CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

KING STREET/BEAUREGARD STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

VDOT Project # 007-100-F04

PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Minnie Howard Ninth Grade Center
3801 West Braddock Road
Alexandria, Virginia
PROCEDINGS

MS. JAATINEN: I want to welcome everyone here tonight, and we’re going to give a short presentation on this project.

I guess I just wanted to clear a few things up. A few people have wondered if this was going to be a formal public hearing where there would be questions and answers in a format similar to a council public hearing, and this meeting is not for that purpose.

The purpose of the meeting is just to learn more about the project, and we do want your comments for the public record.

We have a Court Reporter sitting right here in the red jacket at the second table, and she will take your comments. We also have comment cards up front when you came in and got a copy of the presentation.

Please fill those out, and you can also email them to the city, to the King/Beauregard email address. Also you can email them to me.

We would like your comments, and please give us your comments by December 1st. Thank you.

My name is Lisa Jaatinen, and I’m the Project Manager for the city on this project. I’m working along
with city staff and David Volkert & Associates who is the consultant we selected to do the design.

Cesar Vargas is the Project Manager, and his design team is here as well. Other city staff is here and also staff from the Virginia Department of Transportation as well.

The project is located in the northwest quadrant of the city. It’s on the border of Arlington and Fairfax County. It’s along King Street from Chesterfield Drive down to North Hampton Drive and then a piece of North Beauregard and Walter Reed Drive.

An intersection improvement is really the scope of the project. It has been significantly scaled back from the original design.

We’re here tonight to facilitate your participation and receive your suggestions and input, and in order to become a part of the public record we’ll need you as I said before give us your written comments tonight.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Why can’t we have oral comments tonight?

MS. JAATINEN: We will answer a few questions at the end of the presentation.
DR. KAUFFMAN: According to state law, public hearings have oral comments.

MS. JAATINEN: Thank you.

DR. KAUFFMAN: You’re welcome.

MS. JAATINEN: Except for the project history, as most of you know this project’s been around for years.

VDOT was originally in charge of the project, and it was supposed to be a separated-grade interchange which would have been a large interchange and would have needed a lot of right-of-way from the adjacent properties.

So moving forward in the ’90s, VDOT had done additional studies. They decided to widen it to six lanes. Eventually when the city took over the design or became the Project Manager of the design all the funding was in place. In 2005 we started with the project design, and the four-lane section is basically going to remain.

We will be adding additional left-turn lane on King Street, wide sidewalks, and a shared-use path that will follow the Alexandria approved transportation master plan, and the path will be on King Street as well as Beauregard Street.

I guess back two years ago we had a citizen information meeting where we met most of you there, and
you had submitted comments, and we’ve looked at your comments and tried to incorporate a few of them into the plan.

Now we’re at this phase where we’re having our final public meeting, and we have sixty percent plans.

In that two-year period we have received improved environmental documents from the federal agencies, and VDOT is providing oversight for us.

We’re providing all of our plans to them and any documents and any federal requirements or meeting and going through VDOT.

We also completed an engineering study earlier this year with VDOT to look at ways to save more money from the reconstruction. We’ve also done a sixty percent submission.

Within that since we are coordinating with other jurisdictions, everyone has seen the thirty percent and sixty percent plans. The next submission will also be reviewed by the city, Arlington, Fairfax, and VDOT as well.

Out of our 2007 citizen information meeting, there were two large issues that were really brought to the front. Basically they were the use of the medians and
blocking access to properties, and also there were impacts of loss of parking to a few of the businesses and residences along the project corridor.

Some of the changes we’ve done to the plan and after reviewing that is U-turns will be allowed at all the signalized intersections, and we are also planning to put a signal at North Beauregard Street and Branch Avenue as well.

Any parking issues or parking losses we will be working with each property owner individually during the right-of-way process to try to work out where they will get parking from, and at that point we will work out any losses.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What does that mean by work out?

MS. JAATINEN: During right-of-way acquisitions, we will be working with you. We can discuss that in further detail at the tables later, what the process is.

So we’ve done community involvement, and we are working with all the local jurisdictions.

Some of the biggest objectives and benefits is this is a safety improvement project. It’s safety for
peDESTRIANS AS WELL AS motorISTS.

WE’RE ADDING SHARED-USE PATHS WITH SIX-FOOT
landscape buffers between the traffic and the pedestrians.
WE’RE REMOVING THE SLIP LANE, AND WE’RE UPGRAADING ALL THE
traffic, the signals, and adding ped signals as well as
crosswalks in there.

Also we are increasing the capacity by adding
the additional east and westbound turn lanes and the
raised medians.

By doing all this, we have found that there is
a thirty-one percent decrease in the delay in the morning
rush hour and a nineteen percent decrease in the p.m. rush
hour by doing these improvements, so there should be a big
improvement in the traffic.

What I’m inviting you to do is after the
meeting, please go to the boards and you can talk
individually with everyone there with your detailed
questions.

We have a design station, transportation
station, environmental, right-of-way, and landscaping
station as most of you probably already know.

So some big considerations we had is we’re
very sensitive to right-of-way acquisition. That was a
big issue in this project, and we’ve done all we can to really scale back right-of-way.

We don’t want to affect any of the buildings so the biggest right-of-way issues will be dealing with parking and land. We also have to maintain access to the businesses and residences during construction.

We just want to let you know that your properties won’t be closed down or affected during the whole two-year construction period, but that at different times, maybe a week, two weeks, a month, there might be construction in front of your property.

That will all be worked out, being some traffic plan which we are still working on.

This is just a rendering. These renderings are over in the area for you to look at, and this is how it exists today. This is looking east on King Street.

Then this is the proposed rendering. You can see the safety improvements to the pedestrians and the cars. You can see the upgraded crosswalks here as well as the median and the turn lanes to increase the capacity in the drawings here.

It was also brought to my attention that in front of where the Five Guys parcel is, there will be no
access to that parcel there. There will remain access, however, to the Tauber property parcel next to that.

So as far as schedule, we’re just waiting.

After this meeting we’re going to be receiving your comments and looking at them and responding to them.

Then we will be moving to the right-of-way acquisition process in the spring where we will be actually coming to the property owners and talking with them about their losses or if we need right-of-way or it might be easements or just temporary easements.

Then we will be working towards construction in the spring of 2011.

This project is a federally, state, and city funded project where most of the funding is coming from federal dollars. The total cost is $11.5 million, and the construction cost is close to $8 million.

Okay. So what we’d like to do next is we’d like you all to visit the stations over there and discussion the project with the various different city and consultant members.

Also please remember if you want your comments to be part of the public record, you have to talk to the Court Reporter sitting over here or submit a comment sheet.
to us or an email. It has to be in writing if it’s going to be a comment that will be recorded in our official record.

So thank you. If anybody has general questions, I’d will be happy to answer them.

DR. KAUFFMAN: I have a question.

MS. JAATINEN: When you ask a question, can you please give your name so the Court Reporter can get that? Thank you.

DR. KAUFFMAN: My name is Dr. Stephen Kauffman, and I represent the Beauregard Medical Center at 3451 Beauregard Street.

Under the proposed improvements, if you want to call them improvements -- there’s some discussion as to whether they were improvements or not improvements -- I have to go back to the meeting, the public information meeting, that was held in 2007.

On Page 3 of that pamphlet it states that as apparently proposed there are no residences or businesses that will be displaced.

Now we’re taking a look at Page 3 of the same document that was printed today or whenever it was printed. The plans are exactly the same, nothing has
changed except believe it not that paragraph is not there because businesses will be displaced.

