

## Meeting Minutes for the Reston Planning and Zoning Committee

### Regular Meeting

Monday, January 27th, 2020 at 7:30pm

North County Government Center

#### 1. Administrative

##### a. RPZ Members Attendance

1. Robert Walker, Chair
2. Mike Jennings, Vice Chair
3. Michelle Kimmel, Scribe
4. Jake Hovermale
5. John Kauppila
6. Dick Kennedy
7. Katie McClain
8. Shelley Mastran
9. William Pegues
10. Bill Penniman
11. Tammi Petrine
12. Matt Stevison
13. Sue Ann Straits
14. David Vanell
15. Rebecca Zakowicz
16. John Carter, Hunter Mill Planning Commissioner
17. Jose Delcid, Hunter Mill Land Use Aide to Supervisor Walter Alcorn
18. Vrushali Oak

##### b. Guests:

- Hunter Mill Supervisor Walter Alcorn

##### c. Welcome and officially vote-in the new Committee Members

- Rob Walker presented the nominations from the sub-committee Committee Members
  - Committee approved
- Election of new officers
  - Chairman/women
    - Bill Penniman nominated Rob for Chairman
    - Committee approved
  - Vice Chairman/women
    - Bill Penniman nominated Mike Jennings
    - Committee approved
  - Secretary

- Tammi Petrine nominated Michelle for Secretary
- Committee approved
- Parliamentarian
  - No nominations
- Rob announced that Jared Wilcox has resigned from the committee due to family issues.

## **2. Land Use Discussion with Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter L. Alcorn**

### **Walter Alcorn**

- Land use is one of the most important things the Board of Supervisors does
- RPZ review is very helpful and makes the difference between crummy outcomes and good outcomes
- How can the county help your process be more effective?
- No need for final recommendations today, but instead start the conversation.
- The acoustics in the room are not well designed
  - Should we install microphones?
- Attendance by Planning Commissioner John Carter has become routine and that is a very good thing - thank you John
- Jose will be attending on behalf of Walter's office
- Walter will come from time to time
- If the Fairfax County planning staff coordinator for each project could attend, that would be very helpful and could, among other things:
  - Relay information the applicant is not relaying / does not know
  - Hear from the committee which can help them focus their attention on things that may not be apparent from a summary

### **Tammi Petrine**

- If possible, we would like the staff report before final votes
- We have experience on a Hunter Mill case that the information given by an applicant that was not accurate
  - Walter Alcorn (WA): Staff report is not published until late in the process - two weeks before the commission vote
  - WA: Staff would not have the committee's input
  - WA: I am not adverse to slowing down the process if there is information the committee needs
  - WA: I have noticed a certain amount of rushing in recent years, I want to make sure you have the time and resources needed.

### **Sue Ann Straits**

- We used to get the draft staff report, but only within in the last few years did we stop getting those. It allowed us to get information and see environmental reports which were extremely helpful. Without that we only get the report from the respect of the developer.

### **Bill Penniman**

- I like the idea of having staff come here because too often we ask questions of the developer

but we don't know if they make it to staff

- It would be very useful to have a senior level staffer who was familiar with Reston. Reston is a unique place and it would be helpful if someone was here to understand our unique perspective.

### **Mike Jennings**

- A lot of the questions we have are transit related. It would be helpful if someone from VDOT or FCDOT came to the meetings.
  - WA: we will not likely get VDOT. But we may be able to get FCDOT

### **Shelley Mastran**

- Without that we are missing the overall density, there is no giant plan for a master plan for transportation
  - WA: that is one of the things we will be doing in the comprehensive plan

### **Tammi Petrine**

- VDOT has a file on each plan. If they could share their files with us that would help us.
  - WA: I have never gotten a VDOT file, that may need to be FOIAed
  - WA: What we are not getting is what happens after the plans gets approved.

### **Rob Walker**

- VDOT will not engage until the site plans. So we have to rely on FCDOT because they are fully engaged.

### **Walter Alcorn**

- On the comprehensive Plan:
  1. Balance: environment
  2. Do the transportation plan meet the development plans
  3. Are we getting the urban design guidance?
- We want a community discussion
- Have not started the process to put together a task force, but staff will begin in the next two weeks
- Will be an open process. Can participate even if not on the task force
- 12-18month period
- Will be holding a lot of meetings
- There is a lot of language in the comprehensive plan that is close, but could be refined while we look at new ideas including on affordable housing
- Affordable housing:
  - We have good language on getting affordable housing
  - But we do not have language on maintaining affordable housing
- In Fairfax County: we have a comprehensive plan for guiding the development of the location and Zoning ordinance is a level down.
- Reston did it backwards - was zoned first in one swoop and then the comprehensive plan came after with former Supervisor Cathy Hudgins

- The comprehensive plan is the people's document - it is supposed to reflect what the community wants for the area
- The plan should include population density and how that balances with infrastructure
- Then we step back and deal with zoning (the PRC)
- We need a comprehensive plan for the redevelopment of Reston

#### **Tammi Petrine**

- Is community defined as people or people and the commercial developers?
  - WA: I have a bent towards people, but the commercial voices have a role that will guide what is built - I looking for a balance of citizens, business owners and developers

#### **Bill Penniman**

- On the environment: we need to be able to respond to climate change - Fairfax County needs to be ahead of the curve if we want to attract people and businesses - it will take government to act.
- We are Reston and we should be pushing different ideas and risk taking
  - WA: It's not just doing the least expensive approach. They are also risk adverse. We need to also make sure that we are not producing a homogeneity - we cannot have a block of the same buildings at the metro

#### **Rob Walker**

- A major issue is there are no architectural covenants along the TSA - this is a fundamental flaw. We have no leverage and we being asked to look at the plans from an architectural standpoint.
  - WA: not sure how to fix that, but happy to work with us on that
  - WA: For Reston's long-term success everything can't be the same, but it needs to be different. Economically we are competing with cities, but cities have diversity and vibrancy but we are not there. We need to move Reston to a more diverse built environment around Reston TSA. That is the big challenge to transition from the suburbs to little pockets of urban environments

#### **David Vanell**

- You have to do a lot of press and need to make sure everyone in the community knows what is going on
  - WA: Lisa Connors is my communications person. We have a lot of different voices and can come together as a community to find a consensus to build on the last 50 years. Important to take this opportunity before we have complete redevelopment of the TSA.

