The Elements of Livability: Placemaking in the Braddock Metro Area

Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan Worksession 2
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Agenda

- Context
- Urban design vision and planning framework
CONTEXT

- Changing America
- …and the DC region and Alexandria
The demographics of housing demand have changed dramatically: 1950s-90s...
...today

- Apartments
- Loft apartments
- Single-family houses
- Townhouses
- Midrise buildings

**1950-2000±**

**2000-2030±**

**New Demand**

- Students
- Younger singles/couples
- Traditional families with children
- Empty nesters
- Retirees
Convergence: baby boomers and millennials—2004 to 2024

Information from Laurie Volk, Zimmerman/Volk
Increased diversity extends beyond age and race

- Married couple with children—less than 25 percent of American households.
- Traditional (one-worker) family—less than 15 percent of American households.

Information from Laurie Volk, Zimmerman/Volk
...far beyond

- Non-family households now outnumber traditional families in the suburbs.
- More than two million grandparents are raising their grandchildren.
- 9 percent of home purchases made by single men.
- ...21 percent by single women.
- More than five million households contain unmarried couples (up 66% since 1990).
- 20 percent aged 30 to 40 foreign born

Information from Laurie Volk, Zimmerman/Volk
Changing values: congestion is now viewed as undermining quality of life

Average commuter today spends more than an entire workweek per year stuck in traffic. — TEXAS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Boston Globe reported that more than 75% polled now report that a shorter commute would be a primary factor in choosing a next house.
Sustainability requires a commitment to green building...and planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Family Household Type</th>
<th>Transportation Use</th>
<th>Household Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburban Avg (239 MBTU)</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban Green (158 MBTU)</td>
<td>(with hybrid cars)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Avg (136 MBTU)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Green (82 MBTU)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Million BTU per Year

© Jonathan Rose Companies, LLC...courtesy of Kaid Benfield, Natural Resources Defense Council

Esquimalt, BC
Mayors are committing to green building

Pass your cursor over each state to view a list of participating cities.

Bob Berkebile, FAIA
BNIM Architects

As of March 19, 2007 425 mayors have responded to Mayor Nickels' challenge to adopt the goals of the Kyoto Protocol
Bringing these changes home: Alexandria and Braddock Road area

- DC is gaining jobs faster than any other region in the US
- Median household income in Alexandria is up by almost 70% since 1990
- Roughly four times as many Braddock neighborhood households earn more than $100,000 than in 1990
The value of mixed-use, walkable developments is rising

Mixed-use walkable environments:

Single use environments 2000-2007: 0%

Mixed-use walkable environments: +35%
URBAN DESIGN VISION AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- Overview
- Neighborhood identity
- Public realm
- Retail and community culture
- Buildings and streets
Overview

- Community charrette and first working session
- Principles
- Mission: what this plan should accomplish
November 3rd Community Charrette

Table 1

Table 2

Table 3

Table 4

Table 5

Table 6
Outcome from the charrette and first working session

- Principles
- What this plan should accomplish
- Neighborhood character
Principles

- Sense of place and unique neighborhood identity
- “Community-serving” open space
- …and retail
- A walkable and safe neighborhood
- Public housing transformed into mixed-income housing
- …and a community that celebrates its diversity
- Managed traffic and public...
What this plan should accomplish—a plan and strategies to achieve...

• A more visible sense of neighborhood identity
• Transformation of public housing into mixed-income housing
• A great neighborhood park
• …and a network of inviting walkable streets
• One or more neighborhood lively, walkable, “neighborhood squares”
• Celebration of the neighborhood’s history and contemporary diversity
Neighborhood character—a community distinguished by...

- Walkable streets that are green—framed by trees and landscaped edges to buildings
- Buildings scaled to respect historic character, sense of community, and walkable streets
- A lively sense of diversity including race, incomes, ages, lifestyles...
- Places that draw people together—retail “squares”, parks, cultural activities
- Inviting access to Metro
Strategy for achieving principles, mission, and character

• Seek opportunities to create public benefit dollars from development where this development is the right “fit” with community character

• Invest a significant share of public benefit dollars in the neighborhood

• Partner with the city and other funding sources to finance appropriate improvements
Marking neighborhood identity

- Gateways
- Transitions
- View corridors
Character areas

Gateway Neighborhood Area
- Mix of building heights that step down as they approach Rt. 1
- Fayette walking street terminates in a neighborhood park and bike path connection to Potomac Yards
- Unique architectural treatment at north end forms the gateway to the neighborhood

Mid-Neighborhood Area
- The transition zone from the P-G Historic District to the Metro station area
- Potential new park space to replace the Post Office block
- Retail nodes and neighborhood-scale Post Office at the ground floors of some new buildings along Henry Street

West Neighborhood Area
- Mix of uses with some taller building heights set back from 3-story edges that define the pedestrian friendly streets
- Primary shopping/dining area in the neighborhood at the Braddock-West intersection and along West Street adjacent to Metro
- Fayette walking street with its lower scale and landscaping forms the east edge

Parker Gray Neighborhood Area
- Defined by 2 and 3 story historic rowhouses and other commercial buildings
- Improved public housing sites that remain primarily low and green
- Improved Queen Street retail street
Enhancing a walkable public realm

- Network of walkable streets and small parks
- A major new neighborhood park
Fayette Street at Pendleton looking North TODAY
Fayette Street at Pendleton looking North with enhancements
A major new neighborhood park