So you lied to us back in 2007, and now you’re telling us about other things.

Not only will my business have the potential to be displaced because I don’t have parking, but where’s the parking for Five Guys, the check cashing place, the store in the little shopping center that Mr Hopkins owns, whether he cares about it not? Those businesses will be displaced.

And in Paragraph 5 of the CE and I’m not really sure what CE stands for, if that’s an environmental study which was done in 2007 and not 2009 -- this is now 2009 -- it also states there will be no commercial relocations. So something is wrong there.

Your people have to go back to whoever did this study and tell us about that.

In addition to that we’re very concerned here with a six-foot sidewalk for Americans with disabilities, but we’re not concerned about Americans with disabilities getting to their doctor.

They can’t go to their doctor if they can’t park, but they’re going to walk down the sidewalk. Well
I’ll tell you after twenty-seven years of being in that location, I don’t think I’ve seen ten people a day walk down that sidewalk.

I don’t think I’ve seen five people a day ride a bike down that sidewalk. As a matter of fact I see nothing, but I’ll give you the chance that maybe there’s five people.

And you’re going to tell me I need a ten-foot bicycle path on both sides of Beauregard Street that go from nowhere and they end up in nowhere. This is absolute insanity.

There is a sidewalk there right now for people to walk down. The only people that stand on there are the people that are coming across from the Larchmont Apartments to take a bus to get from work.

Now in addition to that there’s a building being built as you well know at the Mark Center. Sixty-five hundred people are going to work there every day.

How many do you think are going to ride their bicycles from Woodbridge or from Washington, D. C. or from Gaithersburg or from Bethesda to get to their jobs that are there, and is there going to be a proposed bicycle path in front on Beauregard Street up there on the south
side of Seminary Road to connect with this bicycle path that goes to nowhere?

I’d like to have an answer to that, but what is your proposals for that?

In addition to that, I want to say on the CE it says that when we approved this there was no future development expected in that particular area.

I see that we’re at least -- what is the proper word? -- lucky enough to have Mr. Davidson here tonight who represents the Tauber Foundation who maybe can tell us about the proposed development that’s going to be up there and how that might affect traffic and how many people they expect to be riding their bicycles and various things so we can have some idea.

I think that the public has to know what’s going on. This is a waste of tax money. It’s not going to improve a damn thing, and that’s my feeling.

MS. BAKER: Thank you, Dr. Kauffman, for your comments. My name is Emily Baker. I’m the City Engineer in the Transportation Environmental Services Department.

I’m going to try to address what I sort of gleaned as three main points in Dr. Kauffman’s comments, and then certainly if you have more detailed discussions
we’ll be happy to continue those discussions with you at some of the tables.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Let me finish, please.

MS. BAKER: Let me just answer your questions. The first question I believe was about the relocations. Certainly it’s not our intention or desire to relocate any businesses or any properties as a result of this project.

We don’t anticipate that and didn’t anticipate that in the beginning of the project; however, we will be going through a right-of-way acquisition as Lisa mentioned.

The first phase of that is going to be appraisals. As we look into in more detail what the value is of the property that needs to be acquired for this project and what the impacts are, some of those issues will be more closely examined.

This project follows the VDOT and Federal Highway guidelines for right-of-way acquisition. They’re very stringent. There isn’t any flexibility or leeway in how they’re handled by the City of Alexandria.

So we have special consultants that are hired specifically to do that, and we have a representative who again will be over at the right-of-way table so we
encourage you for those of you with those questions.

That’s how we’re going to be handling the right-of-way acquisition of relocations. Those issues do change, and some of those things won’t be known until we get to that point although certainly it isn’t our intention to relocate any businesses.

The second question that I got out of that was about the Categorical Exclusion or the CE, the environmental document. CE stands for Categorical Exclusion.

It’s a NEPA term, National Environmental Policy Act, the federal agency that oversees the environmental permit for this project through the state. That is the terminology that they use, and we have copies of the document and somebody here who can address those questions. If you have them, get over to the environmental station.

The document was started in 2007. I believe it’s just very recently been approved by VDOT in September. So this meeting couldn’t occur until that approval was gained, and we just got that in September so here we are.

We certainly can address that, and things like
development are fluid and aren’t things that can always be predicted in advance. There certainly are developmental proposals that may be on the table today which we hope stay, but things change.

As this project goes forward to construction, the same regulatory agencies that have overseen us to date and have improved the environmental document will continue to oversee it, and they will make a determination if this project still falls within the parameters that they felt were appropriate at the time they approved the environmental document.

So even though it may have been an approved document, this project will still be under scrutiny and we’ll have to show that we’re still in compliance as we go forward.

The third comment, if I’m remembering correctly, was relating to the bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Yes. This project is limited, and as Lisa said it’s an intersection improvement.

However, the city does have a master plan that’s been approved by our council for bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements throughout the city.

We are building those improvements as part of
this project and do have plans to extend them over time in other projects but certainly don’t want to go through the improvements at this intersection and have to come back in a few years simply to widen it again and to put in a sidewalk improvement.

So as part of our responsibility for moving forward with the project, those improvements will be done here and the connection to those will be done at a further time.

So again more detailed information we have at the stations over here, but again we’re happy to answer if there’s just a few other general questions people have.

MS. McGEE: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Yes.

MS. McGEE: I have a general question.

Virginia McGee. I live at 28th Street and King.

There was a letter from a gentleman, Dave Cavanaugh (ph), talking about the BRAC and the new development at Mark Center that makes reference to this intersection.

It concerns me because what it states is the Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. report, which is an outside consulting firm, concludes that the Beauregard
intersection would have some operational benefits.

This is relating to the new facilities over at Mark Center. However the triple left by itself would not be able to accommodate the increased trip demand during the a.m. and p.m. hours.

These mentions of triple left --

MS. BAKER: Not at this intersection. That is Seminary and Beauregard. The BRAC project -- VHB is the consultant that you mentioned. You have it there. I can never remember what VHB stands for, but you had read it out. They have studied the traffic impacts of the BRAC -- this is Department of Defense relocation to the Mark Center that is at Beauregard and Seminary.

There’s a triple left turn proposed there.

MS. McGEE: Obviously they’re looking at this Beauregard/King Street intersection as also being impacted.

MS. BAKER: They have looked at the impacts, and again I would just encourage you only because I’m not versed to answer those specific questions, but we do have a traffic engineer who is also very involved and is managing that VHB study at our transportation display.

He will be able to go into a lot of the
details about that study and about how it impacts this project and vice versa, so he will be able to answer those questions.

MS. FISHER: I’m Annabelle Fisher. I live at Southern Towers, so obviously I’m greatly impacted by the traffic.

I guess my questions are, one, what are the agencies which oversee the environmental document that are guiding you in terms of criteria and guidelines since things have changed with the intersection improvement here at King/Beauregard; what agencies do you have?

Do you have to follow the guidelines of VDOT, the state, or Alexandria, and did you know this when you started this planning process/discussion I think it was about two years ago because this is not new, this King/Beauregard intersection --

MS. BAKER: No. It’s definitely been around for decades.

MS. FISHER: So if you knew what the guidelines and criteria were in 2007 as dictated by the state and VDOT, and Dr. Kauffman is now saying businesses and residences could be, not necessarily, displaced and you’re going to widen the sidewalk for bicyclists to get
killed -- I hope you’re on fee, doc -- because there will be accidents at this intersection, why didn’t you include that or look at that when you developed this plan? First question.

The second is the BRAC site, the transportation and traffic plan also will be impacting the Beauregard small area new development plan.

