

RE 7-Corners Task Force Vote

From: Mason BOS Email  
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2014 7:02 PM  
To: 'Len Jones'  
Subject: RE: 7-Corners Task Force Vote

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Jones: Thank you for your recent email about the Seven Corners Task Force work. As you may know, no vote was taken by the Task Force at last Tuesday's meeting. The Task Force is continuing to work on its recommendations, taking into consideration the many comments heard from the public. You raised several questions in your email that I would like to address.

For many years, Seven Corners residents have expressed their concerns to me that Seven Corners needed new planning, to move from the existing 1950s and 60s development, to something more efficient and modern, to address current and future challenges. The Task Force members were selected by me, and include one of your neighbors from Ravenwood - Martin Faga - who, I believe, lives several doors down from you on Juniper Lane, as well as residents from Ravenwood Park, Sleepy Hollow, and Lee Boulevard Heights, among others. Also included on the task force are property owners or managers of the major commercial parcels in the Seven Corners/Willston area. Together, the residents and business owners on the task force have spent the past two years performing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to determine what Seven Corners/Willston should be over the next several decades. We know there will be change, and those changes need to be planned for.

The Task Force work does address transportation, and work is continuing on their recommendations. Straightening out the conflicting movements at the interchange, providing a more walkable grid of streets in redevelopment, bicycle access, and an easier route to the East Falls Church Metro, all must be part of the recommendations. The pedestrian bridge you say is not being used was first proposed by Tom Davis in 1983, and I was able to bring that idea to fruition in 2009. The bridge was constructed as a safety measure to eliminate hazardous crossings of Route 50 (several people had been killed, and many injured in this area). The pedestrian bridge is fairly heavily used every day, and no one has been injured or killed crossing Route 50 since the bridge was installed. When the study area for potential redevelopment was defined, the adjacent stable single family neighborhoods were not included. Neighborhoods like Ravenwood are anticipated to remain stable, and you can see significant reinvestment there already, as homeowners upgrade and remodel their homes, and new owners purchase those that are for sale. It is the commercial and multi-family area of Seven Corners/Willston that is the focus of the task force's work. Those areas need reinvestment and upgrades that come with revitalization. With hundreds of thousands of new jobs and more than a million new residents forecast for the National Capital Region in the next few decades, we need to make sure that Seven Corners/Willston is prepared for those changes, and remains a welcoming location for

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new residents and businesses, as it was when you and many of your neighbors moved there. There is no proposed construction at the Sears site. The Task Force's charge is to prepare language for the County's Comprehensive Plan, which is a guide to land use. The current zoning category for that site would allow intense commercial redevelopment, much more than the existing uses, as a by-right use (an owner would simply have to submit a site plan and pull building permits, with no oversight or input by the community). A change to the Comp Plan language would more clearly define what the uses should be in the future, and allow for more public oversight with subsequent rezonings. The former Willston School site was declared surplus by the school system in the early 1980s, and transferred to the county Board of Supervisors in 1983, according to the state laws governing surplus property. Although I am aware of the misinformation about the site, there has never been a request to Fairfax County from the School Board or the school system for return of the Willston school site. The site has not been identified by school planners as a location for any new school facility, but would be an appropriate location for a county services facility as discussed by the Task Force.

I hope this information is helpful.

Penelope A. Gross  
Mason District Supervisor  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
From: Len Jones [mailto:len.jones@verizon.net]  
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 9:36 PM  
To: Mason BOS Email  
Subject: 7-Corners Task Force Vote  
Importance: High

To: Mason District Supervisor, Penny Gross  
From: Len and Carol Jones, Citizens of the Ravenwood Community  
Date: September 8, 2014  
Unfortunately we are unable to attend the vote tomorrow evening by the Task Force. We have attended several meetings, however, and want to voice our concerns over this vote. We would like to know who in their right mind, came up with the plans for the 7 Corners area? We are not a Tysons Corners, we are not a Balston, or a Clarendon, we are not a logical walking distance from the Metro. The committee touts that we're just a 20 minute walk to the Metro. This may be true from the far edge closest to the Metro but from 7-corners center it's more like an hour. Once again, a handful of hand-picked people, who probably do not even live in close proximity to the neighborhood and would not be affected by any of these ridiculous options, are trying to decide how we in our established neighborhood should live - how we should travel, how we should shop, where we should shop and the route by which we can travel in and out of our neighborhood streets. Route 7 and Route 50 already have more traffic than they can handle. We certainly don't need to add a street car lane, or another walking bridge, which is not being used. The proposed construction on the Sears Site, which includes the 2 neighboring buildings, will add an immense amount of additional traffic

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through 7-Corners and the Juniper Lane neighborhood. It has been proposed to close the end of Juniper Lane to keep the hundreds of additional cars out, however, this is going to add much more inconvenience to the neighborhood when trying to get out via either Patrick Henry or Sleepy Hollow. You have placed representatives of the commercial property owners on the committee. Do you really think they will be reasonable in how much development will take place? Of course they will want the largest, most densely populated, and most profitable configuration. These owners talk down to the rest of the committee and are very persuasive, even though their facts are inaccurate. The other committee members do not want to go against these owners because of the relationships they've built with them over the 2 years this committee has been together. Schools that serve the 7 Corners community are already overcrowded and apartments are filled with far too many children and adults and more are moving in all the time. One of the School Board Members stated that the School Board has been trying to get back the old Wilston School but the county won't give it back to them. Why? You say we will only have a small growth in school age children living in these six thousand new units in your proposals for the 7 Corners area; that individual business people will be the ones renting most of these? Are your heads in the sand? Of course, they will be filled with children. The existing apartments are currently holding more people and children than they are supposed to. Do you really think that by limiting the apartments to 1 or 2 bedrooms are going to keep the occupants down to 2 or 3 people? You need to ask the school board why they had to open another school in 7-corners when no new apartments have been built in years. Now you're going to add 6,000 more? This means at least 12,000 more children needing school. Our neighborhoods have long been a popular choice for purchasing homes in Fairfax County and were known for our great schools. However, our own neighborhood high school, JEB Stuart, has gone from fully credited to accredited with warning in a year's time from 2012-13 to 2013-14. Do you think families still want to choose this area? With your plans, our homes and neighborhoods are on a downward trend. Our taxes are going up on our land, while the resale value of our homes are rapidly diminishing. We OPPOSE your plans for our 7 Corners area and if you proceed with these plans, you will not be re-elected. A grass-roots effort will take hold and kick you out of office. You may think that only the Republicans will be against this plan... you are far wrong. Many, many Democrats and "former" supporters of you are against it as well. Please make sure that the Revitalization Task Force members each get a copy of this letter, as well as each member of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Thank you.

Len and Carol Jones  
3123 Juniper Lane  
Falls Church, VA 22044

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