

# **HERNDON-MONROE COMMITTEE**

***06/08/10***

## ***Meeting Notes***

### **Attendees:**

John Bowman, TF  
John Carter, TF  
Mike Cooper, TF  
Fred Costello, TF  
Paul Darmory  
Rick Hamilton  
Arthur Hill, TF  
Richard A. Lambert, Jr., Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning  
George Loulis  
John Lovaas  
Upen Malani  
Heidi T. Merkel, Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning  
Patricia Nicoson, TF  
Greg Riegler, TF  
Kay Robertson, Town of Herndon Department of Community Development  
Jerry Volloy, TF

### **Open Forum (15 minutes)**

Arthur Hill: Wetlands should remain undisturbed, as is. That they are partially man-made (mitigated) is irrelevant. The land should ideally be transferred in some way to RA, which could maintain and enhance the property.

Rick Hamilton: Polo Fields representatives met with Kathy Ichter (Director, Fairfax County Department of Transportation) and Rick Stevens (Project Manager, Dulles Rail project, Fairfax County Department of Transportation) last week. DOT can make improvements beyond what might be required just for the toll road. Access to the station from Fairfax County Parkway is possible; access from Monroe Street is more challenging. Additional access to the Sprint property (C-3 and C-4) from Fairfax County Parkway would require re-zoning.

Fred Costllo: Reston 2020 prepared a paper on "Vision for Herndon Monroe Metro Station Area" that should have been sent to all committee members.

Greg Riegel: Recommend that the committee focus on first developing an overall vision for the area, keeping in mind the opportunities and constraints presented by the various parcels/owners. Need to balance incentives and outcomes.

John Lovaas: If the wetlands were lost, they would be lost to Reston even if mitigated somewhere else. RA is well equipped to maintain the wetlands park. Concerned that hearing from the property owners before the committee forms a vision could restrict the scope of what is considered and lead to a more piecemeal approach.

Jerry Volloy: The committee needs to understand Herndon's plans.

Mike Cooper: The park and ride facility is a current reality—it is a feeder location. After the Silver Line is completed, western users will utilize parking at stations in Loudoun County.

### **Administrative (15 minutes)**

- Committee approved the proposed charter by voice vote with no dissent.
- Planned meeting schedule was confirmed:
  - Location: Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston, VA 20191
  - Tues. June 8: Room 4, 8-9:30 am
  - Mon. June 14: Room 4, 6-7:30 pm
  - Tues. June 22: Room 4, 8-9:30 am
  - Mon. June 28: Room 3, 6-7:30 pm
- Possible additional meeting dates were tentatively agreed to (location TBD):
  - Tues. July 6, 8 – 9:30 am
  - Monday July 12, 6 – 7:30 pm
- Agreed to general outline of goals for next four meetings:
  - 6/8, 6/14, and 6/22 to hear from stakeholders and discuss vision;
  - 6/22 and 6/28 to reach consensus on vision, to create a graphical layout of that vision from Centerville Road to Fairfax County Parkway (objective is to create visuals that will allow for text additions to Comprehensive Plan), and to develop an outline for a written committee recommendation to the TF by July 15, 2010; and
  - Additional meeting(s) will be used as needed to discuss incentives and finalize the written recommendations.
- The committee discussed the sequence of topics to be address at the Committee meetings. There was concern raised that hearing from property owners first would constrain the options considered by the Committee and potentially lead to a less creative and unified vision; however, it can be useful to better understand the parcels and their owners goals and constraints. No specific conclusions were reached, but there was general consensus that it is important to consider both a clear vision and some grounding in reality. Property owners can be incented to sell their properties if the vision is beyond what they want to do, and other parties can recognize that value and implement the vision. Sprint was discussed as a possible example of that situation.

### **Discussions with Stakeholders (60 minutes)**

**Town of Herndon**—Discussion of current status of planning process and vision for development and redevelopment in the Town of Herndon north of Rt. 267 from Centerville Road to Fairfax County Parkway. (Kay Robertson, Town of Herndon Department of Community Development)

- Town commissioned a study of the area, focusing on access, transportation, and overall form/mass of development (rather than specific land uses). An economic analysis will be included (e.g., cost of recommended infrastructure, utility relocation). The study is expected to be completed within 1 yr and result in adoption of changes to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan (re-zoning would follow). Two scenarios will be evaluated:
  1. Current road system remains; high density south of Herndon Parkway and lower density north of Herndon Parkway (as buffer to protect existing low-density residential neighborhood).
  2. Road re-alignment/addition; includes higher density north of Herndon Parkway.
- TOD is envisioned in the primary impact area within about ¼ mile of the station, which is under the control of 11 property owners. Vision: integrated development with public plaza that is linked to and compliments the historic downtown area. The area is currently commercial, but there is interest among some Town Council members to encourage residential development.
- Lower-density “transit-friendly development” is envisioned in the secondary impact area to the northeast of the station between about ¼ from the station and extending to Spring Street.
- Sugarland Run and bordering property (northeast of the station) comprise a VA resource protection area (RPA).
- The Town of Herndon does not own any property in the vicinity of the station; therefore, the private property owners will control any re-development.
- Station access is a challenge, as the bridge to the station platform terminates on private property. Current plans call for a sidewalk leading from the station bridge to Herndon Parkway. The study will consider options for improved station access, focusing on pedestrian, bicycle, and bus, and may include a bus loop or pull-off area.
- No commuter parking is planned in Herndon.

**Polo Fields**—Discussion of goals, concerns, vision, and specific redevelopment ideas. (Paul Darmory, Polo Fields HOA)

- Wetlands should be preserved and set an environmental/sustainability theme for TOD in parcels C-1 through C-4.
  - Ample open space
  - Architecture that enhances/reflects the environment, with visual appeal
  - Attract tenants with environmental ties—non-profits, etc.
- Access is a major concern. Need to reduce traffic on Sunrise Valley Drive. The intersection of Sunrise Valley Drive and Fairfax County Parkway is already one of the most heavily congested in the County at rush hour.
  - Provide station access from both Fairfax County Parkway and Monroe Street, ideally via access roads located adjacent to the toll road.

- Emphasize access to the station via bus, bike, and walking
- Parking should remain at the current capacity and not expanded. If the parking capacity is doubled, as under the current plan, the traffic will also double. Parking capacity would be better placed at western stations.
  - A transition plan is needed to convert commuter parking to other uses.
- Protection of Polo Fields neighborhood. Any re-development should be sensitive to the low-density single-family Polo Fields neighborhood immediately south of Sunrise Valley Drive.
  - Light, sound, and noise impacts should be mitigated.
  - Do not want to look at tall buildings immediately across Sunrise Valley Drive.
  - Use plantings/trees as buffer.
  - The HOA has not discussed details of development preferences (e.g., uniform 6-story development vs. 15 stories close to toll road, and less density close to Sunrise Valley Drive).