

Reston Master Plan Special Study
Community Meeting: Phase 2 Informational

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 7 p.m.

South Lakes School Cafeteria

11400 South Lakes Drive

7:00 pm – 7:15pm Open House

7:18pm Welcome by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins

7:25pm – Staff Presentation by Heidi Merkel, Department of Planning and Zoning

- Ms. Merkel began by clarifying that the purpose of the community meeting was to provide an update on Phase 1 and present information as to the timing and key elements of Phase 2.
- Phase 2 is planned to start in late spring 2012 once the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force has made their recommendations re: Phase 1 to the Planning Commission.
- Ms. Merkel provided a brief summary on the background of Reston planning efforts since the 1960s.
 - Reston’s [planning history timeline](#) is located on the Reston Master Plan Special Study website.
 - The [History of Reston and the Reston Master Plan Report \(1962\)](#) can be found on the Reston Museum’s website.
- Ms. Merkel defined the purpose of the Reston Master Plan Special Study.
 - The primary study objective is to revise current recommendations in the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan for Reston in a way that respects Robert Simon’s original plan.
 - Since Reston no longer has a master developer, the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan must provide more specific guidance to strike a balance between forecasted growth and preserving Reston’s foundational principles.
 - The most [recent Reston Land Use Plan map](#), updated in 1989, needs to be updated to provide guidance as Reston evolves as a community.
- Ms. Merkel described the [geography](#), background, purpose, and timing of Phases 1 and 2.
 - **Phase 1 - Areas around 3 planned rail stations and most of Town Center**
 - The Phase 1 Task Force has approved [2 density allocation scenarios](#) for testing by Fairfax Department of Transportation (and other Departments as needed)
 - Study began in January 2010 and original schedule envisioned 1 year for Phase 1 but the desire for additional community interaction and more detailed discussion resulted in this timeline being extended.
 - The current [Task Force membership](#) includes representatives from Reston Planning & Zoning Committee, Reston Association, Reston Citizens Association, Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, Alliance of Reston Cluster and Homeowners, rail organizations, and land owners.

- **Phase 2 – Areas of Reston away from Toll Road**
 - The purpose of Phase 2 will be to evaluate areas zoned Planned Residential Community (PRC). Although Reston’s Town Center is zoned PRC, most of the Town Center is being reviewed as a part of Phase 1. (Read more about [PRC districts in Article 6, Part 3](#) of the Fairfax County Zoning ordinance).
 - Phase 2 will begin once the Phase 1 Task Force makes its recommendations to the Planning Commission.
 - Phase 2 is expected to begin late spring 2012 and conclude in late fall 2012.
 - Phase 2 will include the review of four key elements: (1) residential areas, (2) Village Centers, the (3) other commercial which include the area north of Baron Cameron adjacent to Reston Town Center and the convenience centers, and (4) the PRC zoning district.
- Ms. Merkel provided more information about the key elements of Phase 2.
 - Residential Neighborhoods
 - The community’s general sentiments to date are (1) a desire for more predictability as to how Reston’s neighborhoods may develop now that it’s a mature community and (2) a desire for a structured process for considering redevelopment proposals.
 - The general approach for Phase 2 consist of the following:
 - Revise the Reston land use map to better reflect existing development.
 - Adjust residential categories to provide better linkage to the existing residential types and densities (currently limited to the categories of “low density”, “medium density”, and “high density”).
 - Develop guidelines for redevelopment that are similar to existing Countywide *Guidelines for Neighborhood Redevelopment* found in [Appendix 8 of the Land Use section within the Fairfax County Policy Plan](#).
 - Include in the guidelines a requirement to ensure there is a high level of property owner support for any redevelopment proposals being considered.
 - Village Centers
 - The general approach for Phase 2 consists of the following:
 - Engage community and Village Center property owners regarding future visions of the Village Centers.
 - Consider using one or more charrettes as a tool in the visioning process for the Village Centers.
 - Other Commercial Areas
 - The general approach for Phase 2 consists of the following:
 - Review current geographic extent and uses.
 - Consider keeping these other commercial areas as they are for the foreseeable future.

- Planned Residential Community (PRC)
 - The PRC's current population cap of 13 people per acre is established by Zoning Ordinance
 - Phase 2 will evaluate options for how to address the situation when the population cap is reached.
- Ms. Merkel described the process for conducting Phase 2.
 - A community task force or advisory group will make recommendations to the Planning Commission (composition under consideration)
 - The task force or group will consist of community organizations, Reston residents, and representatives for commercial property owners and businesses.
 - Community meetings will be held to gather community input for each element in Phase 2 (residential areas, Village Centers, other commercial areas).
 - Public hearings will be held for presentation of comprehensive plan recommendations to Planning Commission and when recommendations are presented to the County Board of Supervisors.
 - The Reston Master Plan maps will be altered to reflect the change in land uses over the last 40 years, existing facilities, and planned improvements.
 - After the study is complete, new plan recommendations will be in place and zoning actions will be required to achieve development under new recommendations

Questions

Questions asked during the presentation and during Q&A period and the responses are paraphrased and summarized below.

Q: What are the guiding principles for increasing residential and commercial?

A: The County's transit-oriented development policy stresses the need to take advantage of transit facilities by concentrating future growth in transit areas in order to expand the opportunities for residents to live and work in areas accessible to transit.

Q: Will there be trees in the Metro station areas? How will 30 foot trees compete with 100 foot buildings?

A: The Task Force has highlighted open space in their Planning Principles for the Reston plan and has talked about how to ensure the open spaces can continue to have a decidedly Reston character.

Q: What property owners are you referring to when you talk about the Village Centers?

A: Phase 2 will focus on bringing the owners of the commercial properties within the Village Center into the planning process to discuss their thoughts about future redevelopment or expansion of commercial properties. Staff expects the residential areas within the Village Center boundaries to remain stable.

Q: How can we get information and updates

A: An email announcement service with weekly study updates is available via the Reston Master Plan Special Study website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/reston/> and by clicking on the “[Sign up for electronic mailings](#)” link.

Q: What renovations and/or expansions are planned for the Village Centers?

A: Before we can determine the extent of expansion or redevelopment of the Village Centers, we need to decide on the community visions for the Village Centers. Should they be typical suburban shopping centers, community gathering places or something else? We also need to understand the desire of property owners and what their ideas are re: developing their property. Their willingness to engage in the discussion is significant to help set realistic expectations in the community. The Village Centers’ visions should be informed by these considerations.

Q: Are there plans pertaining to the Reston National Golf Course as part of the Reston study?

A: Proposed changes to the golf course could be considered as part of Phase 2 of the study. Any discussion about changes would have consider how the golf course relates to overall open space.

Q: Will pending zoning applications in the geography of Phase 2 be held (examples include Fairways and Colvin Woods)

A: Colvin Woods was the subject of an Area Plan Review request for replanning and it will remain pending because that request was made a part of the Reston Master Plan Special Study. Fairways will most likely move forward before Phase 2 because the property owner has development rights under the existing zoning.

Q: Any populations projections for 5 -10 years?

A: Our discussions have been focused on a planning horizon of 20 years. Factors such as market demand play a part in potential population growth.

Q: What is the use of having a population cap within the PRC if you can change it or go over it?

A: The population cap was an alternate way of ensuring that Reston's Master Developer entity would provide appropriate community serving infrastructure as new residential development occurred. It was not envisioned as a fixed cap never to be changed.