

PLACE Design Task Force Minutes
May 11, 2017, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Neighborhood Development Services Conference Room

Members Present

Mike Stoneking, Chairman, Rachel Lloyd, Scott Paisley, Paul Josey, Gennie Keller, Chris Henry, Andrew Mondschein, Andres Pacheco, Clarence Green

Staff Present: Carrie Rainey, Alex Ikefuna, Carolyn McCray (Clerk)

Call to Order:

Chairman Mike Stoneking called the PLACE Design Task Force Meeting to order at 12:00pm.

Agenda

1. Public Comments

Mr. Cliff Fox stated he is a commercial broker, and would like a discussion on affordable housing.

Mr. Ikefuna asked what Mr. Fox is looking for this group to do.

Mr. Fox said he thought it was an interesting fact that the Friendship Court is a valuable asset from a land use point of view, and one of the things that it is important is providing the mix of the use regime. From everything he can tell, providing more housing to support market rate housing to support affordable housing is not an economic model that will work and that is shown in the master planning project and in a couple of scenario that PHA [Piedmont Housing Alliance] has done recently. First attempt was six million dollars short recently and then there was a change in interest rate and apparently there's another 10 million dollar capitol stack gap so when you put all of the pieces together, there is not enough to make it work. What he has seen, you need more primary economic function or business or commercial integrated into this use regime to make economically viable. You need more primary economically functions and entities that are producing goods and services, exporting those goods and services and importing taxable dollars to make it reasonable to support the affordable housing.

Ms. Keller: You are saying we need that kind of economic generator as opposed to market rate housing, and is that unique to Friendship Court or a principal we can apply to [other locations]?

Mr. Fox: This is an economic modeling, if you take the cost of market rate housing and the cost to produce and what it throws off and the economic impacts it has for infrastructure whether it's schools [or otherwise], one needs something that produces more real estate tax, and state tax revenue and other forms of revenue to support that.

Chairman Stoneking: Is this part of why you want to know the inventory count so you can do an equation about our tax revenue versus the amount inventory we are trying to generate?

Mr. Fox: Basically you have PHA and the Housing Authority, you have that client bill of rights that we need to follow, beyond that you have social components that you need to evaluate, but there is also an economic component so that becomes one element on an overall pyridine that one is looking at to try to manufacture the right sustainable or generative component so that it continues to work. Look at the HUD financing now and what we've done from a land use prospective both at Friendship Court and Westhaven. The financing has locked those land uses in place in such a rigid fashion it has become encumbrances to the cities goals to the non-profit organizations goals Produce more real estate tax and other form of revenue. To try to manufacture so it continues to work, look at the HUD finances at friendship and Westhaven.

Mr. Ikefunu said he is not sure what Mr. Fox is asking. In terms of Friendship Court, it increased from 6 million dollars, we can still do some engineering or find some subsidiaries to make it work. Maybe we can talk at another time because he would like to understand what Mr. Fox is asking. In terms of financing, there several things that go into making it work. In terms of making it affordable you have to have enough subsidies.

Mr. Fox: One of the subsidies can be a form of land use. You take the existing land use model and economically it fails by itself, so how one can rearticulate it so it is more productive for the city and the affordable housing community.

Chairman Stoneking: Are you saying dedicating land for the purpose of solving affordable housing and dividing it is a failed model?

Mr. Fox: What is developed now in Friendship Court is a two-story product spread over 11 acres and you have about two acres of that is open space. You can rearticulate that land use into some 4-6 story or in a great commercial use that either it is structured as a land lease for some other form mate to actual subsidize the affordable housing.

Ms. Lloyd: isn't there a committee that is better suited for this discussion; perhaps you can take these ideas to the HAC [Housing Advisory Committee]?

Mr. Fox said he has taken them to the Housing Advisory Committee.

Ms. Lloyd: we not trying to cut you off, but finance modelings are not things we tend to deal with.

Ms. Keller: You could speak to the Planning Commission during public comment as well. Urban Land Institute has modeling and they have seminars on it.

2. Discussion on Healthy Cities– Matt Trowbridge introduced by Ms. Bennis.

Mr. Trowbridge is an associate professor at the University of Virginia in the Department of Emergency Medicine and the Department of Public Health.

