Del Ray Community Conversation  
Dec 12, 2019, Meeting Notes

Note: tables 2, 3 and 4 did not label their worksheets, so I had to combine them.

Table 1
Values:
- Sense of community through pride of local own shops.
- Value small businesses
- Unique character of the 2 neighborhoods: Arlandria and Del Ray
- Arlandria: diversity and ethnic food, etc
- Del Ray, small independent businesses
- Historic character of the neighborhood, maintaining it is important
- Walkability of Mt. Vernon
- Proximity to metro station
- Park trails, 4 Mile Run Trail
- Arts in the community

Issues:
- Worries about chains as we want to preserve local small businesses. Some anchors are OK.
- Walkability of Mt. Vernon ave, south of Monroe is not good
- Ped and bike safety in the neighborhood, especially in Arlandria. Continue connectivity to transit.
- Gaps in the bike network
- Trolley (on-car) connection between metro, Del Ray and Arlandria.
- How much retail is sustainable realistically?
- Would like west side access to metro station
- All season water fountains
- No restroom in parks
- Dark sidewalks at night, safety, business development, Christmas lights
- Community kiosks for posters, notices.

What we value currently:
- Mt. Vernon Ave as a cohesive business district (2005 plan)
- Walkability to metro station
- Neighborhood feel, parades, community
- Vibrant business district in Del Ray, but so many vacant storefronts in Chirilagua. Empty MVVC, need new restaurants and stores
- Birchmere
- Diversity
- Legacy of community engagement (Pat Miller, Ruby Tucker)
- Must preserve this ethnic, motivate, understand, working towards common good.
- “Specialness”, neighborhood likeness, art on the avenue, web of relationships.
- Sustaining this is difficult and important.

Issues:
- Overcrowding in Chirilagua due to ruthless landlords and fear on the part of resident to speak up. Affordable housing is a big issue.
- Increase minimum wage
- Very difficult to have thriving retail shops in today’s environment. Not enough foot traffic due to online shopping, etc.
- Rents are high
- Different needs of different businesses
- Need more people
- Rising property values due to Amazon

**Tables 2, 3, 4:**
- Lack of parking
- Love the neighborhood
- Need better signage
- Uneffective parking enforcement
- People are parking in residents' driveways
- No enforcement of resident parking spaces
- People park too close to the stop signs
- Parking on crosswalks
- Would love to see bike line on Commonwealth
- 4 Mile Run is great, we need to maximise its use
- Focus on pedestrian safety
- Need bus shelters
- Small town feel
- We need bike lanes
- Scooters are an issue to look at carefully
- Dangerous intersections can be improved by increasing visibility near intersections, parking problems penetrate into the neighborhoods.
- Need enforceable parking districts in neighborhood
- Intersection improvements and traffic calming at problem intersections
- Need goog human-scale and things to fit the neighborhood
- Bring printed plans for folks without computers.
- Transit prices, including the Dash, senior citizen discounts only during off peak hours. Otherwise, buses and transit are pretty good.
- Look into better location for bus stops.
- Scooters, concerns over user safety and discarding of scooters in sidewalks
- Speed limits, does lowering speed limits have a difference?
- Sensor that catches drivers going over the speed limit
- Fast food restaurants leave garbage, cans in streets
- “Del Ray North” - concern over what sort of development is going on there, communication over existing project, CVS closing.
- Oakville triangle, concern of the redevelopment happening there, more open communication regarding development projects.
• Need more status updates regarding Potomac
• Old safeway lot, what’s up there?
• Bei Kay Central/Bei Ray Tower redevelopment was well done, good neighborhood entrance.
• 4 Mile run improvements was good for bicycles, but need separate trails
• Good redevelopment happening here
• Arlandria floors building garage entrance is ugly, needs beautification
• Loss of small businesses due to online shopping, new development, not enough variety (too many restaurants)
• Affordable housing is a concern, what does Alexandria consider affordable?
• Redevelopment of large multifamily is a concern
• Improvements along Monroe have been great! Coffee shops and dog parks
• Amazon has claimed local businesses only in their developments, affordable retail
• More street lights and crosswalks
• Need more delis, bookstores, independent markets,
• There are empty storefronts, Andi dealership, car sales.

Table 5
• Look at Mom’s space
• Playgrounds are a plus
• Traffic around Pat Miller
• Ancell/Commonwealth, near warwick are appears like there is a crosswalk
• Unused parking space in front of the old safeway; it’s underutilized
• Park with glass
• Dark streets, lack of lighting on Reed
• Bike trails on Commonwealth
• Need continuous bike lanes.
• What is the longevity of human services Department?
• Like the walkable and local feel. Don’t want Mt. Vernon to turn into King street.
• Need more daycares in the neighborhood
• Concern that people renting in Arlandria in Lynhaven will be priced out of the area.
• Aging in place is an important consideration and the City needs to ensure this.
• Pro 23 B’s new route
• All the transit options are a big positive

Table 6
Loves:
• Sense of community
• Housing diversity, size/density difference
• No fan of chains (walgreens, exception) Good kept building. Bright neon lights
• Small town feel
• Walkability
• Easily run errands, everything here is bikeable.
- Diversity, Arlandria near by
- Public transportation accessible
- Top things: walkability, diversity (land use, commercial, residential, acceptable of all types of people), very welcoming.

