

## Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force Draft Meeting Summary

April 13, 2010, 7:00 PM.  
Lake Anne Community Center

Task Force Chair opened at 7:05

Heidi Merkel of the Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning made the following announcements:

- The Reston Town Center Sub-Committee meeting advertisements and meeting summaries will be posted on the County website as they are made available to staff:  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston.htm>
- County Staff will post the portions of the existing conditions report as they are available. The report will include a broad overview of aggregate information, and will not include specific transportation mode splits or a review by traffic analysis zones. Heidi Merkel reminded the Task Force that the special study will involve more detailed transportation analysis after the Task Force begins to determine densities for the transit station areas.
- The County is still providing background information to the George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis to complete its work. Therefore, the County does not have a time frame for the completion of GMU's review.

### Public Comment (7:13):

Limited to 2 minutes/person

- Speaker unknown: The first speaker during the public comment period voiced concern that the Task Force is analyzing the Reston Parkway Metro Station area under today's conditions rather than the future condition of the area, and noted that the Task Force needs to identify a way for pedestrians to cross Sunset Hills Road and Reston Parkway. One suggestion is to extend the pedestrian bridge from the Metro station all the way across Sunset Hills Road.
- Dick Stillson read a resolution on behalf of the Reston 2020 Committee in support of preserving the wetlands area at the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station. A copy of this resolution can be found here:  
[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/communitydocs/resolution\\_about\\_wetlands.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/communitydocs/resolution_about_wetlands.pdf)  
A copy of the existing conservation covenant is available at this link:  
[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/sunrise\\_valley\\_wetland\\_easements.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/sunrise_valley_wetland_easements.pdf)
- Dick Rogers commended the Reston Town Center Sub-Committee efforts and stated that he was able to easily attend the sub-committee's meetings. He added that the sub-committee is dominated by development interests and suggested that the TF strike more of a balance in representation. Patty Nicoson reminded everyone that all Task Force members are welcome to participate on the sub-committee.
- Kathy Kaplan stated that the Residential, Urban Design, and Livability Committee of the Reston 2020 Committee, Reston Citizens Association is comprised of five Task Force members, urban planners, Dave Edwards of the Reston Planning & Zoning Committee, and Bryan Moll of the JBG Companies. She urged the Task Force to slow down their aggressive schedule since they have yet to produce plan text or recommendations.
- Anthony Balestrieu of Tishman Speyer spoke about the Reston Crossing property. The property, consisting of two office buildings on 16 acres on the south side of the Dulles Toll Road, is adjacent to the planned Reston Parkway Metro Station. Part of this property will be taken for the Metro project. He emphasized Tishman Speyer's commitment to communicating with the Task Force and will provide documents, plans, and proposed Comprehensive Plan text for the Task Force's consideration.

### Administrative Items (7:35):

Task Force Chair Patty Nicoson made the following announcements:

- Volunteers are needed to take notes at the community meeting on Saturday.
- Reston Museum has an exhibit about the history of railroads in Reston sponsored by the JBG Companies.
- John Carter of Montgomery County and Robert Brosnan of Arlington County have agreed to host a seminar on transit-oriented development. The location and time are to be determined, but will be one of the first three Saturdays in May.
- The April 6<sup>th</sup> Town Center sub-committee meeting summary was emailed to the TF and posted on the county website.

Patty Nicoson made a motion to approve the March 20<sup>th</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting summaries. Motion carried.

Task Force member Robert Goudie updated the Task Force on the work of the Reston Town Center Sub-Committee.

- Focus on the integration of north the Reston Town Center area into the Town Center Urban Core and to the Reston Parkway Metro Station.
- At the sub-committee's last two meetings, Heidi Merkel and David Marshall of Fairfax County made presentations about the Fairfax County Police Department's needs for its site in the north Town Center area, Mark Looney provided an overview of Lerner's redevelopment approved for the Reston Spectrum retail center, and David Sittler gave a presentation on behalf of Inova Health.
- The next meeting will involve discussion of a draft proposal for the Inova property. Robert Goudie also announced that the Reston Town Center Sub-Committee will have six meetings between now and May 25th. A schedule for the sub-committee's meetings is available at this link: [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/reston\\_town\\_center\\_mtg\\_blurb.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/reston_town_center_mtg_blurb.htm) <[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/reston\\_town\\_center\\_mtg\\_blurb.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/reston_town_center_mtg_blurb.htm)> .

