

**Minutes of the Seven Corners Transportation and Land Use Task Force Meeting
June 23, 2014**

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM
Mason District Government Center

Attendance:

Task Force: John Thillmann, Evelyn Haught, Mary Ellen Ward, Patrick Hoar, Mark Silverwood, Vince Burke, Blake Smith, Martin Faga, Steve Tillman, Karl Moritz, Dick Knapp, Iqbal Khaiy

Staff: Elizabeth Hagg (OCR), JoAnne Fiebe (OCR), Hyojung Garland (OCR), Bernard Suchicital (DPZ), Kim Rybold (DPZ), Michael Garcia (DOT), and Kris Morley-Niftar (DOT), Tom Biesiadny (DOT), Marianne Gardner (DPZ) and Aaron Frank from the office of Supervisor Gross

Presentation of Transportation and Urban Street Sections of Draft Plan and distribution of Draft Plan language

Mike Garcia presented an overview of the Transportation section of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. He began by reviewing the initial six concepts considered by the Task Force for improving the existing Seven Corners interchange and the criteria used by the Task force to evaluate each concept. He stated that these concepts were narrowed down and further refined resulting in a final recommended concept for the interchange - Concept B, or Two Half Diamonds. This concept would have the effect of creating a four-way intersection in place of the current interchange and would result in a ring road that would enhance local connectivity. An added benefit would be further separation of local and regional traffic. Concept B, if implemented, would result in shorter intersection wait-times and system-wide delays. Also, Concept B would provide for better pedestrian access and shorter walk times, as well as greater network penetration and routing for bicyclists than the current Comprehensive Plan. Mike concluded his remarks with a slide that outlined the sections of the proposed Transportation chapter.

Next, JoAnne Fiebe presented an overview of the Urban Street Network sections of the proposed Plan. She described the new urban design-oriented street functional classification and presented a table that cross-references the new terms with the traditional highway functional classification system. She also presented a map showing how existing and proposed streets would be classified. Finally, JoAnne presented the draft street cross-sections being proposed for each type of street, including a specialized type of Local Street called the Village Main Street.

Tom Biesiadny, Director of FCDOT, talked about the importance of linking transportation improvements with development, and the need for them to “grow together”. He said that for Tysons, for example, they developed a funding plan that included a monitoring element. He

could envision something like that happening for the Seven Corners area. Tom reported that they now have new tools and that as a result of the County-wide dialogue on Transportation held in the fall of 2013, that they have set aside \$3 million for design of the new plan for the interchange. He also noted that Route 7 is being looked at for higher quality transit and that the county has set aside \$200 million to upgrade transit in the county, including on Route 7. Additionally, because Route 50 is in the federal highway system, improvements to it qualify for federal funds. He said the county also has access to new regional and local revenue sources such as the Northern Virginia Transportation Association and the commercial and industrial property tax. On the private sector side, developers will be asked to address the transportation needs of individual projects as well as contribute to a road fund to address area improvements. He said it is their intention to tie the transportation plan to a transportation funding plan.

Finally, Seven Corners Task Force Co-Chairman, John Thillmann, described in detail the planning process that the Task Force had followed in the past 18 months, and that they expected to finish their work by this fall. He also outlined the remaining steps in the process, including public hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in October and November of this year.

Public Comment on Draft Plan

(Resident names were subject to interpretation)

Summary of top concerns that were identified by the public:

- Clarify the Existing Conditions Report contents.
- Lower the densities that are proposed for Land Unit C.
- Provide additional time for the community to review the Plan text, and schedule more public comment meetings.
- Shadeland Road cul-de-sac should remain closed off to thru-traffic.
- Ensure that traffic volumes on Juniper Lane do not increase from today. Juniper Lane should not intersect with Patrick Henry Drive.
- An implementation and phasing plan should be incorporated into the Plan text.
- How will the overcrowding issue of area schools, including the high school, be addressed?
- Provide a density comparison of other activity centers in the county to the proposed Seven Corners CBC.
- Provide additional environmental protections to Lake Barcroft.
- Detail a funding plan for transportation improvements, and tie it to phasing of development.

Richard Cheston – Buffalo Hills Civic Association

- Requests additional public comment opportunities.
- Does not support transit grid that shows Roosevelt connector going around the backside of the Corner at Seven Corners. Western terminus will have negative impacts on their neighborhood.
- Road improvements need to occur prior to the redevelopment of Land Unit C.
- Cul-de-sacs in neighborhood should remain as such, and not connect through to Leesburg Pike.

Caroline Morel – Sleepy Hollow Manor HOA

- Generally supports the Plan.
- Concerned about the proposed density increases. Residential increase seems imbalanced with non-residential square footage.

- Include FAR in the Plan text to better understand comparisons.
- Include language that addresses phasing of development and implementation.

Cathy Austin – Lee Heights Citizens Association

- Supportive of the proposed Plan amendments and a redesigned intersection, with better pedestrian facilities and more mixed uses. Looks forward to higher quality retail and architectural integrity.
- Concerned about overcrowding of area schools.
- Density should be addressed by transportation.
- Ensure that stormwater management does not impact neighborhoods.

