

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
POLICY AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2017**

PRESENT: Ellen J. Hurley, Braddock District, Chairman  
James T. Migliaccio, Lee District  
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District  
Peter F. Murphy, Springfield District  
James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large  
Janyce N. Hedetniemi, Commissioner At-Large  
Timothy J. Sargeant, Commissioner At-Large

ABSENT: None

OTHERS: John C. Ulfelder, Dranesville District  
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District  
Julie M. Strandlie, Mason District  
Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner, Providence District  
Jill G. Cooper, Director, Planning Commission  
John W. Cooper, Clerk, Planning Commission  
Inna Kangarloo, Senior Deputy Clerk, Planning Commission  
Clayton Medford, Chairman's Office, Board of Supervisors  
Walter Alcorn, Fairfax County Park Authority Board  
Fred Selden, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)  
Tracy Strunk, Zoning Evaluation Division, DPZ

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Planning Commission Bylaws Markup
- B. PC Speaker Survey Results
- C. PC Hearings Ending after 12:00 a.m.
- D. PC – 3a – CCLUE Response
- E. PC – 12 – CCLUE Response
- F. PC – 14 – CCLUE Response
- G. PC – 17– CCLUE Response
- H. Enhancing Community Engagement and Outreach in Fairfax County – April 27, 2017
- I. Community Council on Land Use Engagement Final Report – May 15, 2017

//

Chairman Ellen J. Hurley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., in the Board Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia, 22035.

//

Jill G. Cooper, Director, Planning Commission, provided an overview of the Planning Commission Bylaws update to reflect Site Specific Plan Amendment speaker times. A conversation ensued between Ms. Cooper, John W. Cooper, Clerk, Planning Commission, and the Committee members regarding the sufficiency of the speaker times allocated to each speaker category.

*(Start Verbatim Transcript)*

Commissioner Hedetniemi: I MOVE THAT THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE FULL COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE AMENDED 7-103, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW, THE PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS, TO REFLECT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE:

NOMINATION – 10 MINUTES

ANYONE NOT DESIGNATED ON THE SPEAKERS LIST - 2 MINUTES

INDIVIDUALS - 3 MINUTES

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS/CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS/COUNTYWIDE ASSOCIATIONS – 5 MINUTES

THIS CHANGE TO BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

Chairman Hurley: Okay, since I suspect this might be a split vote, could I ask the staff to remind us who is actually voting member, not the alternates?

Commissioner Migliaccio: We need a second.

Chairman Hurley: Oh, do we have a second?

Commissioner Sargeant: Second.

Chairman Hurley: We have a second.

Inna Kangarloo, Senior Deputy Clerk, Planning Commission: So, Commissioners who can vote are: Commissioner Hurley, Flanagan, Hart, Hedetniemi, Migliaccio, Sargeant. Commissioner Murphy is an alternate member.

Chairman Hurley: Alternates don't vote, since we have the quorum. Okay, so everybody knows who can vote? Alright, how many are in favor of the motion to a change?

Commissioner Hedetniemi: So moved.

Chairman Hurley: One, two. Opposed?

Commissioner Hart: Nay.

Chairman Hurley: One, two, three, four. Four opposed. The motion fails.

The motion failed by a vote of 2-4.

*(End Verbatim Transcript)*

//

Clayton Medford, Chairman's Office, Board of Supervisors, presented the update on the citizen engagement initiatives:

- Fairfax First Project Team 10
- Urban Land Institute Regional Fellowship
- Chairman Bulova's Community Council on Land Use Engagement (CCLUE)

//

Jill G. Cooper, Director, Planning Commission highlighted a recommendation from the CCLUE that involved more convenient meetings times and addressing the issue of meetings continuing past midnight. Referring to analysis of the meeting duration over the past five-years (included in Attachment C), she stated that 22 meetings continued beyond midnight. She further indicated that changing the meeting start time from 8:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and holding public hearings and committee meetings on separate nights would address the CCLUE recommendation. She further noted that the first and third Wednesday of each month was proposed to be a Committee meeting night. She concluded by saying that if supported by the full Commission, the change should become effective as of January 10, 2018, to accommodate scheduling and notification processes. A discussion ensued between the Committee members regarding the proposed time change.

*(Start Verbatim Transcript)*

Commissioner Sargeant: I MOVE THAT THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE RECOMMENND TO THE FULL COMMISSION APPROVAL OF AMMENDED SECTION 6-101, REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS TO REFLECT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE:

- PARAGRAPH 1 - REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY AND/OR THURSDAY OF EACH WEEK AS THE COMMISSION – AS THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION MAY REQUIRE, EXCEPT ON LEGAL HOLIDAYS, AND AT SUCH OTHER TIMES AS THE COMMISSION MAY DETERMINE.
- PARAGRAPH 2 - MEETINGS SHALL BE HELD IN THE BOARD AUDITORIUM OF THE GOVERNMENT CENTER AT 7:30 P.M. OR AT THE TIME AND PLACE DESIGNATED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

THIS CHANGE IS TO BE EFFECTIVE ON JANUARY 10, 2018.



Chairman Hurley: Do I hear a second?

Commissioners Hedetniemi and Flanagan: Second.

Chairman Hurley: Seeing six Committee members all in favor – at least in favor: one, two, three, four, five. Okay, the motion passes.

Commissioner Hart: I abstain.

Chairman Hurley: And one abstention.

The motion carried by a vote of 5-0-1.

*(End Verbatim Transcript)*

//

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.  
Ellen J. Hurley, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office,  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Inna Kangarloo

Approved: April 4, 2018



John W. Cooper, Clerk to the  
Fairfax County Planning Commission



7-103

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW**

It shall be the Chairman's responsibility to enforce the procedures and time limitations set forth below for all hearings on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Call of the public hearing by the presiding officer.
2. Description of the area under study, together with a presentation by staff and/or Commission members of recommendations for development of the designated area.
3. Call by the presiding officer for names of interested parties who wish to speak to the proposed Plan amendment.
4. Presentation by interested parties on the proposed Plan amendment with the following times allotted. Public testimony shall be provided in-person at the Board Auditorium of the Government Center during the public hearing unless designated otherwise by the Chairman.

Anyone not designated on the *Speakers List*: ~~23~~ minutes

For individuals signed up on the Speakers List by 3:00 p.m. on the scheduled date of the public hearing:

~~35~~ Minutes

~~40~~ Minutes

Individuals

Homeowners Associations/Civic Associations  
/Countywide Associations

5. Staff/Commission discussion.
6. Commission action. (At the Commission's discretion, a separate markup session may be scheduled for action.)

### Comment report

**Question 1:** Please list the date and application for which you participated

**Question 2:** In which of the following roles did this application impact you?

**Question 3:** How did you become aware of this application?

**Question 4:** When did you become aware of this application?

**Question 5:** How often do you provide input to the Planning Commission and/or attend its public hearing?

**Question 6:** The Planning Commission values citizen input. Should you have any comments or questions.

Number of invitees:	245
Invites that Responded:	76
Percentage of Responses/Invites:	31.02%

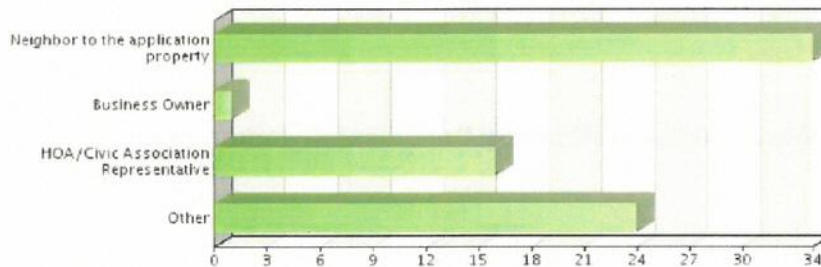
**Question 1:**

**Please list the date and application for which you participated.**

The timeframe for the survey covered all applications from March through July 2017

**Question 2**

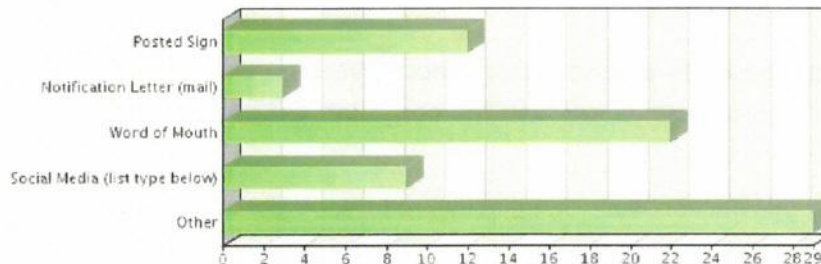
**In which of the following roles did this application impact you?**



The majority of the respondents indicated that they were neighbors of the application property. In the category of other, most of the respondents stated that they were representing other interest groups and nearby associations or organizations.

**Question 3**

**How did you become aware of this application?**

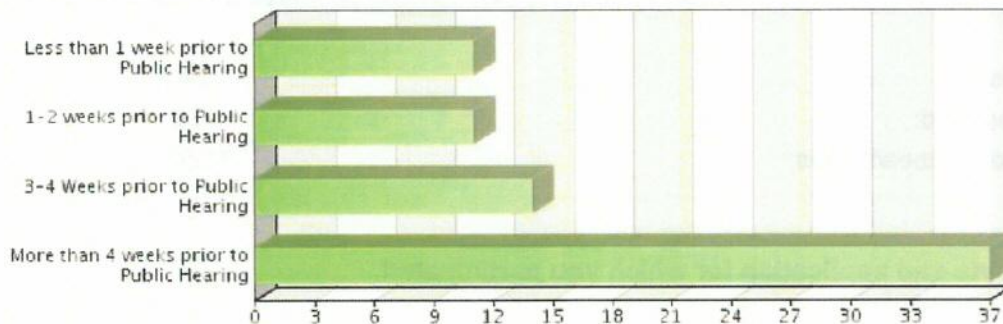


## Comment report

The response to this was largely categorized as “other” or “Social media” with a listed type. Neighborhood Facebook pages, listservs, and website applications were the leading sources indicating notification.