Negatives:
- Pedestrian safety
- Housing affordability
- Gentrification, especially Arlandria
- Plan should include that people in Arlandria and Del Ray should not be displaced
- Fear of potential redevelopment at GW
- Don’t reduce amount of affordable housing
- Like the gradual, thoughtful redevelopment
- Amazon, tech can change character
- Unplanned growth
- Do better are keeping community.
- There is a lack of traffic and parking enforcement. Keep cars/trucks away from corners.
- Sidewalks are uneven
- Think about seniors residents and their safety.
- Create an overlay map showing a plan area and common neighborhood boundaries
- Plan needs to look at commercial and residential because they both impact each other

Big issues:
- Pedestrian safety
- Hard to cross Mt. Vernon Ave on a car, daylighting the intersections.
- Mixed use is good
- Connecting to metro - Py and Braddock close to heavy parking problems. There is a need of parking study.

Table 7
- Many potholes on Mt. Vernon Ave
- Visibility at intersections on Mt. Vernon is horrible
- Safety issues, pedestrians aren’t safe rossing.
- Cars are allowed to park up to corner
- More pedestrian education - in Britain/GW Camps, as you approach, crosswalk flash is a sound indication that tells ped to look up and left/right.
- Traffic management
- Dewitt irregular stop signs
- Custis/ Mt. Vernon or Del Ray and Mt Vernorn, should have a traffic light
- A dedicated bike lane would be good on Commonwealth
- Maybe a traffic study is warranted on Glebe and RT intersection
- Colosanto Park, DRCA is improving this park, how would that change the dynamic of the road intersection
- City matching funds on park?
- Parks are looking really good
- No rain gardens that collect trash, maintenance is an issue
What activities can teens do outside? What programming on space allocation is there?
Need social component, light supervision
Chick arstrong used to have rolled skating on gym floor for teens
Rec center activity that is STEM, art, robotics, mechanic automotive engineering, auto shop
St. Elmos partners with businesses to paint and other activities in shop, or
Advertising rec programing
More street trees
Car dealerships, are they staying? Historically Mt. Vernon Ave was an auto row
Opposing for other uses when they do move
Maintain some openness along Mt. Vernon, more open space along avenue
Buys next to GW, shone be preserved, kids need space to play, or put housing, mixed use on a portion of it.
Arlandria and Del Ray should remain distinct
Revitalize Arlinadria, Chirilagua Business Association as it would help maintain vitality
Mv Village Ctr. Proj, follow Arlandria Plan? Took advantage of bonus dentisto to go high.
How can Arlandria be protected?
Trade off of Affordable Housing/density for neighborhood character
Affordable business space, support small business is very important to these neighborhoods
Del Ray business association works hard

Transportation
Love the BRT on route 1, use is often
Love Yates corner, seem very engaged in their surroundings/neighborhood
Scooters are a challenge, not safe, can’t see them, move much faster than a pedestrian
Bicycle lanes for scooters

Table 8:
Don’t Like:
On Mount Vernon Ave, improve Kestersois “Look”
Would NOT like a bike lane on Mt. Vernon Ave
Lack of shared parking
Lack of affordable housing and senior housing
Condition of Mt. Vernon Elementary and GW Middle schools
Recent street signage

Need:
Community parking
Pedestrian safety
Lighting on Mt. Vernon avenue
Keep “main street” feel
Trolley service
Another grocery store, fresh market
Like:
- Keep fields at Simpson, baseball and soccer
- Bus stop from Park square to next block, united Bank
- Mom and pop retail, no chains
- Mt. Jefferson Park, lightning
- Bus services and routes

Question:
- What will happen to buildings, block parking lot where the City Department of Human Services is now?
- BBT/block?

Table 9
- Community advisories, sparks learning, a way to meet people.
- Adult leagues, festivals, bar crawls, ladies night out, are a way of non-kid, focused events. Can we include more of these in Alexandria? And How do you find out about these events?
- It’s dark on side streets
- Dark crosswalks, and we need more flashing crosswalks. For example: Mt. Vernon and Giford, and Mt. Vernon and Del Ray.
- Parking on Simpson field is terrible
- Bigger houses are changing the look and feel of the neighborhood
- Our neighborhood is charming, walkable and close to DC
- 4 Mile run is great
- Outdoor space, it feels like a small town community
- Hops N Shine, Monday dog event on Mt. Vernon Ave
- Another store across Glebe
- Need recreation for adults