That whole traffic transportation issue must be addressed, must be resolved before -- BRAC we don’t have a choice. It’s 2011.

It seems to me there’s a lack of coordination and communication with you and VDOT and the citizens on how we’re going to do this “master use transportation plan.”

MS. BAKER: I’ll be happy to address that.

MS. FISHER: Thank you. I see this as pretty disconvoluted and not well planned, We do have major problems with King and Beauregard, and I live up at Southern Towers. Why didn’t you all notice?

MS. BAKER: Let me address those two questions. The first one is, again, about the relocations and the environmental agencies.

We do have an environmental specialist here
who will be able to answer specifically those questions at the table about what the agencies are that reviewed it. It is VDOT, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. There are other federal agencies involved as well, so we can get you that information at the station.

Again, we don’t anticipate or desire to relocate any businesses. It is not likely, but it is certainly a possibility that the regulatory agencies will have to make a determination if that is the eventuality as to whether or not a relocation of a commercial business would change the parameters significantly to change it out of a Categorical Exclusion.

I would think that it probably wouldn’t, but again that’s a question for the regulators, but it’s possible that we could relocate businesses and that it still would not change the parameters of the permit that we’ve been approved.

Certainly we have somebody here you can talk to more about the regulatory agencies that are involved.

Regarding the coordination of the other projects in the Beauregard small area plan and the BRAC project, certainly the city and our department and all the other departments in the city have been coordinating.
This project isn’t new. It has been around in some form since I think the ’80s as Lisa mentioned earlier in the presentation.

We are currently working with our planning department. In fact we have a representative from our planning department today. We are very much involved, the same staff, in the Beauregard small area plan. From our perspective we don’t see a disconnect.

All of these improvements are being coordinated with what’s going on on the Beauregard corridor and the transportation improvements that are anticipated as part of that.

Again as you heard from Lisa, there are real improvements to traffic flow along the corridor: thirty-one percent in the a.m. peak period and nineteen percent improvements in the p.m. peak period.

What that means is a decrease in the delay that you spend when you drive through the corridor.

Again our traffic engineers will be happy to interpret that for you in terms of minutes that you spend at the intersections waiting.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What about the traffic light synchronisation?
MS. BAKER: The traffic light synchronisation will certainly be done as part of this project.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But also up to Seminary and Beauregard, too?

MS. BAKER: Well it will be done certainly within the influence of the limits of this project, and we’re constantly looking at our traffic signalization for improvements, and our traffic engineers will take that into consideration.

MR. KAUFFMAN: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Yes.

MR. KAUFFMAN: Hi. I’m David Kauffman. Coincidentally I actually live in the Bethesda area where we have BRAC between Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval. Our community was very impacted, our neighborhood.

During these meetings we actually had coordination with BRAC. BRAC did attend our meetings up there. Bethesda Naval attends it, so I’m a little bit surprised that that doesn’t happen here.

My question to you very specifically is although you’re not paving over the shopping center or paving over the medical practices, how is it not a taking when you remove their parking from them?
MS. BAKER: Again, that will have to be determined as part of the appraisals. We have to follow very strict VDOT and Federal Highway guidelines for right-of-way acquisition which we have an expert that will be able to talk to you about it in more detail, but there are appraisals that have to be done and impacts that have to be determined.

Then there’s a possibility that the city can develop a cure plan to look at ways that we might be able to do improvements on the property or make some adjustments to the project that could minimize those impacts because the right-of-way impacts on this project, as Lisa mentioned, is one of the greatest challenges that we have.

The project has been scaled back significantly over the years to try to minimize that. It’s not something the city takes lightly.

Any time we have to look at acquiring property from a private property owner for a city improvement, it’s something we take very seriously. We don’t do it lightly, and I want to assure that.

So we certainly will be working with all the properties that are going to be impacted. Whether the
parking will be impacted or whether we’re taking just a temporary construction easement, we take that very seriously.

Individually we will be working with each of the properties and Mr. Schray is here. You can talk about that again at the right-of-way station in much more detail, but we will be working with each of the properties to try individually to minimize all those impacts and look at what we might be able to do.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Ma’am, I don’t know why you’re ignoring me.

MS. BAKER: I’m sorry. I answered your question.

DR. KAUFFMAN: No. I have a follow-up question.

MS. BAKER: Okay. Please go ahead. I’ll answer your next question, and we’ll take two more questions and then we’ll go ahead --

DR. KAUFFMAN: Wait a minute. This is a public hearing. What do you mean you’re going to take two questions?

MS. BAKER: The public hearing format as mentioned was we really want to get your written comments
for the public record, so please go ahead with your next comment. Please go ahead.

    DR. KAUFFMAN: It’s a public hearing.

    MS. BAKER: Please go ahead.

    DR. KAUFFMAN: On a separate matter since you’re obviously not an expert in engineering, why don’t we have the engineers who are already here answer questions?

    MS. BAKER: Well, again, this is an open public hearing format. We feel it’s more appropriate to have the experts over there where they we can talk to you about --

    DR. KAUFFMAN: Does everybody have time to listen to their answers?

    PARTICIPANTS: Yes.

    DR. KAUFFMAN: Okay. So it’s open. It’s public. They spent their time. They all drove here. I doubt anybody biked here this evening. It’s open. They’re willing to do it.

    MS. BAKER: We can certainly do that, but let me get your specific question.

    DR. KAUFFMAN: When does it become eminent domain?
MS. FISHER: Will you be taking any property by eminent domain?

MS. BAKER: Well certainly we would like to avoid that. The process is that we prepare an appraisal for the property. Then we provide that information to the property owner with an offer.

That property owner has an opportunity to review that information, provide us with any comments about whether they agree or disagree with the value of the property.

They can certainly provide us with a separate appraisal that’s prepared by a different appraiser, and then there is a negotiation period on behalf of the city by our consultant who’s hired to follow the VDOT and Federal Highway guidelines.

There’s a negotiation period during which it would be hoped that an agreement could be arrived at.

If there is no agreement arrived at, then the city could consider exercising eminent domain to take the property. That’s the process.

MS. CREGGER: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Yes.

MS. CREGGER: Hi. My name is Mary Cregger.
I’m the daughter of Mr. Hopkins. I guess it was in 1978 when this whole conversation first started, so to put that in perspective I was three.

So what I was kind of wondering here is you said that — you definitely seem to agree that the bike path that you’re proposing starts nowhere and goes to nowhere currently and that there are plans to actually develop that into a larger network.

So I’m interested to know when will that happen because it’s taken thirty years to get to this point, and I imagine that all of the business owners and landowners here would be happy to keep our parking for the next thirty years while you figure out how to connect that to somewhere because that land is actually what makes our properties less valuable.

When you take our parking and as a result of taking that parking in front of our parcel, you are now removing two access points to Route 7.

The whole reason that Lisa gave me for that was because you won’t be able to drive around the front of the building anymore because there’s too much land taken for the bike path.

So my question is when will it be connected to
something that actually goes somewhere so that we will not
actually have our parking taken away for thirty years
while you figure that out.

MS. BAKER: I know that there are plans for
part of that connection to be constructed very soon. I’m
going to hand this over to Yon Lambert who is our bicycle
and pedestrian coordinator.

MR. LAMBERT: Thank you, Emily.

The bike paths, the shared-use paths, that are
proposed as part of this project actually would connect
with a trail in Arlington County that runs down Walter
Reed and connects with the W&OD trail.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The purple lines could
go over that soon.

MR. LAMBERT: That’s actually in Bethesda.
That’s a good point, but that’s not in the same place.

MS. FISHER: It’s not the same Walter Reed.

There’s two Walter Reeds.

