



Meeting Summary

February 27, 2007, 7:00 PM

Westbriar Elementary School, 1741 Pine Valley Drive, Vienna, VA

- I. Call to Order: The Task Force approved the January 22, 2007 meeting summary as submitted.
- II. Change in Staffing: Clark Tyler announced that Katrina Newton is moving to Asheville, NC, and asked the Task Force members to express their appreciation to her. He also announced that Linda Hollis of Fairfax County DPZ is joining the Tysons team.
- III. Overview of Work Session with Members of Consultant Team: G.B. Arrington of PB PlaceMaking explained that the purpose of the meeting was to take the Task Force members through part of the exercises for the [public workshops to be held in March](#). This would enable Task Force members to suggest ways that the consultants can improve the exercises.
- IV. [Presentation by PB PlaceMaking](#): Uri Avin gave a PowerPoint presentation describing the process used to develop the initial alternatives that will be reviewed and refined at the public workshops. Consultants have analyzed current development patterns at Tysons Corner in terms of the amount and distribution of land uses, employment and population and compared Tysons to other activity centers in the region.

Regarding Tysons Corner's current development pattern, the presentation showed that retail, residential, office and hotel uses are dispersed and not integrated with one another. The current development pattern was contrasted with potential future Transit Oriented Development (TOD), which focuses the most intense mixed use development in nodes around the four Metro stations at Tysons.

The consultants also examined the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area's regional activity centers, most of which are currently served by Metrorail. These regional centers included those in the following areas: I-95/Springfield, Alexandria, Rosslyn/Ballston, Bethesda/Friendship Heights and Rockville/North Bethesda. The consultant's evaluation of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) long-term forecasts of these centers was utilized in the consultant's process for developing potential future targets for employment and housing at Tysons Corner.

Uri Avin indicated that their evaluation has resulted in identifying three initial alternatives for Tysons Corner, as follows:

- Housing Emphasis – This mixed-use alternative includes a much stronger residential base, creating a live-work-play community in the core of Tysons.
- Employment Emphasis – This alternative assumes continued strong growth in jobs at Tysons, with a relatively high percentage of work trips arriving by transit; it also includes additional housing at Tysons.
- Pushing the Envelope – This alternative includes more jobs and housing than the other two mixed-use concepts, and assumes very high use of transit and the addition of a circulator bus system linking the Metro stations.

V. Task Force Small Group Exercises: Task Force members were divided into four groups for these exercises. At each table, a member of the consultant team served as facilitator and a member of the county staff as notetaker. During the first exercise, each table was covered with a base map of Tysons Corner. Using the map’s legend, Task Force members were asked to identify areas with the following characteristics:

- Landmarks
- Barriers
- Loved and Important Places
- Dangerous Intersections
- Underutilized Parcels
- Activity Nodes

The purpose of this exercise was to engage the Task Force members in a discussion of issues and redevelopment opportunities, identifying what features of Tysons are important to keep and what needs to change.

In the second exercise, Task Force members played the “Lego Game.” In this game, participants were asked to place plastic blocks (Legos) in places where they think new development would be appropriate. Each table was covered with a map dividing Tysons into around twenty subareas. Each table was also provided with enough Legos to represent development at Tysons under the current Comprehensive Plan, with additional Legos beyond the potential of the current Comprehensive Plan and beyond the current 2030 current regional forecast.

The different colors of Legos and the amounts of development that they represented are:

- Yellow – 500 housing units
- White – 100,000 square feet of Retail space
- Blue – 500,000 square feet of Other Commercial space

VI. Task Force Small Group Report Back: At the conclusion of the small group exercises, each table reported back to the larger group. Regarding the first exercise,

the consensus was that there are no natural landmarks at Tysons, but that there are a number of landmark buildings. There was also agreement that the highways (Route 7 and 123) represent barriers. All four groups named the stream valleys (Scotts Run and Courthouse Spring Branch) as places they love; some groups named the malls; and other groups named certain residential buildings.

Task Force members were in agreement that there are a number of dangerous intersections in Tysons Corner. Regarding underutilized parcels, most groups mentioned Route 7 between the Tysons Central 7 and Tysons West stations. For activity nodes, all mentioned the malls, and some mentioned the automobile dealers along Route 7 and major office buildings with large numbers of employees.

There was a good deal of variation in the ways in which tables reported on the Lego game. One table stated that they could have distributed more housing, while another table was unable to allocate all the office space they were given. Generally, all four tables significantly increased the amount of housing and residential serving retail between the two central stations. They also tried to create a more balanced mix of uses throughout the rest of Tysons.

- VII. Suggestions for March Public Workshops: Task Force members had a number of suggestions to make the Lego game run more smoothly at the public workshops. These included improvements to the maps, such as showing street names, stream valleys, and important places, and adding circles representing 5 and 10 minute walk times from the Metro stations.

Task Force members would also like on the map (or in a hand-out) a matrix showing the amount of development in Tysons today; the amount of development under the Comprehensive Plan; and the amount of development under the alternative being tested.

Participants did not understand why the subareas on the map varied so much in size, and found those differences made it difficult to place Legos.

Several Task Force members suggested that green blocks be added to represent public places including parks and open space and plazas and other community facilities. One table wanted both green blocks for open space and red blocks for community facilities.

Participants needed more guidance for the Lego game, such as displaying the Guiding Planning Principles on the flipchart beside each table. They also need more explanation of how the alternatives will be analyzed after the public workshops, including their use by the transportation consultants.

Task Force members agreed that they need examples of what 500 housing units, 100,000 square feet of retail and 500,000 square feet of office space look like, such as photographs of actual buildings at Tysons. Finally, Task Force members would

like to see examples of desirable mixes of uses, such as ratios of residential/retail/office development from other urban centers in the region.

VIII. Next Steps: The Task Force requested that the consultants increase the upper limits of development under the alternative called “Pushing the Envelope.” PB PlaceMaking agreed to provide estimated square feet to the Task Force for a quick review prior to March 19, the week of the public workshops.

IX. Adjourn: 10:15 p.m.