

Re Leesburg Pike Opportunity Area vote in August return note from John Thillmann
From: Jhtcav@aol.com
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2014 8:03 AM
To: cmacdonald@linchpinstrategies.com
Cc: mfaga@mitre.org; Frank, Aaron M.; dixiemyrealtor@cox.net;
kathleenabrown@verizon.net; mdegitz50@gmail.com;
macdonald@linchpinstrategies.com
Subject: Re: Leesburg Pike Opportunity Area vote in August return note from John Thillmann

Dear Ms Macdonald:

I have been out of town on family emergency since late last Wednesday and returned only yesterday so have finally gotten to my emails. That said, I am somewhat surprised and dismayed that you think that the discussion on Tuesday evening was an abrogation of the Task Force's position on the Sears Site--it was quite the contrary. We are taking a position to our always expressed opinion that the Charrette numbers (of FAR) should govern on the Sears site (Land Unit C) and not the numbers as proposed in the Staff draft plan! The plan is only a draft at this point and we have not taken a formal position on the draft plan as that is slated for the September meeting.

The discussion at our next meeting relative to the Sears site is to clarify that position so that we are all on the same page and each TF member will advise the rest of us of their opinion or position and I also expect that we will discuss possibly proposing less office and retail on the site. The office and retail FAR significantly increases traffic trips from that site especially if we have only Rt 7

Access as I believe most of us support. The conversation at the TF meeting on July 8th (I believe you were there) is when we discussed bringing the Sears Site FAR as proposed in the Draft Plan down to the TF Charrette numbers and to ask that staff provide us with options for this--and those options were discussed at Tuesday's meeting. So what we discussed the other evening (Tuesday 12th) was the Charrette numbers---do you now understand?

I am somewhat taken aback at your implication that the TF is railroading anything. The only control I have is to convene the meeting and thereafter anyone on the TF can bring us any issue, ask for any information and make suggestions, and or call for a vote on any issue. We conduct all of our business in the open (there are no closed meetings) and we have listened to the community issues which I believe most of the TF members agree with.

You might want to remember that the membership of the TF includes someone from each of the communities that have spoken at the public comment meetings. Since all of the communities have a member on the TF, we have to assume that they have been informing their community leaders on TF actions. Indeed, they have participated in all of our meetings in the past two years and all have been active participants. I might add that the rest of the TF membership have deferred Sears Site development issues to the members who represent the communities around the Sears Site! Don't make the mistake of assuming that one TF member even if that member owns the land can decide what the plan will be for that land--we all on the TF have to agree, the Staff has to agree, and then the County Planning Commission has to agree and finally the County Board of Supervisors also have to agree. So when one member at the last meeting discussed the option that he liked the best that doesn't mean much other than it is one person's opinion. Many others also have to agree as well!

I was not able to cc the other members of the TF that were in your email to me as we operate under the open meeting rule where one of us can only communicate with one other member so only Martin Faga was cc'd

John Thillmann

Re Leesburg Pike Opportunity Area vote in August return note from John Thillmann
Co-Chairman

-----Original Message-----

From: Catriona Macdonald <cmacdonald@linchpinstrategies.com>
To: JHTcav <JHTcav@aol.com>; Smith Blake <bsmith@nahb.org>; Faga, Martin C.
<mfaga@mitre.org>
Cc: Mason BOS Email <mason@fairfaxcounty.gov>; aaron.frank
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Michael Degitz
<mdegitz50@gmail.com>; Catriona Macdonald <cmacdonald@linchpinstrategies.com>
Sent: Thu, Aug 14, 2014 1:35 pm
Subject: Leesburg Pike Opportunity Area vote in August
Mr. Chairman,

At the Task Force meeting on Tuesday night, you presented three options for development of the Sears property, including one that would have 100% residential development, with no community-serving retail at all. A straw poll of Task Force members was conducted and the option with no retail was approved.

We are deeply concerned that, apparently, a binding vote will be taken at the next Task Force meeting, in August. I think it is fair to say that our neighborhood, which was well represented at the meeting on Tuesday, is up in arms.

We would like to note that:

- 1) This appears to directly contradict the vision's emphasis on walkable, community-serving, mixed development.
- 2) The proposal was not made public prior to the meeting, and was introduced after the public comment period portion of the meeting had been completed.
- 3) Several representatives of our community on the Task Force were not available to attend the meeting and represent the obvious, and predictable, concerns of our neighborhoods.
- 4) The vote is planned for the next August meeting, with no opportunity for community members to address the Task Force before the vote.

Whatever the intentions may be, it appears to our neighborhood that this change to the Task Force's recommendations is being railroaded through, during the month of August when many residents are on vacation, at the request of the developer.

In order to preserve the integrity of the Task Force process, its commitment to public input and to respond to neighborhood concerns, and the positive working relationship between the Task Force and the residents of the neighborhoods for which it is making recommendations, I urge you to reconsider this ill-advised proposal. At a minimum, I urge you to:

- 1) schedule a public comment opportunity on this significant revision to the Task Force's recommendations at a Task Force meeting, when all or virtually all Task Force members can be in attendance, to be held after Labor Day.
- 2) Delay the vote on this proposal until after public comment can be heard by

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Task Force members and residents can return from vacation to learn more about
the proposal.
3)Share this request with all Task Force members.

Thank you,

Catriona McCormack
President, Ravenwood Neighborhood Association

Catriona Macdonald
President
Linchpin Strategies, LLC

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