### Question 4

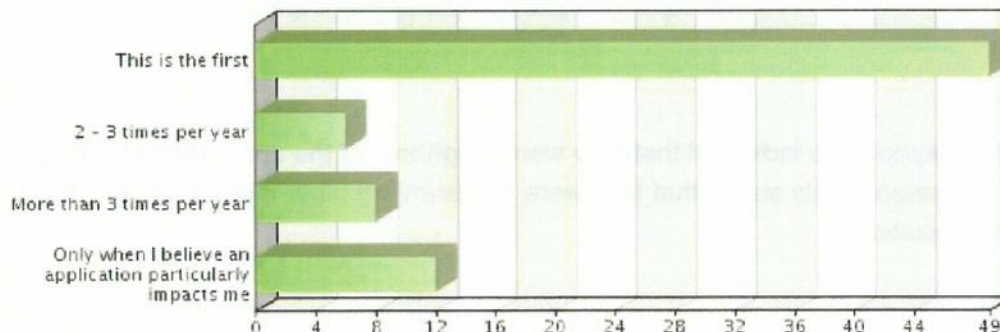
**When did you become aware of this application?**



Most of the participants were indeed notified more than 4 weeks prior to the public hearing through various means of communication. The participants who indicated they were informed less than 1 week, were those who indicated they were affected by other impacts other than the application property directly. These included traffic, or school.

### Question 5

**How often do you provide input to the Planning Commission and/or attend its public hearings?**



### Question 6

**The Planning Commission values citizen input. Should you have any comments or question on the public meeting process, please let us know in the comment section below.**

Most of the comments in this section were of a positive nature. A few gave suggestions indicating the time of the public hearings and questions about the speaker times. Others discussed the process to how applications are approved.



# ATTACHMENT C

Planning Commission Hearings				
Hearing Ending After 12:00 a.m.				
Start Time		8:15	1:15	0:45
Hearing Date	Total # Speakers	Adjourned Time		
2/9/2012	4	12:41	11:26	11:56
2/23/2012	17	1:55	12:40	1:10
11/29/2012	5	12:30	11:15	11:45
12/5/2012	14	1:51	12:36	1:06
3/7/2013	10	12:08	10:53	11:23
3/27/2013	14	1:05	11:50	12:20
4/25/2013	18	12:34	11:19	11:49
10/16/2013	12	12:47	11:32	12:02
12/4/2013	20	12:30	11:15	11:45
2/27/2014	47	3:04	1:49	2:19
10/15/2014	12	12:06	10:51	11:21
10/30/2014	45	1:58	12:43	1:13
2/12/2015	13	12:26	11:11	11:41
7/8/2015	12	12:06	10:51	11:21
12/9/2015	10	12:41	11:26	11:56
1/21/2016	25	2:02	12:47	1:17
6/16/2016	4	12:12	10:57	11:27
7/20/2016	29	1:27	12:12	12:42
7/21/2016	17	12:24	11:09	11:39
7/28/2016	3	12:01	10:46	11:16
3/8/2017	39	1:33	12:18	12:48
6/21/2017	12	1:10	11:55	12:25
Total Meetings	22		7	10
Total Speakers	382			
Average number of Speakers	17.4			

## Community Council on Land Use Engagement

Implementation Template

## AGENCY RESPONSE

## Recommendation 3a

Priority

Communicate early in the process.

- a. The Planning Commission and County staff should evaluate their current processes to identify opportunities to communicate earlier.
- b. (Assigned to DPZ staff) For example, for rezonings and special exceptions, notices and letters of justification could be posted online between filing and acceptance.
- c. (Assigned to DPZ staff) Communications should go beyond major applications or changes to ordinances to include changes with very localized impact.

## Ownership Information

Owner Agency

PC

Additional  
agencies to  
be  
represented

Individual (if  
determined)

## Mission/Objective/Scope

Briefly set the scope of work to successfully achieve the recommendation

The scope of this recommendation involves communicating with the public earlier in the land development process.

## Actions to Accomplish

Specific actions proposed to accomplish the intent of the recommendation or surpass it.

1. The Planning Commission will explore the use of social media and digital device applications to enhance its communications regarding upcoming public meetings.
2. The Planning Commission office can send out a monthly agenda email to its listserv, in addition to the weekly meeting agendas and action reports it already sends. The Planning Commission will pursue additional opportunities to communicate through its listserv.

## Next Steps and Schedule

Identify next steps toward implementation (e.g. Create work program, set up team, etc.) and a timeline for identified steps.

In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs and the Office of the County Attorney, the Planning Commission's Policy and Procedures Committee will further explore the use of social media and digital device applications.

### Potential Measures to show accomplishments

*How will we know we have accomplished or improved?*

The Planning Commission's Citizen Engagement Survey will capture feedback regarding this recommendation.

### Fiscal Impact

*FTE? Budgetary? Already funded/absorbable? Future replacement cycle?*

Already funded/absorbable

### Ease of Implementation/Potential Risk or Obstacles to Success

*(Implementation Ease: 1-3, 3 hardest)? Please note risks or other obstacles*

2

### Additional comments



## Community Council on Land Use Engagement

Implementation Template

## AGENCY RESPONSE

## Recommendation 12

Improve efforts to go into the community rather than holding meetings at the Government Center.

- a. Meetings being held by outside groups such as schools or places of worship.
- b. The Planning Commission, where appropriate, could hold field meetings in locations in the affected area.

## Ownership Information

Owner Agency	PC	Additional agencies to be represented
Individual (if determined)		

## Mission/Objective/Scope

*Briefly set the scope of work to successfully achieve the recommendation*

The scope of this recommendation involves facilitating community engagement in areas that are convenient to members of the public across the County.

## Actions to Accomplish

*Specific actions proposed to accomplish the intent of the recommendation or surpass it.*

1. See additional comments.

## Next Steps and Schedule

*Identify next steps toward implementation (e.g. Create work program, set up team, etc.) and a timeline for identified steps.*

## Potential Measures to show accomplishments

How will we know we have accomplished or improved?

### Fiscal Impact

*FTE? Budgetary? Already funded/absorbable? Future replacement cycle?*

### Ease of Implementation/Potential Risk or Obstacles to Success

*(Implementation Ease: 1-3, 3 hardest)? Please note risks or other obstacles*

### Additional comments

Each Planning Commission meeting agenda is comprised of applications from multiple supervisory districts, making it unrealistic to hold meetings in the district for an individual application. The Government Center also serves to meet the requirements for recording and broadcasting/streaming Planning Commission meetings.

The Planning Commission accepts public testimony through both electronic and postal mail. The office will explore additional opportunities for digital correspondence.

## Community Council on Land Use Engagement

Implementation Template

## AGENCY RESPONSE

## Recommendation 14

Develop a program to capture feedback from residents who attend meetings, public hearings, and other public engagement events, online and offline, and to capture how the feedback was addressed in the County's final decision.

## Ownership Information

Owner Agency	PC	Additional agencies to be represented
Individual (if determined)		

## Mission/Objective/Scope

Briefly set the scope of work to successfully achieve the recommendation

The scope of this recommendation involves the process to capture feedback from residents who attend public hearings.

## Actions to Accomplish

Specific actions proposed to accomplish the intent of the recommendation or surpass it.

1. The Planning Commission staff will continue to send quarterly surveys with questions specific to citizen engagement in the public hearing process
2. The Planning Commission will periodically review questions within the survey to ensure that useful information is being obtained.

## Next Steps and Schedule

Identify next steps toward implementation (e.g. Create work program, set up team, etc.) and a timeline for identified steps.

The Planning Commission Policy and Procedures Committee will review the proposed actions.

## Potential Measures to show accomplishments

How will we know we have accomplished or improved?



The Planning Commission office will continue to compile data through survey results.

### Fiscal Impact

*FTE? Budgetary? Already funded/absorbable? Future replacement cycle?*

Already funded/Absorbable

### Ease of Implementation/Potential Risk or Obstacles to Success

*(Implementation Ease: 1-3, 3 hardest)? Please note risks or other obstacles*

1

### Additional comments

## Community Council on Land Use Engagement

Implementation Template

## AGENCY RESPONSE

## Recommendation 17

## Priority

Supervisors should actively promote engagement through their usual means of communication and maintain the processes they use that best serve their residents, but use these recommendations as they collaborate to establish a baseline of expectations countywide.

- a. (Assigned to DPZ) Countywide, regional or cases with cross-jurisdictional impact occur frequently and notices for these cases should be provided regularly.
- b. Affected residents should be able to rely on a consistent process for engagement, understanding there will continue to be variations between magisterial districts.
- c. All County-sponsored land use meetings and public hearings should be as convenient as possible, and those that carry on past midnight should be continued to a subsequent date.
- d. Supervisors and the Planning Commission should consider deferring final vote when they receive extensive testimony.

## Ownership Information

Owner Agency

BOS/PC

Additional  
agencies to  
be  
represented

Individual (if  
determined)

## Mission/Objective/Scope

*Briefly set the scope of work to successfully achieve the recommendation*

The scope of this recommendation involves the convenience of public meetings and meeting procedures.

## Actions to Accomplish

*Specific actions proposed to accomplish the intent of the recommendation or surpass it.*

---

1. The Planning Commission will implement an earlier regular meeting start time effective January 10, 2018 – 7:30pm instead of the current 8:15pm – in an effort to keep meetings from extending beyond midnight.

2. The Planning Commission Bylaws allow for meetings to adjourn at midnight subject to a motion and majority vote. For meetings that may extend far beyond midnight, the Planning Commission will explore the logistics of enacting this provision.

