

Oakville Triangle and Route 1 Corridor Advisory Group Community Meeting #6

September 22, 2014

Summary of Advisory Group Feedback and Community Comment

The meeting began with a brief update from Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning, and Maria Wasowski, Planning Commissioner and Oakville Triangle Advisory Group Chair, about the planning process to date and the Dominion 230kV Transmission Line proposal.

Discussion of Developer's Concept Plan

Doug Firstenberg, representing StonebridgeCarras, presented the Concept I plan recently submitted to the City as part of the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) process.

• Questions Raised:

- Does the development propose to connect to Del Ray [via Stewart]
  - Advisory Group response: The Advisory Group is discussing that issue
- What is the bicycle access/network for the site, will there be bike lanes?
  - Developer response: Prefer bikes on Oakville Street and Calvert Street, not on Swann Avenue.
- Give an overview of the street network on the site
  - Developer response: Route 1, Swann Ave, Fannon St, and Calvert St will remain as they currently exist today, adding Park Road [road along Mt. Jefferson Park] and moving Oakville Street. Calvert Street intended to be a narrow neighborhood street, 55' wide.
- What phase will the "neighborhood serving retail" be?
  - Developer response: Expected in the first phase
- Will there be open spaces within buildings and on rooftops?
  - Developer response: Yes, courtyards/amenity spaces provided, as well as rooftop open space.
- What will border the park [between the road and the park]?
  - Developer response: Transitional landscaping, a north-bound lane and a south-bound lane, on-street parking on one side, green space, and then the townhouses. Some areas will have a courtyard before the townhouses.
- Route 1 traffic is bad today, why can't the developer double the size of the park instead of building retail?
  - Developer response: Oakville Triangle will remain as it is if there are not enough development entitlements [to make the economics work to redevelop].
- What will the overall height transition zone look like?
  - City response: As this development plan becomes more refined, we can bring more detailed drawings, cross sections, studies to show how the buildings will transition. (Note: A general heights concept developed by the community and Advisory Group is available on the website [here](#).)
  - Developer response: The building footprints are also very important to this discussion.
  - Advisory Group response: We are discussing ways of visualizing the plan with the developer.
- How wide is the [Park Road]?
  - Developer response: This road is not envisioned to be part of the retail, will be narrow with two travel lanes and a parking lane.
- What is the baseline for building heights/how are they calculated?
  - Developer response: Existing grade [Note: technically called "average finished grade"] on the site is where building height is measured from
  - (Staff note: the City's Zoning Ordinance prescribes the way building heights and average finished grade are calculated for all buildings within the City)
- When will the light study [solar analysis] be completed?
  - Developer response: This study will be done later in the development process.
- What type of hotel and how will the hotel be parked?
  - Developer response: Potentially looking at a hotel in the Hilton family, will be parked underground
- Retail anchors seem "old school," Del Ray and King Street work well because they have lots of small shops and business owners, will the new development have local businesses?

- Developer response: It will likely be a mix of local and national chains. Calvert Street is intended to have more “neighborhood serving retail,” smaller footprint retail. Anchor tenant likely to be a national chain.
- What is the setback of the buildings on Route 1?
  - Developer response: 25 feet
  - City Response: The Potomac Yard Fire Station is set back 20-25 feet, other townhouses in Potomac Yard are set back around 16 feet.
- Does Swann dead end at the “piazza” into a pedestrian space?
  - Developer response: Yes, we’d like to be able to close down the road for festivals and pedestrian-only events
  - Advisory Group response: Piazza is shown as pedestrian only, reminding the community that this is the developer’s plan and not a recommendation by staff or by the Advisory Group.
- Will there be enough parking in the garages?
  - Developer response: Anticipating parking the buildings as required by zoning, will be happy to talk about parking reductions.
  - Advisory Group response: Parking is a complex topic, City is working on determining the right amount of parking for different uses.
  - City response: We anticipate an Advisory Group meeting to talk about parking.
- How much FAR (floor area ratio) is the developer asking for?
  - Developer response: 2.5 FAR, currently can have 0.85 FAR and up to 1.25 FAR with an SUP.
- How will you service the site/how will trucks access it? Will there be trucks on the “Park Road?”
  - Developer response: Service loading has been accommodated. Park Road is not intended for trucks.
- How will the townhouses be parked?
  - Developer response: They will park in the large structured garages behind the townhouses.
- How large is the courtyard park?
  - Developer response: About 1/3 acre.

#### Community Comments

- Regarding the Stewart Avenue proposed connection:
  - 120 signature petition against the proposed connection at Stewart Avenue was given to Advisory Group Chair.
  - The fact that it’s difficult to drive in a “straight shot” down any road in Del Ray gives it its character and slows traffic down [making it safer].

#### Discussion of Preliminary Park Plan (Bubble Diagram)

Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator for the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, presented the preliminary plan, or “bubble diagram,” which shows an initial concept plan for basic programmatic elements of the Mt. Jefferson Park.

- Questions/Comments Raised:
  - There are only two points of public access now?
    - City response: Yes, at Route 1 and Raymond Avenue. The gate at Stewart Avenue, which is within public right of way, will be opened later this year to provide better access and improve safety.
  - The dog park should not be located so close to Raymond Avenue
    - City response: This is exactly the type of feedback we’re looking for as part of the Neighborhood Parks Planning process, these types of comments can guide the discussion.
  - Are there precedents for cutting through existing parks with roads?
    - City response: Not sure, will get back to group with an answer. If a road did go through the park, the parkland lost would have to be replaced so the open space total comes out whole.
  - Will there be any physical barriers between the park and the road?
    - City response: There hasn’t been discussion about that yet, will continue to talk about it through the park planning process.
  - The road would create an entrance to the park for the entire length of the road, would prefer to have more nature and less entrances.

- A road would make it difficult for someone to let their child roam freely through the park without the danger of cars
- Off leash dog exercise area is a valuable resource to the community
  - City response: We hope to improve the dog exercise area with this process
- Has the soil been sampled for contamination?
  - City response: It's one of the issues we've raised as part of the existing conditions study, any disturbance of the soil could potentially require mitigation
- Advisory Group Comment
  - Encouraged by reclaiming space from buildings for courtyards; it would be great to treat stormwater in the stream in the park (City note: technically not a stream or RPA, but a natural settling point for water)
  - Making the park a little easier to access and true to Virginia heritage will be great but will take work.
  - In favor of turning park into a place that will draw people from everywhere, formalize the dog park, wants it to be less the "best kept secret" but biggest draw for the neighborhood.
  - Pleased to see that the park is being worked on, was displeased that the park had been removed from the City survey on neighborhood parks, wants comments from all residents on the park and not just Oakville Triangle related comments. Comments collected so far capture sentiments well, hope all suggestions end up in the final design. Concerned that the mature trees along the property line will be taken down due to new development, character may change dramatically but should plan for the future of the park.
  - Glad to see the high turnout for the meeting, cleared up some misinformation. Connectivity is an important issue, will need to continue to discuss access to and from the Oakville site.
  - Have heard lots of feedback about connectivity, will find a solution. Road along park limits the sense of isolation you find on the trail currently, find a design solution to keep that quality there with the road.
  - Industrial/commercial businesses are important to Alexandria, important to keep tenants in the same location, balancing the development and quality of life issues will be an important part of the process.
  - Oakville Triangle could become the crossroads of Del Ray and Potomac Yard, important to consider how it will interact with both neighborhoods.