

## Route 1 South Housing Affordability Strategy

Wednesday, February 28, 2018

### Day 3 Community Meeting – Small Group Exercise Community Feedback

#### Table 1

- West side traffic – diversions from S Patrick (S Fayette)
- Never have less than 215 affordable housing units
- Developers opening a percentage of units as affordable housing
- Street parking as “residents only” from 6pm-7am, for example
- “Workforce affordability” affordable housing
- “Setbacks” instead of “flat walls” for visual affect – variation of height
- Explore opportunities for retail along S Alfred (small convenience store)
- Wolfe street – open space along Wolfe/S Alfred
- Activity between east and west sides of neighborhood
- Elevate crossing along Wilkes crossing after s Patrick
- Look closely at connectivity of the parkway – gibbon – Patrick – beltway
- Rapid transit; other “people movers” around the city
- What type of city do we want to be? What does the future look like?

#### Table 2

- Concern over overall traffic volume and larger transportation issues and pedestrian safety.
- Do not label neighborhood as “Route 1 South”; residents do not identify with Route 1
- How will commercial sites on east side of Route 1 be accessed if redevelopment occurs?
- Cars back up on Franklin going East in AM towards S. Columbus
- Is there a potential to examine light timing?
- Don’t forget to consider all the traffic going to South Washington Street
- Important to preserve affordable housing, but allow the minimum amount of additional density to accomplish that goal
- Like townhouses on gas station sites.
- Make open space at Wilkes feel more welcoming to all users.
- Don’t charge affordable housing residents for parking.
- Install “Welcome to Alexandria” sign on Route 1.
- Some neighbors have reported concern over lack of time to provide input.
- The intersection of Gibbon and Alfred is a big problem.
- One single access point from Gibbon to the new envisioned buildings could be difficult due to backups on the street.
- Should open space on Wilkes be opened up to allow vehicular access to properties?

#### Table 3

- Concerns about Alfred Street Baptist Church units
- Tools to become property owners

- Traffic pedestrian crossing; 3-7 congestion
- No traffic enforcement
- Alfred St car speed
- Wilkes st cross walk – safety pedestrian
- Pedestrian traffic
- Consider Senior housing
- Options for allowing families in 22 church units to remain in Old Town West
- Like the illustrative plan

#### Table 4

- How many total units would be built with redevelopment?
- Were the property owners encouraged to redevelop?
- Why are the other commercial properties part of this process?
- Is there imminent redevelopment or eminent domain on the other redevelopment blocks (gas stations)?
- High crime area at the gas stations because of easy access to 495. Also, nuisance rats in trash
- Any thoughts about redeveloping the 7-11?
- Heights - would the proposed concept restrict the heights as shown? i.e., the 55' and 45' within a block
- East-West bike network link
- All streets are dangerous to cross as pedestrians
  - Previous efforts for improvements have not progressed
- Franklin Street issues
- Any potential treatments we could apply just off the beltway? Rumble strips?
- Regional traffic is already terrible with additional density will be worse
- Would suspect that many people moving into new development don't have cars
- Not the case in the SF homes – all have cars
- Millennials tend not to have cars
- But once people have kids, they get cars
- Zoning is important/land use if there's small/micro neighborhood uses – won't encourage traffic
- I drive from Gibbon to the Lee Center every day because so difficult to get there by foot – unsafe; lawless zone
- Short term tweaks can be beneficial
- Maybe an alternative crossing of Route 1; tunnel?
- Traffic studies in isolation rather than holistic
- Volume and safety – law breaking dangerous to cross the street
  - Even trash trucks and school buses
- Hard as a pedestrian to see around parked cars – curb extensions tighten turns
- Number of cars, level of aggression
- Need more traffic enforcement
- Is there any possibility that the City would spend the money to buy the units instead of property owners redeveloping?

