

ROUTE 360 WEST CORRIDOR COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 13, 2001

MEETING MINUTES

The Meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

A *motion* was made to accept the minutes from the January 10, 2001 meeting, seconded by Tim White.

Ayes: Unanimous

Due to the absence of Laurie Newill, the Annual Meeting for the Election of Officers was suspended until the March 14, 2001, meeting. The election will be for both 1 and 2 year terms.

Mike Divita invited Gary Gallagher of EDC, general contractors, to present plans for Commonwealth Center II. The proffers originally negotiated with Brandermill Community Association are still in effect.

Gary Gallagher explained that EDC is a general contractor working in the southeast portion of country. They are the eyes and ears of the development group. They are about to submit building plans for Commonwealth Center Phase II. These include Barnes & Noble, some small shops, a sit down restaurant with outside seating, Michaels, Steinmart, shops, Rack Room, shops, Old Navy, and restaurants such as Atlanta Bread Company. On Pad 1, across from the theater will be Pier 1. On Pad 2 a Hallmark card and gift shop. Pad 3 will be a sit down restaurant. There will be passive spaces for sidewalks, benches, lights, a meeting place (plaza) and green area. He displayed a rendering of the meeting place.

The architecture will be similar to Kohl's and Target incorporating elements from across the street, such as split face rock and dryvit. They are still going through the review process now. It is not intended to be cookie cutter approach. They are hoping to introduce some colors and allow individuality. The bigger tenants will dwarf the smaller tenant and yet achieve continuity. They are trying to get final site plan approval.

Dorcas Yeager asked about possible parking lot expansion. Mr. Gallagher explained there are 37 more acres but they do not have anyone for it yet. On the high knoll there is a possibility for a couple more buildings.

Tommy Baer asked if there were any commitments from restaurants yet. Mr. Gallagher stated that Seasons and Atlanta Bread Company have come pretty far and possibly a Mexican restaurant. Tommy asked about the sit down restaurants as a follow-up question. There is a company interested that is affiliated with Shackelfords.

Gary Gallagher stated there would be 180,000 square feet total in this phase. He is hoping to have the shells ready for August or September so the businesses can open in October or November.

Dorcas Yeager requested information on proximity to creek. Mr. Gallagher explained there is a 100 year floodplain as well as a detention pond before the creek. The floodplain is up from the creek about 200 feet so the creek is well protected.

She also requested information on possible pedestrian paths. Mr. Jacobson explained that this project touches only a small portion of the creek, and that the path is a requirement for Swift Creek Associate. Dorcas stressed that there appears to be the potential for a good access point to the pathways from this property. Mr. Gallagher stated he would take the concept back for discussion. He also suggested that the Virginia Power line area be looked at as a possibility.

Tom Jacobson mentioned that there is intended to be pedestrian connection to the west. Mr. Gallagher stated that it will be a cut through into the condos. He also mentioned the possibility of beefing up the pedestrian crossing.

Greg Allen stated that VDOT usually will not allowed beefed up painted crossings unless at a 4 way stop. Gary Gallagher said he would be willing to look at a 4 way stop. Greg stated VDOT will still need to approve. Mr. Gallagher stated that they are actively working on the state system. It behooves them to make it safe. It is currently under maintenance of the original developer and Wachovia.

Dorcas Yaeger questioned an under the road passage. However, Tom Jacobson stated that it is an all at grade crossing.

Mike Divita expressed his compliments to Mr. Gallagher as it has been a pleasure to work with him through the Brandermill Community Association.

The committee thanked Mr. Gallagher for his time and willingness to speak before the committee.

Gary Gallagher commended Mike Divita, the Brandermill Community Association, the committee members and County staff for a great relationship.

Tim White, Chairman of the subcommittee for the Design Standards discussed the subcommittee's progress and meeting with Art Warren, Russ Gulley and Tom Jacobson. They have reviewed the study and the existing Route 360 East Corridor Plan which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Tom Jacobson explained that this plan is available on the internet for those wishing to review it. If there is trouble downloading it, a paper copy can be mailed if the Planning Department is notified.

