



Meeting Summary

January 28, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike

- I. Call to Order
- II. Meeting Summary: The summary of the January 14 Task Force meeting was approved as submitted.
- III. Announcements: Chairman Clark Tyler called Task Force members' attention to the flyer produced by The Perspectives Group, announcing the [February 27 and 28 workshops](#). He also asked Task Force members to sign up for at least one workshop. Finally, Mr. Tyler welcomed attendees to the [Seminar on Density](#).
- IV. [Putting the Transformation of Tysons into a Regional Perspective](#): The first speaker was Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director of the Coalition for Smarter Growth. He explained that one of the reasons that we have so much traffic is that our land uses are separated by so much geographic distance. Redeveloping near transit stations and mixing land uses will result in reductions in traffic. The metropolitan Washington region is expected to add 2 million residents and 1.6 million jobs by the year 2030. During the 2005 visioning exercise called "Reality Check," the consensus was that these residents and jobs should be concentrated near Metro stations and other activity centers in the region. In closing, Mr. Schwartz pointed out that transit-oriented development can help reduce the U.S. share of auto emissions. This in turn can help address one of the greatest challenges of our time, global warming or climate change.
- V. [Introduction to Key Concepts in Land Use Intensity](#): The second speaker was Sterling Wheeler, Chief of the Policy & Plan Development Branch, Planning Division, Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning. Mr. Wheeler began by defining Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as the result of dividing gross building floor area by a site's land area. He then showed illustrations of the same FAR occupying different portions of a site. Mr. Wheeler pointed out that in Fairfax County, parking structures are not included in the calculation of FAR. In addition, parking at office and multifamily buildings at Tysons and in the County as a whole are currently provided at much higher ratios than in Arlington's Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor or in Washington, D.C. Mr. Wheeler then showed illustrations of different configurations of parking with the same size of building. He closed with renderings of current developments in the County in which public and private open spaces are

being provided as integral components: Halstead near the Dunn Loring Metro station, and the Merrifield Town Center.

- VI. [Advantages of Development at Higher Intensities:](#) The third speaker was Doug Carter, Principal of Davis Carter Scott Ltd., of McLean, VA. Mr. Carter stated that high density development should be accompanied by a finer grid of streets. This in turn will permit less driving and more walking and bicycling. Less driving will reduce air pollution and congestion, which in turn will promote better mental and physical health. High density development should also be accompanied by community amenities, such as walkable streets and public gathering places. Based on over 30 years of experience transforming suburban to urban places around the world, Mr. Carter urged the Task Force to plan for 1.6 jobs per housing unit at Tysons. He recommends a total of 80,000 housing units in the area, or a balance of 68% of development residential and 32% nonresidential. Mr. Carter also urged the Task Force to plan for “green” development at Tysons, citing the benefits of reductions in consumption of water and energy and reductions in production of wastewater, stormwater and other waste products. Green buildings cost less to operate and result in increased productivity and improved health for people who work in them.
- VI. [Balancing Transit Oriented Developments \(TODs\) with Existing Neighborhoods:](#) The final speaker was Suzette Goldstein, Senior Vice President with HOK in Washington, D.C. Ms. Goldstein showed how various communities in the region have maintained an edge between TODs and neighborhoods. In Arlington County near the Clarendon Metro station, a public park and townhouses buffer the new Clarendon Market Commons development from the adjacent single family neighborhood. Near the Ballston Metro station, multifamily buildings were designed to step down from their highest point to street level across from a neighborhood of townhouses and single family homes. In Montgomery County, Maryland near the Bethesda Metro station, an elementary school, a park and a public library separate the TOD to the east from the stable single family neighborhood to the west. Near the Friendship Heights Metro, Montgomery County built a linear park and trail which connects Chevy Chase Village to the TOD but also protects its edge. Near the Silver Spring Metro, single family neighborhoods are buffered from the TOD by churches in one location, and by a community center and public park in another location.
- VII. Question and Answer Period: One Task Force member asked the panelists to comment on the community benefits that high density on a large site could produce. Doug Carter responded that at Tysons, the parking requirements need to be reduced to bring the economics of development back into balance.

Another Task Force member asked about the importance of the grid of streets and connections to existing neighborhoods at Tysons. Stewart Schwartz responded that he thought the plan should start with pedestrian and bicycle connections and additional transit, and asked the Task Force to remember that highways are barriers.

A third Task Force member asked Doug Carter if his “green” approach meant LEED certification. Mr. Carter responded that over the last 10 years the basic LEED certification has had increased acceptance in the development community, and that over the next 10 years he expects that the higher LEED certifications (Silver, Gold and Platinum) will also become more common. Stewart Schwartz added that LEED stands for Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, and LEED is now developing a set of standards for Neighborhood Development.

An attendee asked if the Task Force will continue its work if federal funding for the Metrorail Silver Line is not approved at this time. Doug Carter stated that rail is only an enabler, and that the plan should include enough multifamily development to balance land uses at Tysons. Stewart Schwartz declared that Tysons will be served by heavy rail at some point in the future. Further, he stated that if we don’t fix Tysons, it will decline. He compared Tysons now to Clarendon in the 1970s before Metrorail and associated reinvestment. Doug Carter agreed and pointed out that Tysons is already being bypassed for Reston as a desirable location for new development.

An attendee asked what the FAR is at Crystal City, and what mistakes were made there? Suzette Goldstein pointed out that Arlington County is in the process of reinventing Crystal City, and that it was a mistake to assume that people wanted to live, work and play underground. Buildings are now being oriented to the street there. Doug Carter pointed out that in the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor, Arlington County began planning at a 3.8 FAR. Now there is redevelopment in areas that were built 10, 15 or 20 years ago, including the proposed 10 FAR building in Rosslyn that will be certified LEED Platinum.

Another attendee asked about the recent photo from the Washington Post, showing the proposed Metro stations at Tysons superimposed over existing development. Sterling Wheeler explained the photo and stated that the depicted surface parking would no longer exist. Suzette Goldstein pointed out that transit-oriented development will be possible at both sides of the Metro stations. Doug Carter stated that one of his designs for the Tysons West Metro station area shows a pedestrian bridge into a major office building.

The final questioner pointed out that FAR is only one dimension of building form. Sterling Wheeler agreed, and stated that the new plan for Tysons will include significantly more urban design guidance in order to address this issue.

VIII. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.