

TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE
AGENDA - 6/29/10
Interlineations in blue summarize discussion

Open Forum (5 minutes)

Dick Rogers: Concern that not yet defined is how buses will move between the Metro and the bus terminal.

Rob Whitfield: Two concerns: 1) that the Police are not yet formally part of this dialogue; and 2) neither is MWAA. Joe noted that he thinks @ July 15 MWAA may have something to say about the air rights platform possibility at the TC Metro.

Administrative (5 minutes – review of future schedule – today revisit Metro North; July 6 revisit Metro South with presentation from west side owners; July 13 and 20 review and comment on draft reports for Metro North and South with supplemental presentations as decided; July 27 public comment on consolidated draft report and finalize edits, presenting to TF that night)

I. **USGS** (10 minutes, Paul Gargano, USGS Facility Site Manager)

Paul indicated that the GSA owns the lot (USGS pays rent) but has looked to USGS for potential uses on the lot. There has been some modest consolidation by locating other government offices on this site. The main building is @ 1M sq. ft, two others between 20-30K sq. ft. and a utility building. There is a stream that feeds into the pond directly north of Sunrise Valley on the west. About 2K employees currently; guessing @ 100 take Metro buses. Assume (hope) there will be bus service to and from the new Metro stop. Perhaps 15-20% of employees live in Reston area, and a high percentage come from west of the airport.

About 50 acres of developable land (essentially the forest area). USGS would like to maintain this as a science campus. GSA taking a higher interest with the arrival of Metro. In addition, the President recently issued an EO seeking \$3B in property savings across the Nation by consolidating government services, so there may be pressure to expand the footprint here (probably at least 10 years out).

About 1600 parking spaces now; would probably have to reconsider structured parking if/as there is pressure to expand the footprint.

What about utilization of the forest as open space? This is a Level 4 building site, so some security issues (buffering). The star building is high security. Open campus now; no fences. Have roving patrols. They don't use parking north of the buildings to maintain a 200' setback.

How does the gov't master plan for a site like this? Must do a study that Congress must approve, and then Congress must appropriate money. GSA would contract with an architect. Could easily be a three-year process.

Has GSA used Enhanced Use Leasing (allowing agency to sublet to private users)? Yes, but not widely due to capital accounting issues. Not aware of any EUL inventory right now.

What about enhanced access, especially a n-s road through forest? Paul not in a position to comment on that.

II. **GMU Data** (10 minutes)

Robert reviewed the key data points (reprinted below). Joe noted that the model is proprietary, so we cannot know the assumptions and science behind the data. Dave

Sittler noted that in the data reprinted below, especially that provided by Tim Sampson, the 250 sq. ft. average for commercial space/employee includes civic space. If that is excluded it is probably much closer to 300'/employee, which would further compress the jobs:household ratios discussed (pushing these even closer to and in some cases much better than the 4:1 Ballston "gold standard"). There was broader discussion about the validity of the numbers; to what extent the ability to project here can be relied upon; etc.. Robert sought to bring the discussion to a close by noting that the numbers are not offered as gospel; however, GMU is thought by many to be the best or one of the best predictors of the region's demographics (both Mark and Pete noted they are highly thought of and have a history of being fairly accurate). The thought was to focus less on theory regarding the numbers and more on facts on the ground – that if Ballston is thought to be something of a model at 4:1, and that 4:1 is a fact not a projection, then we at least have a touchstone to consider (not necessarily embrace) as we continue to think through FARs, triggers, and mixes of uses. Using that touchstone, these numbers give us some sense: a) that the trigger designed for TCN has some merit; and b) that moving to something like a 4:1 jobs:household ratio (using Ballston as a model) provides some hope of mitigating (not eliminating) traffic/congestion issues.

