

VISION 2030 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Architecture and Design Session

Discussion Comments February 9, 2008

The following is a brief summary of handwritten notes taken by the JHU consultant team during the afternoon session of the February 9 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

- Does downturn in economy affect plans?
- Is JHU – MCC part of planning area and might it be re-planned (more dense) as part of the process?
- What is the role of Hopkins over the next 20-30 years?
- Are there any plans/themes that buildings will be focused around? Unifying Vision?
 - o There is no real current sense of what defines this place.
 - o Could educational institutions provide this identity? (4year institutions)
 - o Look at great campus towns for examples.
- The area outside of Belward is largely not owned by JHU. What is the role of JHU in the planning process?
- Will the build-out be faster for Belward?
- Montgomery County is also revising the Master Plan for this area. (This is also long-range.)
- What about existing buildings within the SGLSC?
 - o Many existing buildings are coming to the end of their life span and will require either a major renovation or replacement.
- We need to think about how well we manage change. There needs to be a vision to add value.

BELWARD SITE

- Preservation of the Banks Farmhouse
 - o How will the historic resources on the site be used?
 - o Can JHU organize a site tour?
- Approved plan for Belward
 - o Is it appropriate today?
 - o Could it be built today?



HEIGHT AND DENSITY

- Height and parking are important issues to neighbors.
- Heights at SGLSC are not as much an issue.
- Green space vs. building heights as a tradeoff
- Hard to envision how you step up the density in suburban environment (Bethesda, Arlington, Connecticut Ave)
- What is growth under current zoning vs. another vision? – CCT is biggest challenge.
- Neighbors like to visit Reston and Bethesda, but there is some concern about having this in their backyards.
- Within what distance of areas such as Reston, Bethesda and Clarendon have property values increased?
- Can start to think about transit and higher density at transit stations, with a transition to surrounding residential scale.
- Concern about building heights
 - o Note that Belward is higher in elevation, so the size of new buildings is a concern.
 - o Is it possible to go below grade?
- Preference for tall buildings
- How tall will buildings be?
 - o Crown Farm buildings are up to 200' (also range of heights)
- Consider line of sight

DESIGN/ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

- Green design – will there be green roofs?
- Look to Europe for good walkable design.
- This does not have to look like every place in the area. It doesn't have to be colonial.
- Street and streetscape wall are most important (rather than building style)
- Crown Farm CCT stop design looks well done.
- Would like to see green design
- LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) requires low level lighting
- Discussion of USGBC LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) and sustainability requirements
 - o Include water preservation, resource preservation, training/education
 - o LEED-ND also includes transit, mixed use, open space, less auto
- Design guidelines are very important to control scale, parking, ground floor uses, etc.
- Design team should look at areas that do and don't work
 - o Boston may be an example with Beacon Hill adjacent to tall buildings
 - o Will need to address the problems with tall buildings, including design, shadow
 - o Tall buildings can be positive – good view
- Architectural design – See UVA, Georgian, Charles Common (not HGS building)
- Good urban buildings have scale (regardless of height)



LANDSCAPE, OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES

- Are buffers antithetical to connectivity
 - o Is “buffer” a good term?
- Look at Slater Park in Rhode Island as an example of mixed use park – also Boston
 - o Show these parks to scale on our site.
- Parks should engage rather than be an afterthought (example: JHU stormwater pond)
- Sustainability and landscape are important draws.
- Would like to see water on the Belward site.
 - o Would like to see a water feature
 - o Treat stormwater in a positive way
- What is the percentage of parking lots, open space, walking paths? Would like to see open space and minimize impervious surface.
- It is important to know that the site is connected to surrounding neighborhoods
- Why would people go to Belward? Think of site as a community amenity: open space.
- It is the quality of the space that is more important than the size.
- What are the locations for community meetings? Athletic facilities? Shared amenities?

TRANSPORTATION AND TOD

- Walkability is a high priority to new workers.
- Transit can provide value to existing neighborhoods.
- How does I-370 integrate?
- Don't treat highway changes as givens
- Urban interchanges NOT huge spaghetti interchanges
- What will happen to Muddy Branch Road
 - o Should redesign to make it less of a barrier
 - o Houses are currently very close to the road. This may be a concern if there is a need to widen the road.
- Can parking go underground? Are there environmental constraints?
- Development should be phased with transit
- Can you mix bus and train for mass transit? Will people switch between modes within the same route?
- Will flyovers be required?
- How will the CCT cross Muddy Branch/Great Seneca intersection?
- This development can be used to leverage the CCT

PROGRAM/HOUSING

- International center to house scientists from other countries – encourage collaboration
- Graduate student and educational staff housing
- Integrate retirement community with education research community
- Co-housing and other alternative housing types
- What does mixed use mean?
 - o Can be “Reston” model, with hotel, office, retail, etc
 - o Can be mixed use within a similar use (for example, research/lab uses)
- These are characteristics of the modern city: mixed use with connections
- Does mixed use make the area more affordable?
 - o Mixed use may expand choices (for example, size of residential unit)



- Larger scale can also allow a broader range of options/prices
 - Fannie Mae offers loans for individuals who live in this type of area
- Affordability is a challenge in this area.
- Concern about crime
 - Discussion about business improvement district (BID) as one means to address safety