

## Meeting Summary

### Oakville Triangle and Route 1 Corridor Advisory Group Community Meeting #10

January 22, 2015 7:00PM Mount Vernon Recreation Center

Topic: Plan Area Land Uses, Plan Area Heights

#### Meeting materials:

Staff provided a [presentation](#) covering the following topics:

- Planning Process and Background
- Character Areas, [Streetscape](#) and [Plan Area Land Use Map - Working Draft](#)
- Retail Examples
- [Plan Area Building Heights - Working Draft](#)
- [Illustrative Plan - Working Draft](#)

#### Feedback/Questions on Plan Area Land use:

- What does flexible ground floor use mean?  
Response: Flexible ground floor use refers to first floor space with ceiling heights of +/- 20 feet to accommodate a diverse range of business types such as contractor's offices, manufacturing, retail and light industrial among others with residential uses on the stories above. It is important to note that higher ceilings on the ground floor can ultimately impact building height. We will discuss examples at the next advisory group and community meeting on February 26, 2015.
- You are proposing residential uses on some properties that are currently commercial in the illustrative plan. Why do the property uses have to change?  
Response: We studied the plan area and the dimensions of each parcel. In the shallow lots, townhomes are proposed as the best use because parking requirements of commercial and retail uses could only be accommodated underground, rendering them too expensive to redevelop.
- Could new development be exempt from parking requirements given that the site is so close to a bus transit and potential metro station?  
Response: Currently the City is preparing a policy that lowers parking ratios near transit. Developers can request parking reductions for parking requirements but the rates would not go as low as zero.
- It is a challenge from the City's perspective to accommodate mostly residential uses because of the services and infrastructure needed to support it. Commercial and office uses on the other hand cost less to support.
- Will the 25 foot streetscape width be able to be accommodated throughout the study area?  
Response: The proposal is to provide 25 feet sidewalks on Route 1. Some parcels may be so narrow that 18-24 feet may be more realistic.
- Will the developer propose a design for his site consistent with what the advisory group recommends?  
Response: Yes
- When redeveloping a site why does it have to be denser?  
Response: It is a matter of economics. Redevelopment will only occur if it makes financial sense for the property owner. Investors look to add value to their investment. This area will likely experience significant increase in redevelopment pressure with the new metro station and transit way. In order to plan for this likely change, the City is working with the community to plan for a high quality neighborhood based on good urban design and sound planning principles.
- Are flexible uses being considered all over the city?

Response: The Eisenhower West Plan may also consider flexible ground floor uses. We will determine what uses will be considered under this category and bring back examples for the community to provide feedback.

- Will existing open space be redeveloped?

No.

- Will you make existing uses non-conforming?

Response: No, existing uses may remain. The recommendations from this planning process will result in an overlay zone should redevelopment occur.

### **Community Comments on Open Space**

- Think about quality and not quantity. For example we love the charming pocket parks in Del Ray.
- Should consider more ground level open space as opposed to roof level or private open space, so that everyone can enjoy it.
- Seems like we are losing a lot of open space and trees due to redevelopment. With the increase in density the community should get more open space.
- There is no open space in Oakville Triangle, nor most of Route 1 area right now. Redevelopment will result in the provision of new open space.
- The higher the height, the more open space we can achieve.

### **Feedback on Plan Area Heights:**

- Kory Mertz: Concerned about 90 feet high buildings on Glebe Road because of existing adjacent single family houses.
- Patricia Harris: Important to make sure we ask for variety of heights and to establish FAR (Floor Area Ratio) maximums in the design guidelines for the plan area.
- Ben Flood: Please explore elevation and how it impacts final perceived height. Topography goes up from Potomac Yard to Del Ray. (Staff will provide information on this at next meeting).
- David Fromm We need to specify “at current grade” so developers does not raise the grade. How do we ensure a variety of heights?  
Staff Response: We will specify design elements such as bays, hyphens and screens in the design guidelines to avoid flat facades and preserve human scale and appropriate transitions.
- Does maximum building height incorporate an elevator shaft or would that add further height?  
Staff response: Elevator shafts are not included in the maximum height measurement; they are typically allowed to go 15 more feet or so.
- Did the community discuss re-grading the park?  
Staff response: The community has indicated a preference for maintaining the grade as is.
- How tall are buildings in Oakville currently?  
Staff response: Existing buildings are between 20-40 feet high. Current zoning allows 50 feet heights at most.
- Is the illustrative plan profitable if the sites are redeveloped as proposed?  
Staff response: The City studied what type of building types fit each parcel to test the feasibility of basic dimensions and parking requirements. We have not done a detailed economic analysis.
- What will happen to existing industrial uses?  
Staff Response: The City is currently doing a small study on regional and local industrial use. We are hoping to preserve some of these uses by proposing flexible ground floor uses that can continue to accommodate some of them. City staff will present an update on the study at the next meeting on February 26.
- When is the developer going to bring his proposal?  
Response: He will present Oakville Triangle heights and architecture at the at the next meeting on February 26.
- If one property owner decides not to sell how does that affect other owners?

