

Defender West – Timeline and Summary

This proposed development project is located along Elk Lick Road and Defender Drive across from the Virginia Tire and McDonald's.

The proposed development application is for 230 (reduced from 262) multi-family units (apartments) that would be annexed into South Riding Proprietary as paying and voting members. Should this application be approved, the Proprietary will receive the land* adjacent to South Riding Boulevard where the original soccer field exists (approximately 10 acres). The Proprietary plans to revitalize the soccer field for South Riding community use. The development will also contribute \$775,000 to the South Riding community designated for use toward capital improvements.

Application materials submitted to the County can be viewed online at <https://loudouncountyvaeg.tylerhost.net/prod/selfservice#/home> then select 'search public records', then type the application number in the search box. Application numbers are: ZMAP-2022-0014, ZMOD-2022-0051, ZMOD-2022-0052 and ZMOD-2023-0019.

September 10, 2024 – The developers hope to settle on the land conveyance to SRP early next month. The SRP Staff will then begin securing proposals for plans, grading and landscaping and accessory components for the soccer field/active rec field project.

Early next year, the parking area to Elk Lick Park will be closed for a few weeks for storm drainage and sidewalk infrastructure work required by the County for this developer. The sidewalk by the Lakeside condos will be connected to existing sidewalks and eventually continue to Defender Drive.

November 17, 2023 – Staff heard from the developer representatives that this project was approved on November 15th by the County's Board of Supervisors.

October 27, 2023 – This is projected to go before the County's Board of Supervisors for another public hearing in November.

September 29, 2023 – Excerpt from Matt Letourneau's September newsletter follows:

At our September 13 Public Hearing, the Board voted to send the Defender West land use application to the November 15 Public Hearing for action. The application seeks to rezone almost 21 acres of undeveloped property on the south side of Defender Drive between South Riding Boulevard and Elk Lick Road. The land is currently zoned for commercial use from the original South Riding zoning in the early 90s. The primary entrance to this development would be directly across from Virginia Tire and Auto. As originally proposed, the developer sought 262 apartments within four buildings constructed on about half the property. The other half, about 10 acres, would be dedicated as open space and recreation area to the South Riding Proprietary.

Between the Planning Commission meeting and the Board's Public Hearing, the applicant discovered a covenant issue that rendered 1.5 acres of land unusable for their purpose. This required them to reduce the number of units to 230 and would have eliminated the entry/exit on Elk Lick. While I welcome the reduction in the number of units (the units will still be predominately one-bedrooms), I was concerned about Defender Drive being the only way to access the property. So, the applicant is revising their plan

and will be able to reintroduce the entry/exit on Elk Lick by reducing the turn lane, which was oversized, from Elk Lick onto Defender Drive.

The biggest issue in this location is the Defender Drive/South Riding Boulevard intersection. However, we have determined that a traffic signal in this location can be built much sooner by the developer than it would be if the County were to undertake it. That is because the intersection is part of the County intersection improvement program, and the evaluation has not yet been completed for all of the projects in that program. Once it is, staff will recommend a solution (in this case, it will be a signal), and then the Board will have to fund the project. Based on the number of projects in need of funding, it could take years to obtain what we need. However, the applicant has agreed to fund the project, and as a condition for my support, has now agreed to do the design for the signal at the Defender Drive and South Riding Boulevard intersection prior to receiving VDOT approval for a signal. This is not the normal process, but it will shave months off the timeline. As it is, the best case for installation of the signal is probably 2026, but that is actually 2-4 years earlier than it would otherwise be. Unfortunately, the process of building a signal from start to finish takes at least 3 years, and often more, due to the myriad of requirements and regulations that must be completed and complied with, and the need to acquire right of way, relocate utilities and actually do the construction.

I expect the Board to act on this application on November 15.

September 18, 2023 – The County’s Board of Supervisors held a public hearing with the development team on September 13th. The project has now been forwarded to the November 15th public hearing for final action by the Board. In the interim, the developer is making needed revisions to the concept plan which includes unit count reduction as a result of a parcel owned by the Proprietary that cannot be incorporated into the project as initially planned.

August 21, 2023 – Supervisor Letourneau’s office scheduled a Town Hall meeting to discuss this project and other neighboring development projects. It will be on the evening of Wednesday, August 30 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at the J. Michael Lunsford Middle School (26020 Ticonderoga Road in South Riding) and live streamed via Facebook.

Representatives for this project will attend South Riding’s September 7, 2023 Board of Directors meeting. It will be held at 7p at South Riding Center, located at 42420 Unicorn Drive. The meeting is open to South Riding residents.

July 25, 2023 – Supervisor Letourneau’s office updated Town Hall on the Planning Commission’s July 24th decision. *“Defender West was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission. They conditioned this on an increased contribution from the developer towards improvements on Route 50 that were agreed to as part of the original South Riding rezoning approvals. They also conditioned it on the developer constructing a signal at South Riding Boulevard and Defender Drive. We still need to discuss timing on that, the Planning Commission wanted it completed prior to first occupancy permit for the property.”*

July 24, 2023 – the developer’s attorney advised the Proprietary that the Planning Commission’s recommendation is for approval.

https://loudoun.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=88&clip_id=7350&meta_id=232927

July 13, 2023 – the developer had a Public Hearing before the Loudoun County Planning Commission - <https://www.loudoun.gov/2203/Meeting-Videos>

May, 2022 – letter of intent for land exchange signed by Developer and South Riding Proprietary.

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