III. **Additional Edits to TCN Draft Report** (15 minutes)

- a. Discussion of any language Terri and Susan propose on the section entitled Additional Open Space (can push to next week given tight schedule if ok with Terri and Susan)

There was a wide ranging discussion on the proposed edits (which folks did not see until that morning). There was general concern this was getting too specific and prescriptive. A competing concern was expressed that we are prescriptive in other parts of the document so why not here? Robert suggested that we are making some very prescriptive and strong points in the draft now about open space: we have made clear we endorse the idea of a +/- 7-acre town green, a major statement, and we've been equally clear we think that needs to be augmented by additional open space (giving examples without being prescriptive). On the specific reference to an "urban parks standard," questions were raised if this is something different than the existing County standard, if not why mention and if so why are we getting into areas that are beyond our expertise (we aren't competent to opine on what is an appropriate urban parks standard)? Robert suggested compromise language that says essentially the County should stay committed to a strong urban parks standard, and there seemed to be agreement on that. He then suggested that he take this off line with Terri and Susan, work on some compromise language for the other pieces and circulate that with all.

- b. TCN governance issue – appears the Inova lots are not part of the Town Center District.

Inova suggested that it sees no reason to be subject to any additional governance layer beyond the County. Robert voiced the concern that while imposing an additional layer is admittedly legally challenging, it may not be easy to predict how the political process will address this issue (if at all). He suggested language that seemed to gain consensus among the group: that the report would include something like the following:
"The Committee understands that the lots in TCN currently are not part of any master landowners association. If in the future any TCN lot is somehow required to become part of such an association (for design guideline purposes, by way of example) then the Committee feels that the Reston Town Center Association -- and not some other or new association – would be the appropriate association for such purposes."

- IV. **Metro North Straw Man** (45 minutes – Pete Otteni of BP and Mike Novotny of Vornado)
Unable to address given the extended discussion above. Rolled over to next meeting.

GMU data as rearticulated by Robert (see http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/presentations/dulles_rail_preliminary_forecasts_f_or_reston.pdf):

1. In what GMU defines as the Reston Parkway station area (from Baron Cameron on the north through the USGS site on the south), there are currently 40K jobs. 66K are projected by 2050 (26K growth).
2. There are estimated to be 2600 households now, growing to almost 10,500 by 2050 (about an 8K household growth). This is all just organic, market-driven growth – no assumptions were made about policy shifts to encourage more residential (like our TCN trigger) or how the 13 people per acre PRC standard or any RCIG limits imposed in lieu of the vacated covenants may impact upon this projected growth.
3. My sense is given the lack of n-s connectivity connecting what we are calling TC Metro North and TC Metro South, combining these for data purposes presents some challenges. That said, the current jobs:household ratio for the combined Metro North and South areas is @ 15:1 (powerfully speaking to Joe's imbalance point). But assuming just the organic growth that GMU projects that ratio will be reduced to @ 6:1 by 2050.
4. I asked the GMU folks what they would consider to be a healthy ratio (healthy being one that helps reduce congestion/traffic). They cited Ballston at 4:1 as the gold standard in the extended corridor. Again, GMU projects the extended TC Metro Station area to be at 6:1 in 2050 (absent policy changes/incentives on residential).
5. I've talked with multiple folks since and it seems GMU is considered either THE BEST or ONE OF THE BEST sources on the region's demographics (depending on who you talked to).

Tim Sampson input (assume 1.6 jobs/household, 1 worker/ 250 sq. ft. of commercial):

The 1,000 unit "baseline" would generate 1,600 resident workers, and the 0.70 FAR (1.25mm SF) of commercial would generate 5,000 jobs, for a ratio (3.125:1)

At max build out, 2,000 units (or 3,200 resident workers) and the 0.90 FAR (1.6mm SF) would generate 6,400 jobs for a ratio (2:1)

If the 0.90 commercial were built out with only the 1,000 initial units, then the ratio would be 4:1 (Ballston "gold standard")

NOTE: commercial space for this modeling includes the civic space.