

VISION 2030 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Open Space, Sustainability and Community Amenities Session

Discussion Comments February 8, 2008

The following is a brief summary of handwritten notes taken by the JHU consultant team during the morning session of the February 8 community workshop. These comments were expressed both as questions and as statements of concern. The JHU consultant team has attempted to record the comments as originally stated during the meeting and have organized these notes by topic below.

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GENERAL

- How do you combine big building/research facilities with these natural systems?
- Will this work here? Bedrock, water table (for example, parking below a green roof)
- What are the environmental constraints and opportunities? - Please list.
- Site tour. What is Belward like? There should be a site tour set up to review site with the public and stakeholders.
- How do you know if the project is environmentally successful?
- For inspiration and good precedents look at:
 - o Montgomery Village stormwater pond
 - o Howard Hughes campus
 - o Bad examples = Wheaton Plaza
 - o County has learned a lot – now take further

CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION

- Historic farm - not yet fully addressed
 - o Acknowledge setting of historic buildings, integrate into community
 - o Opportunity to do something innovative with community - agriculture
- Concept of farm house as interpretive museum is too conventional and uninteresting.
 - o More innovative idea is sought
 - o Community-supported agriculture was suggested
- Cultural resources
 - o Show historic site and acknowledge and reference historic heritage and landscape resources.
 - o Reflect history
 - Historic preservation background
 - o Not a lot of this farm history left
 - Need to preserve
- Historic preservation should be integrated into design where appropriate
- Agricultural heritage/scenery/history as important aspect of the landscape and should be integrated into the master plan
 - o Preserve rural context as well as farm buildings
- Work with Historic Commission in developing site design
- Preserve character of property including:



- Rural quality, white fence, etc.
- Need to maintain, respect Ms. Banks' wishes
- Preserve specimen trees
 - Need a survey?
 - County regulating preservation of trees?

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE

- Better bike lanes - along roads and crossing lanes
 - Southeast corner (at CVS) is dangerous
 - Bike lanes will reduce traffic
- Improve existing large roads to be more pedestrian friendly:
 - Muddy Branch, Rt. 28, Key West
 - What changes can be made to make roads safer/better for pedestrians:
 - Sidewalks?
 - Street parking?
- Additional input from an absentee community member (sent via e-mail):
Would like ...
“to have a bike path within the campus boundaries that runs parallel to Rt. 28 and to Great Seneca (straight one) that connects with the internal bike paths of the Lake Lands and Washingtonian woods, so that people could use the bike path to travel up Rte 28 and use it for commuting to work and doing errands.

Rte 28 and Great Seneca both have bike paths along the road, but they are not pleasant for commuting because they are so close to rush hour traffic. Bike paths that run within the properties, would be used more frequently, feel safer and provide better accessibility for bikers and walkers. People want to be able to walk to a destination. Just having a circular path would not cut down on traffic, if it did not hook up with other paths...

P.S. I work at GWU on Executive Blvd in Rockville and live on McDonald Chapel Drive (across from the Pizza hut on QO) behind the new Chevy chase Bank. In my office of 50 people, About 1/3 of the people that I know commute to our location from the Quince Orchard/ north Potomac area.

I hope to one day be able to commute to work by bike and ride through the Kentlands, Lakelands, Washingtonian Woods, Belward campus, to Wooton Parkway to Tower Oaks to Executive.”

TRANSPORTATION

- Density and traffic created in plan
 - Will it overwhelm the green building efforts?
 - Will scientists really bike?
- How do you encourage people not to drive?
- Where is all of the parking going to be located?
 - More people = more cars = more spaces

RECREATION/OPEN SPACE

- Multi-use recreation? School site with fields?
 - Community has tennis; schools already have facilities for public use



- Active recreation not high priority
- Community/family park needed
 - Are there any within walking distance?
- City of Gaithersburg band shell
- Aquatic center (at old NG property) – now not a high priority
- Would like un-programmed open space (not soccer plex)
- Would like school that is walkable
 - Different concept - more urban, multistory school requirement
- Will need to know residential density
 - High school planned for Crown Farm
- How do plans affect future demographics?
 - Opportunities (educational) for children
 - Education opportunity for children in terms of sustainability
- Belward:
 - Keep park areas informal, no set sports fields
 - Limit to activities to biking/walking and neighborhood size, informal parks
 - Safety—how do you get there? The road crossings to the park and the greenways should be safe from traffic.
- Preserve vista of farmhouse from Darnestown Road
- Preference for more “natural” pathways vs. open land type of park
 - Long term maintenance issues are a concern
 - Look at greenways and trails in Washingtonian Woods for a good precedent
- Healing environment: water - potential on site
 - Adventist Hospital Complex - future buildings will be built with sustainability in mind
 - Building, civil, landscape, etc.
 - Improve residential runoff
 - Adventist—wellness vision
 - Synergy with Belward site to create larger campus
 - Lifestyle