- What about grade separation of Route 1 - enhance crossing
- Support the scenario proposed to retain the units – heights seem manageable
- Concerned about the potential impact on Lyles crouch
- Really hard to believe the forecast student numbers
- Lyles Crouch already very crowded; concerned about exacerbating the issue
- Households south of Jefferson have increasing numbers of school-aged kids – more doubling up. Families staying.
- Ped safety
  - Washington Street is also an issue – crossing, right turns at Franklin, Gibbon, Greene
- Consider prohibiting left turn onto Columbus from Alfred Street Baptist Church (beltway)
- Concern about permanent displacement
- Other options for saving the affordable housing – are there other tools?
- Does this level of density preserve the current level of affordable housing?
- Need community green space

#### Table 6

- Intersection: don't block the box (ex, NYC)
  - Alfred at Gibbon and Wilkes
  - Enforcement so not blocking intersections
- Issue: parking Sunday on Alfred
- Missing issue: connecting communities likes Wilkes Street
- Visual/physical connections – maybe thru building architecture
- Does Route 1 narrow N.B.? same width – however, parking on both sides
- Why not take away travel lane on Route 1 - traffic volume
- Expansion of Alfred Street Baptist Church affecting circulation
- VDOT owns right-of-way south of Franklin
- Would Wilkes St be improved if redevelopment doesn't occur?
- Is affordable housing provided for free?
- Term of affordability?
- Moving forward after committing to vision?
- Can it redevelop into townhouses?
- Turn on Franklin from Route 1 problematic – unsafe crossing Franklin and Alfred; flashing lights or stop sign needed
- Does density scenario look comfortable? Bringing out diversity to outside culture and vibrancy
- Playgrounds and open space
- Reconnecting Wolfe at least ped/bike bridge?
- Ped bridge at Jefferson

#### Table 7 – Some residents of Old Town West

- Very concerned about being displaced
- Is there an opportunity to buy my unit like in DC?
- How soon will this happen?

- Everyone in the 22 units will be gone by 2020
  - If we do have to move will we be given affordable housing?
  - Alfred Street Baptist Church does a whole lot – it seems like they can do what they want to do
  - Additional density to preserve affordability
    - That's how it's done now
    - Wouldn't want to ?? by because it's time for change
    - It's ok to have mixed affordable units with market rate units
    - Church bought the properties to preserve affordable housing
    - The properties are falling apart and need to be redone
  - Not concerned about heights
  - Old Town is overcrowded
  - Can't lose any more trees
  - Stuffing buildings
  - Push buildings back along streets with lots of traffic for more open areas
  - Would have a problem with a scenario that didn't put the units back
1. Ok with additional density if the 215 units come back (it's the way it's done now)
  2. Ok with increased height
  3. More setback along busy streets (Gibbon)
  4. Properties are falling apart and need to be rebuilt
  5. Include pedestrian safety measures at Columbus and Franklin
  6. More open space centrally located to have more community cohesion ... we go to Lyles Crouch or Windmill Park but would like to stay in the neighborhood to play with kids
  7. Relocation is unclear need more information about resources. Neighbors are like family here. We're nervous.

#### Table 8

- What's happening with the gas station locations?
- What's the overall timeframe?
  - In one year the term of the affordable housing contracts expire, then renew annually
- Cross walks study the feasibility to be usable, functional, user friendly to all
- Cross walks – audible prompting
- Bureaucratic process for rezoning? Timeline?
- Allowable heights of new buildings?
- Is it possible to allow parking on Patrick and or S Henry?
- How will street parking for visitors to the city be handled?
- Transportation studies – is this being addressed simultaneously and or separately?
- Strong interest in traffic management
- Safety, enforcement, pedestrian safety are critical matters and needs to be addressed asap
- What is the criteria on what AMI for affordable housing is determined?

- Consider the open spaces and porosity of buildings and visual evident of entering Alexandria
- Affordable housing options – 1 and 2 are prohibitively expensive
- How will the city budget/pay for any units that cannot be replaced by the new buildings?
- Is HUD committed based on history of project?
- Who will be financing the improvements to streetscapes, open spaces?
- Particular traffic/safety concerns: Gibbon and S Columbus; Gibbon and Route 1; Franklin and Route 1
- Concerns about height limits at 50', 45' limits in terms of precedents
- Streetscape improvements should be balanced along S Patrick and throughout the projects
- What happens with BAR oversight when the building is half way in half way out of historic district

#### Table 9

- Surprised how low school generation rates are
- Concerned about proposed no parking on Alfred St
- Love to see Route 1 narrowed
- Allow developers to count double row of trees as required open space
- Will people buy residential property on Route 1?
- Private schools could be syphoning students, need for additional elementary school