Welcome and Acknowledgements
Advisory Group Chair Maria Wasowski convened OTN SAP Advisory Group Meeting #11 reminding the Advisory Group that three chapters of the draft OTN SAP Update were released at Community Meeting #7 on November 7th. The draft chapters which were released include: 1) Draft Introduction Chapter, 2) Draft Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter, and 3) Draft Historic Preservation Chapter. In addition, she indicated that two more chapters are being released tonight: the Draft Housing Chapter and the Draft Economic Development Chapter.

Public Comments on the first three chapters Released on November 7th - Staff indicated that of the comments received to-date on the three chapters released on November 7th, most comments related to the Art League and the interest in keeping the existing art institutions as an important component of the OTN SAP Update; comments about Royal Street bikeway also continued to be shared; and Advisory Group member and NOTICe President, T. Soapes, also submitted comments. The comments on these three chapters are noted at the end of these summary notes.

Tonight’s Update for the Advisory Group and Public – City Staff indicated tonight’s presentation contains a brief overview of where we are in the planning process and it includes an overview of the Draft Housing and Economic Chapters being released tonight.

(1) Overview of Status of the Planning Process and the ways in which the public can comment on the draft chapters as they are released (pages 1-9)

Housing Chapter – City Staff gave a presentation outlining the content of the draft Housing Chapter (pages 10-14 of the presentation) starting with the existing and recently approved and/or under construction residential developments in Old Town North; the goal and objectives that were developed during Phase I (Plan Framework Development); as well as the recommendations that were generated with input from the community and the Advisory Group during various public meetings. The draft Housing Chapter includes an overview of the population and number and style of housing in Old Town North, along with the Housing goals and objectives; planning process; demand and affordability; and overall Plan recommendations.
Housing Chapter Comments

Comment: Bullet #7 in Housing objectives should say “creating” only, not “preserving. There is no market affordable housing in Old Town North to preserve.  
Response: That is correct. We can take out the work “preserving”.

Comment: Need to recognize when talking about housing, we are talking about homeownership as well as apartments.  
Response: Typically, when the City gets affordable units through the development process, they are rarely for-sale units; instead, they are mostly rental apartments due to the greater production rate of rental units over the past several years. However, the City has financial tools to help people with down payment and closing cost assistance to make ownership more affordable. With regard to rental units, there are currently 9 set aside affordable units planned in the Edens project on the former ABC/Giant site.

Question: How does the City ensure that the developer provides the affordable housing that they are required to provide?  
Response: There are multiple ways the City ensures that the developer delivers the required affordable housing units. The City on an annual basis checks the records for the property and makes sure that people to whom the units are rented are income eligible, and confirms that the rents charged fall within the levels promised. The City also conducts physical inspections of the units to make sure that they’re being maintained. When the City participates in the original financing of an ownership unit and the unit is later resold, the City makes sure that it’s being sold to someone who is within the same income range. The discount that the person received as well as the share of the equity from the City’s assistance is passed on to subsequent buyers to keep the unit affordable; that way, the opportunity for the next person to own a home affordably is retained. Additionally, there is a deed of restrictive covenant in the land records that recognizes that the property was sold through the City’s homeownership program and that it is required to be affordable for a certain number of years and that, by law, it cannot be transferred without the restriction.

Question: What happens if the definition of affordability put out by the federal or state government changes within the 40-year term of affordability?  
Response: Typically, they target a particular income level and then every year there is an update to what that income level is, based on how incomes overall in the area have changed. So, the actual incomes of the people served may have risen as incomes rise, but if a unit is made affordable at 60% AMI, that percentage remains the same even if the actual incomes rise.

Question: The whole purpose is that this development will be built with some kind of concession from the City that makes the affordability enforceable.  
Response: Correct.

Comment: Recommendation # 9 talks about quality standards – such a requirement should apply to all residential developments, not just mixed-income development.  
Response: We can revise the recommendation to apply to all residential development.

Question: The open space requirement is mandated by the Zoning Ordinance; however, do not see the need to require that community space be provided at every residential development as stated in Recommendation # 7.  
Response: We can revise the recommendation to say that
“Community Space is encouraged to be provided to the extent feasible and appropriate. So, for example, for larger projects it may be more feasible for them to provide a community space, however, for smaller projects it may not make sense and that would be judged through the development review process.

