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TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR 'NEW TOWN' CITIZENS GROUPS:

An Urban Guerilla Warfare Manual

a paper as part of a panel discussion on

"TOWARD IMPROVED NEW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE"

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TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR 'NEW TOWN' CITIZEN GROUPS:

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SUMMARY

We wish to relate the 'modus operandi' of the Reston Community Association (RCA) Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Committee in dealing with growth in the new town of Reston, Virginia. We will describe the direct interjection of the residents of Reston into the basic county development process on a continuing basis. Because of our scant material resources we will be basically speaking of something akin to a kind of civilized urban guerilla warfare. We will sketch the nature of the arena in which our activity is played out...Fairfax County, Virginia, which has a unique urban county form of government. We will sketch out the rules which are contained in the Residential Planned Community Ordinance (RPC)...a zoning document quite unlike conventional code books.

It is our intent throughout to stress the means available to citizens groups who believe that they should participate in the evolution of a new town. In so asserting we may be at odds with some professional planners who view citizen insertion in the development process as inherently inefficient. To the extent that this is true, we regard our involvement as another "cost of doing business". In a sense we represent an imperfect feed-back control mechanism through which the new town planning cycle may improve itself.

In our discussion our problems as well as our strengths are illuminated. Our principles of operation and our basic approach to setting priorities is discussed. We indicate concern with the dynamic equilibrium of a growing new town as contrasted with the more sterile original planning. Some actual examples with an explanation of the principle we sought to stress concludes the presentation.

BACKGROUND

When in 1967 Robert E. Simon passed from the picture in the new town of Reston, a fundamental transition occurred. The Proprietor of Reston was no longer, the emotionally and intellectually committed "Founder, but rather a gray, amorphous, corporate conglomerate, which had somewhat accidentally plunged into a new venture. In that transition Reston ceased to be solely an experimental dream...some say almost a kind of Camelot...and began instead a steady metamorphosis into a commercial enterprise.

Now residents may participate as disciples in the creative work of the "founder", but what may they expect in the way of participation in a commercial enterprise? It has been argued by many that the citizen role in the latter case is best restricted to that of the consumer...a view fostered by a number of government agencies. In this instance the development process becomes a two sided affair: the developer as monitored by the local government. This is one of the contrasts cited between Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland.

In Reston few have accepted the role of uninvolved consumer. Since the advent of Gulf-Reston, Incorporated (GRINC), we have espoused the notion that steady resident participation is essential to new town growth. We have seen our participation mature into a true three faceted process: the developer, the county, and the "new town" residents acting through a citizens association. We refer here not to token consultation, but to direct interjection into the ongoing mechanics of the new town development process at carefully selected points. The process, though crisis oriented, has produced a governance of sorts.

The result of citizen involvement has been to insert an imperfect feed-back mechanism into the cycle of development. (Here we interpret feed-back in the sense of control theory where a portion of the system output is fed back to modify the input.) Feed-back introduced through lay participation is fundamentally different from the fiscal and market feed-back which controls the developer. While it is somewhat akin to the political feed-back governing our whole county, it is also different. It occurs before the fact, rather than after the fact. That it is to say, citizens review and comment on development plans before they are approved, rather than simply complaining after being presented with a fait accompli.

We believe citizen feed-back accomplishes the following:

- (i) continually tests the new plans against the benchmarks of the original concept;
- (ii) applies experience gained in the living of an existing concept against the proposed extension of it;
- (iii) introduces accountability into the county staff review process;
- (iv) breaks down complex design issues into understandable terms;
- (v) forces the developers' economic model to consider social

- impacts;
- (vi) creates the function of a shadow staff for our principle elected county official, the supervisor.

AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR ORGANIZATION

Having made a fundamental decision to intervene, immediate questions must be faced. How are we to intervene?; for how long?; to what degree? These questions remain when the stimulus of the immediate crisis is past. In answer, the overall community association has become a citizen advocate on a number of community wide issues: health, development, consumerism, schools. More specifically, the Planning & Zoning Committee has answered these questions by evolving a highly elastic group under the general auspices of the RCA Board of Directors. We maintain a constant level of monitoring over Reston development. We simultaneously provide a pre-existing forum, technical assistance, and ready access to government for ad hoc groups responding to specific development crises. Such ad hoc groups may even be temporarily absorbed to form a kind of popular front. In this manner, the usual pattern in which multitudinous--often competitive--ad hoc citizens groups form and disassociate, has not emerged. We have had only one serious ideological dispute, and it was necessary to smash the group involved.

