

August 4, 2011 Task Force Meeting

Convened at 7:40 pm.

No quorum –

Present: Howard Kohn, Katrina Oprisko, Barbara Muhlbacher, Linette Lander, Billy Coulter, Roger Schlegel, Lorig Charkoudian, Kay Daniels Cohen,

Visiting: JJ Smith.

No review, corrections, and vote on July 12 minutes.

Survey Monkey results: 10 or 11 have weighed in – sometimes 12.

Highlights of desired further research actions:

- Completing business owner surveys (By the 18<sup>th</sup> – Subcommittee B)
- Clarification of maximum additional spaces possible to create in City lot and/or elsewhere. ... somewhat related to survey of overall parking needs. (Roger has done an estimate for the lot; Joe Klockner did an estimate for the lot several years ago; Lorig proposes estimate of possible spaces in area behind Carroll; Kay recalls business owners wanting more parking in SS Carroll-led conversation a few years ago. Also there is the question of unused spaces in Lee Ave. apartments and whether some could be dedicated to employee parking. (Roger will take lead on remaining estimation.)

Group discussed how those research areas most favored for further action should definitely be researched further, while other areas should receive treatment in the report.

Point was also made that one need not assume that, in a green city, all employees should expect to be able to park for free. Good question is how to incentivize the use of alternate transportation by employees. N.B. it was observed by a business owner that most parking meters are never enforced at the Junction.

Question about feasibility of diagonal parking on Carroll – Barbara's research indicated no regulations pertaining to diagonal parking in the County or the City (on-street parking).

- Can the sidewalk be moved back from the street in any places? This would be tied to streetscape and stormwater issues, as well as pedestrian safety perceptions. This would also relate to the potential removal of the peninsula to extend the bus stop cut-in at BY Morrison. (Katrina will examine map.)
- Clarification of whether/how SHA incorporates pedestrian routes in reevaluations of timings/phasing (Those in touch with Cedric Ward – Lorraine and Seth -- will continue to follow up with him.) Howard will ask Sara Daines to next meeting to discuss with her how to gain further responses from Cedric Ward. Chief of Police has also been in touch with Cedric about the Sycamore light. Linette will talk to Sara and get her advice on how to proceed.

Some discussion of Fire-House turn lane possibility ... whether it is possible informally at present; what hardscape changes might still be possible; observation that a three-way stop would negate the need for a left-turn lane.

- Availability of space for bike lanes – could three lanes for the common stretch make a bike lane possible on one or both sides?

NOTED for report: possibility of three-way stop at Firehouse should be addressed in report.

- Vehicular Traffic Concerns: Roundabout minimum footprint; three-way stop feasibility; T intersection feasibility; status of “fix” of timing of lights; prognosis for City lot aprons. T intersection has been discussed at a prior meeting and will have further discussion.

NOTED: August 17<sup>th</sup> will be a meeting of Sub A (all invited) at City Lot with Jeff Topchik and John Urciolo to discuss development potential for City lot ... all invited at 7:30.

- Location of bus stops and pull-in requirements for buses. Recollection that Historic Takoma may at some time have suggested use of City lot as a bus turnaround. (Linette will talk to Sara to find out whether there is a point person with City staff for dealing with Ride-On and Metrobus questions.)
- Likelihood of digging down at site (borings data) – (Lorig will continue working on this. August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting may also shed light on this.) Urciolo has mentioned in an email that the subgrade conditions at the City lot were a stumbling block for developers 15 years ago. Fred Schultz may have information on this as well.
- Pedestrian survey questions: What are you doing here? Where do you live? How did you get here? How often do you come here? If there was one thing that you would like to change or see here, what would it be? (Kay will type up survey; Kay, Lorig, Katrina have volunteered to do surveys ... Megan is also likely)
- Additional directional signage at outskirts of town (Howard will ask Roz)
- Potential for alternative-energy generation (Roger will look into Solar City estimates)
- Walking path question – we could more broadly talk about the pedestrian access to the Junction from the south side. Need to estimate the grade change and needed length of the route. (No volunteers.)

NOTE: Improvement of Columbia Ave sidewalk may allow staircase (more simple) to be put in the woods. Kay doesn't want to lose recreational possibilities for wooded lot – discussion suggests picnic tables, fitness stops, ropes course.

NOTE: Kay is still finishing flip-chart summaries.

- BY Morrison commercial use will be mentioned but not further investigated at this time.
- Historic value of front portion of BY Morrison (Kay has memories; Diana Kohn is looking through old photographs but hasn't found anything) – also question of whether historic character would be negatively impacted by changes to BYM footprint. (At last meeting, Dan Seligman

volunteered to look into landscaping potential changes at City lot and at BY Morrison and will write up those two sections.) Howard notes that Daryl Braithwaite also expressed dissatisfaction with the current layout and landscaping. Billy would like to have clarified whether we are preserving the structure or both the structure and the surrounding area. Consensus is that “greening” of the area would not be an issue; but that realignment of streets would necessitate Historic Commission review. Howard recalls the extension being added in the 80s as part of the creation of the bus bays. Discussion of whether Historic Takoma has an opinion on the historic character/preservation questions related to the park.

- Clarification of maximum footprint for a new structure on City lot. (This is likely a question for the developers on August 17<sup>th</sup>.) Lorig notes that a market survey is underway by TPSSETF to determine whether 12.5K square feet is the right size. (Linette will ask Ilona Blanchard for structure-to-lot proportions in the zoning area applying to the Junction).
- No desire for further investigation of New Hampshire Gateway, Hospital, and Streetcar plans.

NOTE: Lower part of wooded lot would be good for a rain garden.

NEW TOPIC: Status of report:

Dan Seligman will be drafting parts of report related to landscaping/streetscaping.

Howard will work with Subcommittee C on traffic section of report.

Sub B will work on results of Sub B work.

Discussion of how to pare down list of options; whether TF is able to arrive at certain favored options – how to capture options that the committee may not be dealing with.

Reminder that short- and long-term suggestions are mandated.

Billy will help with layout and appearance of report.

Roger will provide pictures.

If flip-charts, when compiled, reveal other ideas, these will be voted upon by the TF and included in the report.

Roger can provide template of Google overhead shot.

Report and presentation should be taking advantage of available media. Not just print.

Adjourned at 9:45 pm.