### Comments on the Herndon-Monroe Station area (7:45)

#### Homeowners Association and Property Owner Comments on the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station Area:

- Paul Darmory spoke on behalf of the Polo Fields Homeowners Association, a neighborhood of approximately 400 homes south of the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station. The community's list of priorities and concerns are as follows:
  - Commuter parking encroaching into the neighborhood,
  - The need for traffic calming devices, and limiting traffic on Sunrise Valley Drive
  - Ensure that the Town of Herndon is engaged in the process and coordinating with the County on pedestrian and bicycle access, additional parking, and additional road connections to distribute traffic
  - Extensive bus system to serve the station
  - Noise and light pollution from the Metro itself and the additional vehicle traffic it will generate, and requested sound barriers and tree planting
  - Support the preservation of the wetlands area.
- Fred Rothmeijer, speaking on his own behalf and based on past experience with the Arboretum property, shared the following ideas with the Task Force:
  - If Herndon-Monroe Metro Station area is to remain a suburban environment than preserving the wetlands area makes sense
  - Don't invest a lot of money into the Metro project without providing connections to the west and south of the Metro station.

- Preserve the best pieces of the wetlands area and creating a road that travels along the edge of the wetlands in order to create a grid of streets
- Transition the area away from being dependent on cars to being better for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Create an urban plaza, water features, and an inviting pedestrian environment
- Replace the parking garage on the County's property with residential or office development.
- Add more density over time.
- Brian Berry stated that Tishman Speyer is interested in working with the Task Force to identify how pedestrians will access the west side of the Metro Station and that the owners do not have any immediate plans. His office manages the property within Sub-Unit A-1 (Woodland Park) and is the owner of the property within Sub-Unit A-2 of the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station area.

Briefing: Dulles Corridor Rail Project (7:55):

Rick Stevens, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, presented on the Dulles Corridor Rail Project:

- The Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Metro project are complete.
- Changes to the Metro parking garage may not be possible.
- Pedestrian access from the west is an issue; a grid of streets would help with access.
- On the north side, the Town of Herndon has been considering off street pull-off, bus service, and possibly a kiss-and-ride.
- Metro project financing is essentially set and does not include any property acquisition in the Town of Herndon.
- There is flexibility on the County site to consider other mixes of uses, but access is an issue b/c it is landlocked at this time.
- Entrance from the toll road may be a solution to taking it off sunrise valley;

Question & Answer re: Dulles Corridor Rail Project

Q: Has the County has done any directional analysis showing how people will enter and exit the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station?

A: Very little traffic will be coming to the station from the west due to the additional stations farther west. The County expects that most traffic will be coming from the south up Fairfax County Parkway. Centreville Road will likely be evenly split between the Route 28/CIT Metro Station and the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station.

Q: Is the County considering a road through the County parking garage property that would connect with Sunrise Valley Drive?

A: Such a connection is difficult because of topography issues and the proximity to the pedestrian bridge, making it unlikely that VDOT would approve a new traffic signal and entrance at that location.

Q: Can the garage design be changed and could the project team easily reduce the number of parking spaces because the environmental impact would be less significant?

A: The preliminary engineering for the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station is about 50% completed and the County needs the additional parking capacity to generate ridership. The County has a fairly strong bus plan, but cannot eliminate too many parking spaces.

Q: Does the County have plans for good pedestrian access to the west across Monroe Street?

A: The rail project is limited to its mission as defined in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, but the Task Force can make Comprehensive Plan recommendations for pedestrian access that are outside the scope of the Metro project.

Q: Is there a way to offer property owners bonuses to provide access improvements? The Task Force may want to consider trade-offs between density and access improvements.

A: The Task Force can recommend additional density options with conditions, and the Comprehensive Plan currently includes development options for higher densities with specific conditions for improvements such as grade-separated pedestrian connections. The Task Force should think about any additional improvements it would like to see at each transit station area.

Rick Stevens stated that the preliminary engineering for Phase II of the rail project should be complete by next March. MWA will competitively bid the construction of Phase II and it is expected to open in early 2017.

Question re: funding the \$105 million of the Reston Metrorail Access Group ("RMAG") improvements.

A: Funding is always an issue, but budgets are especially limited this year. The County is attempting to separate the less costly RMAG pedestrian/intersection improvements and move forward on those improvements ahead of the more expensive road improvements. Feeder bus service will be an important aspect of access to the station and the bus system will be expensive.

RCIG Covenants Update: Rick Stevens noted that the Fairfax County Circuit Court approved the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority's bond issuance for the Comstock project at the Wiehle Avenue Metro Station. Mark Looney explained that the County's bond validation suit included the issue of whether the amendment and vacation of the Reston Center for Industry and Government ("RCIG") Covenants was completed in accordance with the requirements of the original RCIG Declaration. He noted that the Circuit Court judge agreed the amendment and vacation was done properly and, therefore, the RCIG Covenants will be vacated effective January 1, 2011.

#### Discussion of Herndon-Monroe Station Area (8:40)

The agenda reflected a discussion of the Reston Parkway Metro Station area; however, the Task Force chose to continue its discussion of the Herndon-Monroe.

