

City of Takoma Park
Takoma Junction Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 12, 2011

The City of Takoma Park Takoma Junction Task Force met on Tuesday, July 12, 2011, in the Azalea Room of the Takoma Park Community Center, Takoma Park.

Members Present: Hailu Aichehi, Billy Coulter, Kay Daniels-Cohen, James DiLuigi, Megan Gallagher, Seth Grimes, Andy Kelemen, Linette Lander, Barbara Muhlbacher, Susan Robb, and Jeffrey Trunzo

Members Absent: Lorig Charkoudian, Steve Dubb, Howard Kohn, Katrina Oprisko, Lorraine Pearsall, Roger Schlegel, Dan Seligman, Jennifer Sisane, and Ellen Zavian

Staff Present: none

Others Present: Roz Grigsby, OTBA, and J.J. Smith, Patch

1. Call to Order and Agenda Review

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 p.m. A quorum was present after 8:10 p.m.

No meeting minutes were distributed.

The following documents were distributed:

- Agenda
- Parking Options for Carroll Avenue, prepared by Barbara Muhlbacher
- Gaps in Research (partial list), prepared by Roger Schlegel
- A "T" Intersection, prepared by Roger Schlegel
- Existing Conditions Summary (draft) June 2011

2. Meeting Minutes

No meeting minutes were available for action.

3. Discussion of “Research Gaps” document. Action plan

Roger Schlegel prepared a draft document for distribution and discussion by the TF. The research gaps document is an attempt to inventory issues that may be germane to the TF report writing. The TF reviewed the document for about 10 minutes, and then discussed how to proceed. It was noted that item 27: Potential for development at site from development professionals, was an action item scheduled for Tuesday, July 19, at 7:30 p.m., at the City lot with Jeff Topchik and Joe Urciolo. At this juncture, all of the items on the list can not be addressed in time to create the report, nor is there enough time to explore each item, even if it is of interest. The Chair repeated that it is important for the TF to shift from research to report writing at this stage of the timeline. He emphasized that discussion can and should continue, but new research needs to be concluded.

The TF worked through the list to identify by consensus which items could be eliminated from consideration for further research. This proved difficult and was consuming substantial discussion time. A suggestion was made that it would be more equitable to allow all TF members to provide input, and since all TF members were not present, an electronic survey could be crafted from the list and distributed. SurveyMonkey was identified as the survey platform, and Billy volunteered to work with Seth to create and distribute the survey. It was suggested that time is very short, therefore the survey will go out within a week, and no more than 1 week will be allotted for TF responses. After the responses are received, the list of items remaining will be brought back before TF members at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

4. Discussion of plan for writing the report

Previously, the TF had reviewed and discussed the topic areas, structure, and content for the draft report. TF members expressed particular interest in the mechanics of how to assemble the report. Various technology applications were considered. A wiki was suggested as the best available method to allow for the contribution of content. Suggestions were made to delegate content contributions to Subcommittee chairs. This was discussed and the TF decided it was both too restrictive and too much of a burden on individuals. After further discussion, it was agreed to continue with the development of a report outline wiki, and then continue to refine the structure of the draft report as sections are created and contributed. The Chair emphasized that reducing research efforts to text at this time, drafting report content sections from the research, and contributing this content to the report must begin now in order to meet the TF report timeline commitment to Council.

5. Parking

Barbara presented research and a diagram of a proposed parking configuration alteration for Carroll Avenue. The proposal is based on parking methodology established on 8th St NE in Washington, DC. Diagonal back-in parking is proposed for the front of the Carroll Avenue shopping strip. At B.Y. Morrison park, reduction of the paved surface and reconfiguration of the parking spaces is suggested to improve pedestrian access to the park as well as provide better visibility and more direct access. The TF reviewed the concept and concurred there are merits to consider alterations to street parking in the area which will improve safety, livability, and maximize parking. To include such a scenario in the report, it must comply with Montgomery County code. Jim offered to research the relevant code and work with Barbara to determine if the proposed plan is conforming. If so, it can be offered as an alternative concept in the draft report.

6. Meeting with developers on July 19th

Jeff Topchik, a Takoma Park resident who works for JBG, and Joe Urciolo, who owns the Laurel Avenue shopping district, are scheduled to meet with TF members at 7:30 p.m. at the City lot to discuss development perspectives. The group plans to move to B.Y. Morrison park after reviewing the site to sit and discuss general issues that would be of concern to developers. TF members are encouraged to attend.

7. Council Presentation to City Council on July 25th

TF members were encouraged to attend the Council session. Seth and Howard will be presenting an outline of progress thus far, and commit to submission of the TF report by the end of September. It was recommended that a very short outline of the highlights be presented to the Council (one-pager). The presentation is expected to be about 10-15 minutes long including responses to any questions from Council.

8. Assignments of TF members to drive the writing of report sections

TF members were asked to volunteer to coordinate and champion the writing of draft report sections. The following members volunteered to lead these efforts:

- Kay: Compile community research, produce the Vision statement, and compile the outreach efforts
- Andy: Produce an outline of the report content topics, describe the Junction boundaries (Tour of Takoma Junction), and define the scope of the TF
- Megan: Introduction

- Susan: Roadway alternatives, signalization improvements

Next Topics

The next TF meeting is Thursday, July 28, at 7:30 p.m., in the Azalea Room of the Community Center. August meetings are Tuesday, August 2, at 7:30 p.m., in the Lilac Room; Thursday, August 18, at 7:30 p.m., in the Azalea Room; and Tuesday, August 30, at 7:30 p.m., in the Lilac Room of the Community Center.

The TF website is www.takomajunction.org

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Trunzo, Secretary

Roger Schlegel, Secretary