

# East Campus Redevelopment Community Review Steering Committee Notes from the January 14, 2008 Meeting

## Introduction

Doug Duncan opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and led the room in a moment of silence in memory of Neil Hoffberg, an attorney who worked for many years as an advisor for the University of Maryland including on the East Campus project, and Gwendolyn Britt, a Maryland State Senator and chair of the Prince George's County delegation.

Bob Peck briefly reviewed steering committee ground rules.

The meeting was then opened to the Committee to raise questions and comments on any outstanding issues. No issues were raised.

## Discussion

*Note: The presentation portions of each meeting topic largely followed the presentation slides. Printouts of the slides were available at the meeting and will be posted on the project website, so these notes will not reproduce all of the information they contain but will instead focus on any additional information that was provided by the presenter and the Q&A segments that followed each topic.*

### Introduction

Presentation (Richard Perlmutter, Foulger-Pratt/Argo)

- Quick overview of the agenda (Purple Line, parking, and transportation).

### Purple Line

Presentation (Joel Oppenheimer, STV Group, consultant for MTA)

- The goal is to get as close to the College Park Metro station as possible.
- In the area of East Campus, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) prefers not to run the Purple Line down Paint Branch Parkway, but through the project site.
- Many concepts (routes) in the University area have been studied, including Campus Drive, Stadium Drive, Mowatt Lane, and a new one, the Preinkert Drive/Chapel Drive alternative.
  - The Mowatt Lane alternative is no longer being considered.
  - Factors used to evaluate the three remaining alternatives include costs, travel time, ridership, and connectivity.
- Preinkert Drive/Chapel Drive
  - Preinkert Fieldhouse could become a transit station.
  - Initial observations include:
    - Travel time is similar to Campus Drive.

- A Preinkert Fieldhouse transit station would not be as central currently, but could become more so if other transit route changes are made (routing Shuttle-UM and municipal buses this way, away from Campus Drive).
- There are fewer pedestrians along this route than Campus Drive.
- The route is mostly already paved, but would include some currently grassy areas.
- This route has more merit than Stadium Drive.
- Stadium Drive
  - Travel time is longer.
  - It would cross Route 1 at Paint Branch Parkway – this intersection is more congested and not as beneficial for East Campus.
  - MTA is ready to drop this alternative.
- Campus Drive
  - If this route were chosen, it would make sense to close Campus Drive to automobiles from Union Lane to the UM circle.
  - Pedestrians would be directed to a fixed number of crossings.
  - There would be funding for aesthetic improvements to Campus Drive.
- Both the Campus Drive and Preinkert Drive routes would likely cross through East Campus via Rossborough Lane. MTA has been working with Foulger-Pratt/Argo regarding width constraints on this road; dual tracks are feasible.

#### Q&A

- Question: The Campus Drive alternative includes a third, emergency lane; would the Preinkert Lane alternative also include this?
  - Response: Probably not. The main reason for the third lane on Campus Drive is not emergencies but major events with heavy traffic – this lane’s direction can be alternated to accommodate this traffic. This would not be an issue with the Preinkert Lane route.
- Question: Light rail is much more expensive than bus rapid transit – does this make bus rapid transit more likely to be the selected mode?
  - Response: 50% of the funding for the Purple Line will be federal. Federal rules require showing the cost-effectiveness of transit projects in comparison to other projects. However, the preferred option in this region is light rail.
- Question: Please elaborate on the topic of light rail and pedestrian safety.
  - Response: Light rail “trains” operate much more similarly to buses than to heavy rail trains: they move relatively slowly and yield to pedestrians at crossings. Light rail routes often go through dense, pedestrian areas with few problems.
- Question: Please elaborate on the issue of the potential effect of light rail on campus character (whether it will divide the campus into two sides).
  - Response: Light rail uses embedded tracks; people and other vehicles can easily cross them. The tracks are also ADA-compliant. These are not “train tracks” in the sense of heavy rail tracks.
- Comment: Regarding the Preinkert Lane alternative, there would be a pedestrian safety issue where it passes between Lefrak Hall and South Campus Dining Hall (tight fit).
- Comment: The Preinkert Lane route is not central to many of the major campus draws (Stamp Student Union, Comcast Center, CSPAC, etc).
  - Response: This issue will be part of MTA’s evaluation. However, note that the campus Master Plan shows much development on this side of campus.

- Comment: The Graduate Student Government has unanimously endorsed the Campus Drive alignment.
- Question: Are students counted in MTA's ridership projections?
  - Response: The ridership forecast is based on the Census' commuting data. So on-campus students are not counted – but MTA estimates and adds this (the estimate is approximately 2,000 on-campus student riders per day).
- Question: Please provide some information on current Campus Drive traffic.
  - Response: 78% of the cars that use this stretch of Campus Drive are parked on campus. 1 bus per minute uses this road.

