

City of Takoma Park
Takoma Junction Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 23, 2011

The City of Takoma Park Takoma Junction Task Force met on Wednesday, March 23, 2011, in the Azalea Room of the Takoma Park Community Center, Takoma Park.

Members Present: Billy Coulter, Kay Daniels-Cohen, James DiLuigi, Howard Kohn, Barbara Muhlbacher, Katrina Oprisko, Susan Robb, Roger Schlegel, Jeffrey Trunzo,

Members Absent: Hailu Aichehi, Lorig Charkoudian, Steve Dubb, Megan Gallagher, Seth Grimes, Andy Kelemen, Linette Lander, Lorraine Pearsall, Jennifer Sisane, and Ellen Zavian.

Staff Present: none

Others Present: J.J. Smith, Patch

1. Call to Order and Agenda Review

A quorum was not present. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. No meeting minutes were distributed.

Members agreed to conduct the meeting with an informal agenda by having each person present give an update of their TF activities.

2. Council Resolution

Howard reported that the draft resolution to Council is in revision and pending review at the next TJ meeting. Achieving a quorum at the next meeting in April is very important.

3. Community Outreach

Community outreach meetings are continuing, led by the "B" subcommittee members. Roger reported on the Sycamore Avenue meeting and Kay reported on the S.S.Carroll outreach meetings conducted this week.

Roger reported input from Sycamore Avenue can be sorted into 4 general topics:

1. **Traffic:** including the main intersection, preserving the light at Sycamore, signage and roadway markings (eliminate 'block-the-box' behaviors)
2. **Pedestrian Experience:** including parking alternatives and possible reconfiguration of some street parking spaces
3. **Vitality:** another anchor establishment
4. **Aesthetics:** integrate the area and make it 'more attractive.' Specifically mentioned the aesthetics of the 4-lane section of roadway comprising the space between the Fire Station to the Co-Op as being a 'scar' on the Junction

Kay reported input from S.S. Carroll generally followed Roger's topics, with some different amplification. Primarily, the pedestrian experience with regard to safe, convenient movements was a primary focus. Vehicle movements were secondary to the pedestrian concerns. Vitality is a concern, though in general S.S. Carroll residents expressed that some positive momentum has been achieved in recent years. There is very strong interest in developing the City lot as a community resource, primarily through preservation of parking to support the Junction merchants, as well as making the entire area function better as a 'Town Square' and open area for community events. Green options for the lot were expressed by several residents, including park and recreation area, permeable pavement for vehicles, and flexibility for vendor and special event usage. Better integration of B.Y. Morrison Park into both sides of the street was expressed as highly desirable.

Billy reported that the use of the City lot for an artisan market is tabled due to issues of scale. Other short-term usage concepts are in development to increase the vitality of the Junction.

Jeff reported on his discussion with the Fire Station officials regarding the Fire Station parking lot. In summary, their policy is that any outside use has the potential to interfere with emergency preparedness, therefore it is never allowed.

Susan contributed that pedestrian movements are the most important issue in the Junction area. She also reported that several members at the S.S. Carroll outreach meeting expressed safety concerns about Grant Avenue. Specifically, the Grant Avenue crosswalk is not marked, and the one-way restriction is being ignored. She also reported that the clients of the TJ commercial area venture to Manor Circle in search of parking, and in addition to the impact on Manor Circle residents of absorbing this commercial parking pressure, the directional restrictions in Manor Circle are also disregarded. The appropriate subcommittee should include specific recommendations about these issues in their reports.

Jim reported on the expansion activity at the Liberty station. A resident of Grant in close proximity strongly expressed that the process was faulty in regard to notification and neighborhood engagement. Follow-up to document how notification to neighbors was handled is being investigated.

Katrina reported that subcommittee “C” continues to meet to evaluate traffic management options. How and when to engage SHA should be decided soon.

Barbara inquired about the current status of the proposed consultant engagement to perform traffic simulations. Kay informed the TF that contact with consultants is ongoing, and more information will be available by the next TF meeting.

Howard informed the TF about recent inquiries about temporary use of the City lot by vendors. Although no action was taken at this meeting, several members expressed doubts that the TF was structured to make specific recommendations about temporary usage of the City lot, and the process to use, on an immediate demand basis.

Howard concluded the meeting by expressing his gratitude for the efforts of TF members to date and all that has been accomplished so far. In particular, he noted that he and Seth observe that the level of the community outreach and engagement is unprecedented, through individual and group outreach efforts. The TF is evolving to a higher level of development, which will require cooperation in order to keep the momentum building as the TF recommendations are further developed and the report writing begins.

Next Topics

The meeting schedule for the next several months is being developed, and will be communicated shortly via the email list.

The TF website is www.takomajunction.org

4. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Trunzo, Secretary

Roger Schlegel, Secretary