Mr. Trowbridge has been working with others on a program to promote, train, and developed Human-Centered Design. Design thinking is a creative problem-solving tool, a systematic way of looking at challenges, a mindset that teaches how to ask the right questions, to tackle the real problem. This is often used to produce the products and experiences we use every day.

- The idea of using prototypes to test various urban planning and design ideas.
- The discussion included exploring ways to involve neighborhood leaders in determining various ways to prototype improvements across the City.
- Design-Days were discussed and the notion of making these regular occurrences was reviewed.

Mr. Ikefuna: In other parts of the world, they do not have regulations.

Mr. Trowbridge said he started with one little block on a weekend, started off as an art exhibit, and then he decided to break as many ordinances as possible in this one block, make it very transparent and visible, putting café sets on the sidewalk and when people saw they bought into this and decided to reduce the fees because they really liked having the café on the sidewalk.

Ms. Lloyd: There seems to be conflict between the special requirements of our emergency services fleet and the specific design of our street section. Are we going to save more lives by making our streets capable of allowing emergency people to whip down the road or are we going to save more lives by skidding up our roads and making sure traffic go slowly? She have seen where other cities have done little experiments where they do this sort of temporary tightening of the intersection radii and some of the trucks could get through pretty well.

Councilor Galvin: It was through TJPDC and one of her student groups did that very thing on 2nd street, one day at the Tom Tom Festival. They actual tested it with the fire trucks and were able to navigate the tighter turning radii.

Chairman Stoneking: Did it change anything?

Councilor Galvin: Not permanently, it was testing out the Streets those Work dimensions.

Mr. Trowbridge: He lives in North Downtown area it's on record that a year ago, seen a child was killed, someone was following the exact speed limit, but because of the design was doing 25 mph. He is on record saying a year before this happened in front of Council saying it is not the speed limit, it is the design. We had this big snow storm and this massive 18 wheeler snow plow pushing snow, and naturally they ended up narrowing the space, and watching this 18 wheeler doing a 3 point turns in this space that was narrowed and ended up being the exact radius of the permanent changes.

Mr. Josey: JPA closed down once a year. Rose Hill is a really wide and you make that a real canopied street with temporary food trucks, Snows [Nursery] with their signage, and put 20 semi-mature trees or café sets along the street for a Sunday.

Mr. Paisley: There are huge complaints in NYC about EMT access, neighborhoods feel like this is creating back logs; the other thing NYC is what they did to research before and after actually taking neighborhoods getting the streetscape improvements and comparing safety for bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers and economic growth or decline and actually matching up a neighborhood with a parallel neighborhood that didn't get improvements, that research is the most valuable urban design research in the world right now, it showed the efficacy of the streetscape changes. The city did the research.

Councilor Galvin: Area like Cherry Ave, the community is pleading for a small area plan, bringing in the food trucks to illustrate what an active street it could be, the food truck acted as store fronts.

Ms. Keller: she would feel a lot more comfortable with this if it were couched in terms of how do we have our whole community engaged, actively involved in use of the public realm. Begin by saying we have too many regulations, she is scared to death by the national mood of anti-regulation and de-regulation and she doesn't think that is the spirit of our city because we want regulations for clean air, clean

water and safe places. If we could couch it in a different way and it is more about taking back our streets. She said her kids played soccer in the street and just had to slow down because they knew there would be kids in that street. She said when schools are closed designate some streets with hills to sled on. She said there is a good way to do this all over the City with a different attitude that it's our City and our space and let's use it.

Mr. Mondschein: As a citizen, he would get excited about that, a radical use of a part of Charlottesville that hasn't received the same attention as the downtown mall gets. He said maybe we have the wrong kind of regulations. He said permanent can be problematic.

Ms. Bennis: Just bring all of your patio furniture, more trees, fake turf and layout on blankets just for a day and make it a fun day.

Ms. Lloyd: Suggested closing down John Warner Parkway for bikes on the weekend.

