

Richmond Times-Dispatch

ANOTHER MEETING SET ON PLAN FOR INNSBROOK

BY LUZ LAZO - PUBLISHED: JULY 05, 2010

Henrico County planning officials this week will hold another community meeting on a redevelopment plan for the Innsbrook area.

The open house-style meeting, the second such session, will focus on a Planning Commission request to include an additional 166 acres to the area that county staff members have been studying since last summer.

The original Innsbrook study area is 1,185 acres and has 8.6 million square feet of office and commercial space. It includes Innsbrook Corporate Center, the county's largest work district, and encompasses acreage between West Broad Street and Nuckols Road near Interstate 295 mostly designated for office use under the 2026 Comprehensive Plan adopted in August.

A draft of the study released in May recommended changing the land-use designation to urban mixed-use. Staff members are recommending that the zoning in the additional 166 acres remain for single-family residential use.

The study suggests a transformation of Innsbrook over the next few decades from what is today mostly office space to a walkable community with a mixture of office, retail, entertainment and residential development.

The Board of Supervisors requested the land-use study last year in response to concerns about increased vacancy rates at the office park and its vicinity. County and business leaders say a plan that includes mixed-use development would be a good fit for the region while it would ensure it remains a viable economic generator in the county.

The Planning Commission recently requested the incorporation of the 166 acres, which includes property west of Sadler Road, east of I-295, north of Interstate 64 and south of Dublin Road. That area has been found to be suitable for residential densities of up to eight units per acre, the lowest density housing in the plan, according to an updated study draft.

Incorporating this section into the Innsbrook Area Study is being considered because there has been increasing interest for potential development there and therefore an opportunity to incorporate more density, said Jean M. Moore, Henrico's assistant director of planning. At the community meeting Wednesday, county staff members will be available to answer questions about the addition and the plan for Innsbrook.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing next week to receive input from residents on the proposed mixed-use designation for the Innsbrook area. The hearing is an important step toward the approval of the plan, which after a commission vote will go before the Board of Supervisors, which could vote on the land-use designation change this year.

Board approval of the plan would be a first step toward a new Innsbrook, said Moore, who is overseeing the study. The change would come as developers invest in the area.

"Innsbrook will have its own unique flair," she said, noting that the plan aims to set a balance between commercial, office and residential space.