---

### Next Steps and Schedule

*Identify next steps toward implementation (e.g. Create work program, set up team, etc.) and a timeline for identified steps.*

Implementation of the earlier meeting time will begin on January 10, 2018.

### Potential Measures to show accomplishments

*How will we know we have accomplished or improved?*

The Planning Commission office will continue to compile data on meeting end times.

### Fiscal Impact

*FTE? Budgetary? Already funded/absorbable? Future replacement cycle?*

Already funded/absorbable

### Ease of Implementation/Potential Risk or Obstacles to Success

*(Implementation Ease: 1-3, 3 hardest)? Please note risks or other obstacles*

1

### Additional comments

Planning Commissioners regularly defer final decision when extensive public testimony is received.



# Enhancing Community Engagement and Outreach in Fairfax County

ULI Washington  
Regional Fellows Program  
Fairfax County Technical Assistance Panel  
April 27, 2017



# ULI Washington

---

Over 2,200 Members, who include developers, architects, planners, public officials, financiers, students. **Our programming emphasizes sharing best practices and providing outreach to communities.**

## Regional Fellows Program

The mission of the ULI Washington Regional Fellows Program is to **empower public sector leaders** in the Metropolitan Washington Region to build, and sustain successful 21st Century communities by providing access to information, best practices, peer networks, and other resources to foster creative, efficient, and sustainable land use practices.





2017 Regional Fellows Program



## TAP Panelists

---

### **Panel Co-Chairs and Faculty**

- **A.J. Jackson**, EYA
- **Julia Koster**, National Capital Planning Commission

### **ULI Washington Regional Fellows**

- **Jewru Bandeh**, Regional Director, Montgomery County Eastern Region
- **Yon Lambert**, Dept. of Transportation and Environmental Services, City of Alexandria
- **Karl Moritz**, Planning Director, City of Alexandria

# TAP Panelists

---

## Panelists

- **Agnès Artemel**, Artemel & Associates, Inc.
- **Samia Byrd**, Arlington County Dept. of Community Planning, Housing & Development
- **Bob Harris**, Lerch, Early & Brewer
- **Drew Morrison**, VHB
- **Mark Silverwood**, Silverwood Associates
- **John Swanson**, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

## Fairfax County Fellows

---

- **Sharon Bulova**, Chair, Board of Supervisors
- **Barbara Byron**, Office of Community Revitalization
- **Kirk Kincannon**, Fairfax County Park Authority
- **Fred Selden**, Dept. of Planning and Zoning
- **Lauren Murphy**, Office of Community Revitalization



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



## Today's Assignment: Fairfax County

---

- Broaden outreach and engagement, particularly to those who don't currently participate
- Increase public understanding of process
- Promote creative engagement
- Better utilize technology
- Identify implications for resources and culture

# Table of Contents

---

- Overview
- Engagement and Outreach
- Countywide Initiatives
- Project-specific Initiatives
- Technology and Engagement
- Conclusion and Assignment

# Overview



**Urban Land  
Institute**

Washington



# Trust

- Good news:
  - Fairfax County government appears to have high credibility as a source of information on land use matters
- Challenges:
  - Inclusivity: The current system is not as representative – as the County grows there are greater opportunities for trust to erode
  - Transparency: if you aren't engaged already, it's not transparent to newcomers
- You can maintain and improve the current trust levels through short term and long term actions



# Process

---

- Current model is understood and working well for informed participants
- Long-term risk of current process:
  - Growing demographic groups aren't well represented
  - Current process lacks transparency and consistency-- problem for those not familiar with process
  - Heavy reliance on HOAs and Civic Associations to inform the public
- The good news is that you have the time to consider how you may wish to revamp the process to increase transparency and inclusiveness and maintain public trust



# Culture of Consensus

- Focus on consensus among a limited group may not meet broader public interests
- Consensus vs. Collaboration
  - Consider collaboration as a goal. Why? process vs. speed -in completing work.
  - Goal is equity not equality
  - Collaborative process: access to process, making sure that input is considered and a clear feedback loop is provided
- Transitioning to a new system increases diversity of input, it doesn't take anything away from anyone



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



# Standardize, Clarify and Define Success

- Set a county-wide land use baseline of what information people can expect to receive and how they can interact with the process
  - Multiple processes are OK if there is clarity about:
    - what the process is
    - how public input is given and used,
    - who makes the decisions
- Clarify what public engagement ‘success’ means for elected officials, staff, and stakeholders

## Willingness to Try

---

- Legacy tools and processes are comfortable for insiders, but not for others
- People's expectations are changing. You're competing for attention
- New tech and approaches coming on line every day
- Critical: Willingness to try new tools and methods.
- Aim: Accessible, visually engaging and clear
- Be innovative, flexible and use failures to improve
- Goal: Match your regional peers

# Outreach and Engagement



**Urban Land  
Institute**

Washington



# Outreach and Engagement Principles

---

- One size doesn't fit all
- Broaden participation beyond traditional participants
- Community engagement is a noun and a verb—ongoing effort
- Two-way communication
- Measuring success is necessary
- Buy-in needed at all levels of government



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Expanded Outreach and Inclusiveness



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



## Expanded Outreach and Inclusiveness

---

- Demographic changes in the County – owner – renter split, immigrants, millennials, aging population
- Outreach needs to be more responsive to changes in County population change



## Demographics (from briefing materials)

- 32% of Fairfax population foreign-born
- 63,546 foreign-born individuals became residents since 2010
- 40% speak a language other than English at home, and 15% speak English “other than very well”

## Barriers to Participation: Immigrants

---

- Cultural, communication (language barriers)
- Literacy/knowledge of English
- Differing authorities and decision-making structures
- Immigrants' possible distrust of government deters participation
- Lack of understanding of government structure
- Government's lack of cultural competency



# Strategies to Engage Immigrant Communities

- Find community-based organizations – not always obvious
  - Need to know the cultural practices (e.g. churches, markets, restaurants) of specific groups to be able to reach and communicate
- First level of trust such as a pastor or imam needs to be found to gain a foothold with a group





# Strategies to Engage Immigrant Communities

- Creativity in use of techniques to reach different groups, including lots of footwork to reach particular cultures
- Use informal networks, faith-based networks



# Strategies to Engage Immigrant Communities

- Build an inventory and database of resources for various groups
- Allow community-based organizations or residents to lead community engagement efforts—recruit a business owner to lead discussion, communicate with members
- Communications should be in most-spoken languages in addition to English





Honey Pig BBQ

@HoneyPigBBQ

Home

About

Photos

Reviews

Likes

Videos

Posts

Create a Page



HONEY PIG RESTAURANT

꿀돼지 삼겹살전문점

Gooldaegee Korean B-B-Q

명품서울

Like Follow Share ...

Send Message

Featured For You

See the most helpful reviews of Ho...

Get in touch with Honey Pig E



If loving galbi is wrong, don't wanna be right! Living in the DC area has its profanity-inducing aspects: the often horrific traffic, the astronomical cost...



Jeff Hughes

See All



9,673 people like this

Dustin E likes this

Asian Restaurant in Annandale, Virginia

4.4 ★★★★★ · Always Open

Community

Invite your friends to like this Page

9,673 people

9,460 people

113,741 people have visited

Jeff Liu and 7 other friends like this or have visited



Urban Land Institute

Washington



## Barriers to Participation: Millennials

- Millennials don't go to meetings
- Some are pressured with new jobs, student loans, other financial issues
- More interested in lifestyle
- Driven by value of time



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Strategies for Engaging Millennials

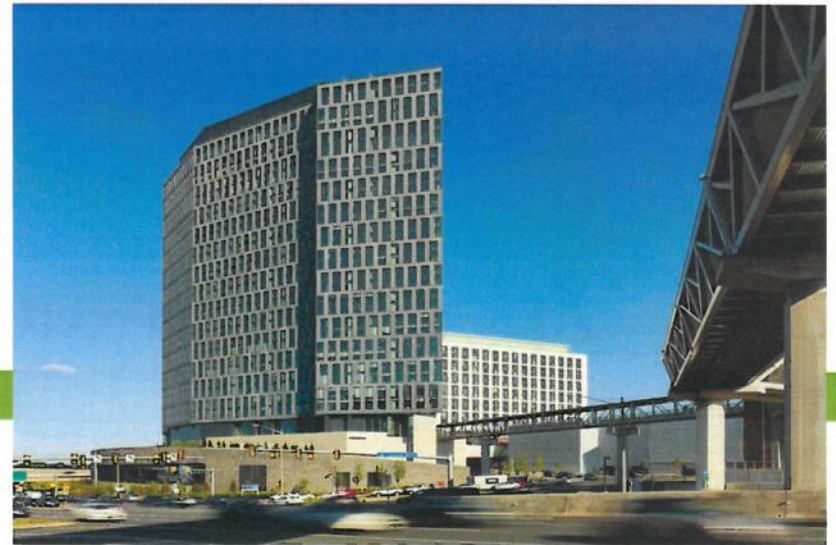
- Go where they are
- Technology is key to reaching millennials, but also social aspects
- Reframe issues in ways they care about (i.e. retail they will use)





# Barriers Participation: Renters

- Renters:
  - Traditional: rent until can afford to buy
  - Now: lifestyle renters who prefer a building heavy on amenities and location to homeownership
- Civic associations aren't typically open to renters
- Immigrant renters are even further isolated from the community structure for engagement



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



## Strategies to Engage Renters

---

- In newer buildings, work through property managers
- In older or low-income settings, work through social service agencies, Housing office, Police, housing inspectors, cultural and social networks, ethnic based non-profits

# Barriers to Engage Businesses

---

- Business owners don't have time to come to meetings—they are busy running a business
- Typically don't take the time to review agendas, dockets, and public notices to see if something might affect them



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Strategies to Engage Businesses

