

# McLean Citizens Association



McLeanCitizens.org

Via Email

October 13, 2011

Walter Alcorn, Chairman  
Tysons Committee  
Fairfax County Planning Commission

Dear Walter:

The McLean Citizens Association (MCA) thanks the county staff and the Planning Commission for the information comparing the Route 28 corridor to Tysons Corner that was presented to the Planning Commission's Tysons Committee (PCTC) on October 5, 2011. The information can assist us all in finding a fair plan to allocate and recover the very expensive infrastructure costs, especially in the area of transportation facilities, needed to sustain dense urban growth at Tysons.

The MCA offers, herein, several comments on the information contained in the staff's materials. In general, while the information is useful, we believe it is lacking in several critical areas, which, in turn, renders the comparisons between the two development areas insufficient. For the reasons set forth below, we do not believe adoption of an infrastructure cost allocation plan for Tysons that is different from that used in the Route 28 corridor has been justified.

Slide 2. Under the subheading "additional transportation improvements," the slide indicates additional road improvements were paid by multiple sources outside the (Route 28) tax district. This information is still deficient for Route 28 when contrasted with the known information from Tysons. We know which specific transportation improvements are necessary for Tysons (see Table 7 in the Comprehensive Plan adopted June 22, 2010), along with their associated costs. Additionally, we have an understanding of the staff's proposed allocation of the costs for each classification of transportation infrastructure improvements. However, for Route 28, we still have no specific information about which nearby roads were improved, the associated costs for each such improvement, and the specific sources of funding. Thus, we do not yet have an apples-to-apples comparison. In the absence of such a detailed comparison, we believe the analysis is incomplete and insufficient to rebut the MCA's position on cost allocation.

Slide 3. In the comparison of “environment and development levels,” there is no mention and display of the planned density levels. I have been informed most of the commercial properties in the Route 28 tax district have approved FARs of less than 2.0, with only certain limited parcels having FARs between 2.0 and 3.0. On the other hand, the Tysons Comprehensive Plan allows unlimited FARs at the four Tysons rail stations. Indeed, it is likely that we will see buildings with 10.0 FARs within an eighth of one mile from each Tysons rail station. This is urban density found in cities such as New York and Chicago. While the transportation infrastructure needs and associated costs for Tysons are much higher than those in the Route 28 corridor, the development authorizations and associated profit potential for Tysons landowners are tremendously larger than those in the Route 28 corridor. For a valid comparison to exist, all of the development potential information should be provided for both areas.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, we believe the comparison on Slide 3 is incomplete and, thus, does not contradict the MCA’s conclusion.

Finally, the comparison does not address traffic types and volumes. One of the key factors underlying the staff’s proposed allocation of costs for Tysons is the amount and percentage of through traffic on the major routes in Tysons (the Beltway, the Dulles Toll Road, Route 7 and Route 123). The staff and other stakeholders have taken the position road improvements serving through traffic at Tysons should be paid by the public. On the other hand, traffic that is going to, or coming from, Tysons should be split between private and public sources, according to the County’s current thinking.

There is some logic to this approach. However, one must also examine the equities between Route 28 and Tysons. Fairness dictates the volume of through traffic versus the percentage allocation of costs for the improvement of major roadway(s) for both Route 28 and Tysons should be compared. Since no comparison has been made, the MCA maintains its position on cost allocation remains valid.

Sincerely,



Robert Jackson  
President

cc: Board of Supervisors  
Planning Commission  
Tony Griffin  
Fred Selden  
Barbara Byron  
Dan Rathbone

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<sup>1</sup> In order to protect confidential business and financial information for both Tysons and Route 28, data could be presented on some type of combined basis that does not effectively identify individual property owners.

Walter Alcorn  
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