Under pressure of external forces (some peculiar to Reston), a P&Z Committee has evolved with these essential characteristics:

- (i) a small number of irregulars facing an extensive, and very wealthy, organization;
- (ii) long campaigns over familiar ground;
- (iii) careful husbanding of resources;
- (iv) careful selection of targets and limited objectives;
- (v) well developed intelligence network;
- (vi) cadre type organization which assists temporary popular front activities.

Items (i) - (vi) above, and other aspects of our organization to be introduced, define a classical guerilla activity. Given Reston's conscious urban character, we speak therefore of a surrogate urban guerilla campaign. Adaptation of it might in time become a preventive for the more familiar, violent kind of urban guerilla activity espoused by the Brazilian, Carlos Marighella.

Our 'modus operandi' is probably not generally applicable. Besides requiring a constant level of external threat stimulus to counter-act any natural drift toward human complacency, it requires a local government which is not overtly corrupt. Three arenas suggest themselves, all on the cutting edge of urban planning: 'new towns', inner city or ghetto areas facing a mindless urban renewal juggernaut, and mushrooming suburban areas. We will now restrict ourselves to relating our activities in one particular arena...the 'new town' of Reston, Virginia.

THE ARENA

Tactically the guerilla draws his strength from operation on familiar territory and within the framework of familiar (though not always responsive) institutions. Hence, in order to understand the RCA tactical approach to citizen involvement, we must add a section on the structural framework of the government in which Reston is embedded. We present certain situational aspects and resultant impacts on our activities for several subject areas:

- A. The Territory...Fairfax County, Virginia and Reston, Virginia;
- B. The Institutional Framework...The RPC Ordinance; the Zoning Process for Reston; the Public Hearing Process.

A. The Territory

(1) Fairfax County, Virginia

Situation: Reston is an entity slated to achieve a population approaching 80,000 in essentially 12 years of growth..."80 in '80". Yet, Reston is not a town in any legal sense of the word. We exist only as a special zoning category in the county of Fairfax, Virginia. We are fundamentally governed by the Reston Master Plan (RMP), a legal document defining land use in terms of density, transportation, and community facilities. The RMP is itself embedded in one of several land use plans which cover Fairfax County...in particular, the Upper Potomac Plan (UPP). These various Fairfax County plans indicate growth patterns in terms of clusters of urban density surrounded by green belts. Reston forms the most dense cluster in the UPP. Adjoining Reston is the incorporated town of Herndon, which creates very special problems. Reston and Herndon together form a "super-cluster" with a projected population of 120-140,000 people.

Impact: The RCA P&Z Committee must involve itself in zoning cases outside the RMP area on a carefully selected basis. In fact we have evolved three rules to govern the selection: (i) land in question is essentially contiguous to the RMP area; (ii) the case is a threat to the UPP; (iii) case affects one of our major transportation corridors to Washington, D.C.

Situation: Fairfax County is unique in having opted for the urban county form of government for some 500,000 people. Under its charter from the Commonwealth, Reston may not incorporate.

Impact: The scope of operation cannot, perforce, be limited to Reston, but must involve segments of the county policy making apparatus. Curiously enough we were chided for our political involvement by the "Founder", Robert E. Simon, in remarks made at the 1972 Reston Re-Dedication Ceremony.

Situation: Administratively, Fairfax County is divided into eight magisterial districts, each placing an elected supervisor (legislator) on a Board of Supervisors (BOS). A Chairman is elected at

large. This Board is the chief instrumentality of the county. It is advised by an extensive, and well educated, career county staff. In zoning matters, the Board depends upon the staff for assessment of cases, and upon an appointive Planning Commission for zoning recommendations.

Impact: The Fairfax Board of Supervisors is the natural focus of our activities, but the county staff is the target group to influence. Moreover, presentations before the Planning Commission require as much preparation as do those before the Board. It is extremely difficult to turn the Board around after an adverse decision from the Planning Commission. On occasion, the state assembly may become the focus. An example is a long range campaign to abolish the Fairfax County Board of Zoning Appeals, whom we judge to be so totally unresponsive to local needs as to be beyond redemption.

