

Innovation Park Small Area Plan
Stakeholder Meeting Notes
November 28, 2017

Cultural Resources & Green Infrastructure

- Green infrastructure is the strategic use of networks of natural lands, working landscapes, and other spaces to conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to people.
- o Group #1 Findings:
 - o Eliminate Light Industrial zoning.
 - o Action strategy to repeal/deal with TEOD.
 - o Regulations to address green space- look at these details in small area plan (clarify/simplify).
 - o Have the cultural resource area been reviewed? Take a global look at the CR issues. Identify to save a step for developers.
 - o Create a definition of “Cultural Resources”.
 - o Cemetery location in the study area and its impact.
 - o Update to GMU Master Plan – water feature
 - Available online.
 - Not regulated by state/county.
 - Identify this area on the plan by shading the area.
 - o Increase densities here- consider impact on Cultural Resources.
 - o Outline of Innovation Park.
 - o Connection to George Mason Trail System- build a network.
 - o Identify 2 science centers: 1-GMU 1-State.
 - o Piedmont trail – rope trail, tower is an asset.
 - o What is the long-term plan for the VRE Innovation Station?
 - o Where does residential fit in the plan?
- o Group #2 Findings:
 - o Revisit buffer requirements – head to urban vs suburban.
 - o Establish view corridors for marketing and visibility.
 - o Can this be removed from zoning ordinance?- too many layers, too many covenants, design guidelines, etc.
 - o Can we do concurrent rezoning changes/ordinance changes with adoption of small area plans?
 - o Aquatic area is expanding – connection of campus to larger area.
 - o Discovery boulevard is the walking path.
 - o Need density at core.
 - o Crossing of 234 is too difficult.
 - o How do we connect the areas within the study area?
 - o 10,000 students at GMU- no housing for students- want a place to go there 5pm to 8pm at night.
 - o Denser development may require deck parking, parking garages.
 - o Buffers between land uses- what is appropriate?
 - o Look at Cedar fence rows along property lines – is this necessary?

- Two barns- connection to economic development.
- Group #3 Findings:
 - Trails/Sidewalks along Innovation Drive and University Blvd- a grant for 1.2 million.
 - Do we have a trail plan?
 - Need to increase connectivity for this area.
 - Where you walk is important in planning a network.
 - The original Innovation Park has much larger setbacks – less land to develop.
 - The proposed “town center” is an extension of the GMU campus.
 - What is the purpose of the buffers- we don’t want to hide/disconnect some uses.
 - (I.e. Columbia, MD- all trees- can’t see the land uses.)
 - Potential cultural resources: Race horse Track- 1940s and Native American Settlement.
 - Look at expanding the study area – to be more holistic moving forward.
 - VRE questions and results – plan to make the cut next go round.
 - Tennis Association HQ is planned for here.
- Group #4 Findings:
 - Where do you go to eat?
 - Where do you stay? Hotels? Big need/demand.
 - There is one dorm on the campus.
 - 80% usage of large hall:
 - 115,000-foot traffic last year (classes, meetings, performances, weddings)
 - Tennis Association HQ to be located across from Police station.
 - What about the industrial sites? Many are starting to go away.

Economic Development and Land-Use

- Assets
 - GMU Sci/Tech campus.
 - Residential potential to take advantage of what is there now.
 - Hylton PAC, Freedom Aquatic.
 - Skeleton bones good: transportation GMU; beginning amenities.
 - Need after 5pm for activities; bring life to the area; amenities to companies; students.
 - Can’t be all data centers.
 - How to use M-2 zoned properties, warehouse properties.
- Going Forward:
 - What is Innovation?
 - Geography.
 - Land uses.
 - Quadrant approach to the area with different emphasis mix of uses.
 - Expand the study area boundary.
 - Targets
 - Secondary uses (entertainment).
 - Support services.
 - Strip off overlays district zoning.
 - Flexibility.
 - Mixed use approach, including housing or else Innovation will remain as it is.

