

HERNDON-MONROE COMMITTEE

06/22/10

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Nick Bauer, TF
Brian Berry, Tishman Speyer
John Bowman, TF
John Carter, TF
Mike Cooper, TF
Fred Costello, TF
Rustom Cowasjee, Tishman Speyer
Paul Darmory
Rick Hamilton
Arthur Hill, TF
Richard A. Lambert, Jr., Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning
Guy Rando
Greg Riegle, TF
Richard Stevens, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Gerald Volloy, TF

Open Forum

Jerry Volloy—Previous e-mail to Heidi Merkel was not meant to imply that the County was not able to create a successful public/private partnership. Agree with comment from last week's meeting that all three Reston stations need to be considered collectively, especially with respect to the ability to meet the many goals of Western Alliance for Rail to Dulles (WARD), the County, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and others, including ridership, development, revenue generation, etc.

Richard Stevens—Comstock was a unique situation because of the constraints, and not a model for future partnerships.

Greg Riegle—It would be helpful for the County to present their perspective on opportunities for public/private partnerships, irrespective of Comstock, as discussed during the last meeting.

Mike Cooper—Clarify that WARD is a collection of separate landowners and, as an entity, has no operational responsibilities.

Administrative

- Minutes from June 14, 2010 meeting were approved.

Discussions with Stakeholders

Tishman Speyer (Brian Berry, Rustom Cowasjee)

- Tishman Speyer has a significant presence in the metro area—owns about 8 million ft² and manages another 4 – 5 million ft².
- Controls all of the Woodland Park area, which includes parcels A1 and A2 (and formerly included parcel B) as designated on the County map. Covenants specific to Woodland Park create consistently high-quality development.
- Woodland Park currently includes commercial, residential, and hotel developments.
- For this station area, development in accordance with concentric circles is not feasible. Instead, density can be oriented linearly, along the spine of Rt. 267.
- The Woodland Park area developed from the west, and no secondary E-W road was included. It would be difficult to add a complete east-west road from Centerville Rd. to Monroe Street. However, additional E-W vehicular connectivity could be added in the center of the site, potentially connecting to the existing road access to Monroe street south of A2.
- Vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle access to the future station area from Monroe St. and safe pedestrian crossings of Monroe would be particularly useful for Woodland Park, and help provide desired relief from Sunrise Valley Drive traffic.
- High-quality trails throughout the Woodland Park site currently provide pedestrian & bicycle access/connectivity. A path runs adjacent to the toll, terminating at A2 (and could be extended to Monroe St. when A2 is developed). The wetlands park should not be a barrier to providing that needed access.
- Private bus service from Woodland Park to the station could be provided for Woodland Park residents. County bus service would remain along Sunrise Valley Drive.
- The existing structures in Woodland Park are valuable and most likely would not be torn down in the near (or even medium) term. The oldest existing structures date from 1988. There is available land within A1 (e.g., current baseball diamonds) that could be developed. Current overall density for Woodland Park is 0.7 FAR (although some individual sites are developed to 1.0 FAR).
- The structures are generally mid-rise. The tallest building (Booz Allen Hamilton on the northwest corner) is 187 ft. Structures over ~100' tall depending on ground elevation) need FAA approval, but approval is not generally difficult to obtain.
- Parcel A2 is close to the future Metro station, has high visibility from Rt. 267, and is reasonably removed from low-density residential neighborhoods. The site would be a prime location for an iconic, prominent, signature building.
- All the residential units allowed by current zoning have already been built.
- Tishman Speyer would be receptive to high-rise residential development, especially closer to the metro station. Bedrock is generally 8 – 25 ft below grade; therefore, building below-ground parking is cost-prohibitive. Parking is better incorporated into multi-use structures--tall, free-standing parking structures generally detract from a development—but this requires greater overall building heights. Current parking requirements need to be reduced.