- Government usually goes to Chamber-type organizations. Need to go to small area-based or ethnic-based business groups, business partnerships.
  - Asian community works together through informal networks to supply, staff businesses
  - Economic development groups
  - Planning area groups (Tysons Partnership, SFDC)



# Strategies to Engage Businesses

---

- Need an issue of concern: signs, loading docks, hours of operation, outdoor seating
- Partner with business group events to share information on government activity
- Allow comments via electronic means rather than requiring attendance at physical meetings

## Resource Needs

---

- Strategies dependent on footwork, compiling databases
- High cost at the beginning; must then be maintained
- Staff training in cultural differences and approaches

## Short-term Priorities

---

- Focus on revitalization areas for immigrant outreach rather than Countywide
- Provide staff training on cultural differences
- Start cataloguing business organizations – local Chambers; Rotary, Kiwanis, and service organizations; geography-based business groups; professional associations; ethnic group business organizations
- Have information booths at fairs, festivals



## Short-term Priorities

---

- Identify property managers of MF buildings built within last 6-8 years
- Track demographic changes in order to adjust outreach strategies
- Build partnerships between County departments centered in engagement/outreach and immigrant issues
- Figure out how to maintain new relationships and keep them ongoing

# County-wide Initiatives



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Strategic Toolbox Principles

---

- Predictability
- Clear stages: buy-in before getting to next step
  - Outreach: establish understanding and trust
  - Strategic information gathering
  - Identify options
  - Select preferred alternative or recommendation
  - Hearings/decision
- Engage people on their terms
- Have both outreach and engagement strategies



# Strategic Toolbox

---

- Informing public about the project
  - Vision/goals, context
  - How does this impact individuals and businesses?
  - How long will it take?
  - What info do we need?
  - What will the info be used for?
  - There will be a feedback loop
  - What is the product?



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Strategic Information Gathering

---

- What info is used to set the agenda – what's on the table?
- Input from the public: businesses, developers, property owners, residents
- Define the issue from their perspective
- Start narrow, go broad
  1. Staff ideas
  2. Focus groups
  3. Broader engagement

# Strategic Information Gathering

- ZMOD exercise: don't talk about zoning, talk about desired land uses for neighborhoods, business activity centers, etc.
- Translating zoning into what people experience: what kind of impacts does a land use have: visual, noise, traffic, what uses should be allowed in a shopping center?
- What are examples of when people/businesses run up against the ordinance? Adding a deck, looking for space to lease for a business



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



## Options Stage

---

- Broader engagement, technology tools
- Model like a visual preference survey, for example
- Put input into a common format: all input has the same status
- Explain how input was translated into options
- If there are not “options” for a category, explain

## Options Stage

---

- Describe, get buy-in on how options will be evaluated
  - Consistency with County goals, plans and policies
  - Consistency with input
  - Broad agreement
  - Minimize unintended consequences

# Austin, Texas

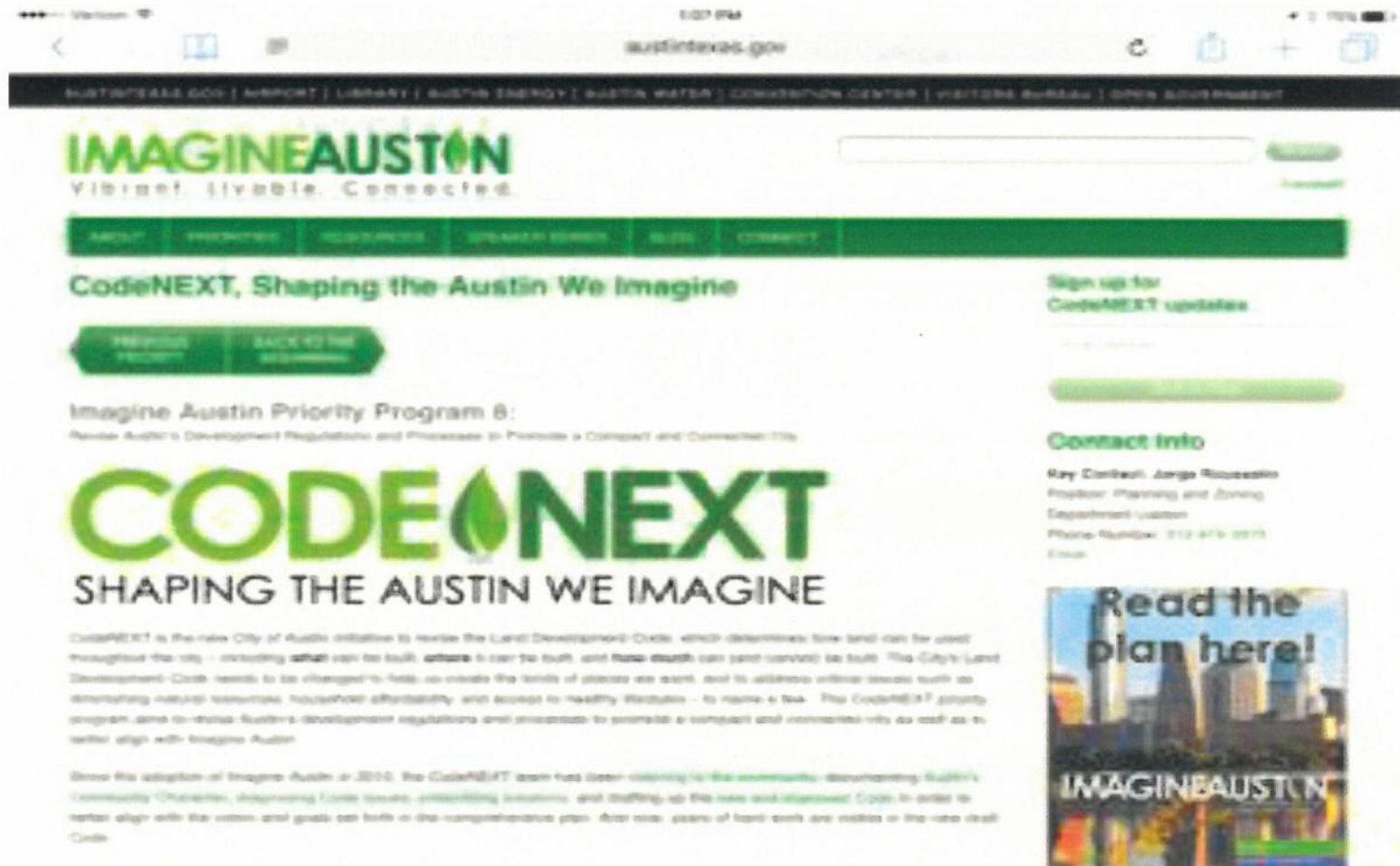


Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



# Austin, Texas



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

# Arlington County, Virginia

Verizon 1:30 PM 72%

commissions.arlingtonva.us

CodeNEXT, Shaping the Austin We Imagine | Imagin... Community Facilities Study - Arlington VA Facility Study Civic Engagement Toolkit - Advisor...

arlingtonva.us County Home • Jobs • Payments • Services A-Z • en Español

## Advisory Groups & Commissions

Search our websites

Apply County Board Community Groups Meetings

### Community Facility Study Civic Engagement Toolkit

**How to use this toolkit**

You can partner with us to encourage engaging dialogues with a broader audience of Arlington residents. The information included in this kit is intended to help Study Committee and Resident Forum members convey clear and concise information about the Community Facilities Study and its importance. We have prepared easy-to-use print and digital resources to support you in your civic engagement efforts.

**1. Prepare**

- Use the one-page [Key Messages](#) sheet to help articulate what the Community Facilities Study is, why it is important and how people can stay informed and be involved.
- Contact individuals, associations and groups in your Arlington network and let them know you're interested in talking to them about the Community Facilities Study. Use the [Sample Outreach Email](#) for ideas on how to get started.
- Review the [Key Takeaways](#) to refresh your memory on what we learned during the first half of the Study.

**Community Facilities Study Homepage**

### Meetings

There are no meetings scheduled at this time.

