

## "RESTON" - A PLANNED COMMUNITY

I consider it a great privilege to be asked to address this session of Planning & Zoning officials, and to have the opportunity to tell you a little about our plans for Reston.

We have one great advantage over most planners - we are starting from scratch - we have nothing to tear down or build around. This may prove to be a disadvantage however, since you can blame most of your problems on your predecessors, but if this doesn't turn out properly, we can blame no one but ourselves.

Reston is the name given to a completely new, self-contained community of 75,000 persons to be built on a 6,750 acre tract of land in Fairfax County. This tract lies approximately 18 miles west of Washington, D. C., and 4 miles east of the New Dulles International Airport. The Dulles Airport Access Road runs through the property as does the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad. This land was formerly known as Sunset Hills and our first industry, which has been in operation some 30 years, is the Smith-Bowman Distillery which makes Virginia Gentlemen and Fairfax County bourbon.

This community ties in with the year 2000 plan for the Washington area, that has been prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission and with the Fairfax County Master Plan now under consideration, which provides for the Satellite Community - Open Space Concept. This concept is simply that rather than having "Controlled Sprawl" throughout the western half of Fairfax County, the population would be concentrated in several high density satellite communities with preserved open space and green belts in between.

As I stated earlier - we propose 75,000 people at Reston by 1980. This breaks down to a population factor of 11 persons per acre.

To properly plan this community, Mr. Simon the owner, is sparing no expense. In every aspect we are securing the services of top people in their respective fields. For example:

Planning - Harland Bartholomew & Associates

Whittlesey & Conklin (Master Plan for Calcutta -  
New towns in Canada, Florida)

Traffic Studies - Wilbur Smith & Associates

Engineering - Massey Engineers - Fairfax (Sanitary Sewers and  
Storm Drainage)

Springfield Surveys (Field work, subdivision lay-  
out)

Social Planning - Dr. Carol Lubin - Health, Education, and Rec-  
reation

Hospital Studies - Dr. William T. Sanger - Chancellor Emeritus -  
Medical College of Virginia

Lake Studies - Northern Virginia Soil Conservation Service and  
Massey Engineers

Economic Survey - Arthur D. Little, Inc., Cambridge, Mass.

Other County, State and Federal Agencies.

At Reston, we are placing great emphasis on the kind of life to be lived there and upon the visual character of the community. As you know, suburban sprawl is commonly criticized as much for its look and life as it is for its traffic and school problems.

The land area is beautiful rolling country with large trees and many streams. About half of the area is wooded and the balance pastureland. This lends itself to a beautiful setting for Reston.

There will be a great range of recreational facilities interwoven within the residential areas. These will include several golf courses, numerous swimming pools, tennis courts, at least three lakes, horse back riding trails and stable facilities.

We wish to avoid the monotony of the vast areas of low density edges commonly associated with suburbia. We want to get away from the commercial center, surrounded by apartments, with all low density around these areas. We also want to create real vital community centers where persons will tend to congregate. To accomplish this, we have created sinews or spines of high density development interweaving throughout the area.

These sinews of higher density development will form the activity spines of the residential areas. All of the village centers of activity will be located along their routes. These sinews of life and activity will be within walking distance of almost every house in Reston, and will lead to the local shopping center and to the schools. Along these walkways the pedestrian will have un-interrupted access to the full range of neighborhood facilities without the problems of automobile traffic.

The residential area of Reston is not strongly characterized by separate self-contained neighborhoods, but rather by the continuous interweaving of lakes and wooded area, medium and low density housing.

However, Reston will be served by 7 community shopping and social centers and therefore, is divided roughly into seven villages of 10,000 persons each.

These 7 centers will have strongly individual character - determined by their topography. One will be at the head of a lake, one on a hilltop, and another on a bluff overlooking a lake.

The individual house areas are planned to make the maximum use of the available land, and to minimize the outdoor maintenance problems.

Some houses will be built in clusters with maximum land areas on the private rear portions. It will thus be possible to have wooded re-

creational space adjacent to the house, of far greater value to children and adults alike than useless individually owned lawns. Many will have common play space for younger children.

In addition to cluster housing, ample space will be available for individually designed houses. Many areas of special terrain are ideally suited for this-lake fronts, golf courses, etc.

To give you a further idea of the size of this project - the population of Reston will require 18 elementary schools, 5 intermediate schools, and 2 high schools.

In addition to seven community shopping centers, there will be a major town center of approximately 150 acres. This will contain about one million square feet of commercial space.

In addition to the commercial area, many other uses will be located here. There will be office buildings, an auditorium, convention center, motel, hotel, a regional library, a museum, health complex with hospital, and many other forms of recreational, cultural, and business facilities.

There will also be approximately 1000 acres of industrial land and employment centers. Most of this will be located along the Airport Access Road and the railroad.

From this description, I think you can see that in planning for a complete self contained town, there are many more things to consider than just how to layout the streets to get the greater number of building sites. We expect Reston to be so different that people will be coming from all over the world to see it. In summary, let us look at some of the advantages that this type of community will have:

1. Greater open spaces: Public factor of 42% - average subdivision in Fairfax County has a public factor of 20% and they are now striving for 30% in the newer subdivisions.
2. Parks and wooded areas will be immediately adjacent to high density areas.
3. All streets will be completely planned throughout entire area.
4. Separate pedestrian ways will be provided. (People will go to stores by walking, riding bikes, on horseback, or even in boats.)
5. Real active efficiently planned community centers.
6. All electric and telephone wires will be underground.
7. School and church sites will be reserved in advance.
8. Houses may be built in clusters.
9. Great emphasis on recreational facilities - lake, riding trails with stable facilities, golf courses (63 holes), tennis courts, and swimming pools.

I would like now to take just a couple minutes more to explain how we hope to implement this plan.

The County Board of Supervisors has approved an amendment to the County Zoning Ordinance that permits RPC Districts (Residential Planned Communities.)

This ordinance gives the county control by density and site plans rather than by various zones with definite criteria established for each zone. The density is controlled by the requirement that at no time can the density of the area on record be greater than the average density permitted for the entire gross residential area (13 persons per acre). This eliminates the possibility of a builder coming in, building apartments, and then selling off the surrounding property.

Since there are not the usual various zones with strict criteria, the County retains control by site plans. A preliminary plan is required for a minimum of 750 acres. Then a final plan of not less than 100 acres must be approved before construction can start. This final plan must show everything - even building locations and uses. Actually in the long run, the county will have more control by this RPC Ordinance. However, the developer will have greater flexibility since we do not have to be concerned with zone boundary lines, setbacks, and so forth, in our planning.

That about sums up our project and how we hope to approach it. As for timing, we plan on starting the first golf course and lake this fall and on the first housing in the spring. We hope that in a few years you will then hold one of your meetings at Reston and take a first hand look at what we have accomplished.

G. W. Saunders, Jr.  
Project Engineer

September 24, 1962