



## North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update

### Advisory Group Meeting #6

Monday, August 29, 2016 | 7:00-9:00PM | Station at Potomac Yard

#### AG and Public Comment Summary

##### Advisory Group General Discussion on Framework Options

- Strongly support staff recommended alternative – Option 2
- To date, we have focused a lot on data/#s (eg. acreage of open space, etc.). As a next step, I look forward to discussing quality of the place.
- To what extent does the transportation study lock us in? For example, could the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route be split, and can that be factored into the transportation model at a later date?
- We need to make a decision regarding the framework so that the transportation study can proceed. If something negative comes out of study, we can subsequently adjust.
- Like the potential of splitting BRT; but if transportation study models BRT all on Potomac Ave., then will we be locked into that?
- AG will need to look in more depth at Crescent Park once we have selected a framework.
- Interested in constructability. With regard to the stormwater pond – if JBG doesn't move forward with development of Phase 1 at the same time as Metro construction, then with Option 1 the City will be forced to pay to move the stormwater pond, whereas with Option 2, metro construction can proceed whether or not JBG proceeds.
- Appreciate and support the rationale for Option 2; the staff presentation addressed concerns raised by AG.
- Concern continues to be having Potomac Avenue in the middle of the development in that it divides the neighborhood.
- There are many unknowns, such as JBG's timing, the stormwater pond, the school site. There are too many reasons to NOT go with Option 2.
- Appreciate that Option 2 allows for flexibility w/Potomac Avenue width in phase 2.
- Option 2 is preferred; that said, it is important that we evaluate the economic delta between 2010 Plan + Opt. 2 in terms of what the developer is expected to deliver.
- Concerned about loss of coherence with the JBG proposal in terms of land use as compared to 2010 Plan. Understand constraints, but needs to be discussed. Also concerned about the impact to the retail/town center concept that was in the 2010 Plan, and the loss of density and office use.
- Concerned that keeping Potomac Avenue where it is will impact the pedestrian environment.
- One option to consider is making Potomac Avenue the BRT-only street, then having a 2 lane through road next to PY Park.
- If Potomac Avenue remains in place, as shown in Option 2, JBG will save significant money, since they will not have to construct a new road. This funding could instead go towards much needed performance space.

- Potomac Avenue in Option 2 (current alignment) will not necessarily divide PY into two communities. For example, Clarendon has a big road running through it and what ties it together is access to Metro and significant amenities / restaurants, etc.
- Option 2 is superior to Option 1 with open space, time to market, economics.
- The BRT Map in 2010 Plan is preferable because it stays on Route 1 longer and therefore can improve ridership # s. Would like to see this approach considered sooner.
- Value capture from Option 2 of JBG not building new Potomac Avenue could go towards building BRT on Route 1.
- Constructability + timing – does the stormwater pond issue render Option 1 implausible?
- Creating a sense of place supersedes all else.

### **Community Members - Public Comment:**

- Priority should be to create a sense of place/community – balancing the data/numbers analysis with qualitative placemaking. I prefer Option 2, but with some concerns remaining: 1) The width of Potomac Avenue. – already have Rte.1 don't want another one. Why can't the transportation study start with a narrower road and widen if necessary? 2) Concern that the Park Road in Option 2 will feel like an alley and not be inviting.
- Need to consider roads into Arlington, don't want to create a choke point w/Option1 (wide in Alexandria, narrow in Arlington).
- Andy Van Horn, JBG, NPY Developer: JBG is excited to be taking on this project. The AG/community process has improved the project already since the proposal was presented in April. JBG's history and successes have been in placemaking, and Option 2 is the best catalyst for NPY as a whole. JBG does not like the suburban character of Potomac Avenue in Option 1; likes the flexibility for Potomac Avenue in Option 2, likes the additional open space in Option 2. Working hard to start as soon as possible in order to be concurrent with Metro.

### **AG Final Comments**

- Ryan – Option 2 is the appropriate way forward subject to the transportation study. Creates momentum for success. It will be important to address Potomac Avenue early on, and important to favor BRT traffic/ridership. People who choose to live there will have fewer cars, with benefits to the NPY development as a whole.
- Michael Ch. – Favor Option 2.
- Bill – Not wholly enthusiastic about Option 2, but can see the merits of it over Option 1. Caution against building a new Route 1 with Potomac Avenue. In general, development proposal seems suburban and “mall-ish.” Perhaps we should consider another through street. Need to look carefully at the back of the development.
- Mike C – Favor Option 2; Keep the movie theater!
- Colleen – Favor Option 2. Process point: workshops should not be held during the work day.
- Garrett – Main perspective has been: do no harm to the 2010 Plan. Feel that Option 2 is very consistent with the 2010 Plan – with some tweaks and improvements. It will

be important to put some parameters around it, to be sure that in Phase 2 -3, there are clear expectations for the developer and City.

- Jeremy – Still think that the 2010 is more urban. Prefer Option 2, but will require that we establish strong guidelines to ensure it is urban. Like that the Metro is closer to the development in Option 2. Option 1's fatal flaw is the width of Potomac Avenue that would be built in Phase I. Still need to work out kinks with Option 2. For example, smooth out the kinks in Park Road. Great that developers, citizens and staff are pushing for narrower streets.
- Nancy – Tonight has been the most constructive conversation on the topic. Very important to provide framework and guidance for future phases. Very much support staff recommendations for Option 2. Need to ensure that there is also some flexibility in future for changing market conditions.
- Jon – Prefers Option 2 (see copy of written testimony submitted, posted on website)
- Patricia – Prefers Option 1 (see copy of written testimony submitted, posted on website).
- Stephen – Remains in favor of Option 1. Key criteria for a successful plan. 1) Sense of place. Should be dynamic (individual parks like Metro square to be examined later); liked the completion of a sweeping curvilinear Potomac Avenue and PY Park. Option 1 could still work, if BRT is located elsewhere. 2) Maximize impact of Metro Station – density, height, land use. 3) Accommodate near term phasing issues without compromising integrity of Plan. Phase I should be part of a coherent cohesive larger development. 4) Achieve walkability. Need to make planning decisions that reinforce that goal. 2010 was walkable. Potomac Avenue is the test case. Act now to rectify the identified issue, rather than writing guidelines to address it later. Will remain in favor of Option 1, and share with PC for additional comments.
- Bill – I agree with some of Stephen's points, and I think we can still address those issues identified with the process.
- Nancy – Process question re Planning Commission work session and the AG Chair's role: Will he feel comfortable sharing the consensus of the AG?
- Stephen – Staff will provide the briefing to the PC – process, comments to date, and the fact that there was 95% consensus at tonight's meeting. He/Stephen will also share consensus with PC; as well as his separate thoughts on relative merits of the options.