### Contact Us

**Project Contacts**

Jennifer Smith  
703-228-0068

Lisa Stengle  
703-228-8663

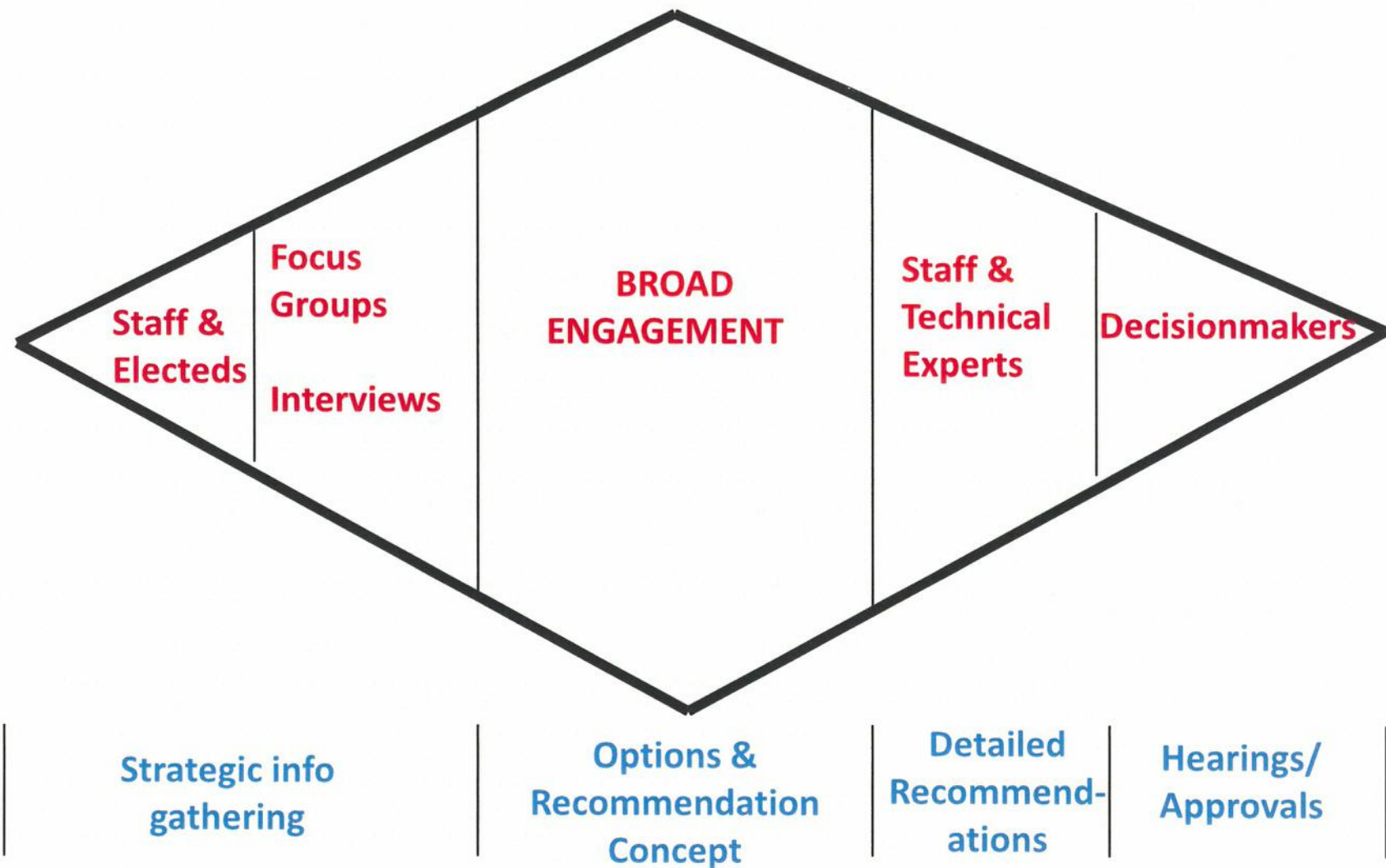
Susan Bell

**Media Contact**

Jessica Margarit  
703-228-3551

# Engagement Process Concept





## Recommendations Stage

---

- How is the recommendation selected?
- This is the stage where actual text is drafted
- Goal for this phase: make sure proposed text is the best way to achieve the recommended approach
- Stakeholder committee? Planning commission subcommittee

## Measures of Success

---

- Identified stakeholders were engaged
- Evidence that the variety of perspectives (the range of constituencies) were captured, taken into account, responded to
- Agreement that the process was fair

# Project-specific Initiatives



**Urban Land  
Institute**

Washington



# Planning and Development Review

- Assessment:
  - Process varies widely by Magisterial District – may not be transparent to those not already in the loop  
Engagement is high among the people who participate
  - High-value on consensus among participants
  - Outreach is targeted at ‘insiders’- HOAs and Civic Associations
    - High dependence on Civic Associations and HOAs to inform citizens
    - Outreach misses renters (33%) and international families (40%), under 35 (45%)

## Minimum Standards across all Magisterial Districts

- Require pre-filing outreach meeting with minutes submitted with application
- All land-use committee agendas be posted by county online in advance in common place.
- Consistency of online information provided by committees.
- Partner with other county agencies (e.g. schools, parks) to collect electronic contact information from residents and allow people to opt-in to notifications based on their location.
- Require county to proactively solicit contact info from HOAs and Civic Associations annually.
  - Create an opt-in list for notices that allows users to select their areas of interest (Montgomery County).



## Minimum Standards across all Magisterial Districts

- Require a plain language summary of existing allowable uses, density, height, etc. and post online.
- Include all public comments as appendix to staff report.
- Create project page for each application accepted—with project summary, justification statement, and links to detailed application
- Enable electronic filing
- Plain-language flyers in local gathering spots (e.g. grocery, restaurants) for land use committee meetings.



# Recommendations

---

1. Targeted outreach through existing social networks (e.g. churches, social clubs, schools, non-profits)
  - Inform everyone of pending applications and solicit feedback.
2. Designate ombudsman/POC for all public questions—a guide to help navigate the process. (role for technology)
3. Provide simple overview of development review process and how to engage (by District)

# City of Alexandria, Virginia



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS



## THE CITY'S ROLE IN MANAGING CHANGE IN ALEXANDRIA

All major development projects in the City of Alexandria go through a rigorous review process. This process incorporates a high degree of public outreach, with active participation from residents and civic groups.

Our city is a diverse and attractive place to live and work, and the City Planning and Zoning Department works to retain and enhance Alexandria's quality of life by ensuring that development proposals:

- are consistent with the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance;
- consist of the highest quality building design, urban design and site planning; and
- provide an overall public benefit.

## SMALL AREA PLANS

The foundation of any development proposal is the guidance provided in the Small Area Plan for the property being considered for development. Small Area Plans lay out the vision, goals, and policies for each area of the City, including how land should be used and how neighborhoods, parks and buildings should be designed. These plans—along with the City Charter, the Strategic Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and Design Guidelines—are the governing documents that guide the vision of the community.



## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The two types of development applications most common in the City are a Development Site Plan (DSP) and a Development Special Use Permit with Site Plan (DSUP). A property owner must have an approved DSP or DSUP before building permits can be released.

A Development Site Plan (DSP) is required in all zones for any development that:

- contains three or more dwelling units;
- is a building or addition that is 3,000 sq ft or larger;
- provides a parking lot with five or more parking spaces;
- is a building addition that is 1/3 or more of the existing gross square feet of the building;
- fails under other criteria listed in Section 11-400 of the Zoning Ordinance.

DSUs contain specific information about building location and elevations, landscaping, lighting, open space and other site amenities. Planning Commission holds a public hearing and takes final action. DSUs do not require review by the City Council.

A Development Special Use Permit with Site Plan (DSUP) is required in all zones for any development that requires a site plan and is requesting approval of a special use permit for the following:

- a modification of the parking ratio;
- a modification to the yard, landscape or open space requirements;
- increased building height;
- increased Floor Area Ratio;
- affordable housing bonus density;
- other special requirements listed in the applicable zone in the Zoning Ordinance.

DSUs contain similar information to a DSP, but in greater detail and there is more discretion with standards for review. The Planning Commission hears requests for DSUs at a public hearing and towards a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council holds a public hearing and takes final action.

A planner in the Development Division of the Planning and Zoning Department is assigned to each development proposal as the project manager and coordinates the review among other City departments. The planner is the main contact for questions or concerns.

## CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT

- For information about proposed development projects, visit [www.alexandriagov/Development](http://www.alexandriagov/Development).
- For questions about which development planner is handling your case of interest, call the Department at 703.746.4666.
- For general questions about zoning, call the Front Counter at 703.746.2588 or 703.746.2589.
- To become involved in the planning process for Small Area Plans, contact the Neighborhood Planning Division at 703.746.3809.





# Technology and Engagement



**Urban Land  
Institute**

**Washington**



# Technology and Engagement

---

## **Principles**

- High Tech and High Touch
- Simple, Digestible, Actionable and Graphic
- Feedback, Accountability and Trust

## **Approaches**

- Digital Marketing
- Electronic and Low Tech Tools
- Metrics and Performance

## What We Heard

---

- County is transparent and provides information for those who understand system
- Social media and video deployment is increasing
- Capacity challenges to increase engagement
- Digital approaches are not the only way to broaden tent

