

Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force

Wiehle Avenue Sub-Committee

Meeting Summary – December 1, 2010

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Discussion of Land Use and Density

Mr. Penniman presented three land use models providing variations on the shape of the “wedding cake” and office/residential GFA ratios. The discussion focused on how to incentivize the creation of the core areas around the station before outlying areas. Mr. Penniman offered one possibility of setting the FAR for outlying areas at a lower level than the ultimate value. The FAR would be increased to the ultimate value based on substantial completion of the core, creation of necessary infrastructure and other factors.

This concept compares to one presented at the November 30th Task Force meeting by Heidi Merkel. In this concept, the ultimate FAR would be established but a GFA “pool” would be set that permitted only a fraction of the ultimate GFA. Increasing the size of the pool would be triggered by factors similar to those described above.

Mr. Looney said that FARs should be set according to the long-range vision and let the market control the development pattern; trying to impose lower FARs, pools and triggers will cause undesirable results. Mr. Penniman maintained that that approach could undermine TOD objectives, for example, by enabling excess development away from station which, by absorbing demand, could defeat timely development near the station.

Mr. Novotny recommended setting FARs at the ultimate value but limit development based on “testing” the infrastructure. Developers can create a 50 year plan for a parcel and roll it out incrementally as factors change. He also suggested allowing retail and hotels to be in addition to the FARs since they should be encouraged. Mr. Penniman noted that there is already language allowing educational and cultural space to be above the FARs.

Mr. Looney suggested a variation in which FARs would be established for non-residential but no limits on residential. This is similar to the approach taken in Tysons and Town Center. He also questioned whether setting FARs would affect the form of development, for example, garden apartments versus high-rise residential.

As the meeting closed, Mr. Penniman asked for views on the three models. Mr. Van Horn said he favored Hypothetical F but with increased FAR in G1. Mr. Foster also favored F but with a 20:80 office/residential ratio. There appeared to be consensus that F was favored, but specifics were tabled until the next meeting.

Members Attending

Bill Penniman – Co-Chairman
Andy Van Horn – Co-Chairman
Van Foster
Richard Kennedy
Mark Looney
Art Murphy
Judith Pew
Anne Strange
Paul Thomas
Rob Walker