

## Oakville Triangle and Route 1 Corridor Advisory Group Community Meeting #7

October 27, 2014

### Summary of Advisory Group Feedback and Community Comment

Staff hosted an open house from 6:00 – 7:00 pm to allow members of the community to ask questions and provide comments.

The Advisory Group meeting began at 7:00 pm, with an introduction by Maria Wasowski, Advisory Group Chair. She reminded attendees that we are in the early stages of the planning process and therefore it is iterative and constantly evolving due to the many inputs that go into the decision-making process. In addition to the community, staff, and Advisory Group feedback, there are also city wide goals and policies that provide guidance with regard to topics such as environmental sustainability, housing, transportation, etc.

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

- Planning Process and Background
- Connectivity, Transportation Study and Analysis
- [Connectivity matrix](#) and Staff Recommendations

#### Community Questions and Responses:

- Why do we need a new road [North-South Connection to Glebe]?
  - City response: The North-South Street provides an opportunity to remove curb cuts from route 1, which present safety concerns. It also accommodates loading/access on interior streets, improves urban design/streetscape on route 1, and improves connectivity into and out of the site for existing and future residents. Staff believes that at least one connection is necessary to distribute traffic and extend the grid.
- Will business owners have to give up their properties?
  - City response: Business owners will not be required to sell their property. The plan will provide guidelines should property owners wish to redevelop.
- Would you propose this new North-South connection to Glebe even if the development did not happen?
  - City response: Staff believes that even if this developer were to decide not to redevelop the Oakville Triangle site, market pressure is sufficiently strong that the City should plan for the area in a proactive manner, looking at the west side of route 1 from a holistic perspective, and establishing policy to guide future redevelopment to ensure that City and community goals and needs are met.
- I am concerned that Raymond is very narrow, and it is difficult to make certain turns or pass cars as it exists now. How is this road going to accommodate more traffic?
  - City response: Staff will be looking into this further and reporting back. The narrow width of the road actually serves to slow traffic which is a positive effect in residential neighborhoods. In addition, the City has funding from the North Potomac Yard project to implement neighborhood preservation/traffic calming within Del Ray.
- What are the traffic counts on Hume Avenue and Raymond Avenue?
  - City response: We are finalizing traffic study and we will come back with data.
- What is the width of Raymond, Custis, and Howell? What will be the new estimated traffic in these intersections?
  - City Response: We will bring data and findings to the next meeting. We will have finalized the traffic study by then and will also bring street cross-sections with measurements.
- Developer says the project will work without new street connections. Why are you proposing new connections?
  - City response: Street network redundancy and additional connectivity/a grid network provides multiple options for people to get from one place to another.
- Why did the City build the Transitway?

- The Route 1 Transitway is part of a regional system and strategy to facilitate the mobility of the community and the metropolitan area at large, as population continues to expand. Over time ridership of the transit way will increase as the Alexandria segments connect with the Arlington system. The goal is to create multiple transportation options.
- Can you explain what “awkward parcels” refers to in the description related to Connection # 5 on the matrix? It does not seem like a valid enough reason to remove from consideration.
  - City response: This connection would result in commercial properties without street access and a new signalized intersection that would impact the configuration of Rte. 1 and the newly constructed Transitway.
- Can we have a special meeting about connectivity at Raymond Avenue? Can we propose additional traffic calming, such as speed cushions?
  - City response: Staff will conduct further analysis on the impact to the park, traffic on Raymond, street width, etc. We will provide that information, and if another meeting is warranted, we can do that.
  - Maria Wasowski response: In addition, please reach out to Advisory group representatives, perhaps ancillary meetings on existing Del Ray traffic issues could be planned.
- How would the proposed North-South connection impact residential properties?
  - City response: We will analyze the impacts based on distance between new development, road, and existing residences. We will come back to you with more detailed information on this.
- Can we keep Mt Jefferson Park intact? I am a heavy user of the trail and I enjoy its uniqueness. My concern is that development will radically change the character of the existing park.
  - City response: Mt Jefferson Park will go through a community open space planning process; the feedback we have received to date is that people value its current secluded, natural, linear character.
- What does “no net loss” of parkland mean in terms of the Calvert to Raymond connection?
  - City response: It means that if parkland is lost as a result of the road, an equal amount of replacement open space will need to be accommodated somewhere in and around the Oakville site. We will return to you with specific square footage.
- Can you say no existing residences will be impacted by road?
  - Maria Wasowski response: The road will create new blocks but will not directly impact any residential property.
- How does the Advisory group work? Who will they make these decisions? We feel the City is advocating for the developer.
  - City response: The advisory group will provide advice to staff throughout the process and present their recommendations to the planning commission and City Council. City council will have the final say.