MR. LAMBERT: The city is actually adding
additional bike facilities on streets in this area both as
part of this project and as part of other development
projects. We’re also building additional projects on
homes that are on green way and on city streets very close
by.

The city has added in the last three years about fourteen miles of new bikeways, so it has become more of a priority for the city.

The bicycle improvements that are proposed as part of this project are proposed because they’re shown in the city’s transportation master plan.

They are also proposed because any project in the State of Virginia, in the Commonwealth, that actually uses state or federal funds must incorporate improvements for all modes of transportation.

It’s actually the policy of the Commonwealth, and it’s the policy of the city as well.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Can you define shared-use?

MR. LAMBERT: A shared-use path is a pathway that would be used by both pedestrians and bicyclists.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Why do we need a separate sidewalk?

MR. LAMBERT: There is no separate sidewalk. It’s actually the same thing. The sidewalk and the shared-used path are the same thing.

DR. KAUFFMAN: No. No. No. There’s a six-foot sidewalk.
MR. LAMBERT: On a separate part of the project, on a separate part. There’s a six-foot sidewalk proposed on King Street, and then there are shared-use paths which will be a sidewalk which will be shared by bicyclists and pedestrians. That’s the definition of a shared-use path.

MS. FISHER: What about folks who are in wheelchairs or mothers with their babies, do they also use the shared-path?

MR. LAMBERT: That’s correct, yes.

MS. FISHER: And pedestrian?

MR. LAMBERT: And pedestrian. That’s correct.

MS. FISHER: Is that bike path going to be wide enough to handle the wheelchair person, the mother with the stroller, the bicycles, and the pedestrians?

MR. LAMBERT: The sidewalks are ADA compliant. They are six feet wide. The shared-use paths are ten feet wide.

MS. ARAZOZA: Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: You in the back, yes. You’ve been patient.

MS. ARAZOZA: Hi. My name is Mirta Arazoza and I live in Fairlington. My question is I ride through
this intersection every morning going west on King Street.

I want to know -- this pamphlet you gave us says King Street between I-395 and North Mason Drive is a congested four-lane road.

How does putting in an extra turn lane on Beauregard help the congestion going back and forth on Mason Drive?

Most of the cars going west in the morning do not turn on Beauregard. They go all the way up to George Mason. At least some of them turn into Target. Some of them turn into Skyline, but the majority turn on George Mason Drive.

Adding another left-turn lane on Beauregard is not going to help you get through the intersection of King and Beauregard if you’re going west on King Street.

MS. BAKER: Let me address that. I will address that, and we certainly have the traffic engineers who can go into more detail.

Adding an additional turn lane on Beauregard reduces the amount of time, of green time, that Beauregard needs to have to get the traffic through there.

It does increase the flow, allows more green time on King Street so that it makes a shorter cycle.
You’re sitting for a shorter amount of time when you’re at the red light, so that is one of the things that creates additional time. It’s improvements through the corridor, so it is a critical component of that.

MS. ARAZOZA: Does it go down all the way towards to 395 because turning right off 28th Street in the mornings is a nightmare onto King?

MS. BAKER: We do have improvements through this corridor, and I’d have to have the traffic engineer talk to you about the specifics about the 28th street.

MS. ARAZOZA: Is he here?

MS. BAKER: I’m sorry.

MS. ARAZOZA: Is that person here?

MS. BAKER: Do you want to talk about that, Ravi?

MR. RUNT: I can.

MS. BAKER: We can come back to that. If we have any other questions we can come back to that, or we can talk to you about it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let’s talk about it now.

MS. BAKER: Okay. You have a question, and we can come back to that.
MS. BIBLIN: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Do you have a question?

MS. BIBLIN: Yes, I do. My name is Dina Biblin. I live on Kirkpatrick Lane.

That is in the community that is sort of behind all this, so I don’t have a particular dog in this fight; but what I see is a lot of the questions being asked that are very legitimate.

I’m kind of concerned as a citizen of Alexandria that some of these things haven’t been thought of by you or at least if they’re thought of it’s not been communicated to us.

For example you start off talking about the wonderfulness that’s going to come on the speeding through King Street, thirty-one percent increase in time in the morning and nineteen percent increase in time in rush hour.

I’m kind of curious where somebody came up with these figures and what they based it on. Is there any data that you have available for us to look at?

MS. BAKER: Yes. Uh-huh.

MS. BIBLIN: Where is that data?

MS. BAKER: Do we have the traffic report? We
can have Ravi talk about that.

MS. BIBLIN: In connection with that I’m kind of concerned about the gentleman’s discussion about eminent domain. It’s not like this hasn’t been a topic for many years about losing parking spaces for these businesses.

You must somewhere have some concept of how much is being taken away and what you’re going to do about it and the impact.

To tell people, my fellow citizens and business owners, that you don’t have an answer to that right now is kind of disconcerting for me as a citizen because it makes me wonder what else hasn’t been planned properly here.

My third question has to do with bus routes. How is this going to impact the bus routes that are currently running down King Street and making left and right turns on Beauregard and on Walter Reed?

MS. BAKER: Okay. Let me see if I can get those, and if I forget then certainly remind me.

The first question maybe was about the general coordination and the traffic improvements and the traffic analyses.
Make no mistake about it -- and you all know because you live here and you drive through this all the time -- this is a very difficult intersection.

When we’re talking about improvements -- we’re talking about nineteen percent and thirty-one percent -- I don’t want you to leave this room with the expectation that you’re going to sail through this intersection.

This is still going to always be a very difficult intersection with the improvements that we’re proposing.

As Lisa mentioned if you wanted this to be functioning at a level of service where there weren’t delays, we would have to build an interchange which was studied before but was decided against based on the impacts of right-of-way into the community.

So we are proposing modest improvements that we believe are necessary for quality of life of people around here to get through this intersection based on the projected volumes of traffic.

We have done extensive traffic analyses and traffic count studies that have been done over the years to determine that, but it is a difficult intersection.

It will remain a difficult intersection, but
the improvements being proposed will make some
improvements to the decreases in the delay that is spent
going through there.

That being said, any time we talk about an
infrastructure improvement in an urban area like this,
there are impacts to the community. There are
construction impacts. One of the impacts is right-of-way,
and there’s no way to avoid that.

If we weren’t going to widen the road and add
any lanes at all, we wouldn’t have to impact any
properties but there wouldn’t be any improvements.

That’s something that the community has to
live with if they decide that they want improvements to
this intersection.

The city has made a decision long ago that
this was important. It was prioritized and funding was
made available by VDOT. Again we’ve scaled it back to the
smallest extent possible.

I’m sorry if you get the impression that it’s
not coordinated or we don’t have the answers, but as I
mentioned with a right-of-way process we’re going to have
to follow very strict guidelines that were laid out by
VDOT and the Federal Highway Administration.
Legally we are prohibited from talking about specifics about takings or properties or appraisals until we follow the specific guidelines.

Appraisals have to be done legally by licensed appraisers and offers have to be made to the property owner.

So it is inappropriate, and it’s actually not legal in the process for me to talk about it to you in this group today about what the values would be or the impacts would be.

I don’t want you to think that it’s something that’s been coordinated, but we are required in order to get the funding, the $11.5 million dollars that’s coming from VDOT and Federal Highway, to follow their guidelines.

Again we take it very seriously. We know there are going to be impacts. Some parcels are going to be impacted to a greater extent than others.

That is something we’ve tried to minimize, but again to make improvements of any sort to a roadway network in a very urban area unfortunately there have to be those impacts.

I know you had a question about transit.

