Meeting Notes

Community Meeting, Landmark/Van Dorn Area Planning

October 21, 2004
Patrick Henry School

The notes below were transcribed from lecture pad sheets used to record public and Planning Commission comments. Comments noted are statements by individuals and are not decisions or consensus of the group.

1. Landmark/Van Dorn Area Planning
   - How demographics change with expanded area?
   - Walking tour info?
   - Add to Analysis:
     - What is goal – stable neighborhood or rental/transient?
     - Data on rentals – length of residency? Extend boundaries, get different demographics
     - Are demographics from larger area used to characterize smaller area? Need to make clear
     - What is ratio of land area of commercial to residential, compared to City?
     - Why would Landmark as a regional center want to become a neighborhood center.

2. What to do with land if people want to redevelop?
   - Caution about industrial buildings – don’t generate a lot of traffic.
   - Traffic bad 20 years ago on Van Dorn.
   - Stuck in traffic 40 minutes mid morning/week day
   - A lot of dead end roads – need to extend roads – Stevenson, Quantrell over 395 Eisenhower Ave. dead end @ Van Dorn extend to Edsall
   - Build periphery/parallel roads
   - Extend residential boundary – include res’l stable nearby – Richenbacker/Duke
   - Not a large youth market – what other demographics needed to assess market psychographic characteristics?
   - Mall friendly to dogs
3. Like to See:

Metro not good in non rush hour.

Bus 15 minutes to Pentagon City rush
2 hours non rush

Ballston – retail inc target to Latin Music look deeper in demographics

Industrial area replanned for residential high density closer to Metro?

Prob with improved walking – so hilly may need mini bus

DC $ 5000 incentive to move in – make condos more affordable to starter.
Rental → condos?

Store mix at Landmark Mall not equal to others (and goods within same store at other malls)

Bradlee Shopping Center – kind like to have stores, access, dogs, etc.

4. Hard to buy housing.

Pedestrian to Landmark Mall –better solutions for pedestrian

Must consider diff @ S. Van Dorn @ 495

Area set aside for market (target to immigrants, nationality) also festivals

Removing industrial is hard on providing services

Mistake to add residential @ Landmark Mall.

If have IKEA, people will come

No notions, cobbler stores.

Area has everything – age/race/nat’l diversity
Problem don’t walk anymore

Like Gateway idea
Ice skating, other rec.
Bookstores missing – beautiful library

5. Transiency in this end of city generated from Pentagon

Many immigrants highly skilled.

Would like to see those things here that have to leave Alex for – Pentagon Row/Clarendon

Densely populated – hard to have more dev/more traffic – dead end roads

Look at density – take all into consideration

Need to look at capacity of systems.

If chop up blocks need to be ped friendly walkable community. – lighting, smaller radius on roads, cross walks, traffic calming

Shopping Center at Clarendon spurred other development.

Smaller area does not capture vitality. While little public open space in small area – larger area has it. expand ½ mile –

6. Dense housing more approp. at Metro than at Landmark due to transit.

Public transit – imperative
Flex Car/ Zip Car at Apts.
Backlick Run concrete culvert
Very little public open space/public facilities/institutions

Where do children go to play
Ice skating (at Pent Row) big hit to draw people
What kind of urban design here?
Balance urban design w/suburban design
Mixed use
Metro as destination for jobs
Shuttle buses → 20 minutes; min cost get people out of cars
- now rush hour oriented only
Bus Shelters
Landmark – Pedestrian unfriendly
Better sidewalks, underground utilities

7.
No way to get from Holmes Run to Mall.
“Does it fit”
Opportunity to create West End Town Village
Need to be able to do multiple activities
Older population – active need to be able to get around
Sidewalks
Pocket Parks
Public square – alive; active; restaurants good design. Civic space
RL – Expand area….
Need for more small business
High- rises are aging…people moving west to live on one floor.
Don’t push service business out of City –

8.
Eric Wagner summary:
Entrance vs. Gateway
Landmark Mall – Showcase
Regional vs neighborhood not incompatible
e.g. Pentagon Row, Ballston
Traffic – thorough investigation
Roadway extensions?
Ped access – makes a place
Broadening study area –
Planning area
Market area
Community facilities – how incorporate

Notes taken by WRT

- What is the planning goal? Is it stable neighborhoods? Would extending the planning area boundaries change the demographics?
- The boundaries for the demographic data should be reconsidered.
- Landmark Mall redevelopment: why would the mall become a neighborhood center?
- What do we do for land that needs to be redeveloped?
- Traffic congestion is an issue. Warehouse and industrial uses generate minimal traffic.
- There have been missed opportunities to extend roads – Stevenson, south end of Eisenhower.
• Reconsider the study area boundaries, look at larger area. Neighborhoods, community facilities outside of the study area need to be considered.

• Look at additional population characteristics: are there families with children? Do they provide a market for redevelopment?

• Look at “psychographics” – what do the neighborhoods want?

• Alexandria is a dog-friendly town, the area needs to be dog-friendly.

• Public transit service is only good during rush hour, non-rush hour frequencies are very bad.

• Redevelopment should match demographic characteristics and needs.

• Can industrial areas near Metro station be redeveloped with high-density residential (transit-oriented development)?

• Topographic constraints for walking – look at minibus service.

• Provide incentives for affordable housing/condos/ownership/starter housing.

• The store mix at Landmark Mall needs a correction/survey potential customers for feedback.

• Provide affordable housing.

• It is a very pedestrian unfriendly environment with hazardous crossings.

• Traffic congestion/levels of service are unacceptable.

• Look at population characteristics and match needs (ethnic markets and festivals).

• Landmark Mall should not have residential. This will take away retail, which needs to be improved.

• Gateway/coffee shops/cultural events/bookstores are good ideas.

• This is a highly skilled immigrant population/not entry level.

• Provide mix of retail close to residential areas.

• Look at demographic dynamics surrounding Pentagon Row.

• Concerns about new development: we are at full capacity already. New development will add to traffic congestion.

• Need walkable communities/traffic calming.

• Concerns regarding the boundary of the planning area.

• Redevelopment would encourage other improvements.

• Public transportation issues: non-rush hour frequencies are very poor, look at incentives for car sharing, shuttle bus services.

• Community “magnet” buildings are absent.

• Residential developments have swimming pools, but there is a lack of a recreational destination (e.g., skating rink).

• Look at urban design issues: zoning, smart growth, streetscape, safe streets.

• Need pedestrian-friendly design.

• Look at needs of elderly as population is aging. Need gathering places, outdoor interactive spaces.

• Need to retain and attract small businesses.