**Question:** I believe there was an objective for affordable housing development to provide active recreational space in affordable housing developments. **Response:** It is one of the objectives in section 4.2 but we can add it as a recommendation as well, when appropriate and feasible.

**Question:** Recommendation #6 only says “Consideration of artist housing”. Can we use stronger language? **Response:** We will start the sentence with “Encourage artist housing” instead of “Consideration…” It is noted that there are legal/fair housing requirements with which the City must comply that would likely broaden the population served to include other low income households.

**Comment:** Recommendations #3 and #4 say “the goal”; this leaves room for interpretation later. Why is it just a goal and not a requirement? **Response:** Affordable housing is a voluntary process that the City cannot necessarily mandate and is typically negotiated through the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) review process. Recommendation #4, “on-site” is the key word. Resolution 830 has been a City Council directive for many years; however, the key phrase in Old Town North is “on-site”. The use of the word “goal” is directly related to getting the affordable (ARHA-owned) units back on-site when these properties redevelop. The economics of being able to build back all the existing affordable units on-site, typically equates to two market-rate units for each Resolution 830 unit. The challenge for development sites is balancing all competing interests such as open space, height and density.

**Comment:** The Braddock East Small Area Plan provides some good recommendations to ensure a critical mass of affordable housing units.

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**Draft Economic Development Chapter**

City Staff gave a presentation with an overview of the draft Economic Development Chapter (pages 15-22 of the presentation) content and structure. The draft chapter starts with an overview of existing population, employment and land use conditions in Old Town North as well as a comparison to the 1992 conditions. The draft chapter also outlines analysis conducted throughout the planning process such as the potential expansion of the 1992 Retail Focus Areas to include Retail Corridors, the exploration of a potential planning area-wide Arts District and/or Arts Corridor along N. Fairfax Street, and the pursuit of possible innovation uses on the power plant site that builds on the neighborhood’s creative economy. The draft Economic Development Chapter also includes recommendations pertaining to ideas for regulatory incentives for retail and art/cultural uses; the Office Competitiveness Study now underway by the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP); ways to retain current office tenants well as attract others, promotion of the creative economy; enhancing and strengthening the Old Town North brand (including leveraging existing assets – Waterfront, sports activities and themes,
Montgomery Park and its programming, Waterfront parks, etc., and promoting existing, and new small local business in the neighborhood among others.

AEDP gave an anticipated timeline for the Office Competitiveness Study that is noted above, with completion contemplated during the first quarter of 2017. The study looks generally at what makes office space competitive in this region. The findings and recommendations can be plugged into the OTN SAP Update as applicable.

**Economic Development Chapter Comments**

**Comment:** Suggest deleting the word “minor” from the footnote under the 1992 and 2015 Land Use Comparison Table.  
**Response:** We can remove the word.

**Comment:** Need to include community oriented retail such as drug stores and other amenities.  
**Response:** AEDP defines what neighborhood retail is and we can include it in the chapter.

**Comment:** Figure 9.04 shows the projected increase in residents and employees in the planning area. Suggest showing the percentage of those numbers generated by the redevelopment of the power plant site.  
**Response:** Good idea. We can generate those percentages.

**Comment:** Regulatory incentives for commercial are not included in the recommendations for the Economic Development Chapter. Will they be included before the end of this planning process?  
**Response:** The draft Economic Development Chapter lays out the importance of keeping those uses and keeping a jobs/housing balance. The implementation phase will identify the specific regulatory incentives such as parking incentives and other needed zoning approvals to incentivize commercial uses.

**Question:** Does the City anticipate that the implementation phase of this particular topic will be in the form of incentives rather than restrictions?  
**Response:** We have not talked about the specific mechanisms; however, the City’s goal generally is to attract and retain office tenants particularly around transit and highly amortized locations. OTN is an area supported by transit; this plan can help strengthen that even further . . . such as through expanded transit, shuttles, improved streetscapes, etc. and expanded amenities and services.

