

**Marymount University Task Force
Meeting 1 | February 16, 2006
Minutes**

In attendance:

Michael Foster, Task Force Chair, Planning Commission
Peter Fallon, Transportation Commission
Christine Smith, Old Dominion Civic Association
Pamela Gillen, Old Dominion Civic Association (arrived late)
Paul Michl, Rock Spring Civic Association
Dave Wahl, Rock Spring Civic Association (arrived late)
David Haring, Yorktown Civic Association
David Parker, St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Maxine Nagel, Donaldson Run Civic Association
Anne Wilson, Donaldson Run Civic Association
Loretta Seigley, VP Academics, Marymount University
Chris Domes, VP Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, Marymount University
Jim Bundschuh, President, Marymount University (left early)

Abby Denham, Walsh Colucci Lubeley Emrich & Terpak
Tara Wiedeman, Walsh Colucci Lubeley Emrich & Terpak
Robert Kohler, Wells & Associates
Chris Kabatt, Wells & Associates
Robert Atkinson, DCS Design
Doug Carter, DCS Design

Jill Griffin, Arlington County, CPHD
Robert Gibson, Arlington County, DES

Due to scheduling conflicts, Mr. Foster asked Dr. Bundschuh to provide an overview of the University's progress before departing the meeting.

Dr. Bundschuh discussed his role with the university and the challenges that he had been faced with upon his arrival: academic standards, budgeting, and strategic planning. Currently, the university has a balanced budget, is addressing its infrastructure needs (updating existing structures) and recognizes the needs for parking, dormitories and academic facilities.

The university established a master plan for the future to address the above stated needs. The original master plan did not anticipate the redevelopment of the parking lot site with more than a multi-level above-ground parking structure. This master plan was presented to the surrounding neighborhoods.

After review and discussion with the architectural firm of DCS Design, the university looked at the use of the parking lot site. It was determined that many of the elements of the master plan could be addressed on this particular parcel. The parking garage was "pushed" underground and dormitories, classrooms, laboratories and an auditorium were placed on top.

Dr. Bundschuh stressed that this proposal is not to increase enrollment but to address the current needs of the university for parking, dormitories and academic facilities.

Prior to his departure, Dr. Bundschuh stated that there are 120 comprehensive universities in the south and Marymount is currently ranked 44. It is through such redevelopment and improvements that Marymount wishes to climb in the rankings.

Introductions

After these contextual comments, Mr. Foster asked for introductions around the room.

Project Overview

After the introductions, Doug Carter, with DCS Design, provided an overview of the project. This included a presentation of the site plan, elevations, perspectives and the model.

Staff Review

Jill Griffin, Arlington County staff, provided an explanation of the "S-3A" zoning district with respect to use, height, density and setback. She also discussed the use permit process, the charge of the task force and subsequent public meetings. Finally, Ms. Griffin provided a brief overview (with handouts) of the history of the university and its use permits and conditions.

Civic Association Updates

Mr. Foster asked the various civic association representatives for a brief overview of their respective civic association's viewpoints.

Donaldson Run (Anne Wilson)

Past history with the initial parking garage – rather contentious
Presentation by the university to the larger civic association next week
Concerns about traffic on 26th Street
General concerns about increased activity in this particular area

Old Dominion (Christine Smith)

Past history with the land swap and soccer fields
Concerns about traffic and location of the services
Concern about height and views

Rock Spring (Paul Michl)

No pressing issues
Not a full civic association to address

Yorktown (David Haring)

No collective feedback to date
Concerns about parking access on Yorktown
Concern about the shift of activity – from the interior of the university to the exterior

St Mary's Episcopal Church (David Parker)

Concerns because this project is in its front yard
Vestry meeting on March 7 to review the project – provide better input to the group

Discussion of Zoning/Use Permit

Ms. Griffin reiterated that the proposal was within the parameters of the General Land Use Plan and the zoning district. She further noted that there was no provision within the zoning ordinance to permit modifications to the "S-3A" zoning district through the use permit provision.

The applicant stated that there was no request, other than the amendment to the use permit, for any such modification.

Mr. Foster read through the charge to the task force – and stated that the task force was to “reach general consensus on the concept of the project and other issues related to use, appropriateness, and neighborhood character.” [from the Task Force charge]

Peter Fallon stated that the Donaldson Run NCAC plan has a good summary of the existing use permit. This is available on the internet.