(2) The Town of Reston, Virginia

Situation: The Reston Master Plan (RMP) area comprises some 7700 acres of which about 4400 are so called 'buildable' acres, (i.e. available for residential construction--the remainder being either industrial or 'public factor' land). Reston's population is now around 20,000 (October 1972) with a pace of growth around 2,500 dwelling units per year. The extent and rate of development creates within Reston an endemic condition of "future shock" as defined by Alvin Toffler in his book of the same name.

Impact: Since future shock causes people to cope by tuning out, we must develop a hard core organization of persons impervious to future shock, motivated to overcome it, or in some cases thriving on it.

Situation: Internal to Reston there exists an ersatz local government based on the resident as a consumer. It is embodied in a formal non-profit corporation, supported by assessment, and responsible for the maintenance of Reston's common ground ('open space'). It is called the Reston Homeowners Association (RHOA). It is a creature of the developer through majority voting control based on total land held. RHOA controls the Architectural Board of Review (ABR), whose approval is required for all non-GRINC developers. Smaller resident homeowner associations called clusters also exist. These are units of 20-175 townhouses with certain property held in common.

Impact: RCA must combat intentional developer confusion with RHOA as spokesman before the county. A major commitment of RCA resources to a continual campaign of education among new residents is required. Close contact with the cluster organizations is essential since they carry the load, and supply the manpower, on zoning cases in developed portions of Reston.

B. The Institutional Framework

(1) The RPC Ordinance

Situation: Development work in Reston is governed by the Residential Planned Community (RPC) Ordinance. This ordinance scraps conventional zoning restrictions in order to allow the developer to pursue a goal of 'design excellence'. Legally, RPC is viewed as being a loose ordinance fraught with danger. One can also take the view that "in order to do great things, you must allow for the possibility of disaster". The latter expresses our viewpoint.

Impact: We have evolved a feed-back process to the county staff and political hierarchy which compares the promises of design excellence with the reality as built. We work toward ordinance revision which clarifies, and defines, the judgemental character of the RPC. We have asserted that RPC processing is more a negotiation process, than the usual procedure in which: "that which is not specifically forbidden is, perforce, permitted."

(2) The Zoning Process for Reston

Situation: Unlike many proposed new town developments, all of Reston is not yet zoned RPC. From time to time the developer comes forward to the county Board of Supervisors with development plans indicating his proposed land use for whichever combination of densities may be involved...low, medium, or high. These development plans are the subject of a published staff study, and are the subject of public hearings before the Fairfax Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Impact: We have concentrated our efforts on the development plan processing. At that level the process is not overwhelmed by technical considerations. We adopt the position that during these submissions the developer can be called to account for his stewardship of RPC already granted, as well as being judged upon the quality of his current submission. In this area we have effected basic changes to the RPC ordinance. In the 1969-70 time frame revisions demanding greater definition of development plan were passed. A closer watch on developing density patterns also emerged.

Note: Not surprisingly this aspect of RPC is one of the elements which planners are dismissing as inefficient, and too demanding of the investment community.

Situation: Approved development plans become a composite of individual site plans, which build on the basic land use granted at rezoning to RPC. What was a trickle of development plans (perhaps 3-5 per year) becomes a torrent of site plans. By law, site plan notification is an 8½" x 11" yellow placard tacked to a tree or post, plus five (5) registered letters to adjacent property owners.

Impact: The sheer volume of site plans requires a special strategy. We monitor all site plans. This means at least a quick visual examination. This screening produces a very limited number of site plans for serious review. This is generally followed by comment to developer and county staff. Following upon a period of negotiation and compromise, usually directed at principles, as opposed to technical details, an even smaller number are subject to formal appeal and public hearings. Beyond this point are the courts, to which

the developer has already had recourse in a case involving a Gulf gasoline station. The implacable pursuit of this single minded goal in the face of total public and county opposition by the Gulf Corporation is perhaps the single most frightening aspect of our developer landlord. It is a glimpse into the world of the unfettered developer king. On the subject of notification, we have demanded that the county instruct Reston developers to give us written notice of site plan submissions. The five other notices are generally sent to the developer himself, or his employees who live in Reston. We would suggest that revision of archaic provisions of most notification procedures take high priority for any citizen group both on a short term, and long term basis.

Note: Tactically we have not gone to court as have many citizens groups for these reasons: (i) it ties up resources; (ii) the developer has impressive legal talent; (iii) RPC is without substantial body of precedent, and the Virginia courts are not noted for the reach of their judicial wisdom; (iv) the courts of Virginia seem a poor forum for creating a new body of common law.