John Iekel – Ravenswood Park Citizens Association

- Concerned about density on the Sears site and the timing of development.
- Concerned about the political viability and the ability to fully fund the transportation improvements.
- Juniper Lane should not be connected to Patrick Henry Drive. Will support any other access plan that does not include making Juniper a cut-through street.

Catrina McCormack – Ravenswood Citizens Association

- Community has gained a sense of mistrust regarding the Upper Baileys school issue.
- Requesting additional time to review and to comment on the proposed Plan text.
- Recommends lower densities, and that it should be tied to transportation funding.

Mark Hayes – Juniper Lane

- A 40-year plan to build out the infrastructure does not address the needs of today.
- Densities are too high in all categories, especially at the Sears site.
- Requesting a town hall meeting with Supervisor Gross.

Suzie Wells – Sleepy Hollow Manor

- Proposed development on the Sears site will create too many negative impacts on the community.
- The Plan’s goals are to protect the existing community. Keep Shadeland Road closed off.
- Does not want their neighborhood to be part of the proposed Leesburg Pike Village.

Al Thieme – Sleepy Hollow

- These plans are “pie in the sky.”
- Requesting that the Task Force restart the planning process from scratch.
- The community does not need any more residents or businesses.

Debbie Ratliff – Sleepy Hollow Manor

- Requests additional public comment opportunities.
- Recognizes the need for more connections.
- Existing Conditions Report does not capture the whole area accurately (outside the CBC).
- Strong language is needed to describe the implementation process and phasing.
- Requesting a reduction in the planned densities.

Ernie Wells – Sleepy Hollow Manor

- This process was faster than the APR process. The public did not have enough time to review and comment on the proposed Plan amendment.
- The Baileys Crossroads CBC has plan language that addresses Plan implementation. This should be copied into the Seven Corners CBC.
- Area schools are too crowded (as will the middle and high schools), and should be addressed.
- The Sears site has too much density, and the Task Force should go back to earlier recommendations for the site.
- Shadeland Drive should remain unconnected.

Debbie Smith – Ravenswood

- The Mosaic District has less density than Seven Corners, with better access to major area highway corridors.
- Consider rethinking the density numbers.

Richard Dreiman – Sleepy Hollow

- More information is needed for the redevelopment of the Sears site. What will be the trade-offs for the community?
- What are the plans for all of the other roads outside of the study area?
- Community is concerned that the Sears site is a done deal.

Ed Russiero – Ravenswood

- Why is the County building a school on Route 7? The county should consider rebuilding the Willston Center as a school.

Marc Freedman – Juniper Lane

- Supports Katrina McCormick's comments.
- Walking through Seven Corners is a bad experience, and the proposed Sears site redevelopment will only undo the Plan amendment's goals.
- Wants to know if and where the Quality of Life and Transportation & Connectivity Working Group reports are located.

Marty Machovisky – Ravenswood Park

- The proposed Sears site redevelopment has too much density assigned to it.
- The original Task Force recommendation for Land Unit C in the fall was more appropriate.
- Long-term residents were upset about Chairman Tillman's "many poor people live here" comment. We should celebrate the community's diversity.

Kim Smith – Lake Barcroft

- Patrick Henry Drive is already too congested.
- Traffic considerations should not stop at Seven Corners and Sleepy Hollow Drive. Additional study is needed further into the neighboring communities.
- More construction and traffic will lead to more environmental impacts on Lake Barcroft.
- The pumping station at Holmes Run has malfunctioned six times in the past, spilling sewage into the lake.

Phillip Steiner – Sleepy Hollow

- The infrastructure is not ready for any new development.

Marcial Peredo – Sleepy Hollow Manor

- An implementation and phasing plan should be incorporated in the Plan text.
- The neighborhood cul-de-sacs should remain untouched.
- Keep the integrity of the community.

Carl Newburg – Ravenswood

- A great road network has been sketched, providing greater access to East Falls Church Metro, but where will all of these new residents park at the Metro?
- The City of Falls Church has plans to bring about a major redevelopment of the Eden Center; won't this siphon off business from Seven Corners?
- The comparison to Shirlington has no validity.
- The idea to fund transportation improvements via a tax will become a huge burden on area businesses and residents.


Matt Friedman – Lake Barcroft

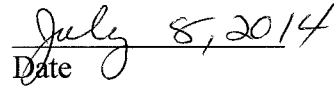
- Would like to see a summary report detailing how this process began and how decisions were made.
- The schools report indicated a huge increase in enrollment, and is reflected via the current overcrowding issues at Baileys Elementary School.
- Protection of Lake Barcroft should be elevated, and a permanent solution to protecting the lake should be found.
- The Plan is too aggressive on growth projections; therefore the proposed densities should be lowered.
- Timing of the phasing of development should be correct from the beginning.
- More time is needed to review the documents, especially for Land Unit C.

Task Force Discussion of Draft Plan

The discussion of the draft Plan was tabled until the July 8, 2014, meeting due to the lateness of the hour.

The Task Force adjourned at 9:15 pm.


By _____
secretary


Date _____