## **Advisory Group Questions and Comments**

### Maria Wasowski

- Potential Stewart connection would take less parkland than the Raymond connection
- Potential new North-South connection to Glebe Road may be many years away.

### Ben Flood

- Potential Stewart connection seems to make more sense from a connectivity perspective, but acknowledge overwhelming community opposition
- Do not see enough transportation benefit of the Calvert-Raymond connection
- Disagree with describing Mt. Jefferson Park as “naturalistic.” Better way to describe it may be “quiet, tranquil.” That quality should be maintained.
- With regard to the potential North-South connection, what happens if property owners never consolidate or agree to sell? City response: The parcels would stay as is. Any redevelopment would require cooperation /coordination among property owners in order to realize the redevelopment potential of a rezoning.

### Frank Fannon

- Property owners maintain the right to decide when, if ever to redevelop their properties.
- Need to keep in mind that new residents will move into the community in the next decades. Population turnover is 50% in Alexandria. Need one connection and to implement traffic calming strategies. People who live in Del Ray and Potomac Yard and the future Oakville Triangle will want to easily go to each area.

Andrew Dubinsky

- Agree with staff recommendation not to introduce new signal/intersection on Route 1 that would interrupt new Transitway.
- Some Mt. Vernon Avenue businesses are struggling, and the business association and some residents would like to connect with the site. But in terms of traffic the best option is the North-South connection to Glebe. Business property owners can decide if they are interested.
- Need more information on the Calvert to Raymond connection. What is the width of street as compared with the width of Mt Jefferson where the new connection from Calvert to Raymond is proposed?
  - City response: Road is 22' wide and Park would be reduced to 50' wide [Currently Mt Jefferson is 72' at its narrowest point]. Many potential ways that the road could be framed through landscape design and plantings

Rodrigo Letonja

- Selecting a connectivity option is a difficult process
- What model is the Oakville Triangle following? For example Market Common in Arlington County: This development's street layout is designed to collect visitors and residents. It is a one way street. I am not sure that is the solution for Oakville Triangle because connectivity is important. We should consider multiple options, as well as parking regulations.

Pat Miller

- The Del Ray Business Association voted unanimously for support of the bike/pedestrian bridge over Mt. Jefferson Park. They also see the plan as limited in scope. They wonder why the study area isn't broader. Some other issues we would like the city to solve is the left turn on Mt Vernon going east. It is impossible.

Peter Pocock

- I am glad we can postpone our decision until we have more information, including the estimate of increased traffic on Raymond Avenue. I live on Howell Avenue and there are certainly more cars than before some of the other roads were closed, but there are not too many.
- Have heard people talk about Mt. Jefferson Park as if it was their own, or Del Ray's own little park. It is a city park and should be treated as common space for all.

David Fromm

- We should be thinking of this plan as if the developer was not here. This is an opportunity for us to get what we want. I think we need to get a breakdown on the number of residents, commercial properties that will move into the community. What does the traffic study tell us about these numbers? Are these the same numbers shown at Potomac Yard? The developer showed a Piazza, how would you get through? Potomac Yard people moved into the site with the promise of metro in the future. We should look at the proposed North-South connection to Glebe in the same way.
  - City response: These traffic study numbers are recalibrated and assumptions of the new development are incorporated so these are not the same numbers we showed at Potomac Yard. The order of magnitude should be consistent (schematic neighborhood protection plan done with North Potomac Yard)

In closing, staff provided information about next steps and future meetings. The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.