

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Hampton Planning Commission

**FROM:** Caroline Butler, AICP  
Chief Planner

**DATE:** June 20, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Ordinance Amendment/Chapter 17.2 (Langley Flight Approach-Mixed Use District M-5A): Recreation Centers as a Permitted Use

The Langley Flight Approach Mixed-Use District (M-5A) is one of four Langley zoning districts developed to provide reasonable land use regulations for the portion of the flight approach to Langley Air Force Base west of Magruder Boulevard. The regulations limit the intensity of development to minimize any negative impact on the flight operations at the Base as well as to provide for a range of activities to develop the Magruder Corridor as a viable business center.

The building housing the former Sentara Health and Fitness Center, located at 300 Butler Farm Road at its northwest intersection with Magruder Boulevard, is zoned M-5A. A permitted use in the M-5A category is “private recreational centers”. That wording and the distinction “private” derive from the private ownership of the fitness center that existed on the site when the M-5A zoning district was adopted. Subsequently, the City of Hampton purchased the building for its new Teen Center, which is scheduled to open in December 2008.

This Zoning Ordinance Amendment proposes to delete the word “private” from the term “private recreational centers” as a permitted use. In practical terms, the impact of a recreational center is the same whether its ownership is private or public.

If approved, this Zoning Ordinance Amendment permits the installation of the Teen Center or any other public recreational use in the former fitness center building. Although it is prompted by the acquisition and proposed use of this building by a public entity, the amendment will also allow other public recreational centers to operate within the M-5A zoning district.

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Staff has received communication from the Base Planner at Langley Air Force Base that "...recreation centers, whether classified as private or public, which gather people in Langley's Accident Potential Zones (Flight Approach Zones) are generally considered incompatible uses and are not recommended in these areas". The City of Hampton goes to great lengths to accommodate Langley through our land use and zoning policies, and Langley staff helped to draft the M5-A zoning category.

The issue here is not whether recreation centers should be permitted in the M-5A zoning district, because they already are. The issue is whether public recreation centers should be permitted in addition to the private ones that are already allowed by right. It is staff's opinion that the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to permit public recreation centers in the M-5A zoning district.

If you have any questions about this proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, please feel free to telephone me directly at 728-5231 or by e-mail at [cbutler@hampton.gov](mailto:cbutler@hampton.gov)