## High Tech and High Touch

---

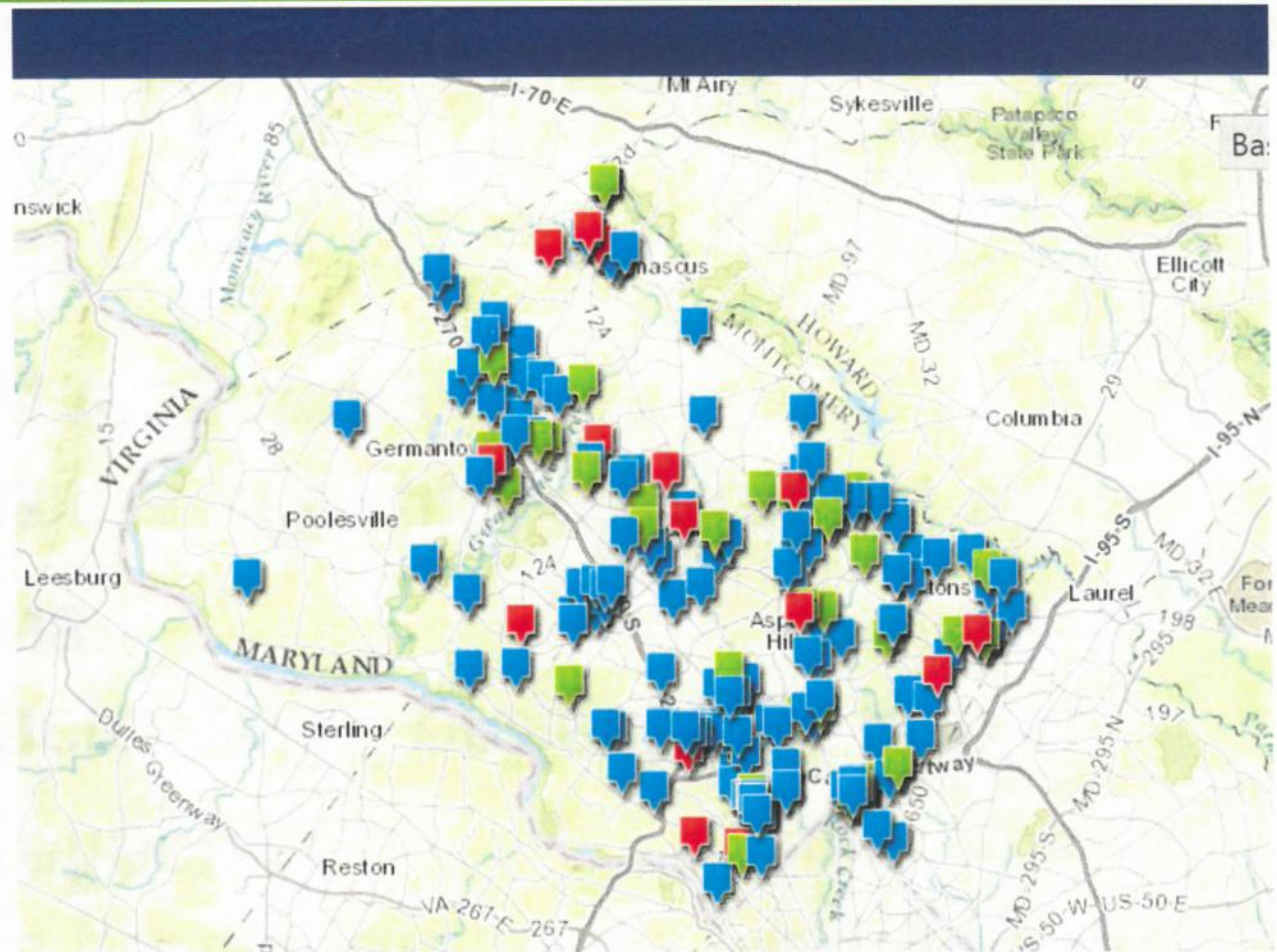
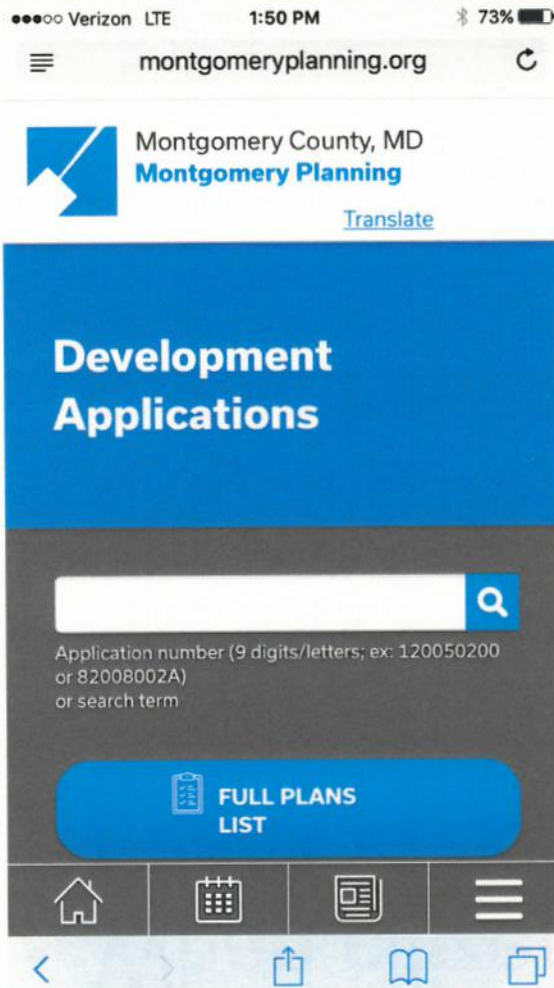
- **Augment** the County's existing engagement processes with technology
- **Fix** existing technology platforms **first**
- County can make it easier, but **manage expectations** by reminding residents to opt-in



# Simple, Digestible, Actionable and Graphic

- Foundation for engagement
- Addressing the “fire hose” of information
  - Make it easy to get to information fast (i.e. on the right eNews or mailing list)
- Easy to access information:
  - Development tracker
  - FAQs
  - Process information

# Simple, Digestible, Actionable and Graphic





## Feedback, Accountability and Trust

---

- When citizens participate, their input always needs to be reflected
- Focus on “macro-level” projects for public feedback focus
- Ongoing dilemma of digital comments vs. public hearing testimony



# Digital Marketing

---

- Digital marketing approach to “selling” participation
  - Answers: **why should I participate?**
  - Overcomes the **enthusiasm gap**
  - **Proactively** drives citizens to the website
  - Reduces **barrier** to entry

# Tools

---

- **Drive to Website**
- **Get More Informed from Website**
- **Participate and Receive Feedback**

# Tools

---

- **Drive to Website**
  - Marketing and Outreach
    - Digital Ads and Geofencing
    - “Screen-sharing”
    - Cross Marketing (high and low tech platforms)
    - Monthly Emails



## Tools

---

- **Get More Information out of Website**
  - Take advantage of **existing site revamp**
  - **“Splash”** page to help direct people
  - Organize by highest asks and citizen needs, not government organization
  - Geolocated **development tracker** using existing Land Development database
  - **FAQs** and **Planning 101s**
  - **Plain language** approaches
  - **Updated** content

# Simple, Digestible, Actionable and Graphic



CITY of BOSTON

TRANSLATE 



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



# Simple, Digestible, Actionable and Graphic



B

---

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

---



## CITY BUILDING HOURS

All municipal buildings are open based on their regular hours of operation.



## TRASH AND RECYCLING

Pickup is on a normal schedule today. We collect leaf and yard waste this week.



## PARKING METERS

Parking meters are operating normally today.



## TOW LOT

The tow lot is open from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. Automated kiosks are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for vehicle releases.



## STREET CLEANING

Today is the fourth Thursday of the month and street cleaning is running on a normal schedule.

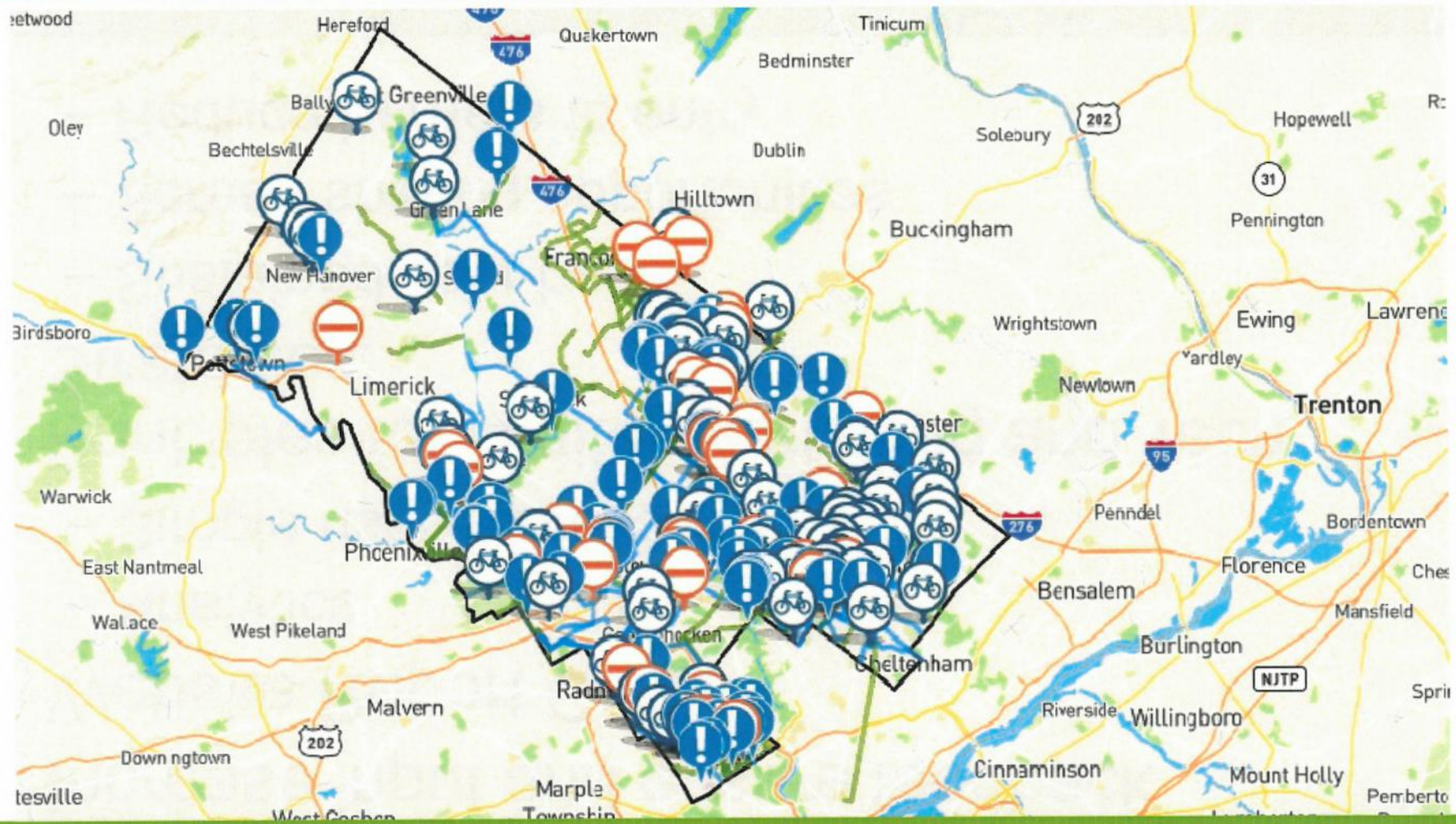


Urban Land  
Institute

Washington



# Tools



Urban Land  
Institute

Washington

## Metrics/Performance Measures

---

- Increase input and ensure feedback
- Website Report Card
  - Analytics
  - Simple user surveys
- Principles for Digital Marketing and Tech Strategies:
  - Sustained user base
  - Screen sharing opportunities
  - Reduce barriers to entry



# Resources and Priorities

---

## Short-Term

- More urgency in website revamp
- Streamline, simplify, and update existing content around priority initiatives



# Resources and Priorities

---

## **Longer-Term**

- Create stronger social/visual media approach
- Improve the business case for engagement (akin to public safety)
- Identify tech tool that meets tech principles
- Deploy digital marketing approach around key area plan