Tim White expanded on the Route 360 East Corridor Plan explaining the content included a Vision or Mission Statement, Existing Conditions or Critical Issues, Goals, Land Use Plan and Implementation Guide. He stressed the need for our committee to have a similar document or Plan.

Mr. Jacobson explained the Route 360 West corridor is currently part of the Upper Swift Creek Plan which was adopted in early 1991 and includes all of the watershed from, Beach Road to the south, to Midlothian Turnpike on the north. The Upper Swift Creek Plan is not as specific as the Route 360 Plan as they were more focused, but does include some of the same principles. They also accepted the concept of nodes with less intense business in between.

The most notable difference between the Plan and design study is that a large portion of the Route 360 West properties are already zoned, whereas Route 360 East was not already zoned, so the Plan brought guidance to Route 360 East.

Mike Divita stressed that if there is no Plan, the committee only has the art of persuasion and must depend on goodwill and political influence. He noted that the committee needs a Plan. However, it took the Route 360 East committee 5 years to adopt their Plan.

Tommy Baer brought the issue back up regarding elimination of a particular use, using a bank as an example. Mr. Jacobson explained that it is difficult in Virginia to eliminate a particular use on a property, as the burden is on the government to show how conditions have changed requiring the "down zone" of a property. The request was made for Route 360 East, but the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors could not find a legal need to "down zone". Mike Divita questioned if the owner can initiate limited uses. Mr. Jacobson replied affirmatively. The existing zoning can be inventoried.

Mr. Jacobson and Tim White continued to discuss areas of interest to include in a plan such as Utilities, infrastructure and road network.

Tim White suggested that the corridor be divided into pieces to focus on smaller sections at a time to expedite some concerns. The hope is to develop a Plan parallel to Route 360 East Plan. Mr. Jacobson agreed that a request should be made to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors with information to ask for resources. The Planning Department is currently undertaking other large projects such as Route 10 area and Matoaca Village. His other option would be to accept a request from the Board of Supervisors to delay another project.

Tim White made a motion to expedite for the 360 W Corridor Plan for adoption by the Board of Supervisors. Dorcas Yeager seconded the motion. When asked if any discussion, Donna Campbell inquired as to the scope of the Corridor. Tim White stated that they would use the area as shown in the Design Study. This area would be the commercial corridor.

Ayes: Unanimous.

Tom Jacobson suggested putting a letter together to Mr. Warren and copy Mr. Gulley. Mike Divita stated he would address it to Ms. Humphrey, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Mr. Marsh, Chairman of the Planning Commission as part of their district is in this area. Tom Jacobson stated that a telephone follow-up should be done to this proposal and option.

Tim White stated that he as Chairman, Jim Gresock, Emily Hudson, Laurie Newill and Martha Garcia will be available to work with Tom Jacobson. Tim White will be the point of contact.

Both Mike Divita and Tim White commended Jim Gresock for his letter and comments dated January 2, 2001, which has been distributed to the committee.

The scope of the commercial corridor again came up for discussion. Tim White stated that traffic impact affects the whole area even if outside the commercial corridor. The Sowers case was used as an example and Mr. Jacobson stated that the case is going before the Board of Supervisors on February 21, 2001 for anyone interested in attending.

Mike Divita stressed to focus on the Route 360 corridor itself since beyond this is not part of the charter. He also stated that the committee does not want to close the door to outside the corridor.

Tom Jacobson stressed that the Route 360 East Plan focuses on development ON Route 360.

Tim White expressed that anyone should bring forward a case of interest to them or that they feel will impact the corridor. If each committee member improves the area closest to them, it will improve the overall corridor.

Mike Divita asked Greg Allen what will trigger cases being brought to the committee. Greg Allen stated that the committee will receive notification of site plan. Tom Jacobson reminded the committee that the committee is on the Planning Department's Civics Mailing List which provides notification of public hearings and other meetings of interest. It is left to the committee to decide from those notices which cases they are interested in reviewing. He also stated that the staff reports are available on the internet.

Jim Lehmann believes the committee should work on developing a plan to provide guidelines for reviewing zoning cases. He also stated that, from his experience, it is best to get into the process earlier to give input. The developer can then plan accordingly before the architecture is drawn up and the specs are out.

Jim Gresock reminded the committee that when residential is being planned, commercial and retail are sure to follow.