(3) The Public Hearing Process

Situation: As we have indicated, Fairfax County, Virginia, uses a two-tiered public hearing process. A minimum public notice of two weeks for each tier is required. Moreover, the Board and Planning Commission publish a <Weekly Agenda> distributed free to any county resident requesting a copy. The present Board is reform-minded, and definitely anti-growth...and this includes Reston. However, they are honest and remarkably free of developer influence...a rare condition. Our own fortunes ride with Supervisor, Mrs Martha V. Pennino, whose political awareness has indicated a sensitivity toward the social aspects of Reston development. For the guerilla, the public forum produces a favourable one-on-one situation which should be exploited.

Impacts:

(i) Our P&Z Committee enters all public hearings concerning Reston, and its immediate environs. Written statements are universally prepared. An oral presentation is also delivered in most cases. This self-imposed requirement of attending all hearings constitutes the single most demanding aspect of our work.

(ii) Over the course of several years a credibility, or standing, has been achieved equal to that of most zoning attorneys. Credibility in turn depends upon our ability to occasionally turn out "bodies" for crucial hearings.

(iii) A mutual exchange level with the public hearing body has been achieved, which ranges from support of well conceived developer plans through neutral commentary on ill-prepared staff reports all the way to total opposition. In essence, the public hearing process produces for us a kind of currency which may be tuned up, or down.

(iv) We avoid the politically untenable posture of total obstructionism by addressing a variety of cases.

(v) We avoid ideological disputes and ad hominum attacks on officials. To handle conflict of interest cases, we research

Commission and Board member involvement in advance. Findings can be 'leaked' as required.

(vi) Maximum flexibility and discretion are accorded the committee member responsible for the public presentation. We observe that failure to accord judgemental discretion equal to the opposition attorney produces a rigid stance, easily disposed of by an experienced zoning attorney.

(vii) We do not use attorneys for public presentation unless a legal principle is involved.

Having now described the arena in which we work, and the manner in which it has shaped our operation, we are free to discuss actual operational procedures. This means an assessment of relative strengths and weaknesses.

THE TACTICAL PROFILE

The guerilla maintains at all times a finely tuned balance sheet of strengths and weaknesses of himself and his opposition. This is essentially a running inventory of resources at his disposal. Thinking in terms of constraints, rather than weaknesses, inventory items may be sorted and compared. Thus, 'immovable' constraints, e.g. (dollars) may be compared with temporary constraints, e.g. (numbers of people). From the former come thresholds and priorities; from the latter, lists of items which will bear temporary stress to achieve limited goals. Another comparison is generic constraints inherent in your organization structure versus constraints specific to the zoning case at hand.

A basic profile sheet for our committee, from whence emerges our tactical profile, goes as follows. Each constraint requires a structural adaptation of the committee, or the imposition of a priority/threshold, or the existence of a countervailing opposition weakness.

Constraints List

A. Constraints Common to Most Citizens Groups

- (i) Volunteer, unpaid group, most without city planning experience.
- (ii) Time consuming public hearings and research.
- (iii) The need to maintain a harsh offensive posture on technically difficult material, plus the continual threat of ridicule in public hearings, all of which combine to burn out volunteers.
- (iv) Extremely limited funds...we have \$100/year for nominal printing and mailing.
- (v) Continual threat of factionalism on specific zoning cases.
- (vi) Short lead time during zoning blitzes.
- (vii) Drain of available talent to developer oriented groups like JayCees and Chamber of Commerce and Rotary.

B. Constraints Peculiar to Reston

- (i) Sheer volume of cases within Reston plus a highly speculative realty market outside Reston.
- (ii) Large corporate landlord not noted for seeking citizen involvement.
- (iii) Competition from a plethora of other less demanding civic activities; Reston has > 75 clubs alone which claim time.
- (iv) Continual need to assert the plastic nature of the RPC ordinance, the need to demand evidence of 'design excellence'.
- (v) Failure to recruit active committee members with considerable free time during the day, particularly on the distaff side.
- (vi) A tendency of Reston people to talk an issue to death.