### Parking Analysis and Strategy

#### Presentation (Jon Eisen, StreetSense)

- The parking strategy is distributed parking – parking spread throughout the site (as opposed to the “super deck” concept where all parking is centralized).
- Most parking will not be visible from the street: much will be below-ground, and the above-ground garages will be in the interior of blocks or on the lower levels of buildings with other uses above. There will be some on-street parking as well.
- Phase I parking demand comparison: This chart shows a comparison of County and ULI parking formulas. The ULI formula generates a smaller total number of required spaces.
- Phase I shared parking analysis: These charts show shared parking synergy reductions.
- Phase I parking comparison: This chart shows a comparison of County, ULI and TOD parking formulas. The TOD formula generates the smallest total number of required spaces – this formula is the one being used.
- The Phase II parking analysis is not as far along, because the Phase II plan is not as defined at this point.
- All parking will be paid, including residential. This helps control demand and use.

#### Q&A

- Question: Where will the parking revenue go?
  - Response: It will be used to pay off the bonds that finance the construction of the parking.
- Question: At earlier meetings, the developer has indicated that the shared parking concept will not apply here because residents will want to store their cars even though they will use them infrequently, but today's presentation stated that the developer is assuming a reduction in parking demand due to shared parking.
  - Response: The shared parking reduction to be used is much lower than in other situations where there is less projected residential car storage; it is based on shared parking among non-residential uses.
- Question: Will the developer charge for residential parking?
  - Response: Yes; residential parking will be paid for separately from rent.
- Question: Will University students who live at East Campus park there?
  - Response: Yes, that is the expectation.
- Question: Are geotechnical conditions being accounted for with the below-ground parking?

- Response: Yes, but a detailed investigation has not been done yet. One goal with the below-ground parking is to reduce the impervious surface, which is currently 100%.
- Question: What is the source of the TOD shared parking reduction formula?
  - Response: ULI was the original source, but the developer's formula is has even larger reduction factors. The developer has done a lot of research on this issue and is confident in the formula they have ended up with. Shuttle-UM is a great resource for reducing driving; other TOD projects don't have a comparable resource.
- Question: Does the parking formula account for "worst-case" scenarios – the heaviest traffic days associated with special events? The concern is with overflow parking that would affect the surrounding community.
  - Response: The developer designs for the 15<sup>th</sup>-worst day of the year – this is the industry standard for these kinds of projects.
- Question: The main below-ground garage will have an edge that runs parallel to a high-pressure gas line – is the parking design accounting for the worst-case scenario of the line exploding?
  - Response: This scenario is being taken into account; much engineering work is still being done.

Bryant Foulger (Foulger-Pratt/Argo): So far, our focus has been on numbers – next we will turn to the very important issue of design (aesthetics and safety issues).

- Question: Will any mechanisms be used to discourage non-East Campus users from parking there (for example, commuting students)?
  - Response: Yes, all manner of strategies will be employed: time limits, access constraints, and cost structures. Parking will not be cheaper than in downtown.
- Question: Will alternative vehicles (e.g., shared cars, carpool, bicycles, etc.) be accommodated?
  - Response: Yes, all kinds of alternative vehicles will be accommodated and given priority.
- Question: Will the project follow LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) standards?
  - Response: The LEED-ND pilot program is closed to new applicants, but the developer is planning to score itself, possibly using one of several other green building scoring systems.
- Comment: There is concern about the cost of parking for graduate students. When will the pricing be determined?
  - Response: This is many months away from being determined and finalized.
- Question: Some housing will be subsidized by the University [150 units will be rent-capped]; will this include the parking for those units?
  - Response: No.

Doug Duncan: The Birchmere will be probably be located on Block E.

### Transportation Analysis and Strategy

Presentation (Wes Guckert, The Traffic Group)

- An abbreviated version of the traffic study was posted on the East Campus website; Committee members can get a copy of the full report if they are interested.

- The report is a draft – it will change, partly as a result of feedback from M-NCPPC and the State Highway Administration.
- Underlying assumptions
  - East Campus will rely heavily on Transportation Demand Management (TDM). Minimizing the number of parking spaces and charging for parking are two significant TDM tools.
- Traffic study assumptions
  - The study assumed no trip reduction for the Purple Line.
- Study results and recommendations
  - In the Route 1 corridor, the County requires projects to meet average critical lane volume (CLV) standards, not CLV at each intersection (because capacity can't practically be increased at this point).
- Access points to Paint Branch Parkway: The plan is for approximately 5 access points along this road. This supports the goal of directing traffic away from Route 1 and toward Paint Branch Parkway and Kenilworth Avenue.