Councilor Galvin: This gives the task force a task. Identify some kind of prototype project and have some kind of reason so you don't get slammed down. Try to think about things that could be wins. She's a little concern about closing down some of the major streets where VDOT will have a lot more heartburn.

Mr. Mohr: Include lighting.

Councilor Galvin: Staples that use to be Vinegar Hill; it would fun to simulate the way it used to be as opposed to a parking lot.

Ms. Lloyd: Said that is 3-D modeling.

Councilor Galvin: asked Ms. Keller is the Planning Commission is working on the community engagement chapter [for the Comprehensive Plan].

Ms. Keller: She proposed that there be a community engagement chapters and found one that is pretty well developed from Portland, Oregon and it's just a list, no graphics, no diagrams and much abbreviated. In comprehensive plans there are community engagements chapters and she felt that a number of her colleagues on the Planning Commission were interested in going that way but staff raised the questioned that community engagement belonging to Council and Council was going to be addressing community engagement and so we wouldn't be able to do that but I did see when we had the kick off meeting a plan in the PowerPoint did

not include community engagement and she said we should have a community engagement chapter.

Ms. Keller: If Council is doing that, why can't we both do it? This would be community engagement that is related to the planning and development process. We take baby steps, a step forward and two steps backwards. Maybe we will make a big jump and get community engagement in the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilor Galvin: Exactly.

Chairman Stoneking: What do we do to make it happen?

Ms. Keller: We hope to have the Planning Commission Chair, Kurt Keesecker, to present on the Commission Community Engagement effort for the Comprehensive Plan- possibly in July.

Councilor Galvin: Will [PLACE] give its recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding the Comprehensive Plan?

Ms. Keller: Where we are now is this broad role out, the launch of the Comprehensive Plan update with 5-6 community meetings. There are some activities to break the ice, get your feet wet, and then in the next phase we will be inviting official groups or non-official groups to engage with us in the way they would like to, regarding what should be in the Comprehensive Plan. PLACE would have idea some things.

Councilor Galvin: There is no statement or policy or resolution from Council saying that only Council deals with community engagement.

Ms. Keller: As we move to this next phase, PLACE would have some ideas like what Kate [Bennis] has recommended.

Chairman Stoneking: Would it do any good if PLACE endorses the Planning Commission idea that the Comprehensive Plan should have a chapter on Community Engagement?

Chairman Stoneking: There were five specific things in our annual report if we are going to ask for specific action from Council, two of which were:

- a. Recommend to Council that additional uses of 3D modeling, in other areas of the City, are appropriate. Dr. Huang to present a demonstration for the 3D modeling currently contracted by the City. This is tentatively set for July 13, 2017.
- b. Endorse the use of Form Based Code in the SIA and we will recommend to Council to explore using character based codes in other parts of the City.

3. Discussion on Cultural Landscape Report for Downtown Mall

It was decided to submit a scope of work and fee proposal to Council for the Historic Landscape Study of the Downtown Mall allocating up to \$50,000 through the Center for Cultural Landscapes (CCL) at UVA. The Center's work focuses on increasing awareness of the historical and ecological value of cultural landscapes through innovative scholarly research, site documentation and fieldwork, planning, preservation, management and design. CCL staff, fellows, and affiliate members. The HLS team will consult these downtown mall stakeholders during the study process. The HLS team assumes that Mary Joy Scala will be the main point of contact for the city.

After a lengthy discussion PLACE will clarify its position on the new Long Range Planning and Design position including the unanimous decision (by those present at the meeting's end on May 11) to recommend this position come in the form of an Assistant City Manager.

1. The new position is supported by staff additions dedicated to this effort as budgeting permits and demand grows with time.
2. The new position coordinates with ongoing Community Engagement practices for all of its efforts.
3. Council forms a committee comprised of key staff with representatives from PLACE, the Planning Commission and the community to determine criteria and interview/ select the initial hire.
4. The new position has coordination responsibility with, and adequate license regarding, the work of:
 - NDS
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Economic Development
 - Utilities
 - Tree Commission
 - PLACE
 - Public Works
 - BAR
 - Small Area Plans
 - Streets That Work
 - Other groups and efforts as deemed fit by Council

Meeting Adjourn: 2:00 p.m.