Possible Strengths

A. Available to Most New Town Citizens Groups

- (i) Observation that many zoning attorneys have grown inept and sloppy after years without effective challenge.
- (ii) Observation that zoning attorneys are usually poorly schooled in urban planning with the result that they have twisted zoning so as to emphasize legal aspects with which they are comfortable.
- (iii) Ability to choose cases for which a major commitment of resources will be made...typically ones involving lynch pin parcels in either a geographical or procedural sense.
- (iv) Large pool of technical talent...in our case established by door-to-door canvass in periodic membership drives by RCA.
- (v) Establishment of county chains of authority, and identification of responsible personnel in the county by name.

B. Peculiar to Reston

- (i) Large pool of professional bureaucrats familiar with government at all levels, and unawed by it. This is a singular resource, and most difficult to duplicate elsewhere.
- (ii) A good focus for our actions: the hegemony of a single developer; a unified county government; a single set of officials; a single newspaper; no parallel citizens groups.
- (iii) A responsive Board of Supervisors, good staff liaison, and fundamentally good sources of county data.
- (iv) Hard won detente with the developer in terms of advance information on development, e.g. we are supplied with maps of major developments and site plans upon request.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Guerilla groups are typically formed around a closely knit cadre which may lack the formal trappings of organization. In our case, the establishment of a realistic tactical profile together with an analysis of county framework, prevents creation of a committee overly concerned with its own structure or internal problems. We have made continual attempts to evolve a very formal committee structure, only to see it collapse under the next set of

major zoning cases. At present we are organized by levels of involvement. Levels are as follows:

(i) A chairman, and vice-chairman, for whom the P&Z Committee must be a nearly full-time avocation. The chairman has a maximum of authority delegated from the RCA Board of Directors. The Chairman is a limited autocrat, confirmed by the RCA Board. His tenure is really at the sufferance of other committee members who can vote their displeasure by quitting.

(ii) A core cadre of 8-12 people...all with one to four years of experience. Each has a general area of responsibility and expertise. Any is capable of making public presentations on short notice, or preparing a case under like circumstances. Turnover is slow in this group. A member of the RCA Board typically is a member of this core group to perform liaison and to extend the policy reach of the RCA Board. Existence of this core group is insurance against collapse due to loss of a key man or chairman...something which has dogged us in the past.

(iii) A longer list of "stringers" with special talents who contribute when time and interest permit. Turnover in this group is high.

(iv) Temporary additions/absorptions of ad hoc citizens committees to meet specific crises.

(v) An inventory of persons who could presumably be tapped or mobilized in specific cases.

Because volunteers tend to migrate slowly into and out of the various categories, based on interest and availability, the committee achieves some degree of stability. Since interest and long-term commitment are our most scarce commodity, committee structure and functioning is adjusted to maximize available talent whenever possible. In order to hold a diverse committee together, public monthly meetings are held. A digest of this meeting and a run down of current involvement is mailed to persons in categories (i)-(iv), plus the RCA Board, the newspaper, and our Supervisor. Sub-committees are formed as needed by the chairman, and vice-chairman. Whether this kind of structure and function is more generally applicable, is open to question. We can only report it has had high survival value for us. We now discuss committee handling of problems that come to us.

TACTICAL APPROACH

Acting upon intelligence from one of several sources, the chairman makes an initial assessment of the problems. Sources of intelligence information include:

- (i) public notice or notice from officials directly;
- (ii) developer supplied information;
- (iii) county contacts;
- (iv) unidentified contacts, or special leads;
- (v) someone's hunch

The chairman generally tries to make an initial verification of the information.

A priority is assigned according to current workload. An

early decision, later reviewed, is made as to the degree of involvement which will be permitted. If the problem is immediate, a sub-committee is formed under a core committee member. If the case may "go to the mat", RCA Board approval is sought.

Actual case preparation follows two parallel tracks.

- (i) Research into the case to establish our position.
- (ii) Assessment of problem for other impacts.

Depending upon the assigned priority, and the results of investigations, a level of response is selected ranging from a simple telephone call all the way to formal appeals. Choosing a level of response is characteristic of guerilla activity as opposed to organizations with prescribed response levels. Levels of response then condition the mixture of fronts on which the issues will be pursued. Choice of fronts or channels for pursuit of an objective is again typical of a guerilla campaign.

