

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE COMMITTEE  
INFORMATION ITEM**

**# 5**

**SUBJECT:** Limited Access Fencing on Route 7

**STAFF CONTACT:** Charles Yudd, County Administration  
Andy Beacher, Office of Transportation Services

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**BACKGROUND:**

This item has been added to the agenda by Supervisor Burk in response to a request from Supervisor Waters to discuss the background and implications of a VDOT requirement for chain link fencing adjacent to interchanges and along Route 7. Attachment 1 is a memorandum from Supervisor Waters that outlines concerns about this type of fencing that arose from discussions with University Center representatives.

VDOT representatives have been invited to the September 21, 2011 committee meeting to explain the requirement and their process to waive the fencing requirement.

**ISSUES:**

Staff understands that there is a desire on the part of some property owners, in the vicinity of the Loudoun County Parkway/Route 7 interchange, that the accompanying chain link fence be removed for aesthetic purposes. Staff notes that the fence was included with the project to meet VDOT guidelines for planned limited access highways. In general, fences are provided on most limited access highways (i.e. Route 28) to ensure that there is a clear indication as to the nature of the highway, thus avoiding the mixing of pedestrians/bicyclists and high-speed traffic. Route 7 is planned to become fully limited access between Route 28 and the Town of Leesburg upon the completion of all planned interchanges/overpasses and the removal of existing traffic signals.

VDOT has informed staff that the requirement for a fence along a limited access highway can be waived provided that a reasonable expectation of safety can be assured and staff defers to VDOT for the exact process/procedures for obtaining the waiver. This is more common in less urbanized areas, where the likelihood of pedestrian and bicycle traffic encountering the limited access facility is reduced. VDOT has further stated that some interchanges along the Route 7 corridor (the interchanges at Lansdowne Boulevard/Claiborne Parkway and at River Creek Parkway) have already received such waivers. While staff views the installation of the fence as a prudent measure, in keeping with the long-term vision for the corridor, staff would not object to

the removal of the fence, provided that VDOT grants a waiver, and that the fence is removed at the property owner's expense. Alternatively, the property owners could remove the existing fence and construct a new fence that is more aesthetically pleasing on their own property, to be constructed and maintained at their own expense.

Finally, staff understands that there has been some discussion concerning potential removal of the planned limited access designation of the Route 7 corridor as a possible solution to the concerns about the fencing. Staff strongly opposes this approach in that it could create the potential for new access points to be allowed along the corridor, thus nullifying the positive impacts to traffic flow created with the installation of the interchanges and removal of traffic signals. Such an action could be devastating to the level of service along the corridor.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. September 13, 2011 memorandum from Supervisor Waters**
- 2. VDOT fence standards**
- 3. July 18, 2011 correspondence from University Center**



## Loudoun County, Virginia

[www.loudoun.gov](http://www.loudoun.gov)

Supervisor Lori L. Waters, Broad Run District

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September 13, 2011

To: Supervisor Kelly Burk, Chairman of the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC)  
TLUC members

From: Supervisor Lori Waters

Re: Fencing along Route 7

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On August 8, I met with representative from University Center, VDOT and Dewberry to discuss a situation regarding the interchange at Loudoun County Parkway and Route 7. In the course of that discussion, it came to light that the VDOT standard for limited access highways is to install fencing along the highway and along the interchange exit and entrance ramps. VDOT representatives said that VDOT installs chain link fencing, as it is the most cost-effective, installation- and maintenance-wise. Normally, this fencing is along the tree line, in most cases, or installed at a lower grade than the highway, so the visual impact is minimal. However, this would not be the case for Route 7, particularly from the Loudoun County Parkway interchange all the way to Leesburg. There is little vegetation or mature trees to disguise the fence, nor are there lower grades along that section to keep the fencing out of travelers' sight line. In some locations, extensive landscaping is already in place. For example, imagine how a chain link fence would look in front of the landscaping at Janelia Farm. In addition it is my understanding that, as an alternative to the chain link that VDOT would install, individual property owners can enter into separate agreements with VDOT where they can install their own fence and maintain it at their own expense. However, we could end up with many fence types, which could degrade the appearance of the entire corridor.