#### **Rob Walker**

- Last year we had a lot of plans pushed through because of the election. But we have a fresh start. We have ability to ask for more architectural information.
- We need applicants to know that if they have a project that they need to step up their game

#### **Tammi Petrine**

- There are three things we need to focus on:

1. Environment
  2. Technology
  3. Income inequality- we have approved apartments with rents that are so high the next generations cannot afford to live here
- All of the problems stem from this
    - WA: one of the first things we will do with the comprehensive plan task force will be to scope it out

#### **William Pegues**

- The environmental committee will be issuing a document in the next several months

#### **Walter Alcorn**

- What was rushed through will likely not be built as approved, but density is a one-way-street.

#### **Audience**

- Communications is so important - right now we only get information if we see an article. So communicate often of many levels and don't assume we all know

#### **Dick Kennedy**

- I think former Supervisor Hudgins had oodles and oodles of information, but most people didn't know about that. These days Reston Now is a good communicator.

#### **Katie McClain**

- Is your office in direct contact with the clusters and H.O.A.s?
  - WA: we are trying to get an accurate and up to date list.

#### **Bill Penniman**

- It's not just H.O.A.s. Some of us don't have associations.

#### **John Carter**

- There is a table that most developers fill out - look at the template if you want different information provided by the applicants.
- The reason that I come is for people to be independent and bring our own thoughts. It is critical to have your own thoughts to bring it forward.
- We worked on a lot of projects the last year or two, they are coming back, but I don't know how we can shape them.
- It is also important to walk around Reston
- Example: Comstock on Reston Station north - streetscape has not worked, they are now going to bring the streetscape on the north and the south back to WA and John.

#### **David Vanell**

- I would like some authority on architecture.
  - WA: . Architecture may be outside the boundaries of what John and I can do. We can incentivize, but we cannot force. We will lose.



### **Tammi Petrine**

- We don't want to be siloed
  - WA: let's keep working on the comms piece - let's figure out better ways so we can make sure the community knows what we are doing.

## **3. Administrative Updates**

### **Committee Overview for New Members – by Rob Walker**

- We go by Robert's Rules of Order
  - Last year we kept to a 3 minute comment period.
  - Rob will politely nudge if you go over.
- Voting
  - Regular members vote
  - Associate members votes count only if other Regular Members are not in attendance
- Attendance
  - If you are unable to attend, send an email to Rob and copy Mike
  - Must have a quorum of 8 people
- New Member Questions
  - Michelle Kimmel: Can plans be made public on the Committee's website ahead of a meeting?
    - A: No known issues with this
  - Katie McClain: Will new members be provided background or history of projects that come back to the Committee?
    - A: The projects would come back as an amendment and generally we will know, and they should give an overview of the project.
  - Michelle Kimmel: On the website or elsewhere, could we solicit questions from the public ahead of meetings?

### **Meeting Minutes**

- We can collaborate offline
- Will try to get minutes completed and posted online
- Jake will help upload to the website
- We will ask Walter if the county can help with the website
- Tammi Petrine: Most important stuff has been approved, but still going forward our minutes should be detailed, including our comments and the applicants' responses
- Mike Jennings: It is hard
- Bill Penniman: What is most important is that we capture what developers say
- Rob Walker moved to approve the previous meeting minutes as edited
  - Committee approved

### **Wiehle Ave. Pedestrian Crossing Study Group**

- The first meeting was held last Monday.
- The study group is open for anyone who wants to join
- The next meeting will be a site visit in February

- All crossing options are open for the study group's review
- \$1.5 Million will be set aside if the study group chooses something other than the bridge options listed in the proffers.
- A broader follow-on motion that was approved will see that pedestrian experience is not broken up
- William Penniman: Will a North-South pedestrian bridge on the East side of the Wiehle bridge over the toll road be considered?
  - A: As part of the follow-on motion, but not the study group

### **Reminders**

- Board of Supervisor's motion to begin a public process to amend the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan for Reston
- Reminder about this committee's previous commitment to promote sustainable design goals for schools
  - Reston P&Z has not looked at a lot of school development plans
  - County was rubber-stamping plans without taking into account environmental concerns
  - A one-pager of recommendations for innovative / green schools was distributed.

### **Open Discussion**

- Application Form
  - Send in edits to the form
  - It sets the level of expectations for applicants
  - They may not do it every time they come
  - David Vanell: We need the right mix between box checking and narrative
  - Bill Penniman: Maybe we could add a google maps link to our site.
- Electronic Review of Plans
  - Rob Walker: They should be mailed the week prior to a meeting, but we would also like to get electronic copies. One idea would be for each committee member to say in which format they would like to receive the plans.
- Extended Calendar
  - Rob will send an Outlook meeting reminder
  - There is a conflict in October

**Next meeting will be held on Monday February 10th , 2020 at 7:30 PM at The North County Government Center.**