Certainly that’s something that’s a very important part.
As Yon Lambert mentioned, this project has to address all modes of transportation. That includes transit.

There are improvements to transit stops that are being made by shelters that are being put in as part of this project, and any improvement in this corridor in terms of decrease and delay is an improvement for transit because it allows the buses to get through as well.

Everybody’s sitting in the traffic with you. The buses are sitting there as well cycle after cycle after cycle waiting to get through there so it does improve here.

Did you have a third question?

MS. BIBLEN: My question is whether or not you’re planning to change any of the bus routes?

MS. BAKER: No. The routes are not planning to change as a result of this specific project. Again this is just an intersection improvement.

MS. BIBLEN: But you are adding a bus stop?

MS. BAKER: Yes.

MS. BIBLEN: So you are actually changing something.

MS. BAKER: A stop is being relocated and a shelter is being added. I don’t know that there’s any
additional stops. It’s the same routes, but we are trying to improve the experience for the transit rider and to encourage more use of transit.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think that we’re all concerned whether the process here has been intelligently designed in light of the properties that will be impacted.

I’m most concerned with, of course, certain specific things which I think show a reasonable concern about the entire process. There’s the tension between the bike paths and effectively engineering for the movement of traffic. It’s obvious here.

If you take a look at this, it appears to have a bike path on both sides of King Street. On the side that’s closest to Arlington, that bike path they put in there takes away the right-turn slip lane going westbound on King Street onto Walter Reed.

That will cause exacerbation of the backup at that intersection by traffic that I think will be significant because at the present time people can go down that extra right turn and avoid waiting at that light.

There is a significant amount of traffic that syphons off there, but in order to accommodate a bike path which will end at the Arlington line and cannot be
extended on that side of Walter Reed because you would have to take away the apartment buildings -- the condominiums in order to do that.

That extension of bike path is absolutely antithetical to the proper movement of traffic, and that bike path can’t go anywhere no matter what you do in the future because Arlington is not going to extend a ten-foot bike path and take away the condominium property there.

So the plan to place that bike path there is nonsensical and certainly impacts upon the ability to move traffic through there.

Additionally once again on Walter Reed Drive on the other side, there’s a plan to have a ten-foot bike path which ends on Walter Reed and a bike path which is now about six feet wide.

The property there is over where the culvert is underneath the ground there. When last there was a widening that was prompted at that intersection and the adding of a right-turn lane going onto westbound on King Street, nobody bothered to look and see that there’s a twenty foot drop-off there, and I’m sure that you’re not going to take it into account now.

The engineering and the retaining walls that
will be needed there will certainly severely impact upon the park land there. Nothing was done to intelligently address that.

You had the possibility of a disaster if a car went off the road there, and only because of my protests afterwards that Arlington had some kind of a traffic barrier there where if anybody goes off that bike path they’re down twenty feet into the creek there. It’s Lucky Run.

So it seems to me that trying to accommodate this grand plan for bike paths hasn’t taken into account what the doctor said which is at least on the location where the bike path is designed to go into Arlington, it can’t go anyway.

It’s nonsensical and if it’s changed, the plan, so that it isn’t going to be a right turn that’s exactly against what this is supposed to be doing in moving the traffic.

These things I bring up as a general question because it raises concerns that there hasn’t been a sensible enough and careful enough approach to what you’re doing here overall.

I think that that also is emblematic of what’s
happening with what will be essentially a destruction of these businesses here which you’re not going to be able to ameliorate unless you take property from Tauber in order to provide parking for these businesses.

I just think that this is being done on the cheap without trying to take property that’s nice, but things can’t be done right with this kind of restriction and trying to take into account all of these things such as these bike paths unless there’s a greater degree of thought and attention to detail.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Actually the representatives of the Tauber Foundation are here.

MS. BAKER: Thank you for those comments, and let me address the slip lane because that’s a very good point. I want to clarify it, and then Yon can address the connectivity issue.

The elimination of the slip lane is not as a result of the bike trail. One of the goals of this project in addition to increasing the capacity in the corridor is pedestrian safety.

The slip lane is a very unsafe intersection for pedestrians because the free-flow movement of those vehicles making that right turn interferes with the safe
crossing of that intersection and crosswalk for pedestrians.

So it was one of the safety improvements of this project is the elimination of that slip lane. It’s not the result of a bike trail.

MR. LAMBERT: Just one addition to that, the so-called bike trails that we’re talking about again I just want to emphasize these are shared-use paths.

These are essentially wide sidewalks, side paths because there’s several different terms you can use for these.

They actually do connect with a shared-use path in Arlington County that connects with Four Mile Run and the W&OD trail, so these connections do go from somewhere to somewhere.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That’s actually not correct because on the opposite of Walter Reed Drive where the present six-foot bike path is that’s across the street. If you’re on the opposite side of Walter Reed --

MR. LAMBERT: Sure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- the bike path that raps around and comes down off of King Street into Arlington on Walter Reed Drive won’t be connected.
MR. LAMBERT: It becomes a six-foot sidewalk.

You’re right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The people are going to have to cross a dangerous street which is not engineered for people crossing because you don’t propose to move your bike path all the way to Dinwiddie Street where there’s an intersection. It ends in a four-foot sidewalk.

MR. LAMBERT: Pedestrians and bicyclists would both use the same crossing at King and Beauregard that is proposed as part of the plan. You’re correct.

The shared-use path on King Street if you were to continue into Arlington County on Walter Reed there are also on-street bike lanes on Walter Reed, so there are connections.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That may be the case, but if you’re plan is to have the bicyclists cross over Walter Reed as they are on King Street, then they’re going to run into at the culvert area that I spoke up a four-foot bike path, and that bike path is between the railing which was put in as an afterthought when I pointed out how dangerous it was and the street curb.

It’s four feet wide approximately there, and there is no plan here apparently to widen that.
To widen it one would have to construct a massive retaining wall next to Lucky Run, and it wouldn’t be just for twenty feet. It would have to be a long reinforcement so as to provide enough space and substructure to make it a ten-foot path.

It can’t be done unless you’re going to spend a lot more money and coordinate with Arlington.

MR. LAMBERT: You’re correct. The limits of this project do not extend into Arlington County, so we’re not proposing improvements in Arlington County except for those associated with the shared-use paths that do connect on Walter Reed.

I understand what you’re saying. Your point is that a ten foot wide shared-use path on King Street then becomes a six foot wide sidewalk on Walter Reed heading into Arlington. That connection can be made by pedestrians or by bicycles, but it can be made one of two ways.

Pedestrians and bicyclists can then just cross the intersection of King and Beauregard to gain the shared-use path on the other side of Walter Reed which is what we would encourage them to do at the intersection.

Bicyclists can go onto the street at Walter
Reed, and pedestrians can continue on the sidewalk on Walter Reed.

MS. FISHER: Have you coordinated all this with Arlington?

MR. LAMBERT: Yes, we have. There’s representatives from Arlington here tonight, and we’ve coordinated with all the jurisdictions.

MS. FISHER: Do you have a written commitment that this is a go for Arlington and Fairfax?

MR. LAMBERT: We have coordinated with all the jurisdictions.

MS. FISHER: But have they accepted it, and are they going to pay for part of it?

MR. LAMBERT: They’re not going to pay for part of it. The City of Alexandria is completing the project, but have we coordinated with them? Yes. The answer is yes.

MS. FISHER: And is it okay?

MR. LAMBERT: Yes. We have been working with them this whole time, and they have seen the plans, reviewed the plans, and have had plenty of opportunities to provide input.

MS. FISHER: Is there anyone here from
Arlington or Fairfax?