According to VDOT, waivers may be granted to provide relief from this regulatory burden. In fact, the Lansdowne Blvd. interchange and River Creek interchange were granted waivers. Those waivers do not impact the "limited access highway" designation. Questions then arise: do we want Route 7 to be designated as limited access by the state, which would trigger the fence requirement? What would the consequences be of that decision? What do we want that corridor to look like? Are there safety considerations? What is the result of some interchanges having fencing waivers and other not? How does this impact projects already approved along that corridor? The remaining interchanges at Ashburn Village Boulevard and Belmont Ridge Road are already in the design phase, which makes this topic time-sensitive as well. It is better to have a policy in place and ask for waivers now before the interchanges are built, rather than have the fencing installed, just to have the County incur the expense of taking it down later, if that is the direction the Board elects to take.

In general, the issue is whether the BOS wants to have a policy or give guidance to staff regarding Route 7 and fencing. In my opinion, we need a cohesive look along Route 7 that is visually attractive and inviting. While we cannot bind a future board, a policy statement could be placed on record that supports the efforts of limited access while stopping short of an official state designation from the CTB that would trigger fencing along the entire roadway.

As for the Loudoun County Parkway interchange, I am requesting for the committee and/or Board to provide direction to staff to work with VDOT to pursue a waiver at this location, identify project funds to remove the unsightly chain link fence, and have it removed as soon as possible.



CORNER BRACE		LINE BRACE		LINE BRACE AT END LOCATION	
	<p><b>WOOD POST</b></p>	<p><b>METAL POST</b></p>	<p><b>LINE BRACE</b></p> <p>DIAGONAL 4" BRACE TO BE PLACED IN DIRECTION OF PULL.</p> <p>POST TO BE NOTCHED FOR DIAGONAL 4" BRACES. ALL DIAGONAL 4" BRACES TO HAVE TWO GALVANIZED 12D NAILS AT EACH END.</p>	<p><b>LINE BRACE AT END LOCATION</b></p> <p>FE-B</p> <p>THE BRACE WIRE TO BE PLACED AROUND POSTS WITH ONE WIRE ON EACH SIDE OF BRACE. WIRE TO BE DRAWN TAUT BY TWISTING BETWEEN BRACE AND EACH POST. THIS APPLIES TO ALL BRACE WIRES.</p>	
<p>IF NOT OTHERWISE NOTED DIMENSIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS SHOWN ON ONE DRAWING APPLY TO OTHER DETAILS WITH THE SAME POST TYPE.</p>					
<p>LINE POSTS ARE TO BE OF THE TYPES SHOWN OR EQUIVALENT MEETING THE APPROVAL OF THE ENGINEER.</p> <p>ALL POSTS ARE TO HAVE A MINIMUM WEIGHT OF 1.25 LBS./FT.</p> <p>A MINIMUM OF FIVE CLAMPS FOR ATTACHING FABRIC TO POST ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN COST OF EACH LINE POST.</p> <p>FLANGED "1 1/2\" TYPE</p> <p>"T" TYPE</p> <p>NOTES: SEE GENERAL NOTES FENCING FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND INSTRUCTIONS.</p> <p><b>METAL LINE POST</b></p>		<p>L2X2X3/8 TO BE CUT TO FIT AROUND L2/2X2/2X1/4 STRETCHER POST.</p> <p>L2/2X2/2X1/4, 2" LONG BRACKET BOLTED TO STRETCHER POST.</p> <p>ALTERNATE METHOD OF ATTACHING ANGLE BRACES TO STRETCHER POSTS</p>	<p>FOR USE IN LIEU OF SETTING POSTS IN CONCRETE. DEVICES SHOWN ARE REPRESENTATIONAL ONLY. SEE GENERAL NOTES.</p> <p><b>ALTERNATE ANCHOR DEVICES</b></p>		
<p>SPECIFICATION REFERENCE</p> <p>242 507 236</p>		<p><b>STANDARD FENCE</b></p> <p><b>BARBED WIRE</b></p> <p>VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION</p>		<p><b>VDOT</b></p> <p>ROAD AND BRIDGE STANDARDS</p> <p>REVISION DATE</p> <p>SHEET 1 OF 1</p> <p>50.3.03</p>	