The objective is then pursued by an admixture of approaches comprised from the following:

- (i) administrative channels employing
 - (a) attacks on the issue
 - (b) attacks on the basic process or ordinance;
- (ii) appeals channels to the political apparatus of the county;
- (iii) use of quasi-judicial channels;
- (iv) use of the full legal machinery of the county;
- (v) use of the media;
- (vi) personal contact and persuasion;
- (vii) direct confrontation (in rare instances);
- (viii) federal channels in a few instances, e.g. freeway locations or low/moderate income housing questions.

We note that citizens groups rarely seem to avail themselves of all channels whilst the developer typically uses all of them. We attribute some of our limited success to a balanced attack which maximizes use of our current resources. We now present a summary of operating principles followed by some actual examples.

SUMMARY OF TACTICAL PRINCIPLES

A. Choosing the Cases

- (i) Monitor everything, but address only carefully selected issues and cases.
- (ii) Be ruthless in establishing your priorities.
- (iii) Concentrate on undeveloped land; no one else will.
- (iv) Concentrate on cases which set basic land use patterns.
- (v) Concentrate on isolating cases which others may wish to pursue; develop background data for them.
- (vi) Fight governmental secrecy whenever, and wherever, encountered as the single greatest obstacle to citizen input.

B. Preparing and Presenting the Cases

- (i) Eschew fanatical opposition; regard the developer as you would any natural phenomenon, which is subject to certain laws of behaviour, but which is basically a neutral entity.
- (ii) When possible, let interested parties carry the ball in public presentations. Use brushfires of public opinion sparingly as you can be burnt very easily.
- (iii) Attempt to establish levels of exchange in any dialogue with governmental bodies.
- (iv) Be prepared to "go to the mat" if necessary; otherwise determine in advance how far you are willing to go. Be prepared also to accept a reasonable compromise if one is offered. Support the developer when appropriate.
- (v) In 'new town' cases assert your interpretation of new zoning laws on the assumption you are in a situation with little precedent. Focus on fundamentals as opposed to legal intricacies. Remember public hearings are not court rooms.
- (vi) Study developer financing; examine lender influence; examine impacts on county. These tell you how much maneuvering room the developer has.
- (vii) Give maximum flexibility to whoever makes your public presentation.

C. Follow-Up to Cases

- (i) Maintain year round contact with the county staff.
- (ii) Brief your elected officials at regular intervals; not just during zoning crises.
- (iii) Do not place your presentation to your elected officials in the context of a favour sought; favours are given and withdrawn on a whim; favours do not depend on the merits of your case.
- (iv) Participate in the redrafting of ordinances...initiate the process yourself if necessary.
- (v) Provide input to county studies; publish 'white papers' on critical issues.
- (vi) Operate so as to strengthen the hand of elements for good design within the county staff and the ranks of the developer.
- (vii) Do not mix development interests and committee membership.
- (viii) Avoid cornering your legislator unless you want to eliminate him.

SOME TACTICAL EXAMPLES

We would now like to close with a baker's dozen of examples of our involvement. Most examples are chosen to illustrate a principle we sought to establish. These examples are in addition to our monthly grind of development plan reviews, site plan review, etc. in which plans are checked for fidelity to the Reston concept and the published RMP, e.g. our defense of the Reston walkway system.

(1) First use of TV in public hearings...To involve people who never come to meetings; to introduce TV on a very popular issue rather than trying to force it upon the supervisors in an unpopular issue.

(2) Entry into cases outside the Reston Master Plan area... To establish that Reston must be judged in a wider context, and to set out three rules for intervention; to counter GRINC silence on this issue; to team with other citizens groups to successfully dampen a rash of speculation fever outside Reston.

(3) Commentary on basic planning documents of the county... To assure ourselves of a livable framework of ordinances and policies, e.g. the Fairfax County Five-Year Community Development Plan or the Upper Potomac Plan for Fairfax County.

(4) Initiation of a redraft of the Residential Planned Community Ordinance (RPC) in 1969-70... To participate in control of the basic process governing our growth; to forestall potential abuses of the former ordinance.

(5) Commentary to the Fairfax County staff on a set of cluster townhouse plans in Reston... To extract the question of the ultimate size of the cluster entity in Reston; to provide a means for the cluster residents to respond to the question of cluster size.

(6) Insistence on a pathway across the Reston Country Club golf course... To protect the pathway concept against arbitrary blockage (short range); to lay the ground work for the principle of a scenic easement (long range), i.e. we foresaw an eventual move to enclose the golf course with chain link if we did not act.

