

**Quality of Life Work Group
Meeting Agenda
October 9, 7:00 p.m.
Mason District Government Center**

Members of the Task Force, as well as Quality of Life and Connectivity Work Groups, heard from Supervisor Gross regarding expectations for each group's work. Supervisor Gross also provided an overview of FOIA/open meeting requirements.

Staff provided an orientation to the comprehensive planning process.

Quality of Life Work Group members re-convened for their individual group meeting.

Work group members in attendance:

Kim Cook

Mike Cook

Kay Cooper

Maria Flores

Carol Turner

Nancy Vorona

Guests: Earl Heng and Andrew Heng

Staff:

Mike Congleton

Susan Epstein

Elisa Lueck

Officer Brendan Murphy

Jay Rauschenbach

Introductions

Introduced new group members: Maria Flores, Kim Cook, and Mike Cook.

Maria was welcomed to the group. Maria indicated that she desires for the work group to address safety issues, including police presence at the pedestrian bridge and monitoring of the areas in proximity to the Willston Multicultural Center soccer field.

Kim Cook discussed the tremendous work it took to get the pedestrian bridge approved and built, and would really like to see if there is anything that can be done to ensure it is a useful, clean, and safe amenity.

Work Group members had been asked to review Visioning workshop summaries provided at meeting and come prepared to discuss top 2-3 issues they identified in these summaries that will form the basis of this group's work and recommendations

Themes/Key Issues:

Pedestrian bridge/stairwells

Appearance in general

- Litter
- Signage
- Trash cans at bus stops
- No walk paths at bus stops
- No trash covers at bus stops
- Panhandling
- Day laborers

Safety

Maria Flores and others spoke up about safety issues especially in the Willston area. There was concern that certain illegal activities (prostitution, gang activity, etc.) might be a growing problem. Also, the stairwells leading to the Route 50 overpass are not being maintained and monitored for loitering or worse. A suggestion was made that Willston residents could organize Neighborhood Watch patrols to help improve safety in this area.

- Should we start Neighborhood Watch?

Business Improvement District establishment?

Other feedback

Aesthetic/Maintenance of commercial areas along Route 7 Corridor: Discussed the problems of upkeep along the Route 7 corridor.

Who is responsible for upkeep of field and outside area at Willston Center? (soccer field maintenance, playground, tree plantings). Also, are there short-term improvements such as landscaping, benches, grass seeding that can be made, and are there grants available to help fund them?

Future of the Willston Center: Kim and Mike Cook expressed concern over what will happen with the Willston Center and the surrounding areas.

Are there short-term improvements that could be made to the vacant parking lot outside of Willston (Saul lot)

Identifying and clarifying responsibility for trash removal (can we develop a maintenance program for trash removal?)

Kay Cooper brought up the topic of environmental issues that need to be part of any new vision for Seven Corners and asked which committee group would most likely be appropriate. Since environmental improvement was one of the primary concerns raised at the visioning sessions on May 21st and June 18th, Kay would like to ensure that it is addressed by the main task force, who she hopes will communicate with this group and the other working groups on this issue. Kay proposed that Environmental Concerns be added as a topic for discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Move forward for feedback

- FPCS is critical to quality of life/connectivity/transportation
 - Would request that Task Force include this as recommendation for review/consideration
- Are short-term improvements possible to parking area outside of Willston? How do we dialogue around with this Saul?
- Recommend that we move forward the importance of arts and restaurants to the area (move forward to Task Force and BCRC). Guests Earl and Andrew Heng expressed interest in creating some boutique businesses in the area. Specifically, they were interested in having an art gallery in the Culmore area and other shops that would attract business especially since the corridor already has so many popular ethnic restaurants.
- Obtain clarification on whether Task Force is appropriate group to review environmental issues.

Follow-up:

Work Group members requested that FCPD/VDOT provide additional perspective on the pedestrian bridge at a future meeting

Work Group members requested that FMD and Park Authority be invited to future meeting to discuss Willston Center maintenance

Work Group members requested that aesthetics be discussed at a future meeting, to include maintenance of commercial locations (building structures, dumpsters, trash/debris). Staff from Department of Code Compliance to survey the area in the meantime.

Mike to invite VDOT rep to future meeting. Also find out if we can get the study that was done by VDOT around the time of the pedestrian bridge project. There may be material in here to help inform the group's work.

Jay to look into grant opportunities that may be available for short-term improvements such as landscaping, benches, grass seeding that can be made at Willston field area.

Jay to research Business Improvement District.

Next meeting: November 13, 7:00 p.m. at Mason District Government Center

Group needs to decide on process for public participation/comment

Victories

VDOT is tentatively scheduled to attend our next meeting.

Mike shared that an agreement has been drafted for VDOT, which will have impact for Adopt-A-Highway program. Mike will provide a clearer picture on timeframes regarding implementation of this agreement at next meeting.