



Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan

City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Zoning
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COMMUNITY MEETING

Monday, January 12, 2009

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Durant Center

Introduction

Faroll Hamer, Director of Planning and Zoning, provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the community meeting is to provide a status update on the establishment of the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) and the Open Space and Community Amenities Funds and progress on plan implementation.

Ms. Hamer discussed the handout with the list of tasks that were recommended in the plan. She explained that there are some tasks that could go forward without funding, such as designating the parking district and transportation management plan district.

Ms. Hamer stated that the establishment of the Open Space and Community Amenity Funds would be going to the Planning Commission for the February Hearing. The establishment of the IAG will go to City Council at the end of this month at its Legislative Session.

Update on Implementation Advisory Group

Ms. Hamer provided an update on the establishment of the Implementation Advisory Group.

- The framework for the IAG was established in the Braddock Plan. Council required the IAG be set up within 90 days of approval of the Braddock East Plan.
- The docket item that is going to City Council will be available on Friday, January 23, 2009. The docket will include a memo recommending the composition of the IAG that is a representative cross-section of the community.
- The City Manager will invite people to be members of the IAG.
- The role of the IAG will be to give the City Council and City staff guidance on how to spend the funds generated from the Community Amenities and Open Space funds within the planning area.
- The first meeting of the IAG will be late February 2009 or early March 2009.

The community requested the IAG be comprised of more residents who live in the planning area and people who were active participants in the planning

process. It was also requested that the City maintain transparency throughout the formulation of the group. P&Z staff will send the docket item through e-news.

Status of Development Projects

Mr. Jeff Farner, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning for Urban Design, provided a development update.

- Madison is going through the final site approval process
- Payne Street is going through a final site approval process.
- Jaguar still intends to go forward.

In response to a question posed by an attendee regarding the location of townhomes in the Payne Street project, Mr. Farner stated that the site has been approved for multi-family flats that will resemble townhomes from the outside.

Status of Open Space and Community Amenities Fund

Open Space Example: Eisenhower East

Mr. Farner provided a brief overview of Eisenhower East as the model for funding open spaces in the planning area.

- Each developer paid their fair share based on total square footage at build out.
- The cost of the park included land acquisition costs, grading, and other improvements.
- It is a dedicated fund solely used for improvements in Carlyle.

The community asked for the total cost of the park. Mr. Farner stated that staff will include it in the materials for the website.

Braddock Park Concept

Mr. Farner stated that staff had to consider a conceptual park plan to develop an estimated total cost for construction of the park.

- The conceptual plan should not be considered as the final design. The actual park design will be later in the implementation process with input from the IAG.
- The preference in the Plan for the park is the block that is bounded by Fayette, Wythe, Henry, and Pendleton streets. This block is currently occupied by commercial use and Post Office.
- Since the plan was approved staff has looked at the Post Office building and given its useful life, it may not be financially feasible to tear down the building.
- Staff also took into consideration the community's desire to maintain the retail functions of the Post Office.
- In addition to the difference in costs and feasibility, the city is also considering the sustainability aspects of retaining the existing building with a desired community service and balancing it with the cost to demolish the existing building and build a new building.

- The City has had discussions with the commercial property owner the southernmost parcel and the United States Postal Service regarding the Post Office property. The City will continue these discussions.

Community members expressed concern about the lack of buffer to the park on Route 1 and asked about the total cost of amenities at the park.

******Post meeting note: After the meeting, staff discovered an error in the calculation of the estimated size of the park. The revised estimated size of the park is 45,600 square feet (>1 acre), which is consistent with the Plan recommendation to have at least a one acre park in the planning area. ******

Open Space Fund (OSF)

Mr. Farner provided an overview of the Open Space Fund

- Staff has had conversations with the development community. The development community has expressed concern about the pro-rata share given current economic conditions.
- There is consideration of having a catalyst phase for developer contributions that is slightly less for development that occurs within a certain time period, as yet undetermined, then escalating in the future to capture the reduced developer contributions during the catalyst phase.

Community Amenities Fund (CAF)

Mr. Farner provided an overview of the Community Amenities Fund

- The Community Amenities Fund is available for street improvement projects, such as streetscape, and street furniture.
- The Community Amenities Fund does not include streets that will be redeveloped by private developers or the streets that are contiguous with the park. Streetscape improvements adjacent to the park will be funded through the Open Space Fund.
- Staff will be looking to the IAG for assistance with prioritizing the projects to be funded by the CAF.

Questions and Answer Session

1. What is going to the Commission in February?
The formula for the developer contributions for the open space fund and community amenities fund will be going to the Planning Commission in February.

Post meeting note: the formula for the developer contributions for the open space and community amenities fund will be going to the Planning Commission in March.

2. Will the formula be compared to how the Eisenhower East was calculated?
Yes. The staff report will include discussion on how it compares to Eisenhower East.

3. Could you discuss the money that was allocated for business retention through the Community Amenities Fund?

As described in the plan, a streetscape and community amenities fund is recommended to provide funds for streetscape improvements and other desired community amenities, such as bulb-outs and related intersection improvements and undergrounding of utilities. Money for this fund would also be used for retail recruitment and enhancement not only along Queen Street but also in other emerging retail areas around the metro and elsewhere in the plan area. The plan originally estimated that \$4-6 million would be spent on those items. After more consideration, staff projects that this number will be considerably less for a number of reasons, including that the City will work with the Small Business Development Center and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP), which currently has recruitment and business assistance programs in place.

4. Can you provide a little more detail about how the IAG will be selected?

The IAG will be a representative cross-section of the community. Staff will look to the civic associations in the neighborhood to provide recommendations; in addition, staff will look at who participated in the planning process. Staff's recommendation is that the City Manager appoints the IAG members. All IAG meetings will be open to the public.

5. There was discussion that the City Council will rededicate the City's Open Space Fund for stormwater improvements. How will this affect the city's matching fund for the neighborhood?

Staff is unaware of any plans to rededicate the City's Open Space Fund, however, if it were to occur, that action has no bearing on the City's commitment to providing matching funds for improvements in the Braddock neighborhood consistent with the plan. The City's match to the developer contributions will be in the form of capital improvement program requests (CIP) that are subject to approval by City Council. CIP requests are reviewed annually and must compete with other desired projects for city funding.

6. Can you provide an update on James Bland?

The first phase of the project will be going to the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review at the next work session in January. The streetscape will include improvements on all blocks that front the property, street trees on First Street and undergrounding utilities. The sidewalks will be 6 feet wide concrete and 6 feet wide for street trees.

7. Will there be any beautification projects along Route 1?

Most beautification along Route 1 will occur as redevelopment occurs. The plan focuses on walking streets; however, the IAG may recommend focusing on other streets as well.