**Question:** In 1992 it was clearly stated that if a project is in a Retail Focus Area they get a .25 FAR increase. Can we get clarity on the specifics on Retail and Art/Cultural uses? The map shows required vs optional? Do all those categories get the .25 FAR incentive?  
**Response:** To ensure that retail in this planning area is successful, the map tries to focus the retail on Montgomery and St. Asaph Streets to create a critical mass. The areas shown as blue are optional locations for retail as well as art and cultural uses. This gives the opportunity for retail to happen in those locations if there is a market demand. Cultural uses may go a step further, in those locations where art and/or cultural uses are being provided, the square footage for those uses will not be deducted from the FAR. This will be outlined more in the Planning, Land Use and Design Chapter with further discussion with the Advisory Group at that time but in the meantime if there are particular viewpoints please submit them tonight, at a future meeting or in writing to staff.
Staff is interested in hearing the thoughts of the Advisory Group, community and all stakeholders.

**Comment:** Figure 9.04 shows residents and employees in Old Town North. It would also be interesting to look at visitor numbers.  **Response:** We can look into the possibility of generating information on visitors.

**Comment:** Old Town North is actually not close to the Metro. In bullet 4 of the Economic Development objectives it should say “improve connections to the Metro” instead of “Maintain”. Also page 98, under “Key existing advantages in Old Town North” it mentions walkable to Metro, and I believe it was said that it was in fact not walkable to the Metro.  **Response:** We can remove this statement from page 98 and add “improving connection to Metro” as a recommendation.

**Comment:** Concerned that the Draft Transportation Chapter is lagging behind and that the Draft Planning, Land Use and Design Chapter will be released before the Transportation Study is complete. At the next meeting, can we have a staff member of the Transportation Department give a presentation on what the findings are so far?  **Response:** We will check with them on the status and a possible update.

**Comment:** The street framework shown on the power plant site in the figures in the Draft Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter shows several 3 way intersections at an angle. Those are typically bad for traffic. Suggest showing those intersections differently.  **Response:** We will include recommendations in the Draft Transportation Chapter specifying that non-tangential intersections should be avoided since they obstruct a driver’s line of sight.

**Comment:** The Waterfront should be highlighted more as an asset in the Draft Economic Development Chapter.  **Response:** It is discussed in the Draft Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter but it will be added to the Economic Development Chapter as well.

**Comment:** Include emphasis on dining options.

**Question:** Residents on S Royal Street are concerned about the recommendation that says explore Royal Street as a Greenway. What is the definition of greenway?  **Response:** Under the OTN SAP Update four streets are recommended as green streets; Royal Street, Second Street, Wythe Street and Washington Street. A green street typically includes stormwater management systems such as bio-retention, enhanced landscaping and tree canopy. A green street also includes traffic calming measures to make it friendlier to pedestrians such as curb extensions, raised intersections and keeping stop signs. We can include a definition of a green street as part of the OTN SAP Update.

**Comments on previously released chapters**
1. Introduction Chapter
2. Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter
3. Historic Preservation Chapter
Tom Soapes Comments:

1. Introduction Chapter, page 14 bullet #4 states “Promotion of uses and activities which make Old Town North a more lively area including evening hours”. Those uses must be consistent with the existing residential component.
2. Page 18, similarly on the side bar, maintaining the sensitivity between retail uses and existing residential areas.
3. Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter, Page 69, in Objectives bullet #4 add community meeting spaces.
4. Page 69, bullet #9 says “Leverage the Waterfront Plan”. This needs more definition such as leverage what and to what objective.
5. Page 83, III Power Plant Site, state that significant public open space on that site is a priority.

Comment: Open Space, Recreation and Cultural Activities Chapter, page 69, add an objective to incentivize keeping the existing art uses. Response: So far we have not been revising the Objectives that came out of Phase I (Plan Framework Development) but if there is consensus from the Advisory Group to make the necessary changes, we can do that. Such consensus was expressed by the Advisory Group.

Advisory Group Attendance
Maria Wasowski
Elizabeth Chimento
Engin Artemel
Herb Cooper-Levy
Carolyn Griffin
Kevin Harris
Bruce Machanic
Thomas Soapes
David Speck
Mary Catherine Gibbs
Marie McKenney Tavernini
Jeff Strup
Christa Watters