

ITEM 12-C.7.b

(2 PAGES)

RELATED TO JURISDICTION

“M. Park back BRAC bid” (11/8/07)

M. Park backs BRAC bid

By KIPP HANLEY

khanley@manassasjm.com

Thursday, November 8, 2007

The Manassas Park city council passed a resolution Tuesday night expressing its support for American Building Corporation's desire to bring 6,500 employees from the Washington Headquarters Service to Manassas Park as part of the Department of Defense's 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendation.

American Building Corporation turned in an unsolicited bid to Manassas Park officials Friday and to the United States Army Corps of Engineers on Monday for the proposed development.

Tuesday's resolution cited the community's origins as a reason for its support of the development. Veterans of World War II and the Korean War helped establish Manassas Park as a town in 1957.

Mayor Frank Jones, who retired from the Navy, said the potential relocation would help reshape the future of the city and further celebrate the community's longstanding patriotic feelings.

"To see a government presence in the community would be in the spirit of the founding traditions of the city and given the true patriotic nature of the city, everybody will be happy to welcome a government neighbor," Jones said.

The proposed 115-acre public-private development, entitled Blooms Grove Station, would be located on Manassas Drive east of Euclid Avenue and on the same land that city hall and several other buildings currently reside.

It would be a mixed-use development with housing for the new employees, a public library, a civic center, a new city hall, specialty shopping and recreational amenities.

To address traffic concerns, the project would include a free monorail system that would provide transit to the entire community and a conversion of the 10-station Virginia Railway Express Manassas line to a two-way "Metro-like" system, providing access both east and west throughout the day.

The developer's goal is to also outfit the project with top-of-the-line environmental amenities which would include buildings with geothermal heating and cooling, photo-voltaic solar cells, wind turbines and underground water basins to recycle rainwater for use in irrigation and restrooms.

"Blooms Grove Station will redefine how communities are designed to fit together, create a sense of place, and be sustainable," said American Building Corporation president David Willmore. "Blooms Grove Station will offer high quality design to divergent interests, while leaving behind an environmentally conscious legacy which will be appreciated by our future fellow residents."

The DoD is also considering a site in Alexandria off Eisenhower Avenue as well as a site in Springfield. It has commissioned an environmental assessment of the Springfield site, near the Franconia-Springfield terminus of Metrorail's Blue line, and the Alexandria site, known as the Victory Center.