



2010 Board of Directors

Officers

Dr. Ralph Perrino
Chairman, Co-Vice Chair
Membership
Northern Virginia Tutoring Service

Michael Ankuma
Chair Elect, Treasurer
JTSI

Dr. William V. Dougherty, III
Vice Chair, Membership
Dougherty DDS

Karen Akers
Vice Chair, Programs

Christopher Bergin
Vice Chair, Fund Development,
Tax Analysts

John Rodock
Vice Chair, Legislation
Ober|Kaler

Marina Westbrook
Secretary,
Burke & Herbert Bank & Trust

Gary LaPorta
Past Chair

Directors

Nick Benton
Falls Church News-Press

John Bowen
Bookkeeping & Money
Management

Dr. Barry Byer
Virginia Hospital Center

Dr. Paul Cannon
Falls Church Foot and Ankle
Center

Sally Cole
Executive Director

Barbara Cram
Greenscape

Marybeth Connelly/Ron Peppe
Falls Church City Public Schools-
BIE

Rick Goff/Becky Witsman
Falls Church City EDO

Mary Lynn Hickey
FC Housing Corporation

JD Leonard
Apple Federal Credit Union

Adam Schulman
Atlantic Realty Companies

Matt Smith
Smith-Gifford

Joe Wetzel
Jefferson One

December 21, 2010

Mayor Baroukh, Vice Mayor Snyder,
and Members of City Council
City of Falls Church
300 Park Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22046

Dear Mayor Baroukh, Vice Mayor Snyder, and Members of
City Council:

The Falls Church Chamber of Commerce's Legislative
Committee met with Mike Gill of Akridge Real Estate on
December 3 to review the revised plans for the Gateway
Project. The committee was impressed with the changes
Akridge has made to the development project as a result of
its meetings with neighborhood groups and the Council's
Economic Development Committee.

The project in its previous proposal was analyzed by the
committee for compliance with the Chamber's own
established criteria for support of proposed real estate
project developments. The project was, and is, both in full
compliance with those criteria and deserving of the
Chamber's enthusiastic support. Modifications to the
reviewed July 2008 plan enhance and strengthen adherence
to our criteria. A new Statement of Endorsement addressing
the changes since the Chamber's initial endorsement is
attached.

The Chamber finds that the proposal's reliance on parking
ratios will provide parking in excess of requirements used
by neighboring Arlington County and supported by
documented usage of similar existing nearby projects. This
is an important step in the right direction of recognizing
contemporary use and parking needs. The Chamber hopes
that these guidelines can be incorporated into future similar
proposals.

Of great concern to the Chamber is the City's demanded
inclusion of ground floor retail, its prescription on amount
of retail and its proposed restrictions on types of allowable

Page Two
Gateway Endorsement

retail. The developer has explained to the Chamber in no uncertain terms that 40% of the building must be pre-leased *prior* to project initiation. The requirement of ground floor retail and the restrictions on the type of allowable retail could alienate large office tenants. These conditions could be deal-breakers for any large company that might want to lease or purchase the entire building. It is our understanding that this was one of the key reasons why Northrup Grumman chose Fairview Park over space in Arlington. Because of the precarious nature of the current commercial real estate market, it is critical that this project be built as soon as possible, and for that to happen, flexibility on use in the commercial building is crucial.

In summary, we believe that the City's demand for ground floor non-office use likely will doom this project because of the unlikelihood that the developer will be able to secure the necessary pre-leasing commitments with the current restrictions in an already difficult leasing market.

The Falls Church Chamber of Commerce strongly urges the Council to repeal the retail restrictions on this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the revised plans and congratulations to the Council's Economic Development Committee for generating changes that have significantly enhanced this project.

Sincerely,



Ralph Perrino
Chairman
Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce

Cc: City Manager's Office
Economic Development Office
Economic Development Authority
Planning Commission