Mr. Fallon also asked staff about the condition pertaining to enrollment cap. He wanted to ensure that there was no unintended consequence if the number of students living on campus increased. He suggested that staff review the condition.

Mr. Wahl asked about the “character” of the neighborhood. He stated that there is a wide variety of character within the neighborhood. This could provide an opportunity.

There was general clarification about the process, the public meetings, etc.

Transportation

Mr. Carter provided a brief overview of the parking garage layout and the location of the entrances.

Chris Cabatt, of Wells & Associates, informed the task force of the traffic studies for this project. The following intersections were studied: 26th Street/Old Dominion Drive; 26th Street/Glebe Road; Old Dominion Drive/Glebe Road; and 26th Street/Yorktown Boulevard.

Mr. Cabatt stated that the following is anticipated with the proposed development:
103 additional vehicles on 26th Street between Old Dominion Drive & Yorktown Boulevard
116 additional vehicles on Yorktown Boulevard
13 – 16 additional vehicles on 26th Street north of Yorktown Boulevard

Mr. Cabatt stated that this model anticipates the traffic signals at Old Dominion Drive and Glebe Road and at the Glebe Road and 26th Street intersections.

He also stated that the peak hour for parking at the university is at 4 p.m.

There was general discussion about the shuttle services provided by the university between the Ballston campus, the metro station and the satellite parking lots.

Mr. Michl asked several questions about the parking garage.

1. What is the number of parking spaces?
2. Will this provide parking for students and faculty? YES
3. Access to the garage from both sides of Yorktown Boulevard? YES
4. Are there parking problems? YES, however, there is zoned parking in the neighborhoods.

Mr. Fallon made several comments:

1. The development will change the student experience.
2. There will be more interaction with the community with this proposal.
3. There will be an increased capacity for 100 additional cars. This poses questions about the turn-over rates (many students will park for 24 hours+) and increased traffic in the neighborhoods.
4. Where did the number of the parking spaces come from? Why is this number ideal?

Mr. Haring suggested that the overall scope may increase the capacity of the university. The intention is to live within the cap (the number of students on campus at a given time). However, this could increase the impact of the university.

Loretta Seigley stated that there are currently 670 students living on campus and this would provide 274 new beds. Eighty students are housed at the Comfort Inn and there is currently a waiting list for housing.

Chris Domes stated that by next fall no freshmen or sophomores will be permitted to have vehicles on campus.

Additionally, the university continues its shuttle service and runs six shuttles between Ballston & the main campus.

There was a question about providing a retail use in the proposed project for students to purchase milk, bread, etc. At this time the university is unsure as to what the retail will be in the proposed building.

Mr. Wahl asked from questions about Old Dominion Drive – capacity, long term plans, etc. He also commented on the number of buses that come to the university for athletics.

The applicant stated that they had studied the impacts outside of the immediate area and the locations of the curb cuts.

Mr. Michl addressed some of the questions raised by Mr. Wahl.

Pamela Gillen further explained the proposed project for Old Dominion Drive from 22nd to 26th Streets. This project is to slow the traffic and remove the open ditches. The project will include a sidewalk on each side, bike lanes and realignment and narrowing of the traffic lanes. The construction will be in the summer.

Ms. Gillen commented on her concerns about the funneling of traffic from two lanes to one lane – merging from southbound Old Dominion after 26th Street.

Ms. Smith asked for the traffic counts on Yorktown Boulevard. 622 am/628 pm – The project would show an increase of 83 am/116 pm.

Ms. Gillen stated that she was okay with the garage entrance/exit but had concerns about conflicts. She also asked about traffic control.

Mr. Fallon also commented on the garage. He asked about stacking information, service delivery information and the need for a parking management/circulation plan.

Sidewalks around the project were discussed. The applicant showed the proposed pedestrian bridge over Yorktown Boulevard. It was suggested that the applicant look at possibly narrowing the traffic lanes (similar to the County project) and increasing the sidewalk width over the existing bridge.

The task force determined its next meeting to be on Wednesday, March 15 at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Board Room in the Reinsch Library at Marymount University.