MR. LAMBERT: There’s someone here from Arlington in the back, yes.

MR. BROACH: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Do you have a question in the back?

MR. BROACH: Yeah. I have problems and concerns. I support a lot of the concerns that I’ve heard so far, and now let me get to the point. Okay.

When this project takes place -- I thought about it and my thoughts might be a little bit different than earlier, but I don’t want to see entrances of any apartments being blocked in such a way that it’s going to cause a sacrifice. That’s one of the issues along there, along Beauregard.

The other one I have -- I want to include Route 7 eventually -- is I think there needs to be a traffic light at -- some people may disagree with me, but I see it this way -- at Beauregard where Branch Avenue comes out.

The reason I feel this way is, number one, it’s okay to some extent to have traffic advance some; but my concern is the pedestrian safety, and these cars coming
in and coming out I’ve seen some close calls happen.

MS. BAKER: Let me just say we agree with you, and a traffic signal at that intersection is proposed as part of this project.

MR. BROACH: Okay. Another thing I mean I don’t have so much problems with planting trees along Route 7, but there needs to be one thing, though.

They look neat and all that, but they need to be kind of over --

MS. BAKER: Absolutely.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- there’s tall people, and the other thing I’ve seen is some signs are already covered.

I’m talking about like Metro bus signs or what police call highway signs. We call them street signs because I know this because of getting ticketed in Arlington.

They call it a highway even though it’s not a highway, but not to have that covered or Metro bus or DASH or ART which stands for Arlington Transit.

Those signs should never be blocked. I know you all want the trees the same distance, but there might have to be one part of a tree sacrificed so these buses
can see these transit signs, so I think that raises concern and I want to voice that.

Now let me get back to this no blocking entrances of apartments or sacrificing them.

The reason I feel this way is knock on wood that there doesn’t have to be any emergency such as the 911 calls. When I say 911 I mean like police, fire, and rescue; but they may have to take place, and I think fire trucks and ambulances have to access those places if there’s a real severe emergency.

I don’t want to ever think of any fire happening, but if it has to happen -- it has to be said anyway -- I don’t want a fireman to take longer and have to stretch a fire hose to put a fire out or an ambulance to have to maze it’s away to get somebody in case they’re having a heart attack in an apartment building or the police have to maze their way around. That’s my concern.

I thank you for hearing me.

MS. BAKER: Well thank you very much. Let me try to address two of those.

The landscaping, certainly it is the goal that the trees will be limbed up and placed so they aren’t blocking any of the signs because certainly transit in
this corridor and throughout the city is something that’s very critical. We want to make sure that those signs are visible.

Also just for safety of pedestrians and vehicles and people who are turning, it’s very important to us that the trees be limbed up.

The second question is about the emergency vehicle access. Again that is a very important role for us. Any time we do roadway improvements, we coordinate in this case Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax for the emergency response because where you’re located here in this area and at King/Beauregard any of those three jurisdictions could respond.

So it’s very important, and we will certainly coordinate with them so they’d know how they’re going to be able to get in and our and what’s the best response and access for emergency vehicles as maintained to all the properties in this corridor. It’s part of the project.

MS. HELGET:  (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER:  You had a question?

MS. HELGET:  Yeah. Actually I have a comment and a question. My name is Kasha Helget, and I live actually behind the BRAC project on Seminary Road.
That project and this project are completely interconnected and if you talk about coordination, there’s a BRAC Advisory Group meeting right now that I would be at had it not been for this meeting which is directly in conflict. Not good coordination, and those meetings are planned way out. That’s the comment.

The question is I don’t know where you’re getting these numbers about improving traffic flow because with that project already Seminary Road is gridlock. It’s worse than 7. I travel both of them all the time.

It is only going to get worse. It is absolutely going to get worse from an Alexandria study that was reported at the BRAC meeting last month. It’s going to happen.

Where do you think these people are going to go? They’re going to come to King Street.

Not only that, one of the ideas being floated is to move all the Skyline traffic so we can only come down King Street because of the horrible gridlock as a result of the BRAC project. These studies are not completed. They’re ongoing.

You cannot say this right now because all of the stuff is interconnected, and it’s all going to get
worse. So until the studies are completed, until that
BRAC project goes in, how can you possibly propose better
traffic flow because it ain’t going to happen?

MS. BAKER: Let me answer those two questions.

Unfortunately, there is a BRAC Advisory Group
meeting tonight. That meeting was scheduled well in
advance, and this meeting is scheduled well in advance.

The City of Alexandria has a lot of planning
projects and things going on, and it’s very difficult for
us to find evenings when there isn’t a conflict with some
other meeting.

We have been coordinating with the staff.
They’re working on that to make sure that this information
is made available. These brochures and these comments
forms will be handed to the attendees of the meeting as
well.

We did notify them. That meeting started at
seven. This is at six to try to encourage people if they
could. I understand it’s a conflict, and we apologize for
that. Unfortunately we can’t always have everything in
the City of Alexandria on a different night.

Regarding the coordination on the projects,
the same traffic engineers that are working on this
project are working on the BRAC.

As I mentioned before, the consultants and the work that VDOT is doing and the IJR all of that is being coordinated by the same traffic engineering staff in the City of Alexandria.

Yes. Traffic is going to get bad. I don’t think any of us would disagree that traffic volumes in this area and throughout the city are only going to increase with time.

As we mentioned our studies show that the improvements that we’re proposing in this intersection do improve traffic flow in the future given the additional traffic that’s going to come.

Let me just be clear. This is the best really we’re going to get at King/Beauregard. As I said even in the future it’s still going to be a difficult and challenging intersection to get through.

It will be better than it is today. We can wait for more studies, and we can wait and see what development is going to come; but the only way we will be able to accommodate traffic is by widening it even further and having more impacts to right-of-way which is something we don’t really see as a positive and something the city
wants to support.

It sounds from the comments we’re getting here tonight, I don’t think other people in the community really think taking additional right-of-way is viable for this intersection so I am sensitive to what you’re saying. There is a lot of traffic. There’s going to be more traffic.

This is about as good as it’s going to get at King/Beauregard with what we’re proposing today without much more significant impacts to right-of-way.

MR. BURKE: (Indicating.)

MS. BAKER: Yes.

MR. BURKE: I’d like to challenge that proposition that you just made about this project will improve traffic.

My name is Tom Burke. I’ve been in Fairlington for thirty years. I’ve seen all the proposals that have come through about this intersection.

In the early days we worried about traffic. The city even worried about traffic. They couldn’t come up with a good solution. We didn’t like the ones they did.

Now we have this proposal which looks like the
emphasis has shifted to pedestrians and bikes, and we’ve
forgotten about traffic.

That intersection for pedestrians is not a
high use-pedestrian area. It’s not King and Saint Acca,
but the proposition of how you’re going to restructure the
intersection is going to make the traffic worse I’m
convinced.

First, the gentleman over here who was talking
about a slip lane on westbound King Street, that’s
important for a couple of cars and keeps the backup lower;
but the slip lane on the other side is a much more heavily
used slip lane to go southbound on Beauregard.

If you don’t have that, if you’re going to
force people to make right-hand turns and wait until the
light changes, you’ll have a backup way beyond Dawes. It
will be all the way up to the Target.

Second, with an emphasis on pedestrians you’re
putting in pedestrian walk buttons which is going to throw
off the timing completely.

Third, you have no through capacity proposed,
no increased flow capacity on King Street. The double,
left-turn lane is not necessary. By adding a few seconds
to that left turn arrow you can accommodate all the
traffic, but the traffic on King, the through traffic in both directions, capacity will not be increased.

