing Crystal City Substation site, which is currently split-zoned “C-O-2.5” and “RA7-16.” Dominion is requesting to zone the entire site “C-O-2.5” to meet minimum lot size requirements for the proposed expansion. The adjacent County exchange parcel is currently zoned “C-O-2.5.” Dominion has also filed an application to amend the substation's original use permit to allow the proposed improvements and expansion.

Overview of 2232 Requirements
Virginia Code Section 15.2-2232 ("2232") requires that the Planning Commission find that the “general location or approximate location, character, and extent” of public buildings and structures, streets, parks, public utility facility, or public service corporation facility as being “substantially in accord” with the Comprehensive Plan, unless the feature is shown on the Comprehensive Plan or is otherwise exempt from this provision. When the County Board adopted the most recent reprinting of the GLUP in February 2020, it added a new map and table to the GLUP that identify the general locations of County and Arlington Public Schools facilities. Part of the rationale for adding this information to the GLUP, an element of the County’s Comprehensive Plan, was to facilitate compliance with 2232 requirements for such uses.

For a facility where 2232 provisions apply, there are multiple ways to demonstrate compliance with these requirements. One option, which had typically been pursued prior to the adoption of the Public Facility map and table in the GLUP, is for the Planning Commission take action to determine that the facility’s general location, character, and extent are in substantial accord with the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Since the Planning Commission is not required to take this action if the facility (or “feature,” to use the state code language) is shown on the Comprehensive Plan, another option to comply with 2232 requirements is to amend the Comprehensive Plan to specifically include the facility.

Proposed GLUP Public Facility Map and Table Amendments
In addition to public buildings and structures, the 2232 provisions also apply to public service corporation facilities, such as Dominion’s electrical substations, that provide utility services to the public. Because electrical substations are not currently shown or described in the GLUP or other Comprehensive Plan elements, staff is proposing to the second option for satisfying the 2232 requirements, amending the Comprehensive Plan to specifically indicate these facilities on the GLUP Public Facility map (Attachment 1) and table (Attachment 2). The proposed amendments would indicate the approximate location, acreage, and use category of eleven Dominion substations located within Arlington, including the proposed expansion of the Crystal City Substation. These amendments would also add a new use category, “Public Service Corporation,” to the map and table. This use category would apply to all eleven of the substations.
Documenting these facilities in the GLUP would provide a specific reference for the proposed improvements to the Crystal City substation and provide a basis for staff and the Planning Commission to determine whether future changes to substations are in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan. Dominion substations located on state or federal property, where the County does not have land use authority, are not proposed for inclusion in the proposed amendments.

**Next Steps and Timeline**
Following discussion at LRPC, staff intends to bring the proposed GLUP Public Facility amendment to the County Board for a request to advertise public hearings at its November meeting. This would be followed by final consideration by the Planning Commission and County Board.

**Anticipated Schedule of Actions**

| October 2020 County Board Meeting | County Board Request to Advertise for Public Hearings (GLUP Public Facility map and table amendments) |
| October 2020 Planning Commission Meeting | Planning Commission Consideration  
• GLUP Public Facility map and table amendments  
• Crystal City Substation rezoning |
| November 2020 County Board Meeting | County Board Consideration  
• Real estate actions (land exchange, resubdivision, South Hayes Street dedication, vacation, license agreement for construction staging)  
• Land use actions (GLUP Public Facility amendments, rezoning, use permit amendment for substation improvements, use permit for construction staging) |
RTA General Land Use Plan Public Facility Map Amendment

Electrical Substations

Legend
- Public Facilities
- Public Ownership
- Public Parks
- Federal Land
## Attachment 2: Proposed GLUP Public Facility Table Amendments

**County Board RTA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map #</th>
<th>Facility Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>ZIP Code</th>
<th>Primary Use Category</th>
<th>Additional Use Categories</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>I1</td>
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<td>22202</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

This table generally omits public facilities that are shown or listed in other Comprehensive Plan elements, such as parks, recycling centers, transportation networks, and water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure and networks.

This table also omits publicly-owned land that does not include a public facility (existing, under construction, or funded).

Acreage is approximate. In instances where the separately listed facilities are located on the same site, acreage for the entire site is provided.

For public facilities leased within a privately-owned building, the acreage is listed as N/A, or not applicable.

1. The Animal Welfare League of Arlington is a private organization that provides public animal control services under contract with Arlington County. AWLA leases the building at 2650 S. Arlington Mill Drive from Arlington County.

2. Arlington Arts Center is a private organization that leases the building at 3550 Wilson Blvd. from Arlington County.

3. Public service corporation facilities located on federal or state property are omitted.