#### Q&A

- Question: The presentation did not touch on the issue of automobile traffic in and out of the surrounding community.
  - Response: The developer favors these connections, but ultimately it is up to the community to decide this. The plans will be flexible on this issue.
- Question: What happens if/when Campus Drive is closed to cars (currently 5,500 cars per day use this route)? The concern is that these cars will instead use and burden College Park streets.
  - Response: This has not been addressed yet in the traffic analysis, and depends in part on the chosen Purple Line alignment.
  - Response [Doug]: The plan is for these cars to use other campus roads, not city roads.
    - Follow-up comment: The plan to close Campus Drive to cars is independent of the Purple Line issue.
      - Response: This is correct; good point. [MTA to provide its data related to this issue to Wes.]
- Question: Why are County trip generation rates inappropriate for this project?
  - Response: The issue was with the residential rates; they are old and out of date, and don't take into account projects of this kind.
- Question: Are stop lights on Paint Branch Parkway planned?
  - Response: There will probably be one or two; this is up to the County.
- Question: Can the Committee get more information on the planned campus development on the area of campus near the Preinkert Drive Purple Line alternative?
  - Response [Doug]: Yes, we can get information out on this.
- Question: The University View student apartment building has a lot of parking, because of the car storage issue – but many of these students still park their cars in the surrounding neighborhood. How will this be discouraged at East Campus?
  - Response: The solution to this is permit parking in the neighborhoods (this exists in parts of College Park already).
- Question: Would the route through campus from Campus Drive to Mowatt Lane to Knox Road be negatively impacted by the Preinkert Lane Purple Line alternative?
  - Response: No.

- Question: What is the projected percentage of East Campus users who will use an alternative transportation mode (walk, bike and transit)?
  - Response: In the evening, the projected percentage is 50%.
    - Follow-up comment: This seems unrealistically high, especially for Phase II which will be all market-rate housing.
      - Response: The developer has studied this in depth and is comfortable with its assumptions.
    - Follow-up comment: One thing that would help is universal Shuttle-UM access.
      - Response [Doug]: There is currently a State bill that addresses this; the University supports it.
- Question: The report on the East Campus website [Exhibit 6] shows the trip generation numbers for each background development, but does not have totals for all background developments. Can you provide those numbers?
  - Response: Wes will get this number to the Committee. [A table summarizing the trips for each background development and showing the totals across background developments is included at the end of this document.]
- Question: The Birchmere seems different from other East Campus attractions in terms of trip generation assumptions (because it has a more regional market) – has the developer considered using CSPAC as a trip generation model for the Birchmere?
  - Response: This Birchmere location will be different in its acts and atmosphere than the original location – the owners plan to market toward a younger target audience.
    - Follow-up question: Is Birchmere management comfortable with Foulger-Pratt/Argo's parking projections?
      - Response [Doug]: Yes. Also, note that its parking demand can be pretty well-estimated because it has a fixed number of seats, and that it is an off-peak use.
- Question: Can you expand on the trip generation rates and assumptions that are being used?
  - Response: The larger a project, the lower the parking rate (number of spaces per unit or square foot) needed (because larger sites allow longer trips (e.g., to do multiple errands in one location), which equate to fewer trips).
  - For retail, the rate being used is approximately 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet.
- Comment: The block layout in the southern part of the site seems better.
  - Response: The developer agrees. This is because there has been a bit more design done in that area so far. Design in general will start to get much more attention now, as project planning advances.

### **Other Issues**

[No other questions or issues were raised.]

### Trip Generation for Background Developments

Project	Morning Peak			Evening Peak			Sat Mid-Day Peak		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Jefferson Square at College Park	51	110	161	209	171	380	184	166	350
Townplace Suites By Marriott	26	23	49	34	26	60	30	24	54
Garden Suites / Marriott Suite Hotel	11	9	20	14	10	24	12	10	22
PDC Campfire	38	109	147	132	88	220	100	89	189
Hollywood Station	40	4	44	8	33	41	5	4	9
Northgate Condos and Taco Bell	123	236	359	212	130	342	223	178	401
Starview Plaza	54	37	91	65	74	139	80	72	152
Mazza Property	36	107	143	123	79	202	112	100	212
Berwyn House	7	30	37	28	15	43	20	17	37
University View	324	36	360	63	270	333	40	34	74
Raymond Towers	28	80	108	105	67	172	127	112	239
Greenbelt Station, South Core	44	172	216	162	86	248	91	77	168
Bewley Estates	0	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Jefferson Square West	66	118	184	236	196	432	245	221	466
Mosaic at Turtle Creek	42	168	210	156	84	240	76	65	141
ACP Balance	631	70	701	123	525	648	no data	no data	no data
M Square	725	94	819	84	654	738	no data	no data	no data
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,246</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>3,651</b>	<b>1,755</b>	<b>2,509</b>	<b>4,264</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>2,516</b>