

Docket Item #27-A
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT #99-0011
REZONING #99-0011
CROMLEY COURT

Planning Commission Meeting
October 5, 1999

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for amendment to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan Chapter of the 1992 Master Plan to change the land use designation of the subject property from CL/Commercial Low to RM/Residential Medium and for a rezoning to change the zoning designation from CL/Commercial to RB/Residential.

APPLICANT: William Cromley
by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

LOCATION: 300 North Henry Street

CITY COUNCIL ACTION, OCTOBER 16, 1999: City Council approved the recommendation of the Planning Commission and approved the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, OCTOBER 5, 1999: On a motion by Mr. Leibach, seconded by Mr. Robinson, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to all applicable codes and ordinances. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0. Mr. Dunn was absent.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

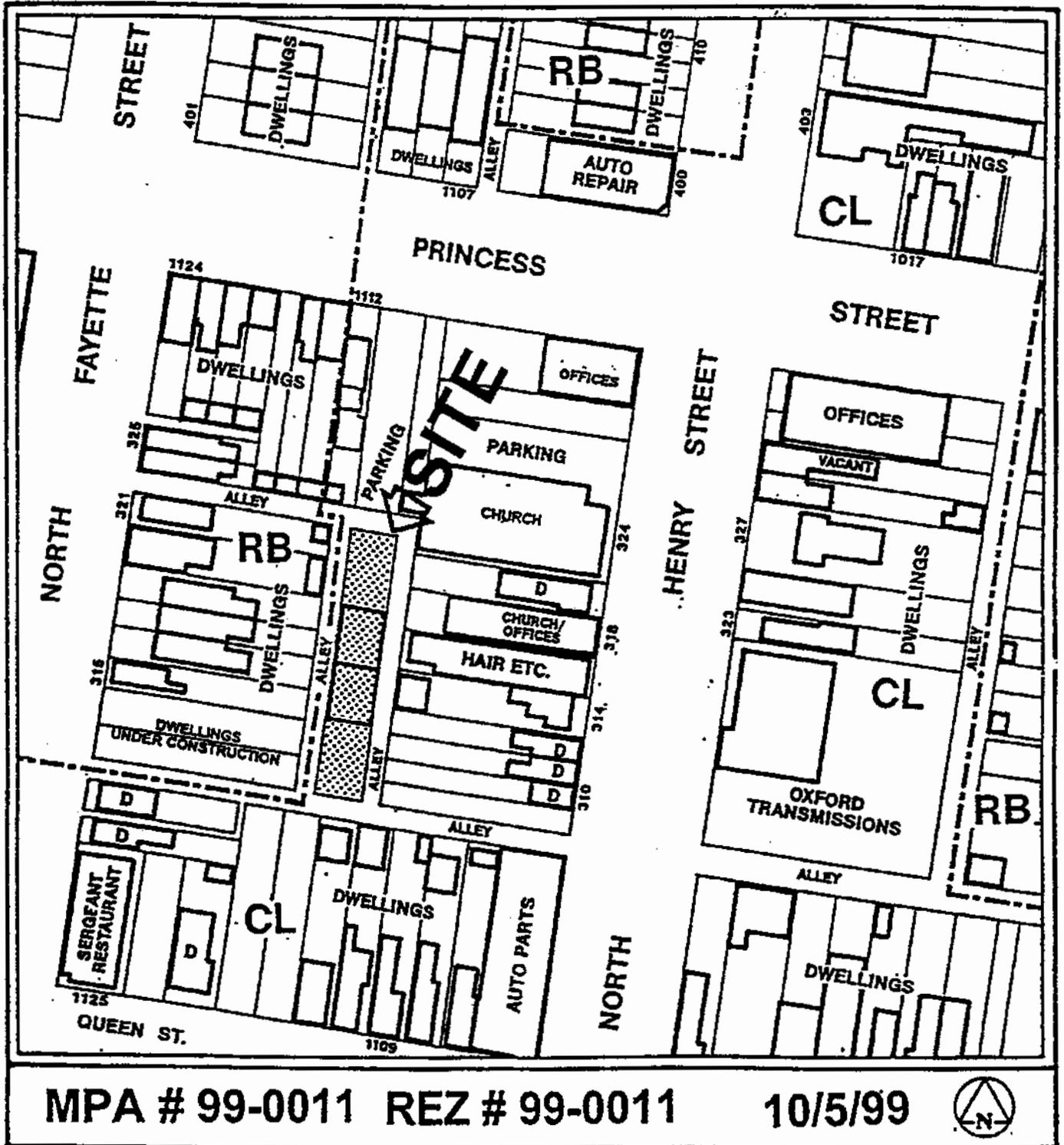
Speakers:

Duncan Blair representing the applicant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approval** of the master plan amendment to change the land use designation from CL/Commercial Low to RM/Residential Medium and the zoning from CL/Commercial Low to RB/Residential.

