

FOOD TRUCK POLICY ADVISORY WORK GROUP
MEETING SUMMARY
3/3/14

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. The Convener asked if anyone had any comments on the Preliminary Key Points and Process for Report Drafting, the February 24 Meeting Summary, and the consensus items and voting results from the previous meeting. One change was suggested for the meeting summary: add comments on ability of food truck to roam and identify need markets; and one change on the Key Points: note that traffic corridor decisions were decided by vote and not consensus. Other comments from members are summarized below.

- Requested clarification on traffic corridors vs. neighborhoods. Reiterated the need for food trucks to have the ability to roam; noted that it was inappropriate for food trucks to be by the courts and not adjacent to outdoor dining; and that food trucks should not be parking in residential parking districts because there is no business there. Food trucks are ok in commercial areas.
- Questioned whether it was legal to say that one business cannot be next to another business. Also said that food trucks should not be near restaurants and suggested that the Group define the distance from outdoor dining. (In response, an Assistant City Attorney said that any restriction must be based on a governmental interest: health, safety, and welfare.)
- Questioned how you could “throw out” regulations for food trucks. Also noted that fumes from outdoor generators could affect outdoor dining and suggested that 20 feet from outdoor dining was not enough.
- Not sure what the correct distance should be from outdoor dining based on a governmental interest. With respect to residential parking districts noted that if restaurants can be on the edge of the neighborhood, then food trucks have to be allowed there. (An Assistant City Attorney agreed to research distance requirements in other jurisdictions.)
- It was suggested that food trucks be 5,000 feet from restaurants and 100 feet from outdoor dining. They have exhaust fans, not scrubbers.
- It is difficult to find options in food deserts for grocery stores or restaurants. Young people go to DC because they think that Alexandria is not for the young. We should be able to accommodate both (food trucks and young people) without harming restaurants. Not in favor of allowing food trucks to park in front of a restaurant; maybe 40 feet from the property. Food trucks should be allowed in the West End and maybe restaurants will come.
- Food trucks are great in areas with no restaurants. However, there is a disconnect between saying food trucks cannot be here when the restaurants come to underserved areas popularized by food trucks.

A discussion then ensued about hours of operation in designated spaces. The Convener noted that there appears to be a consensus for designating the space from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with the caveat that trucks wishing to vend must fill the spaces between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. If there are no trucks at 12:00 noon, the parking spaces can be used by anyone. The Group will take a vote on this proposal at the final meeting.

Based on the discussion that the traffic corridors would be defined to include two blocks in either direction of the roadway, there was a request for a map of the traffic corridors.

The Convener indicated that the next meeting would be the last meeting. During that meeting, the Group would review the restrictions and discuss whether to add Washington Street as a traffic corridor. The final meeting was set for March 24 at 6:00 p.m.