• A: 1261 Madison
• B: Metro site
• C: Andrew Adkins
• D: Post Office
Tradeoffs to consider to creating a major new park

• Is it large enough?
• Is it accessible and inviting to the larger community?
• Do the edge conditions contribute to a create park?
• What related improvements could make it a better park?
• What are the relative direct and indirect costs?
• How long would it take to happen?
• How does it benefit the larger community?
• Other options?
Post Office
• Large enough?
  – Yes (xx acres)

• Inviting and accessible?
  – Highly visible, most central location

• The right edge conditions?
  – Mix of housing and retail facing park

• What could make a difference?
  – A neighborhood post office and café

• Relative direct and indirect costs?
  – One of three more expensive sites

• Timing?
  – Relocate post office distribution
• Large enough?
  – Yes (xx acres)
• Inviting and accessible?
  – Least visible and central
• The right edge conditions?
  – Located behind housing
• What could make a difference?
  – Community-oriented uses in Braddock Place
• Relative direct and indirect costs?
  – Least expensive
• Timing?
  – Potentially earlier than other sites
• Benefit the larger community?
  – Enliven the area around Metro
• Other options?
  – Pocket park facing Madison? Braddock Place?
Andrew Adkins
• Large enough?
  – Yes (xx acres)

• Inviting and accessible?
  – Highly visible, more central than other sites

• What could make a difference?
  – A café or other commercial use visible to and from the park

• Relative direct and indirect costs?
  – Valuable site, lost ability to help finance mixed-income housing

• Timing?
  – Possibly longest timeframe

• Benefit the larger community?
Metro site
• Large enough?
  – Yes (xx acres)

• Inviting and accessible?
  – Highly visible, but less central than other sites

• The right edge conditions?
  – Bus bays, embankment, transit hub, poor neighbors

• What could make a difference?
  – Buffering from bus bays and new retail “square”

• Relative direct and indirect costs?
  – One of most valuable development opportunities, costly to redevelop

• Timing?
  – Reconfigure bus circulation, relocate parking

• Benefit the larger community?
  – More regional and less neighborhood
Retail and community culture

- One or two neighborhood retail “squares”
- Places that celebrate the community’s unique and diverse culture
One or two neighborhood retail “squares”
Braddock Rd - West St. Neighborhood Center
Places that celebrate the community’s unique and diverse culture
Shaping buildings that build community

• The right height for its context
• Design qualities that enhance the community
The right height for its context

- Continuity across and along streets
- Appropriate character for each part of the neighborhood
Continuity across and along streets

- Relationship of building height to street width and character
- Suggested heights along streets
Relationship of building height to street character
Defining and activating a vibrant public realm
Potential housing along Fayette or Madison Streets

3-4 story condo/apt. building

1:3 - 1:2 aspect ratio

3-4 story townhouse

6' min. 13' 40' 13' 6' min.

66' right of way
Retail “outdoor room” on West or Madison Streets
Suggested heights along streets

- Patrick and Henry Streets—primarily 2-3 story facing the street, higher elements set back (up to 50’ east of Madison, 70-90’ west of Madison)
- Fayette Street—primarily 2-3 story facing the street, higher elements set back (up to 70-90’ west of Wythe)
- Madison and Wythe Streets—primarily 2-3 story facing the street, higher elements set back
Appropriate heights for different areas

- Parker Gray Historic Area—match predominant adjacent heights, primarily 2-3 story
- Braddock East—primarily mix of 3 to 4 story
- Mid neighborhood—primarily 3 story along streets, higher elements (up to 70-90’) set back
- Triangle—primarily 3 and 4 story along Fayette, higher elements set back and within the site (70-120’)
- West neighborhood—primarily 3 story along streets, higher
Taking advantage of unique opportunities to create value

- Increase allowable heights adjacent to the Metro tracks (Metro and Jaguar sites)
- Increase allowable heights to support redevelopment of Adkins site
Fayette Street at 1st Street looking south TODAY
Fayette Street at 1st Street looking south with enhancements
Continuity across and along streets – FAYETTE ST.
Continuity across and along streets – Patrick and Henry Streets
Continuity across and along streets – MADISON and WYTHE ST.
Madison Street looking west with enhancements
Design guidelines that enhance community

- Landscaped edges
- Materials and details that demonstrate respect for existing neighbors
- Buildings that engage streets
  - No blank walls or parking facing streets
  - Row houses lining the street for taller residential buildings
- Sidewalks designed to invite walkability
  - Tree-lined
11. STREET SECTIONS:
EISENHOWER AVENUE

East (From Mill Road to Holland Lane)

- **Public Right-of-Way** - 140’-146’
- **Roadways**
  - Four 10’ Travel Lanes (two-way)
  - Two 10’ Parking Lanes, exclusive of
gutter pan, devoted to short-term parallel
parking except during designated peak
traffic hours
- **Median** - 38 feet park median, reducing to
  - 20 feet at intersection of Eisenhower and
Mill Road
  - 29 feet at other location of left turn lanes
- **Pedestrian Zone** - 22’ to include a bike path
  incorporated into the sidewalk. The location
and width to be determined.
- **Crosswalks** - 8’-10’ brick Crosswalks with
  concrete edge band
- **Bulb-outs** - None in Eisenhower R.O.W., but
  located in east/west direction at intersecting
  streets
Next steps

- Working sessions