- Assets
 - GMU Campus.
 - Freedom Center, Hylton Center, Comcast.
 - Infrastructure is in place.
 - Missing:
 - Hotels (no place to stay/eat/celebrate).
 - Data centers incompatible with a mixed used environment.
 - Recreational uses for existing & to attract new & events.
 - Too many encumbrances (proffers, TEOD, other restrictive regulations).
- 2040 Vision
- Group A
 - A real live/work/play space.
 - Dense residential (townhouses, apartments).
 - Walkable.
 - GMU students/ professors living on campus (more undergrads) less of a commuter campus.
 - Repeal TEOD and all other layers of restrictive/confusing.
 - Innovation covenants; FAR, ARB.
 - Wellington upgraded to 4-lanes.
 - Light industrial along wellington.
 - Engineering uses (lab/test) adjacent to campus (expanded).
 - Bio Engineering; instrumentation; biomedical devices; aerospace; UAS.
 - Partnership with Sentara, Novant, Inova.
- Group B
 - Reason to stay in the area.
 - Nightlife.
 - Recreation-active outdoor greenspaces with television screens (like Potomac Town Center/Mosaic District).
 - Somewhere for lunch.
 - Get rid of TEOD.
 - Coordinate zoning with SAP so it can be implemented.
 - Allow flexibility and administrative flexibility.
 - Go for more density, walkability.
 - Higher FARs.
 - Target corporate HQ.
 - Other opportunities for housing, next to GMU.
 - Incentives for mixed-use development.

Transportation

- Group #1
- Opportunities:
 - Interchanges (planned) – PW Parkways & Sudley Manor, PW Parkway & University.
 - Create more connectivity (alternative roads).
 - Improve road conditions.
 - Increase density near transit station (FAR 3.0).

- Challenges:
 - University Blvd- traffic growing.
 - Signal Timing – wait time is longer.
 - Left & right turn from Univ. Blvd (east) to PW Parkway (234).
 - University is planning to grow – will add more traffic.
 - Wellington Road- see many growth/ heavy trucks- needs resurfacing & eliminate potholes.
 - Farm Brew Live – generates lots of traffic.
 - 100 ft. buffering requirement- route 234 (too large?).
 - Maybe bring it down to 50ft?
 - Hard to widen the roads.
 - Not much existing bicycling infrastructure.
 - Not walkable.

- Group #2
- Opportunities:
 - Eliminate N/S connector because Innovation Drive will be connected.
 - Extend Godwin Drive to Fairfax County (28 bypass).
 - Consider making Freedom Center 4-lanes throughout.
 - PRTC is necessary! (add bus routes).
 - Connect GMU campus trails to Innovation Park trails.
 - County might want to come in and expand Wellington Rd to 4 lanes.
 - Bike trail connection from City of Manassas on Wellington Road.
 - Connectivity over 28 (crossing).
 - Difficult to access the study area.
 - Expand Innovation Drive up to Sudley Manor Drive.
 - Wellington Road can be bridged over 234.

- Challenges:
 - George Mason is expecting to add recreation facility off of Freedom Center Blvd. and Wellington Road.
 - This will increase traffic and generate more trips on Wellington.
 - Freedom Center is 4 lanes to a point (partially 4 lanes).
 - PW Parkway and University Blvd- road crossing is a nightmare.
 - Trail is challenging because of this challenge. Possibly tunnel under it?

- Group #3
- Challenges:
 - Walkability – especially to a future VRE station.
 - Need more pedestrian/bike connection.
 - From the town center to a VRE station.
 - Across PW Parkway.
 - PW Parkway – barrier for access.
 - Too costly for developers – county may need to step in/create partnerships.
 - PRTC Route – no existing bus service.
 - Parking can be an issue.
 - Deck parking/ structure parking as a possible solution.
 - Lack of pedestrian crossing (on 234), lack of trails (wellington).

- Opportunities:
 - Farm Brew Live- provide access from the opposite side of the PW Parkway.
 - Look at the internal bike system.
 - Get big corporate users involved as well.
 - Elevate PW Parking – for PW Parkway/University Interchange.
 - Innovation Drive will be slightly relocated – can be extended up to Bethlehem Road.
 - Shared Parking.
 - Electrical Engineering school- moving here:
 - Might even be the entire engineering department
 - Add lots of students and generate much more traffic
 - Add a few elevated pedestrian connection (bridges) over parkway (especially South of Innovation Drive).
 - Multi-modal transportation plan for Innovation.
 - Tech park – need one.
 - Use it to get funds to improve shuttle bus at GMU.
- Group #4
- Challenges:
 - No funding for planned interchanges- funding for Balls Ford Rd. interchanges can benefit down here? Maybe need more pedestrian friendly design.
- Opportunities:
 - Opportunities for mixed-use developments.
 - Add more pedestrian features.
 - Maybe the roads do not need to be expanded (Innovation Drive).
 - Downsize roads? – widen the road, it's harder for pedestrian to cross.
 - Consider nodes/districts within the small area plan.
 - Focus redevelopment/improvements near the town center/university/Innovation Park co-located with residential development.
 - Upgrade wellington Road:
 - Straighten this road out / consolidate parcels