# Conclusions and Recommendations



**Urban Land  
Institute**

Washington

## Conclusions

---

- Fairfax County is viewed as a trusted source of land use information by the community of participants
- Outreach and engagement are not the same: outreach is one-way communication while engagement is two-way. Both are essential to effective community processes
- Consider collaborative process rather than forcing processes to consensus



## Conclusions

---

- While informed participants can effectively participate in land use processes, demographic changes in the County — increases in immigrants, lifestyle renters, millennials—create the need for new approaches to outreach and engagement
- It's difficult for small business to participate even in issues relevant to them due to the demands of business operations

## Conclusions

---

- Reaching new residents will require new techniques, including going to where these groups gather, reside and do business, and greater cultural awareness by staff
- Existing engagement processes can be augmented by strategic use of technology, particularly the County website
- Website information should be simple, accessible and graphic—geocoding immediately improves access to information



# Conclusions

---

- To broaden participation, County processes need to move beyond reliance on HOAs, civic associations and large business organizations
- Different processes in the Magisterial Districts are acceptable as long as there is consistency in key aspects:
  - land use committee agendas are posted,
  - consistent information in plain English summary form
  - all public comments are posted and acknowledged



## Recommendations – Short Term

---

- Accelerate website revisions as *first priority* to create widely accessible platform
- Create county-wide process template –
  - clear stages
  - buy-in before moving to the next step
  - engage citizens on their own terms
  - predictable timetable
  - use outreach and engagement strategies

## Recommendations – Short Term

---

- Use Web analytics to find out what's important to users
- Streamline, simplify and update web content
- Provide simple overviews of development process information
- Post all land use committee agendas online in advance and in common place.

## Recommendations – Short Term

---

- Proactively solicit and update contact info from HOAs and Civic Associations annually
- Create an opt-in list for notices that allows users in all magisterial districts to select their areas of interest (Montgomery County)



## Recommendations – Long Term

---

- Revamp outreach efforts
  - Focus on revitalization areas for immigrant outreach rather than Countywide
  - Provide “cultural sensitivity” outreach training for staff
  - Catalogue business organizations – Chambers; Rotary, Kiwanis and service organizations; geography-based business groups; professional associations; ethnic group business organizations
  - Have information booths at fairs, festivals

## Recommendations – Long Term

---

- Enable application electronic filing
- Provide consistent online information
- Require pre-filing outreach meeting with minutes submitted with application
- Place plain-language flyers in local gathering spots (e.g. grocery, restaurants) for land use committee meetings.



## Recommendations – Long Term

---

- Partner with other county agencies (e.g. schools, parks) to collect electronic contact information from residents and allow people to opt-in to notifications based on their location.
- Develop public education for those interested in becoming involved (i.e. Neighborhood College) including immigrants



## Recommendations – Long Term

---

- Post a plain language summary of existing allowable uses, density, height, etc.
- Include all public comments as appendix to staff report.
- Create project page for each application accepted—with project summary, justification statement, and links to detailed application (e.g. Arlington County)

## Recommendations – Long Term

---

- Create stronger social/visual media approach
- Improve the business case for engagement (akin to public safety)
- Identify tech tool that meets tech principles
- Deploy digital marketing approach around key area plan

# Thank you!







COMMUNITY COUNCIL ON LAND USE  
ENGAGEMENT  
FINAL REPORT

May 15, 2017

Fairfax County has changed dramatically since I joined the Board of Supervisors as the Braddock District Supervisor in 1988. But before that, change was already occurring rapidly. During the 1950s and 1960s, Fairfax County experienced rapid suburbanization as the post-War boom hit the region. In the two decades that followed, the County established itself as a major employer in the National Capital Region by attracting major corporate headquarters like Mobil Oil along with federal agencies and contractors. The County has for the past 15 years been focusing on revitalization and redevelopment of the older commercial areas built during these periods of growth. Adding mixed use and transit-oriented development and focusing growth in these areas helps us to accommodate a growing population while protecting our older, suburban neighborhoods and continuing to grow our thriving business community.

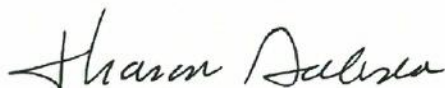
During each of these periods of growth, Fairfax County has benefitted from having an informed and engaged citizenry at the table. The challenges of engagement have changed as the County has grown, just as the work and family demands on residents have changed. But the need for civic engagement on local and countywide decisions remains just as important. We now have new technologies that have made information much more readily available, and have made engagement on different levels possible. While they remain valuable tools, we are no longer reliant solely on letters and in-person meetings.

With these new tools come new challenges. With the volume and complexity of information County residents receive in multiple ways, a message can be lost or the amount of information received can be overwhelming. I have heard from residents that they were unaware or felt uninformed about a pending decision before the Board which could have an impact on their community, despite the County doing what we thought was our best to communicate and engage with the affected community.

I established the Community Council on Land Use Engagement to address these challenges. The recommendations in this report will assist Fairfax County in improving our engagement with residents on land use. Some recommendations are high level and conceptual while others are practical and specific.

The work of this Council, I believe, will transcend beyond land use to other subject areas where there is a need to have the community at the table to impact the decision making process. I want to thank Council members for their hard work and dedication, and I look forward to working with County staff and my colleagues on the Board to implement these recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sharon Bulova".

Sharon Bulova



# Community Council on Land Use Engagement

## FINAL REPORT

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Council on Land Use Engagement was created by Chairman Sharon Bulova in January 2017. The goal of the Council was to produce a set of recommendations that would improve Fairfax County's public outreach – providing information to indirectly and directly affected residents – and community engagement – the process by which residents are informed and given the ability to influence County decisions – in the land use and development process.

The Council was chaired by former Planning Commissioner Walter Alcorn, and its 25 members included new and long-time Fairfax County residents, district land use committee members, citizen association representatives, developer representatives, and County staff from the Office of Public Affairs, Department of Information Technology, and the Office of the Deputy County Executive. The Community Council met six times between February and May of 2017, and heard presentations from County planning and zoning staff, Planning Commissioners, Sup. Linda Smyth, a civic association leader, a land use committee chair, and a land use attorney.

The Council recognizes that many existing citizen engagement processes, particularly those where there are active civic associations, homeowner associations and/or land use committees, have worked well because of this strong community civic infrastructure. In areas with such associations, or with mostly multi-family or condominium housing without a single point of contact, engagement often has often not worked as well. Improving engagement in both these areas will require renewed effort from the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, County staff, developers, civic and homeowner associations, property management companies and individuals. County officials – the Board, Planning Commission and staff – must actively seek and be responsive to resident input. Developers must also respect the role of residents in the process. While the County and applicants should conduct outreach in a timely manner, civic and homeowner associations must be vigilant in relaying important information to their members. Finally, individuals participating in the civic infrastructure should actively communicate with the County in order to help the County provide the most accurate and timely information to them.

Furthermore, the Council believes that current legal requirements for notification (e.g., notification of 25 adjacent landowners prior to a land use change public hearing) is insufficient for a properly engaged citizenry. While many existing outreach practices go



beyond these legal minimums, mandatory notice requirements should be reviewed so that notice can be expanded as appropriate.

The Council also discussed overall challenges to increasing citizen engagement, including competing demands on County citizens' time and attention, the emphasis on technical expertise for most County staff involved in land use matters (as opposed to an emphasis on communications), the sheer size of the County and supervisor districts which can limit engagement opportunities geographically and with land use decision makers, legal restrictions on community outreach and engagement such as those resulting from the recently enacted "proffer bill" in Richmond, and the variation of existing engagement processes across the County with regards to land use councils, citizen's associations, HOAs, etc.

The Council also recognizes that some land use changes can trigger a substantial amount of controversy in the community for a variety of reasons. Some of the controversy may be unavoidable, but some could be minimized through greater county staff and applicant intervention, education, and consensus-building early in the process. That idea underlies most of the recommendations of the Council.

This report contains 21 recommendations on which the Council reached consensus. The recommendations fall into three main categories: communication, engagement and education. Additionally, this report includes a link to the complete set of ideas discussed by Council members during breakout sessions, not all of which are part of the recommendations made by the Council. These unfiltered ideas do not represent the views of the Council as a whole but help illustrate the breadth of depth of the issues explored during this process.

The Council has not prioritized its recommendations. To the extent possible, they should be implemented in conjunction with other ongoing County efforts. Once implemented, County residents should be better able to understand the land use process via the education efforts, receive timely and understandable information regarding decisions that affect or interest them, and have multiple opportunities to fully engage with the County, applicants, other interested citizens and those proposing changes on land use matters.

## TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Fairfax County needs to better utilize all forms of communication, traditional, non-traditional, and new or emerging. Utilizing a mix of traditional and non-traditional forms will help the County retain engagement by residents who prefer traditional mediums while also reaching a wider, more diverse audience. No matter the medium, the message must be direct, succinct, actionable and targeted.

Traditional forms of communication, including direct mail, newspaper ads and articles, newsletters, and legal postings (the yellow signs), can be better utilized if they are more targeted in placement and distribution and more clearly written. These forms, particularly the legally required notices, rely too heavily on technical language. The County should take the opportunity to inject clarity and brevity in these communications.

Other forms of communication, including email, the website, Channel 16, and third-party services like NextDoor, provide great opportunity to continue and broaden participation. Acknowledging the amount of information people already receive digitally should be central to the County's pursuit of more and better digital communications; but emphasis should be on sending better, not necessarily more, information. Better utilizing digital forms of engagement will assist the County in reaching residents with busy schedules and a younger demographic regardless of the state of a community's civic infrastructure.

Residents receive a high volume of information, through both traditional and new forms of communication. The County should focus on targeting its communications in terms of geography and use clear, succinct and direct language. The recipient should be able to understand the issue at hand, be aware of its potential impact on his or her neighborhood, and know how and when to get involved if he or she so chooses.