Tom Jacobson explained that when a new developer comes in, the developer will be notified that the committee exists. Mike Divita is the point of contact for notifications from developers wishing to come in and speak with the committee.

Jim Gresock mentioned Henrico County's conceptual site plan. Is there one required in Chesterfield County? Greg Allen stated that there is not. There is old zoning with so many overlaps that there is too great a chance of mistake so they do not wish to stamp a conceptual plan.

At this point, the committee took a break to introduce new members. Appreciation was expressed to Jim Moyler of Brandermill Inn for the use of the meeting room and refreshments. Appreciation was also expressed to Donna Campbell in recording the minutes for the committee.

Tom Jacobson suggested the committee begin determining architectural standards which could possibly be adopted by the committees to become Design Standards or be adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Using Commonwealth Center as example, possible suggestions could include classic style versus monolithic; bigger uses have classical design uses; architectural treatment in context of what is around them, such as tighter architectural style compatible with residential neighborhoods; or a suburban look such as Friendly's. Much of the corridor is appropriate for mixed use corridor use.

Need to determine whether to begin Design Standards process or to eliminate this step and proceed with Plan. Mr. Jacobson explained that the Design Standards can be developed before a Plan. A Plan is not mandatory but rather a guide for the property owner. The Board of Supervisors takes Plans very seriously, but reminded the committee that they are always subject to interpretation. However, the Zoning Ordinance is mandatory. A Plan includes Land Uses, Transportation, Pedestrian Paths, Utilities, Marketing and Design. The Land Use work is done already but committee can adopt guidelines for design in hopes to become Zoning Ordinance.

Tommy Baer recommended developing design standards. Jim Gresock stated if zoned already, then it is grandfathered. At that point, it is a public relations appeal through site plan process. Tom Jacobson stated that although to have something in writing is helpful, but that most developers are willing to work with you.

Mike Divita asked Tim White and the subcommittee to come back with recommendations to the committee. Jim Lehman was asked to join the subcommittee. The subcommittee will report at the next meeting as this item will be placed on the agenda.

Tom Jacobson explained that the design standard must be put into legal form to hold public forums. The it can be brought before the Planning Commission, and then the Board of Supervisors.

Tommy Baer made a *motion* to develop architectural standards for submission. There was discussion and clarification. Jim Lehmann questioned if design includes lighting and landscaping. Mr. Jacobson explained there are currently Zoning Ordinances for both, as well as sidewalks.

Ayes: Unanimous

Greg Allen distributed copies of Site Plan Activity in the corridor. Does the committee need submittal date and approval date? It currently lists the site plan number and description. He explained a waiver request by the Japanese restaurant requesting not to look like Virginia Paint. West of Commonwealth Center II and Hunters Chase is 01PR0204 which is looking at mixed use to include commercial and multi-family.

Greg Allen recommended the committee request a presentation for 01PR0204. Mike Divita requested to schedule a presentation with Swift Creek Associates for the next Route 360 W Corridor Committee Meeting on March 14, 2001.

Greg Allen reiterated the need for a year's list of meeting dates as he had requested at the last meeting to forward to potential developers. He also noted that residential projects are not identified on the paper he gave out to committee members in attendance.

Greg Allen recognized Lowe's for having a clean exterior appearance and for hiring a new contractor which is installing sugar maples. This was a voluntary effort by Lowe's.

Resolutions were provided by Tom Jacobson for those not in attendance of the January 24, 2001 Board of Supervisors' meeting.

Tommy Baer stated that the corporation was chartered on February 9, 2001 as Route 360 West Corridor Committee.

Mike Divita extended thanks to Tommy Baer for all of his legal work. He also noted Belinda Ricketts as accountant of record.

Tim White made a *motion* to adjourn, seconded by Belinda Ricketts.

Attendees: Mike Divita
Tommy Baer
Dorcas Yeager
Raymond May
Donna Campbell
Ed Campbell
Belinda Ricketts
Jim Moyler
David Taylor
Paul Bonner
Tim White
Jim Gresock
Jim Lehmann

The next meeting, originally scheduled for March 14, 2001, has been rescheduled for April 11, 2001 at 7 p.m. at the Brandermill Inn.