

City of Alexandria
Department of Planning and Zoning
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**Landmark/Van Dorn Advisory Group
Monday, January 28, 2008**

Meeting Summary

Meeting notes are recorded by City staff to provide a written record of principal items of discussion, key comments, decisions of the Advisory Group and comments from the public. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of events at the meeting.

Welcome and Self-Introductions.

Tom Osborne with PHR + Associates Consultants welcomed the attendees and opened the meeting. The Advisory Group members introduced themselves, followed by Pat Mann of Planning and Zoning, who introduced City staff members present including Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager, Kathleen Beeton, Division Chief for Neighborhood Planning, and Brandy Collins, urban planner in Neighborhood Planning.

Tom Osborne then acknowledged City Council members Del Pepper and Rob Krupicka.

Matt Bell of EEK, Prashant Salvi of EEK and [?] of EEK completed the introductions.

Landmark Mall Status Update

Gregory Hamm of General Growth Properties (GGP) and a member of the Advisory Group provided an update on the status of redevelopment of Landmark Mall. He stated the following principles for GGP related to the Landmark Planning Process:

- Landmark presents on opportunity for smart growth
- Unique in its efforts to revitalize areas and link transportation and transit to developments
- Think it can continue to grow smarter
- Believes if we are successful in implementing some of the concepts that are presented today, a developer will be able to improve the quality of life that exists now

Some objectives are:

- Create a broad range of housing opportunities and choices
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Walkable developments
- Encourage and embrace community and stakeholder collaboration
- Creating a sense of place

The full presentation may be found on the City of Alexandria website at <http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedfiles/planning/info/Landmark-Van%20Dorn/2008-01-28%20GGP%20Presentation.pdf>.

Some members of the Advisory Group posed questions to Mr. Hamm.

Q: The focus of development should be retail and not housing. Are you talking about continuing Landmark as regional retail center?

A: What GGP envisions is a mix of uses. GGP is a retail operator and retail critical to the development. The retail component will be very vibrant.

Q: The branding of “Landmark Village”. Is that the final name? It looks like a lot of thought was put into that.

A: There was a lot of thought put into that but that was a long time ago. I’m not certain if that will be the ultimate branding. That is subject to looking at when GGP submits [plans] to the city.

Q: You mentioned Atlanta Station in Atlanta, GA. Could you talk about how it compares to the surrounding areas like downtown Atlanta, interstate highway. Although people talk about Alexandria as an urban area, a huge part of West End Alexandria is suburban with single-family homes.

A: I think the similarities are that it is not quite as dense population-wise than Alexandria. I can’t get into specifics now. I will get the information to you. I am not familiar with the area surrounding Atlanta Station. I am more familiar with the surrounding area of Reston in Fairfax so I can speak to that. At Reston, we created a “spine area” that had the higher densities (up to 21 stories). The density tapered down to low-rise residential areas. It worked very nicely. People who live there are generally pleased. It is a place you’d wish to take visitors. Old Town is one of these places. Landmark can be a similar place and setting. There is a benefit to trip generation by virtue of the mix of uses. There were studies on what the anticipated benefit would be.

Q: Is the plan conceptual? What is the timetable?

A: Yes, the plan is conceptual. The Advisory Group is important and we want to monitor it, participate in it, and engage in the discussion. With respect to the timetable, GGP is one of three property owners in the project area. So we are not able to commit to a timeframe because we want to commit to what we can control. So, we do not have a fixed schedule.

Q: With the increase in mixed-use developments are stand-alone malls as a concept going away?

A: Not sure how many malls like Landmark or Tysons [structural enclosed design] were built last year (maybe 2 or 3) but the direction we are going in is the future.

Tom Osborne requested that newly arriving Advisory Group members introduce themselves. He acknowledged City Council member Justin Wilson.

Council Vision from Strategic Plan

Pat Mann recapped the issues raised by the advisory group and the public at the previous meeting. He also discussed the City Council Strategic Plan and how it related to this planning effort.

The full presentation is located on the City of Alexandria website at <http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedfiles/planning/info/Landmark-Van%20Dorn/2008-01-28%20Vision%20Staff%20Presentation.pdf>.

Comment from member of Advisory Group: Rosslyn is not a model for anything you want in Alexandria. I don't remember anyone saying that anchor stores are not important and if so, that is problematic. I have copies of the West End Principles with me that have a different vision for this area. (The West End Principles are available for downloading on the Landmark/Van Dorn web page.)

Vision for the Landmark/Van Dorn Planning Area

Matt Bell of EEK presented best practices and how they may be applied here. He asked the group to think about five organizing principles for planning: transportation, open space, neighborhood character, housing and environment. He presented examples of urban form showing various aspects of each of these themes, and then initiated a discussion of how these principles might be applied to the planning area.

The full presentation is located on the City of Alexandria website at <http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedfiles/planning/info/Landmark-Van%20Dorn/2008-01-28%20EEK%20Presentation.pdf>.

Visioning Session with members of Advisory Group

Facilitated by Matt Bell.

All comments are recorded on Lecture Pad Notes and can be found on the City of Alexandria website at <http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=7014>.

Public Comment

Matt Bell opened the discussion up for public comment.

All comments during the public comment session are recorded on the Lecture Pad Notes and can be found on the City of Alexandria website at <http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=7014>.

Adjournment

Tom Osborne adjourned the meeting, and informed attendees of the upcoming meeting and town centers bus tour.