The accommodation of all those things I think is going to make traffic worse. Like I said I live in Fairlington. On Saturday morning I see traffic backed up from that intersection to 395, sitting there.

This proposal does nothing to improve that. I think it’s an $11 million dollar boondoggle, and it should be rethought from the get go.

MS. BAKER: Well thank you for those comments. Again let me say our analyses does show that there is an improvement in traffic flow on King Street, and adding a couple of seconds again that just adds to the delay that people are already experiencing at this intersection.

This is a balance. This improvement is a balance between all modes of transportation. We know there’s going to be more traffic. It’s only going to become more difficult to get through the city and through this intersection in this urban area.

We can’t continue to just build roadway improvements to get cars through there. We have to take into consideration that over time the modes are going to have to shift or nobody’s ever going to be able to get
anywhere.

The City of Alexandria has made a decision with our transportation master plan to really focus on modes to include vehicles but not exclusively vehicles, to focus on pedestrians and bicycle improvements as well.

I think what you will see in this part of the city and certainly if you talk to our planning staff and you participate in the planning efforts that are going on, this area over time is it’s going to become much more of a pedestrian destination.

There are development plans. There’s a master plan going on for the Beauregard area that is going to become more of a transit-oriented, pedestrian-oriented development, so we don’t want to make decisions today that are going to preclude that.

Again these are modest improvements, but we have to balance the use of this intersection for vehicles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Emily, can you let the folks know how they can find out about future meetings on the Beauregard small area plan?

It does impact this community, and I think it’s important folks know how to find out when the next
MS. BAKER: That’s a very good point. We have a website which is in the handout. We can put a link on there to the Beauregard plan. A representative from our planning department is here, and we can get you that information before you leave.

If you want to go to our planning website, there’s a lot of information about how you can become involved and what the meetings are, but we will put on a link on our website to the planning website that talks about the Beauregard plan and when the meetings are going to be and how people can get involved.

DR. AMIN: I’m Dr. Amin. I work at the Beauregard Medical Center. With this plan we are going to lose our parking space.

I was wondering whether the city is planning to build a parking garage or a parking lot to help the businesses and residences who will be affected.

MS. BAKER: Again as I mentioned we are going to be doing appraisals --

DR. AMIN: What does appraisal mean?

MS. BAKER: Appraisals mean we hire an appraiser who is licensed to determine the value of the
property and --

DR. AMIN: I’m not talking about money. I’m talking about the parking space.

MS. BAKER: Right. I’m explaining to you what the process is. Somebody will determine what the value is of the land that the city is going to acquire for the project which includes impacts to the functionality of what’s going on.

It’s not just a square footage cost. It takes into consideration the uses of the property and how this property that we use in our project will impact the use of the existing property.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you just answer the question?

MS. BAKER: I am trying to get to that. He asked me how this is going to happen.

Then once that value is determined, we will be working with the property owners to see. Again I can’t tell you now because the federal and state guidelines prohibit us from getting into specific details.

MS. FISHER: Is anyone here from VDOT?

MS. BAKER: We have a representative here who can speak to the right-of-way process.
MS. FISHER: Is there a VDOT representative here tonight, or are they at the other meeting?

MS. BAKER: Again, the parking is something that as we get involved into more specific details we can talk about what it’s impact will be.

DR. AMIN: How are you going to compensate for the parking space? Where will you create new parking space for us? That’s what I want to know.

MS. BAKER: Again it will have to be negotiated as an impact to the property?

DR. AMIN: Negotiated, but how? What do you do?

MS. FISHER: Emily, is there someone from VDOT here tonight to explain to these folks the guidelines and criteria --

MS. BAKER: There’s somebody from VDOT here.

MS. FISHER: Who can speak right now because they set the guidelines for this. Who’s from VDOT? Not from the City of Alexandria, from VDOT, because I suspect the VDOT people are at the BRAK meeting.

MR. RAUT: I’m with VDOT.

MS. FISHER: You’re with VDOT. Fine. Ask him your question because they’re the ones who are setting the
guidelines for this. It’s not the city. She said it. It’s VDOT.

MS. BAKER: Do you want to try to address the question, or we can have our right-of-way expert address the question? Really we can have you talk about it in much more detail.

MR. RAUT: Property values are assessed depending upon the area, the type of land use, and it’s not one blanket cost. It can vary from one part of the city to the other.

They have their equations. They assess the property values. Now as she mentioned awhile back, their word is not the final word. An offer is generally made to the person whose property they wish to acquire.

DR. AMIN: I’m talking about the parking space. How will you create parking space for us? I don’t want to be compensated financially. I’m not talking about that.

MR. RAUT: It’s like we can take a person’s -- let’s say their main entrance. Instead of us giving them an entrance, we pay them. If you want to go and build it, we give you the cheapest one.

MR. KAUFFMAN: I think it should be sort of
blaming the obvious. Behind the medical practice and behind the shopping center at the end there is the Tauber Foundation. The late Laszlo Tauber owns it. These two organizations, the donors of all those businesses there, are getting squeezed.

It’s blatant what’s going on. Has anyone asked the Tauber Foundation if they’re willing to loan a little bit of land? Perhaps they can put a path through there. It is a foundation.

I sit here. This gentleman, attorney, stares me down, but he doesn’t say a whole lot. I think there’s someone from the press.

That’s really what’s going on here. So maybe they’re communicating with you, but they don’t own those buildings. They don’t own that facility.

They have a direct opposite interest, so you’re wiping out a medical practice for twenty-seven years. You’re wiping out the businesses at the end of the street, and the land is sitting right there with the Tauber Foundation. You could save all this by running a path through them.

MR. RAUT: Let’s put it this way. You will be compensated for the parking lots. The people and the
businesses that are losing their parking lots, they can
acquire property from the person, from the foundation that
had the land --

MS. BAKER: I think we need to move on from
this discussion. I don’t think it’s productive. We’ve
been hearing a lot of the same comments, and they’re
significant. They’re very serious and we’re very
sensitive to this, but I don’t feel like any more
information that’s being added to it.

We do have a representative from our
consultant who is doing the right-of-way acquisition who
can answer more specific questions about how the process
will happen.

Again I don’t think we’re getting any more on
this. So are there any other questions that aren’t
related to right-of-way acquisition?

We’ll take a couple more questions. Then if
people are still interested, we do have a lot of people
who will be happy to go around to the tables.

DR. KAUFFMAN: Another question that’s
unrelated to the previous. You talked about speeding up
traffic by shortening the cycles. You talk about
pedestrian and bicycle safety.
Now you tell me how we’re going to make
pedestrians that can’t walk across the street get across
the street if we’re shortening the cycle.

How are we going to get them people across the
street?

And you’re taking away my practice, and you
have EMS bringing them over to my office plus I won’t be
even be there to take care of them.

I’d like to ask the representative of VDOT is
it really safer to make a U-turn at an intersection than
it is to make a left-hand turn to a business?

MR. RAUT: A U-turn is safer.

DR. KAUFFMAN: By shorting the cycle, how many
cars are going to be backed up waiting to make U-turns?

MR. RAUT: Rights in and right outs are the
safest. Left ins and left outs are the most difficult.
It’s much safer. Again a person will come to a traffic
light and will stop at the traffic light --

DR. KAUFFMAN: You know when I first came to
Alexandria I made a U-turn on King Street and got a ticket
for making a U-turn.

MS. BAKER: Thank you all. We certainly are
happy to answer everybody’s questions. Staff will be
here, and the consultants will be over here at the
stations. I appreciate your patients and thank you for
coming this evening.