- Taller buildings entail higher building costs, and therefore need greater density to be economical.
- Residential development surrounding the retail development (Harris Teeter, etc.) to date have surprisingly not commanded rent premiums compared to comparable properties further from shopping. With the generally suburban development style, people apparently find it just as easy to drive to the grocery store. (The Metro station and future more urban development may change this as people can more easily get around with fewer cars.)
- Retail development should be ancillary to the neighborhood, providing services and products needed by the workers and residents.

Brandywine (Mike Cooper)

- Woodland Park is a major employment center and tax base. The buildings are new and mid-rise. Some of the County's most valuable buildings are in this office park (e.g., the Volkswagen building set a record on Rt. 267 at \$525/sq ft)—Woodland Park is a high-end development and commands higher rents.
- Brandywine owns four buildings fronting Rt. 267 in the west-central portion of Woodland park. There are approved plans to construct a fifth (~100,000 ft² building in a small lot currently used for parking. Brandywine has no other space to develop. Interested in enhancing the value of the investment by increasing the attractiveness of Woodland Park and the station area as a whole.
- Companies pay extra for frontage on Rt. 267—"beach-front property."
- It is important to respect the mature projects and not place all focus on future redevelopment.
- Lack of connectivity among some parcels is a problem but can be overcome.
- Access to the Metro station will be important and needs to be enhanced.
- The retail center is great for the tenants.
- Additional amenities—restaurants, retail, services—are needed to make the area more vibrant, but additional density would be required to support such services.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (Richard Stevens)

- The County is conducting a wetlands survey of the C2 parcel to inform decisions about parking structure placement & development.
- Existing access from Sunrise Valley Drive is not adequate. The county is in the preliminary stages of exploring options for additional access—additional access from Sunrise Valley Drive around the Arboretum development, and/or from Monroe Street between the existing buildings.
- The County is also considering re-configuring the ramp from Rt. 267 to provide at least right in/right out access at Fairfax County Parkway.
- Significant community bus service is planned to feed the H-M station. Experience has shown that frequent bus service (~10 minute headway) is required to coax people from their cars. With less frequent service, most will choose to drive.
- Parking requirement for the station is based on a demand study that considered parking assumptions for all stations. Re-visiting the parking capacity would necessitate a lengthy, expensive analysis. However, the parking demand could be re-

evaluated in the future, when it may be easier to show the need for a lesser parking capacity at the station.

- However, the parking need not be permanent. The existing garage structure will need substantial refurbishment by 2020 (~\$15 million?). There may be an opportunity at that time to demolish the structure and make way for development instead of refurbishing the parking structure.

Committee Discussion

- An access study for this station is needed. Ask staff to evaluate the feasibility of access options from Monroe Street, Fairfax County Parkway, and Sunrise Valley Drive.
- Need for better understanding of how access alternatives would affect the wetlands park. Will schedule a subject matter expert presentation and discussion about the wetlands at an upcoming meeting.
- Need to evaluate options for the planned parking capacity that would facilitate future TOD development on C2.
- C3 and C4 are older, low-rise developments that are prime candidates for re-development, especially if developed in conjunction with C2.
- It would be useful to hear staff perspective on the opportunities for public-private partnership development.
- Consideration of strategic height to create greater identity and potentially iconic structures and design, provide sufficient density to support needed amenities, and allow for more open space.
- Development density is more likely to be linear, along the axis of Rt. 267, rather than radiating from the station in concentric circles.
- John Carter presented a series of slides that summarized the results of the recent Task Force workshop and provided information to begin to assist the Herndon Monroe subcommittee in formulating recommendations. The slides included the following:
 - Results of the recent full Task Force Meeting on the Monroe Station area (text and graphics)
 - Photo summary of existing conditions at the Monroe Station area
 - Streets - A potential network of streets with photographic examples of characteristics that could be appropriate for Sunrise Valley Drive as a boulevard, and a series of new urban streets
 - Open Spaces - Photographs of existing wetlands, streams and stormwater management ponds, and characteristics of appropriate active open spaces important in creating transit oriented places
 - Buildings - Photographic summary of the types of existing buildings, and ideas to indicate the characteristics of future buildings important in shaping new urban streets and active open spaces