(7) Opposition to the use of the name "Reston" outside the RMP area... To prevent fraud against consumers buying in area; to prevent dilution of the basic RPC planning principles through confusion at the county level.

(8) The development of plans to cover the contingency of a developer pull out from Reston... To cover ourselves via ordinances which would prevent fragmentation of Reston should the developer sell out. Any new town citizens group should make such plans.

(9) Commentary on low/moderate income housing proposals and site plans... To assure that Reston would develop a balanced housing mix within a viable economic framework. (note: Most work on this issue was handled by another RCA Committee devoted to housing per se.)

(10) Introduction of community meetings on hot issues... To develop our position as citizen broker in the planning process and to suppress splintered opposition working at cross purposes.

(11) Appeal to the Board of Supervisors on a gas station site... To maintain flexibility in the RPC; to require safety, as well as esthetics, in the siting of filling stations; to assert the authority of the Board to pass on the final disposition of Reston site plans; to expose a land transfer by the developer which violated his trust of future common land for a cluster; to test agreements made to homeowners in an adjacent cluster on screening.

(12) Opposition to a rezoning via special permit in a case before the Fairfax Board of Zoning Appeals on a golf driving range...To counter zoning by exception; to prevent introduction of 'holding pattern' zoning on a key corridor into Reston.

(13) Presentation of case known locally as the "Beer-Store-in-the-Woods"...To stop the introduction of strip commercial zoning into Reston; to force eventual commercial development into village centers. The title is itself some comment on our methods.

A FINAL QUESTION

What are the measures of effectiveness of our work. For a guerilla activity, they are always difficult to ascertain. For us the question is this...what would the eventual realization of the Reston concept have been if we 'had never entered the picture at all? We honestly believe that the result would have been different. We do not always know by now much, and in what direction, the changes have occurred. We are certain, however, that Reston would have been less responsive to the people were we not involved. In the final analysis we hew to a belief that dumb questions reveal serious flaws in planning and policy, and that most governmental processes work fairly well if someone is watching.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ACRONYMS

- ABR...Architectural Board of Review. An entity in Reston which passes on all construction design except that done by GRINC. It is part of RHOA.
- BOS...Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County. An elected group of nine responsible for running the county.
- BZA...Board of Zoning Appeals. An appointive body of Fairfax County formed to handle exceptions to zoning ordinances. They are appointed in Richmond, the state capital.
- "Cluster"...This is an entity composed of a number of townhouse units (although other types of houses are possible). A certain amount of land is held in common and exterior maintenance is done by the cluster. They are self-governing and are supported by self-imposed assessments.
- Fairfax, County, Va...A county of 500,000 in northern Virginia. It has an urban county form of government, and is run by a Board of Supervisors through a county executive and staff.
- Five Year Plan...A current (1972) inventory of the county's resources. It is intended to set the limits of growth in terms of available resources and funding.
- GRINC...Gulf-Reston, Incorporated the landlord of Reston.
- RCA...Reston Community Association. Any resident of Reston over 16 may join for \$2/year...\$3 for the whole family. It is run through a Board of Directors elected from the membership. It functions through several standing committees. It is purely a citizen advocate.
- RHOA...Reston Homeowners Association...This is a non-profit corporation responsible for the maintenance of Reston's common ground or 'open space'. It is charged with enforcing the covenants that run with the RPC zoning within Reston. Membership is restricted to land owners. The developer controls RHOA through a nine man board because he is the largest land owner in Reston. In theory control should eventually pass to the residents.
- RPC...Residential Planned Community Ordinance. It sets land use for Reston. It is like some planned unit development (PUD) or planned development community (PDC) ordinances elsewhere. Conventional zoning is scrapped under RPC and the developer is exhorted toward a goal of 'design excellence'.
- RMP...Reston Master Plan. A land use document in three parts which assigns one of three densities to parcels in Reston. These densities are low, medium and high. The other two parts of the RMP cover transportation & community facilities. Under the RMP and the RPC Reston may never exceed 13 persons per "gross residential acre"...a total of 75-80,000.
- P&Z...Planning & Zoning Committee of the RCA.
- Planning Commission...Appointive Body of Fairfax County which advises the Board of Supervisors on zoning after public hearings.
- UPP...Upper Potomac Plan. A land use plan for Fairfax County. It includes the area of the RMP.
- Walkway Concept...Under the RPC and the RMP, Reston is to achieve separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.