Now let me emphasize we will be recording the
comments that you’ve made verbally, but we still very much
encourage you to write your comments down so that they are
recorded in the public record.

(The following comments were read into the
record.)

DR. PULIZZI: I’m Dr. John Pulizzi,
P-u-l-i-z-z-i, from the Beauregard Medical Center. I’ve
been in this practice to care for the citizens of
Alexandria in Northern Virginia for the past twenty-six
years.

At the present time the entire nation is
involved in a bitter debate concerning access to health
care. I might add that the debate is taking place in an
unprecedented economic downturn.

When the King Street/Beauregard project was
originally drawn up, circumstances for health care and the
economy were much more rosy.

This plan has not been changed since the
original concept. It seems to me that the City of
Alexandria would be much better served by directing precious resources into enhancing patient access to medical and health facilities like the Beauregard Medical Center.

This project will terribly limit 30,000 patients from gaining access to primary medical care and in the process possibly cause the medical center to disappear entirely. That really would be rationing medical care. Thank you.

MS. CREGGER: Okay. First my name is Mary Cregger, and I am the daughter of Gerard T. Hopkins. I’m a resident of Alexandria.

There are some things I’ve been concerned about in this particular meeting are that the welcome sign says welcome, public hearing, King Street/Beauregard Street Improvement Project.

However when I asked if it will be a formal question and answer, I was told that there would not be. When I asked if there would be minutes of the proceedings, they told me that there would not be and to talk to the Court Reporter which is not the same as minutes of a meeting. So I think that that’s not very clear.
I came here prepared to be heard, and it felt there was a lot of resistance to the people asking questions and being answered.

The second thing that -- another thing I found disturbing was in the proposed view landscape perspective which is one of the visual aids -- it’s looking east from Beauregard Street -- it’s actually inaccurate which I feel like it’s deceptive to the participants of this meeting.

This particular board does not show the proposed bus stop. In addition it shows an access into that property that they will not be actually on that property.

There are two access points being taken from my family’s property, and there will be no access on Route 7. However that drawing shows that there will be access which is not true.

Something that I didn’t understand was two years ago there was a citizen information meeting, and apparently one of the two biggest concerns was a blocking of access to properties and the elimination of parking.

Basically two-thirds of the access to my family’s property is being removed, and over twenty-two parking spaces are being eliminated which is one-third of
the parking for our family business.

I’m concerned that the City of Alexandria will not be compensating people for the value of parking. Parking is really valuable to businesses and negatively impacts businesses in that whole intersection.

I’d like to point out that there was a BRAK Advisory Planning Group meeting scheduled at the exact same time as this meeting.

The speaker of this meeting said that these two development plans are being coordinated by the same traffic engineers and are closely connected to the larger plan.

For them to schedule them for the same time it seems irresponsible. It seems to be bad planning, and it seems to not allow the public to be able to participate in things that affects that intersection.

There’s something I said during the meeting that I would like to reiterate on which is that it seems to me that it’s taken Alexandria over thirty years to get to this point in the developmental plan.

It began in 1970 when I was three years old, and they’re saying now that the shared-use walkway is needed because in the future it will connect to a larger
network of bicycle paths.

I would like to know when that is because I do feel that there is no reason for businesses to lose their parking during the time before that actually does happen.

If it is implemented we can continue to have parking for our businesses and not have our values decreased until Alexandria City is actually prepared and able to construct the larger network of bike paths.

MS. EHRlich: I have a very short message.

Okay. We’re told about the widening of King Street between Chesterfield and Walter Reed which is Beauregard.

It is being proposed that the above section of King Street be divided to add two turn lanes with a median in the center.

Our property comprising a Wendy restaurant, a 7-Eleven store, and a Taco Bell restaurant confronts the north side of this stretch of King Street, and the main entrance where the small shopping center is on King Street.

The proposal medium would cut off direct access to half the customers of these three properties, namely for all traffic on King Street flowing from west to east which actually in this economy would be a total
disaster to the owners and the employees.

We would request that since two left-turn lanes are being established from King Street into Walter Reed that these same lanes also be designed as a U-turn lane, and this would somewhat reduce the harm done by the median to our property. Thank you, and it’s signed by Verna and Bernard Ehrlich.

MS. CHOI: Yeah. I have a business on 4622 King Street since 1999, January. I mean my life is there. That is the only one I have for my life.

Now the project kind of tear down and destroy our business. I don’t know what is going to happen, but kind of their project looking good but to me there is no entrance, no exit at all, and I can’t even drive around the building.

Who can come? That is just a few people who walk down to get in the store. That means no business at all. With my short limited language, I want to appear my situation.

MS. WILSON: She feels like this was her lifelong savings, and then losing job and losing business, and once the construction starts she just have to walk out empty handed. There’s nothing that she can do anything
about, so she’s feeling really, really bad about that.

MR. LOWENSTERN: I think the new construction will make the sidewalks prettier. I happen to live in the Larchmont Apartments, and it will make it impossible for me to make a left turn out of the main entrance.

The entrance I can make a left turn out is basically a single-file road so it’s kind of more difficult for the amount of traffic that’s going to be on it now.

Because of the location of the Fridays and the impossibility for people to make a left turn into it, it’s going to change some traffic patterns including that military installation attached to small businesses in the Fridays complex.

So again you’re going to have some backup in the mornings on King Street going west, and again some people will be wanting to do weird U-turns and other things on Beauregard to King which is going to make it a little tricky, but again we’re in a recession.

It’s a beautifying project. It’s putting some construction people in business, but I’m not sure this is really a necessary project to do as far as the scope of it. Again it’s going to make the neighborhood weird with
all these weird boundaries and kind of medians that will be high.

It’s going to take away a business that does a fairly good job, Five Guys, and make it almost impossible with no parking. I just think basically this is a waste of money in these economic times. Thank you.

MS. SEXTON: My name is Mary Anne Sexton. Most of you here know me. I am the manager of Beauregard Medical Center. As manager I feel responsible for all my employees and the partners that I work for.

I have been with the group for thirty years. The one thing I have learned about doctors is that they don’t really pick a year to retire like most folks do. Healing and caring seems to be built into their fiber. They want to work as long as they are physically able.

Now I find myself in a dilemma, not being able to help. This situation is brought about by the City of Alexandria, which we support and pay real estate, license, and personal property taxes.

Our practice will be curtailed and possibly closed down by the actions of the city. By acquiring land in front of our building for the King/Beauregard project, our parking lot will be cut in half. That is not the only
issue. Our ingress and egress will be made more
difficult, making it dangerous for our employees and our
patients.

I am here to plead with you not to disrupt our
business in this way. We were here two years ago with
this same plan, and we were promised by the city engineers
that they would work with us. Nothing changed.

We give much to the community. Obviously, the
city does not appreciate what we do. We want to implore
you to really take another look at this project. Don’t
waste our tax dollars.

The thousands of patients that frequent our
practice every year will not forget how you have wasted
their money, if there is no practice there or we can’t see
the volume that we do now or can’t take the walk-ins,
which would otherwise end up at Alexandria Hospital
emergency room which is already overburdened.

Now is the time for the city to give back to
us. Thank you for listening.

* * * * *

(Whereupon, at approximately 8:30 o’clock
p.m., the hearing in the above-entitled matter was
concluded.)
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, KATHY L. HANNUM, a Verbatim Reporter, do hereby certify that I took the stenographic notes of the foregoing proceedings which I thereafter reduced to typewriting; that the foregoing is a true record of said proceedings; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were held; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

____________________________
KATHY L. HANNUM
Verbatim Reporter