The subject property and surrounding land uses are shown on the sketch below



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10/5/99



DISCUSSION:

The applicant proposes to change the land use designation and zoning of a 3,572 square foot parcel addressed off of 300 North Henry Street and located in the interior of the block bounded by North Henry Street, Queen Street, North Fayette Street and Princess Street from commercial to residential. The lot is presently zoned CL/Commercial Low and the applicant proposes to rezone the lot to RB/Residential, thereby changing the land use designation from CL/Commercial Low to RM/Residential Medium. The lot falls within the Braddock Road Metro Small Area Plan and is located in the Parker-Gray Historic District.

The subject property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring approximately 27' by 133' and surrounded by four alleys: two public and two private. The lot is adjacent to RB zoned townhouses to the west along North Fayette Street, and a mix of uses, primarily residential, in the CL zone along Princess, North Henry and Queen Streets. The applicant proposes moving the RB zone line from behind the properties on North Fayette Street to encompass the subject property. The lot is presently vacant and has been the source of many complaints over the years relating to illegal drug activity, prostitution and the accumulation of trash on the site.

In addition to this rezoning and master plan amendment, the applicant is requesting approval of a special use permit and subdivision to develop the lot with two semi-detached dwellings (SUP #99-0086 and SUB #99-0015).

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff supports the rezoning and master plan amendment requested by the applicant for four reasons:

- It complies with the fundamental goals of the Braddock Road Small Area Plan to reinforce residential development in the neighborhood
- It will end the nuisance that the lot has posed to surrounding residences
- The proposed use is compatible with surrounding uses
- Development under CL zoning could be detrimental to the surrounding residential properties

Compliance with Braddock Road Small Area Plan

One of the fundamental goals of the Braddock Road Small Area Plan is to preserve and strengthen the residential character of the neighborhood. Another primary objective of the plan is to “Preserve the residential areas by retaining the existing residential zoning, vigorously adhering to the Parker-Gray Historic District standards, and rezoning commercially zoned residentially used land to residential.” The Small Area Plan also encourages residential infill development on vacant parcels.

Staff believes that the proposed rezoning addresses all of these objectives. In the future, the commission may also want to consider rezoning some of the residentially used land along Princess, North Henry and Queen Streets to RB/Residential as well to ensure that the residential character of this block is maintained and that there is no potential for incompatible commercial development.

Comparability with Surrounding Uses

In the opinion of Staff, the rezoning and residential development proposed by the applicant is compatible with the neighborhood’s surrounding uses. The majority, 16 of 23, of the surrounding lots are used for residential purposes, although most retain a commercial zoning. The remaining seven lots surrounding the site are used by two churches and a hair salon, or are vacant lots or lots used for parking. On both the northwest and northeast corners of Queen Street there are additional commercial uses; a hardware/automotive supply store and a restaurant. The proposed houses will be compatible with the surrounding residential uses and at the same time not be detrimental to the existing commercial and institutional uses.

Removal of a Nuisance

Staff believes there is significant benefit to many surrounding property owners from the removal

of a blighted lot adjacent to their property. In the opinion of many City agencies, including Planning, T&ES and the Police, the addition of houses in this area and the nearly constant surveillance these houses will provide will be a significant improvement and a benefit to the neighborhood.

Development Under CL Zoning

While it is not known what permitted uses in the CL zone might be proposed at this site should the rezoning not be approved, it is known that a number of permitted uses, such as motor vehicle parking and storage and retail sales, may be incompatible with residential uses. It is also possible that many of these commercial uses would be permitted without a special use permit, since they do not have frontage requirements. While the site could also be developed residentially under the CL zone, the proposed RB zone is more likely to result in housing similar to that housing on the exterior of the block -- single family fee simple houses -- because the CL zone would permit multiple units to be built on the site only as multi-family or accessory units.

Staff recommends approval of the rezoning and master plan amendment.

STAFF: Sheldon Lynn, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Kimberley Johnson, Chief, Development;

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Stephanie Sechrist, Urban Planner.

RESOLUTION NO. MPA-99-0011

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, an application for amendment to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan section of the 1992 Master Plan was filed with the Department of Planning and Zoning on July 22, 1999 for changes in the land use designations to the parcels at 300 North Henry Street; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has analyzed the proposed revision and presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on October 5, 1999 with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan section of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan and with the specific goals and objectives set forth in the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan section of the 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the amendment to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan section of the 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The following amendment is hereby adopted in its entirety as an amendment to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan section of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:

Change the designation of parcels at 300 North Henry Street from CL/Commercial Low to RM/Residential Medium.

2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the 5th day of October, 1999.

W. B. Hurd, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sheldon Lynn, Secretary