PUBLIC SPACE

- What programming is needed for quality spaces?
- Make attractive and accessible to broad range of users
 - Example: Rio
 - Multi-use
 - Attractive
 - Scale
- What is the scale of retail/commercial areas?
- There should be a diversity of community spaces such as:
 - Learning center (indoor and outdoor)
 - Amphitheater (Hopkins-supported)
 - Lectures (Hopkins-supported)
 - Integrated open public space, active space
 - Don't want NIH – like environment!
- Make campus open and available to all
 - Not just students
- How does this work with security concerns?



- Should security be at building façade instead on restricted outdoor space?

SUSTAINABILITY

- What type of heating/power?
- Vehicle types used on site? Could they use alternative to cars –electric etc.
- Community wants JHU to set high sustainability standards
- Montgomery County requires new buildings to be LEED-certified: Silver

HEIGHTS AND DENSITY

- Can you create transition (heights) on ~100 acres
 - Move buildings to side (east) without residential
 - Better to spread out and lower heights
 - How many sq. feet for Hopkins?
 - Built environments that are attractive?
 - Downtown Bethesda?—Different entirely
 - Howard Hughes – as an amenity
 - How will facility be integrated into community?
 - 4 to 5 story okay (Howard Hughes)
 - Bikeways/pathways
- Interested in plan with tiering of density toward the center of the property and away from the neighborhood.
 - Recreation—Would like some recreation space in plan although most of the interest is in more passive or informal recreation.

ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS/CONNECTIONS

- Area sites to form a “whole”
 - A great place
 - How to link buildings - currently disconnected
 - Need master plan vision (long-term)
 - Importance of variety in an urban environment
 - Provide connections through open space
 - What happens after 5 PM?
 - Need life beyond 9 to 5
 - Farmer’s market, recreation
 - 3:30 to 7 gridlock—Rockville Pike
 - Kentlands – current planning process
 - Up to 10-12 stories at transit stops
 - Indoor recreation facilities - currently don’t have
- Community priorities?
 - No housing on Belward - enough in area
 - Provide bike paths from these existing neighborhoods to site
- County plans (old NG building) for fire, police, etc. (county uses)
 - Moved to promote smart growth
- How does environmental work integrate with existing older neighborhoods?
 - Can you extend the benefits and quality to the nearby neighborhoods?
- Views from Mission Hills needs to be considered
- Existing natural spring and trees at Mission Hills in center of site:
 - What will happen to this?
 - Stormwater issues—there is ponding, intense flows and flooding to some degree at bottom of existing stream. Can this be improved?



- Would like buffer along edges of Darnestown Road, Muddy Branch Road and Mission Hills
 - o More specifics are needed regarding quality of buffer. What is it?
 - o If parkland the community would use, but need good connections across the main roads. Rt. 28 and Muddy Branch Road are very hard to cross.
- Darnestown Road—renderings with trees that would block the view—is this necessary? (This was clarified in discussion: green areas in landscape plan did not indicate only trees, but could also be other landscape spaces such as meadow, gardens or fields.)
 - o Consider view shed
 - o Also consider heights of buildings around
 - o Opposition to 10-story building on site
 - Residential area—tall buildings inconsistent/out of character
 - Will be multiple stories, but not 10 stories
 - o Lower buildings—less green space or go deep
 - o What you see from houses is most important
 - Even if you don't see from yard, you will see tall buildings as one drives by.

SCHOOLS

- Not on Belward
- Is it needed in the project?
- Work with Montgomery County Public School system and integrate educational resources into plan.
- Will need daycare and preschool
 - o Big shortage in area
 - o On-site?
 - o Available to all
 - Ex.: daycare at senior citizen center
 - o Better to centralize daycare rather than company by company.

COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE

- Community garden/orchard could be good with increased density
- Farmer's market is a possibility.