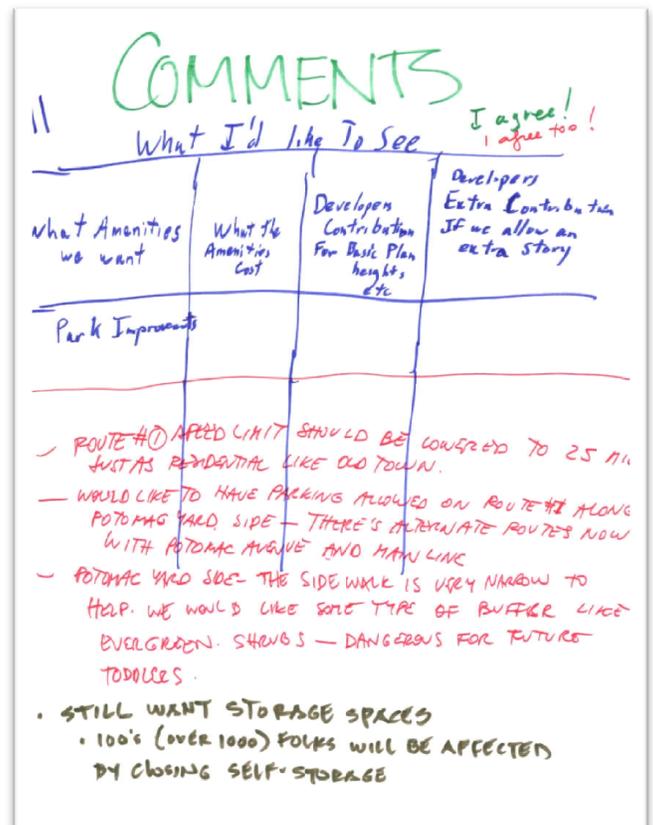
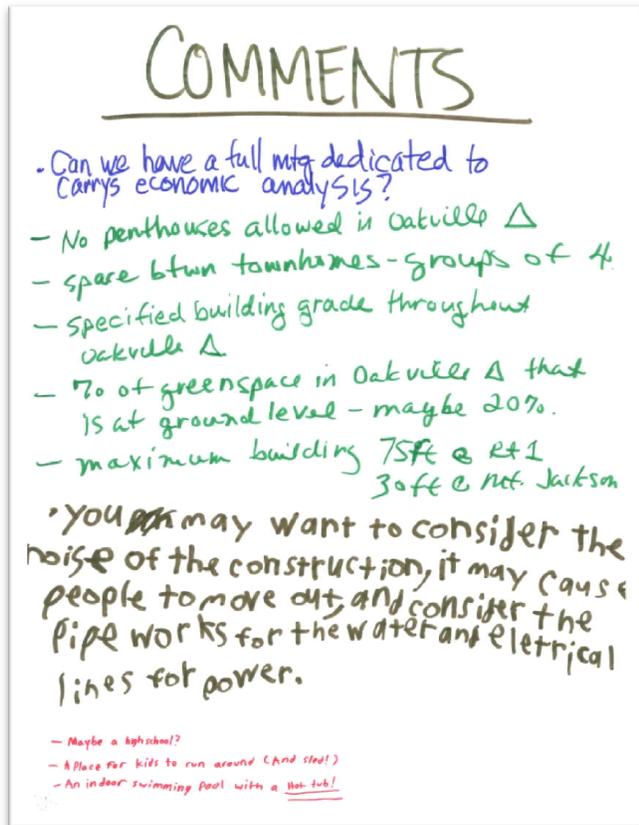
Response: We will need to figure out the lots that will need assembly. CDD (Coordinated Development District) zoning requires coordination. We will get at that level of detail as the plan continues to develop and conditions of approval are negotiated.

- What kind of ceiling heights are we talking about for the flexible ground level uses?  
Staff response: 15 to 20 feet for ground floors.
- Where are our suggestions going to be recorded?  
They are recorded in the meeting summaries, posted on the [project website](#), and inform each iteration as we go through the planning process.
- Please provide the dates on park meetings  
Staff response: As soon as the next park meeting date is confirmed, we will notify the group.

**Next Steps:**

- 11th Oakville Triangle/Route 1 Corridor Advisory Group/Community meeting, Wednesday, February 26, 2015, Mount Vernon Recreational Center, 2701 Commonwealth Avenue  
Community Meeting, 6:00pm - 9:00pm

**Community Comments Written on Boards**



- Route 1 speed limit should be lowered to 25 miles per hour just like residential neighborhoods in Old Town
- Allow parking on Route 1 (on the Potomac Yard side) since there are alternative routes on Potomac Avenue and Main Line Avenue
- The sidewalk on Potomac Yard side is very narrow. A planting buffer would really help residents of townhomes and their children.

- We would like storage spaces to remain. Many folks will be affected if self-storage businesses go away
- No penthouses should be allowed in Oakville Triangle
- We should have only groups of four townhomes at a time
- We would prefer a minimum of 20% ground-level open space at Oakville Triangle
- Maximum building height of 75 feet at Route 1 and 30 feet high at Mount Jefferson Park
- Consider new development utilities and noise impacts
- A new high school?
- Place for kids to run around and sled. An indoor swimming pool and hot tub

### Community Feedback Marked on Illustrative Plan



- Keep sites between E. Howell Avenue and E. Custis Avenue industrial
- Propose medium heights on sites located between Hume Avenue and Lynhaven Drive
- In terms of heights the Oakville Triangle should remain low where it is adjacent to existing neighborhoods followed by medium heights with the highest buildings located in the middle of the Triangle
- Provide some solar studies and views
- Buildings on Route 1 should not be higher than those existing on the opposite side at Potomac Yard
- Provide existing residential property adjacent to North-South road with a landscape buffer
- Provide existing residential properties north of E. Glebe Road with a buffer from the proposed multifamily building