Draft Consolidated Steering Committee Meeting Notes

December 13, 2010
December 20, 2010
January 4, 2011
January 11, 2011

December 13, 2010 Meeting

At the **December 13, 2010, first meeting** of the Steering Committee, I told the committee that I wanted its help to develop a process to facilitate task force decision-making. There was considerable discussion of the **purpose of the committee.** With this input, Heidi and I were to develop a draft mission statement for committee review at the next meeting.

Review of Development Process The group recognized there were three levels at which density decisions could be made: by subarea or land unit, and for a larger area for a 20-year plan horizon or a 40 to 50 year vision. Members were in agreement that we should develop a long-term vision and then work backwards to develop proposed recommendations to amend the Comprehensive Plan that could be adequately served by transportation and other public infrastructure.

This would enable property owners to plan for a long-term vision, which could be revisited every 5 to 10 years. How can you renegotiate an agreement? Does the process need to be changed? There was a concern that developers not sit on approved densities, and instead get construction underway within a reasonable time period. How can we incentivize property owners so that they develop plans for good transit-oriented development (TOD) tearing down existing buildings as opposed to putting up infill buildings?

There was discussion about Fairfax County's current planning and zoning process. The group recognized that would be key to structure a phasing system for implementing development. The Tysons plan amendment is a 20-year plan and includes infrastructure that needs to be provided. Certain levels of density trigger additional infrastructure requirements.

It was noted that there are different kinds of infrastructure: those which can be provided on-site, which the developer has to demonstrate he can provide, and those that are required off-site, for example contributions to area-wide or regional improvements.

Concern was expressed about the transportation model being used. What are the inputs and outputs? Heidi Merkel said that although the model being used by the transportation staff would not be changed, it is possible to get involved in post processing and put in different assumptions to test.

It was agreed that we need to spell out a vision and that it needs to be kept simple. This vision would identify the special characteristics of each station area while allowing for some flexibility. To make TOD succeed, it was recognized that people will have to change their behaviors.

Under **next steps**, it was agreed that Mark Looney and Greg Riegle would put together a report and presentation on how the plan process has worked elsewhere in the county for discussion at the December 20 meeting of the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

December 20, 2010, Steering Committee Meeting

At this meeting, Mark Looney reviewed information that he and Greg Riegle had compiled on planning options and developer commitments. The December 16, 2010, memo included materials on the Fairfax Center, Central Springfield/Springfield Mall Area, and the Columbia Pike Corridor in Arlington County Virginia. Mark Looney provided an extensive and detailed presentation on several of these plans at the December 20 meeting.

It was suggested that we compare the current Comprehensive Plan for Reston to the newer approaches that have been developed by Fairfax County. The current plan for Reston does not get into the same level of detail. Heidi Merkle pointed out that was why the vision was so important. The Fairfax zoning staff will consider it in reviewing projects.

The Committee thought it ought to look at the process for rezoning since most of the land area in the corridor is not in Reston's PRC zone.

It was agreed that we needed to develop a framework for decision-making and one of the elements that would be addressed was a vision for each area. Other elements included form, mix of uses, levels of density, and connectivity.

Heidi Merkel noted that the outline for the Comprehensive Plan and the report of the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force will be different. The task force report will include reasons why recommendations were made and provide something similar to a legislative history.

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

January 4, 2011 Steering Committee Meeting.

A Draft Steering Subcommittee Mission Statement was provided and commented upon. It was agreed that it would be staff's role to review the work products prepared by the Task Force Station Area Committees to see if they are consistent with Fairfax County's adopted TOD policy. Working with the committee reports that have been prepared, the steering committee would compile and review report elements to articulate a vision for each of the areas, describe the desired form,

establish the general location of uses, identify the desired mix of uses, as well as the relative intensity envisioned for each of the areas. The Steering Committee will highlight mechanisms that could be used to implement task force recommendations for task force consideration.

The committee reviewed and commented on the check list that had been prepared by Heidi Merkel that included as elements: Vision, Form, General Location of Uses, Mix of Uses, Relative Intensity, Transportation Network and Connectivity. Committee chairs will provide information on Vision and Form so that these elements can be discussed at the next Task Force meeting. Heidi Merkel will revise the checklist based on group comments.

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

January 11, 2011 Steering Committee Meeting.

When asked about the difference between the Vision and Steering Committees, I (Nicoson) said that the Vision committee had developed the draft of the Vision statement for Reston and guiding principles and was looking comprehensively at several area-wide systems including transportation, the environment and open space and infrastructure. The Steering Committee is to review the committee reports and help in shaping a framework for decision making by the full task force on the key plan issues, which in addition to the vision and principles include station visions, form, mix of uses, intensity of uses and connectivity.

The Committee made further suggestions to revise the mission of the Steering **Committee. It reviewed a revised Vision and Principles document prepared by John Carter and his Vision Committee. While I prepared a version that was meant to** show my suggested changes and what other changes John had made since the May 2010 version, it proved confusing. The Committee noted that we were addressing three distinct transit neighborhoods not one linear one. It felt that there was repetition and that some of the principles could be combined. Staff was directed to take the Committee's comments and produce a more concise version, preferably two-pages in length with 10 not 14 principles. A new principle had been proposed to address Reston as a vibrant business center and a good place for a broad mix of businesses and companies.

Bill Penniman made a presentation on the Wiehle Area vision that had been prepared by the Wiehle Avenue Committee. This was done in response to a paper presented by Robert Goudie recommending a 2:1 residential/nonresidential mix. He explained why they had come up with their recommended mix of uses, which overall is 56 percent residential and 44 percent nonresidential. The current study area is not now zoned for residential and has none. It does have 10 million square feet (SF) of nonresidential. GMU's Center for Regional Analysis projected 16,900 residents and 50,400 jobs by 2050 with a gross floor area of 12 million SF for residential and 19 million SF for non-residential.

Bill noted that within ¼ to ½ mile from the station the residential densities proposed for the land units are 60 to 75 percent of the total floor area. He did not think we should think of Reston Town Center as a downtown fed by bedroom communities. The committee thought that the Wiehle area needed significant commercial development FARs to incentivize developers to build mixed use (residential) and build it in the near term.

Robert Goudie did respond by saying the Reston Town Center has always been considered Reston's downtown, that he did not share the urban versus suburban vision. He thought the stations should complement each other and that more residential was needed at the Wiehle and Herndon Monroe stations to better balance of jobs and residents in Reston and reduce congestion by promoting non-vehicular trips and reducing trip lengths.

The committee considered the check list staff had prepared which included the area committees' guidance on vision and form and made some recommendations. It thought this framework would be very useful in focusing the discussion and providing a framework for the task force to use in making decisions. The committee would begin its work on the check list at its next meeting.