Heidi Merkel began the discussion with the following comments regarding the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station:

- There will be transit-oriented development ("TOD") opportunities at each of the Metro stations in Fairfax County and that the County's TOD Guidelines do not automatically trump the environmental recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan
- There may be an opportunity to preserve the Herndon-Monroe wetlands without undermining the larger TOD goals for the transit station area. She said, for example, that a connection parallel to the Dulles Toll Road solely for bus service could improve access to the station, that the Sprint campus could have residential uses along Sunrise Valley Drive to create a better transition to the Polo Fields neighborhood, and that office uses along the Dulles Toll Road would provide a noise buffer. The Task Force could develop recommendations by building on concepts like these examples.

The Task Force made the following comments regarding the Herndon-Monroe Station Area:

- Question re: possibility of providing additional curb cuts along Sunrise Valley Drive and aligning them to create a grid network. Rick Stevens noted that the Metro project is limited to internal circulation and improvements at the main intersection at Sunrise Valley Drive.
- Residential on the south side of the Sprint property and office on the north side is desired, but ingress/egress at Fairfax County Parkway and Monroe Street is critical.
- Question re: bonus density in the Comprehensive Plan for parcel consolidation. Heidi Merkel confirmed that parcel consolidation with bonus density can be part of the Plan

recommendations, although it isn't as much of an issue because Sprint owns the properties within Sub-Units C-3 and C-4 east of the station.

- The Sprint properties in Sub-Units C-3 and C-4 are a gateway site that is ideal for redevelopment, and that residential on the south side and office on the north side makes a lot of sense.
- The Task Force should consider the existing zoning and Plan recommendations for properties in the transit station areas. Recognize the existing zoning and identify the incentives needed for property owners to move away from their existing zoning to the land uses and site designs the Task Force would like to achieve.
- The Task Force should first identify a potential grid of streets and new road/pedestrian connections, and then draft the incentives to encourage the property owners to fill in the grid in accordance with the Task Force's vision.
- The Task Force should begin with the input from the community workshops and use Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments ("COG") projections to determine densities.
- Keep the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station at the lowest density of the three stations despite COG projections that show it to be the highest density.
- Community input suggests the Herndon-Monroe Metro Station should be an environmental area with preservation of the wetlands. The east side of Monroe Street should receive the highest density at this station.
- The Task Force should respect the concerns of the Polo Fields residents.
- Expanding the parking garage is a huge mistake. An area with only wetlands and parking within a ½ mile radius is not TOD. Expand the garage on only the west and move the Metro station to the east. Create a grid of streets for the area.
- Sub-Unit A-1 (Woodland Park) has very nice office buildings, but it lacks connectivity to the east. Task Force recommendations should attempt to make the area livelier and provide pedestrian connections.
- The Task Force should go through a series of drawings with additional connections.
- Heidi Merkel reminded the Task Force members that Woodland Park is outside of the ½ mile radius that is generally accepted as the limit for TOD. Arthur Murphy said if connections are made then the area could be appropriate for TOD.
- The Task Force should focus on incentives and market realities, and should think unconventionally rather than just using the ½ mile and ¼ mile radii that do not acknowledge the conditions of the properties.
- The most important aspect of the Task Force's effort is to identify access improvements needed so the areas around the station can function properly, and then filling in the densities and uses based on existing development and the incentives needed to achieve the Task Force's objectives.
- The Task Force should focus more on getting people to and from the Metro station rather than just the ½ mile and ¼ mile radii.
- Many property owners or tenants would likely run shuttle buses to the Metro station even if their properties are outside of the ½ mile radius.

Brian Berry said there is no question that property owners will run shuttles from Woodland Park to the Metro station, but the question is where the shuttle buses will have access. He said the east-west road connections need to be better. He also said the Task Force should consider the height of the buildings because higher building heights allow more open space.

- The station needs a reliable, timely, and efficient bus system because people cannot rely on cars to easily get into and out of the station. The parking garage expansion is a mistake.

#### Announcements (9:30)

Process sub-committee will meet at Cathy Hudgins office in the North County Government Center on Friday, April 16 at 9 a.m.

There will be a Community Meeting at Langston Hughes Middle School on Saturday, April 17 at 9 a.m. to discuss the Reston Parkway Metro Station area.

The next Task Force meeting will be held at **South Lakes High School** on Tuesday, April 27 at 7 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned (9:39)

### **Members Present**

Bauer, Nicholas  
Cooper, Michael  
Corrigan, Mike  
Cortelyou, Stephanie  
Costello, Frederick  
de la Fe, Frank (EX OFFICIO)  
Foster, Van  
Goudie, Robert  
Hill, Arthur  
Keefe, William  
Kennedy, Richard  
Looney, Mark  
Murphy, Arthur  
Nicoson, Patricia (CHAIR)  
Ottenti, Peter  
Pew, Judith  
Thomas, Paul  
Tobey, Phil  
Volloy, Gerald  
Walker, Robert  
Bowman, John  
Gilley Sr., Wade  
Matthews, Milton  
Mills, Colin  
Noritake, Rae  
Penniman, William  
Pfeilmeier, Frank  
Phillips, Terri  
Stowers, Joe  
Strange, Anne