FE-CL

TOP AND BOTTOM SELVAGE TO BE BARBED.

HEIGHT OF BRACE TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS.

TENSION WIRE #7 GAUGE GALVANIZED COIL SPRING WIRE STRETCHED TAUT

LINE POST

#6 GAUGE WIRE CLAMPS TO BE USED TO ATTACH FABRIC TO "H" COLUMNS. (8 PER POST)

GROUND LINE

10'-0" LINE POST

TYPICAL SPACING BETWEEN ALL LINE POSTS.

ONE TENSION WIRE CLIP EACH LINE POST (#8 GAUGE.)

BRACE

10'-0" END, CORNER, LINE OR BRACE POST

CONCRETE FOOTING

10" END BRACE

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ATTACH FENCE FABRIC TO TENSION WIRE WITH HOG-RINGS APPROX. 24" C-C

5" ± 1"

#11 GAUGE X 1" BEVELED GALVANIZED STEEL BAND WITH BOLT & NUT.

END/CORNER POST

10'-0" END, CORNER, LINE OR BRACE POST

CONCRETE FOOTING

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LINE POST

GROUND LINE

*University Center Owners Association, Inc.  
c/o NRP  
365 Herndon Parkway, Suite 111  
Herndon, VA 20170  
Tel. 703-435-3800*

July 18, 2011

Supervisor Lori Waters  
County of Loudoun Board of Supervisors  
By Email: Lori.Waters@Loudoun.gov

Dear Supervisor Waters,

The University Center Owners Association (UC) is a large mixed use 600 acre community of many businesses, a world renowned university and nearly 2000 residences. Our collective group of owners and tenants has concerns regarding the new access to University Center as a result of the construction of the Loudoun County Parkway interchange and the resulting closure of the previous ingress and egress points. We would greatly appreciate your assistance to resolve our concerns.

The first issue is the total lack of signage on Rt 7 to timely advise visitors of the exit for University Center. As a result of the construction UC has lost all of its property identity. There is no signage on Rt. 7 whatsoever to tell visitors that Loudoun County Parkway is the exit for UC. Confused visitors are usually well past the property before they realize their mistake. We ask for your assistance in requesting VDOT to erect signage on Rt. 7 identifying "University Center" at the Loudoun County Parkway exit. Please note that signage for GW University is not adequate to serve the remaining owners and tenants.

The second issue is one of aesthetics. UC has worked hard over the years to have an aesthetically pleasing property frontage, even personally taking on the maintenance of the Rt. 7 median until the interchange construction. In today's tough economic environment, it is even more important to make sure our property is an attractive place to work and live. The construction of chain link fences surrounding the contact points of the Loudoun County Parkway with our property is the very first impression of our property that visitors see and a very negative one. We are about to launch an improvement project of our own, and ask that you help us by requesting the removal of the chain link fence.

We look forward to discussing this further with you at your very earliest convenience. In that regard, please contact Ed Zigo of Clarke-Hook Cos. at [EdZigo@ClarkeHook.com](mailto:EdZigo@ClarkeHook.com) and Fred Rothmeijer of MRP Realty at [frothmeijer@mrprealty.com](mailto:frothmeijer@mrprealty.com).

Sincerely,

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Ed Zigo, President  
University Center Owners Association, Inc.  
Email: [edzigo@clarkehook.com](mailto:edzigo@clarkehook.com)