### **Communication Recommendations:**

1. In all forms of communication, use plain language, be accurate, be succinct, and describe the land use proposal being made to the recipient of the communication.
2. The County and applicants should encourage a culture to communicate with a broad group of citizens even when not required.
3. Communicate early in the process.
  - a. The Planning Commission and County staff should evaluate their current processes to identify opportunities to communicate earlier.
  - b. For example, for rezonings and special exceptions, notices and letters of justification could be posted online between filing and acceptance.
  - c. Communications should go beyond major applications or changes to ordinances to include changes with very localized impact.
4. Use multiple channels to communicate throughout the process including media which serves non-English speaking populations.
5. The County should continue to explore opportunities for facilitating communication of information about by-right development when possible.



- a. Even when there is no public input in the decision process (e.g., engineering approvals of site plans) staff should encourage property developers to provide a courtesy notification of neighbors prior to development initiation.
  - b. The County should identify better ways for citizens to know what development has already been approved through a previous rezoning, or is called for in the Comprehensive Plan, for every privately owned property in the County. What is already allowed or planned is one of the most critical pieces of information for citizens to know when evaluating any proposed land use change.
- 6. Identify opportunities to improve the legally required notices within the confines of existing law and expand them
  - a. Yellow signs should be more legible, eye-catching and uniform and be placed appropriately
  - b. Summary information should be provided when feasible (such as through the use of QR codes or similar technology)

#### **Engagement Recommendations:**

- 7. Create a geographically targeted system through which residents can sign up to receive land use information specific the addresses they enter when signing up.
  - a. This system should include the following options:
    - i. Notification at time of application acceptance for cases with geographically limited impact (e.g. rezonings, special exceptions, Comprehensive Plan amendments targeting small areas, permits, etc.).
    - ii. Provide option to receive information on proposals with regional or countywide impact (e.g. Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan amendments, projects within nearby revitalization areas, etc.).
    - iii. Communications should adhere to Recommendation 1.
    - iv. Unsubscribe
- 8. In addition to the system in Recommendation 7, identify other technological opportunities to geo-target communications for land use decisions with geographically limited impact.
  - a. The County should create a presence and strategy for use of NextDoor and similar services with an established user base.
  - b. Find tools and social media people are already using.
  - c. Civic and homeowner associations should be encouraged to use private databases to communicate land use decisions.
- 9. Applicants should be required to show they have notified potentially impacted neighbors and provide that information to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors at the public hearings.
  - a. The County should create guidance for applicants on ways to communicate early in the process with citizens, including traditional means such as flyers and mailings and non-traditional (e.g., social media).



- b. The County should create guidance for applicants specifically for multi-family and high density transit-oriented development to ensure adequate notification.
- 10. Identify opportunities to deliver information about proposed land use changes through non-County channels
  - a. Public postings in conspicuous places like coffee shops
  - b. Non-County newsletters
- 11. Explore technology solutions and enhance the public's knowledge of current capabilities to allow residents to access and engage in meetings remotely like webinars (such as GoToMeeting, Facebook Live, YouTube) as well as offer comments offline
- 12. Improve efforts to go into the community rather than holding meetings at the Government Center
  - a. Meetings being held by outside groups such as schools or places of worship
  - b. The Planning Commission, where appropriate, could hold meetings in locations in the affected area
- 13. Update and maintain information on FairfaxCounty.gov in a way that allows residents to quickly and easily find information relevant to them and to engage
  - a. Allow users to search by location
  - b. Provide ability to submit comments beyond filling out a survey
  - c. Process and timeline of a particular case should be clear and include:
    - v. All decision points
    - vi. Current stage
    - vii. Opportunities for engagement
- 14. Develop a program to capture feedback from residents who attend meetings, public hearings, and other public engagement events, online and offline, and to capture how the feedback was addressed in final decision
- 15. Civic and homeowner associations should continue to be utilized, but without overreliance, and the County should better maintain the list of interested citizens in order to facilitate outreach
- 16. Encourage HOAs and citizen associations to designate a representative to check County land use information periodically that may affect their neighborhood or just sign-up to receive County alerts and report to their community
- 17. Supervisors should actively promote engagement through their usual means of communication and maintain the processes they use that best serve their residents, but use these recommendations as they collaborate to establish a baseline of expectations countywide
  - a. Countywide, regional or cases with cross-jurisdictional impact occur frequently
  - b. Affected residents should be able to rely on a consistent process for engagement, understanding there will continue to be variations between magisterial districts
  - c. All County-sponsored land use meetings and public hearings should be as convenient as possible, and those that carry on past midnight should be continued to a subsequent date.

- d. Supervisors and the Planning Commission should consider deferring final vote when they receive extensive testimony
- 18. The County should identify opportunities to cross-promote land use information using existing communication channels
- 19. Many of these recommendations are applicable to the Board of Zoning Appeals and they should be encouraged to review and consider those

DRAFT



## EDUCATION

Fairfax County and applicants need to be more strategic, accountable and focused in their engagement efforts to attract a more broad demographic. The most involved citizens tend to be older and more educated on the land use development process. While experience and knowledge of history is important and must be captured, engaging with a wider, more diverse group of citizens is critical to guiding the County into the future. To do so, the County should create educational tools to help residents and business owners understand the County's policies and practices, thereby empowering them to engage with the County and applicants on these complicated issues. Fairfax County is successfully engaging its residents on land use in many areas, but existing engagement systems may attract only a limited subset of County residents such as retirees, those with a vested interest or are directly impacted, and property owners.

However, in order to more effectively reach the whole community potentially directly or indirectly impacted by land use changes, Fairfax County should expand its reach by targeting: new residents, small business owners, parents of young children, homeowners and tenants, young adults, people who primarily do not speak English at home, residents who do not have an active civic association, and those residents who are indirectly impacted by a land use policy or project. Examples of indirect impacts on nearby residents include potential increases in demand on public facilities (e.g., roads, schools, and safety), movement towards urban and transit-oriented communities in designated growth areas of the County, and new residential infill that would likely lead to proposed school boundary changes.

Land use processes are complicated and constantly evolving, and it can be challenging for residents to understand. In order to improve understanding, Fairfax County should recognize this challenge and address it through various educational and informational programs.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **20. Establish an ongoing Land Use 101 Academy**

- a. A citizens course, offered in the neighborhoods rather than at the Government Center. An online, interactive version should also be made available on the County website.
- b. The County should offer the Academy in multiple languages
- c. The County should track participants in the Academy who are interested in remaining involved in land use decisions.
- d. Leaders of civic and homeowners associations should be encouraged to participate, but the County should not limit outreach on the Academy to these groups
- e. Explore a certificate program placed on the website where a citizen could "graduate" from land use curriculum that is taken at their leisure
- f. Establish a separate page on County website that is easy to locate that contains the information above, as well as links to basic information such as



land use definitions, that are necessary to understand applications and/or staff reports

21. The County should sponsor community briefings and/or charrettes for major applications, such as those that require changes to the Comprehensive Plan

22. For land use changes still early in the process, develop a broadly accessible communications medium for applicants to create short videos or presentations for major projects early or even prior to the development review process.

- a. Developers are encouraged to engage with citizens as early as possible, i.e., when they have a conceptual plan that is ready to be presented to the supervisor.
- b. The County should also utilize this communication tool to provide similar information about major Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan amendments not initiated by landowners/developers
- c. These online products could be static/purely informational or follow a webinar format and give a short, high-level overview of a project or countywide change with links to more detailed information.
- d. Applicants would be encouraged to provide materials given to stakeholders off line, but posting online expands the reach of such presentations.
- e. Presentations should be able to be accessed based on geographic location to enable citizens to find proposals of interest more easily.
- f. A responsible party should be clearly identified to make changes to the proposed application when necessary

23. The County should be committed to deliver clear and concise information to empower residents to effectively engage on land use cases, community planning activities and countywide amendments

- a. While people can contact County staff now, new resources and guidance would provide greater capacity for County staff to communicate the complexities of a particular case or a countywide amendment.
- b. Staff coordinators and/or public information officers could be empowered to deliver such information.
- c. Provide basic information in other prominent languages such as Spanish and Korean
- d. Place links to educational land use materials on Board members websites
- e. Use established programs, such as PC Roundtable, BOS programs, and County Magazine, to present educational various land use topics and advertise availability of educational materials

**Community Council on Land Use Engagement Members:**

Walter Alcorn, Chairman, Hunter Mill District, former Planning Commissioner,  
Consumer Technology Association

Scott Adams/Lori Greenlief, McGuireWoods (Land Use Attorney/Planner)

Matt Bell, Mt. Vernon District

Robert Cain, Braddock District

Karen Campblin, Sully District

Bill Canis, Dranesville District

Mike Carlin, Springfield District

Michael DeLoose, Springfield District

Sherry Fisher, Braddock District

Al Francese, Sully District

Deborah Fraser, Mason District

Elizabeth John, Dranesville District

Barbara Lippa, Sully District

Jeffrey Longo, Mason District, Sleepy Hollow Manor Citizens Association

Sandra Lukic Dapoigny, Braddock District

Brad McKinney, Mason District

Carrie Nixon, Providence District

Kevin O'Neill, Braddock District

Vincent Picciano, Braddock District

Chris Soule, Lee District

Annmarie Swope, Hunter Mill, Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

Fran Wallingford, Providence District

County Staff:

Tony Castrilli, Director, Office of Public Affairs

Tom Conry, Department of Information Technology

Chase Suddith, Office of the Deputy County Executive

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/communitycouncil.htm>

This document is the complete set of ideas discussed by Council members during the breakout sessions on April 17, not all of which are part of the recommendations made by the Council. These ideas do not represent the views of the Council as a whole.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/pdf/commcouncil-breakout-notes-4.17.17.pdf>

DRAFT