Infrastructure/ Level-of-Service

- Group #1:
 - Transmission lines will be upgraded – this can be an asset.
 - Existing substation.
 - NOVEC:
 - Install/order the first substation to service the Innovation Park.
 - Get Dominion involved early (perhaps relationship with NOVEC).
 - Can NOVEC come to the table for these meetings and future planning efforts?
 - Good water/sewer capacity – although some users on wells.
 - Existing regional ponds (good):
 - However, shared cost agreement is antiquated/troublesome.
 - Good for meeting new 2014 stormwater standards.
 - There is fiber – this is important – may need help with easements.
 - No existing schools impact because there is no residential.
 - Central district police station opening soon, will help relieve Western District.
 - Tenants often need upgraded security and fire prevention measures.

- Transmission lines reaching Innovation Park- how will this work?
- Have the Comprehensive Plan match the DCSM?
 - DCSM allow larger lines to remain above ground.
- Some existing gas line locations make site development challenging (especially on Wellington).
- Utilities should be consistent along the right-of-way.
- Buffering and utilities are often in conflict, buffers are too wide in the sector plan area. Might not allow the implementation of a town center.
- Utility location affects the buffering that can be provided.

- Group #2:
 - Best thing:
 - Get rid of zoning overlays.
 - Implement mixed-use planning (residential).
 - Schools should be a consideration with a mixed-use concept.
 - Service Authority – how is the capacity?
 - 30 inch lines should be plenty.
 - Transportation improvements could be costly.
 - Difficulty and cost of employing 2,500 people – and finding employees at the rate desired- high cost.
 - Mixed-use concept would increase LOS requirements- police and fire and rescue.
 - GMU talent pool is a plus – workforce implications
 - Future transportation advancements – are we prepared? (i.e. self-driving cars).
 - Already a need for an elementary school.
 - Currently no parks, school- would need.
 - Police and fire facilities are in good shape.
 - Need people (housing).
 - 35% non-residential tax base:
 - Concerns with achieving it.
 - Office tax rate per square feet very low in comparison to residential.
 - Need a diversity of housing for first time home-buyers:
 - More services will be needed, but tax benefits are still strong.
 - 4.6 mil per acre (mixed-use – residential).
 - 2.4 mil per acre (mixed-use –offices).
 - Wellington is a data corridor.
 - Concern that the data centers in bulk may drop the capacity:
 - Example: Haymarket Amazon vs. Hospital.
 - Data centers are great on water; recycle and air cooled.
 - Rail lines/VRE failed because no people live here.
 - Some sites not/part of regional pond system.
 - Existing streams.
 - What about a park as a temporary use until VRE station is put in?
 - Incentive for land assemblage.
 - Loudon MUB zone (example: to encourage the assemblage of smaller site).

- Group #3:
 - Wi-Fi needs are high:
 - Hylton Art has it, but the needs are growing.

- Police Station down the street – great.
 - What are the SWM implications of high FAR?
 - Some sites do not flow/have gravity to flow into the regional pond (Discovery Blvd).
 - High wind area (known since it was farm land).
 - Fiber needs/fast internet needed in the future – demand will be higher with mixed-use concept.
 - Transportation demand will increase.
 - Existing water/sewer facilities.
 - Power lines- data centers bring overhead utilities.
 - Is there water infrastructure available?
 - Want walkable/ bike friendly infrastructure for students/residents/ workers, especially around town center.
- Group #4:
 - Asset
 - Electrical infrastructure.
 - Opportunities for data centers:
 - But perhaps not as much here due to folks wanting larger sites (100-200 acres).
 - Existing gas line.
 - What are the utilities long range plan?
 - University may be upgrading heating and cooling systems.
 - Fiber along Freedom Center as well.
 - Need for addition green space hopefully the town center project will address.
 - University master plan includes additional green space, piedmont trail loop (1 mile).
 - Intellectual infrastructure:
 - Micron (engineering, IT).
 - Location is a plus.
 - Funding source for labs.
 - Charging stations.
 - Consider public improvements to reduce costs for applicants:
 - Wellington- top priority.
 - Nonresidential can have thinner margins for paying these costs.
 - Transportation improvements on 28 across from study area.
 - Phase 3 of Route 28 plan.