

Fwd Comment from Thillmann on reply from Marianne Gardner  
From: Jhtcav@aol.com  
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2014 12:46 PM  
To: Gross, Penny  
Cc: Frank, Aaron M.  
Subject: Fwd: Comment from Thillmann on reply from Marianne Gardner

Penny:  
FYI.  
John

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

From: Jhtcav@aol.com <jhtcav@aol.com>  
To: benandkaycooper <benandkaycooper@cox.net>  
Cc: DSmithie <DSmithie@verizon.net>  
Sent: Tue, Aug 12, 2014 12:36 pm  
Subject: Re: Comment from Thillmann on reply from Marianne Gardner  
Ben and Kay:

The issue for 7 corners is a bit complicated but but can be broken down two fold.

1) First, all of the currently existing affordable housing within the areas of 7 corners that are opportunity areas and therefore are being redeveloped needs to be replaced if the owner wants to redevelop the site.

(a) So the owner of an existing affordable housing project if HUD or VHDA financed needs to get their approval first in order to redevelop (this can mean paying off mortgage debt early with penalties and etc) and then of course he must replace those units with new units. These new units will have extended affordable time frames (the HUD and VHDA financed loans are usually for 20-30 years). These property owners in order to replace the existing units must achieve a density of 3 to 4 times the existing number of units to be replaced with new "Market Rate" units (adding density involves lots of additional costs for different structure types and parking garages) or the owners won't break even. There needs to be density and other incentives for these owners to redevelop or we will be stuck with the 50-60 year old buildings for ever.

(b) Also a part (something like 12%) of these new units also need to be "affordable" but the yardstick we are using is to make them "workforce housing units" these units while technically affordable are really 80% of the median household income so are pretty much almost market rate. Family income in Fairfax County is \$107 so 80% of that is about \$85,000.

2) Second those areas where there is no existing affordable housing stock that needs to be replaced will be required to also do the 12% of workforce housing which is about \$85,000.

So as you can see, the real problem we have in 7 Corners is how can we redevelop the currently obsolete and unsightly subsidized and affordable units which are primarily on the East side of Rt 50. Anything that is done on the west side of 50 is in much better shape and the affordable component will likely be never noticed as it will be easily integrated into the market rate units and indeed rent and or sell for very comparable prices.

The challenge we have is that if we ever expect to create a sense of place with an environmentally friendly and walkable community we have to add a population with disposable income so that the hoped for restaurants and shops that make up an activated street front where people want leave their units and walk to shops and restaurants. This means bring in a population of new units that "these people" (mostly much younger than the area is now) will occupy.

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The units that are on the west side of 50 along Patrick Henry are not subsidized and many are owner occupied and the increase in value that a revitalized 7 Corners will give these areas will allow them to be significantly upgraded and make them more desirable as a place to live. I have met with these condo owners and they are so looking forward to this plan as a salvation to the run down 7 corners area.

Hope that this helps.

Best,  
John T

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

From: Ben and Kay Cooper <benandkaycooper@cox.net>

To: Jhtcav@aol.com <JHTcav@aol.com>

Cc: Debbie Smith <DSmithie@verizon.net>

Sent: Tue, Aug 12, 2014 12:00 pm

Subject: Re: Comment from Thillmann on reply from Marianne Gardner

John,

We hope you can clarify a question for us.

We believe the county requires that any new development must include a minimum of 12% for low

income (or affordable?--not sure of the terminology since I know these mean very different things). As you

indicated, 7 Corners (and most of Mason District) currently exceeds this percentage by a large margin

and is far greater than the county as a whole.

Our question is: Must any re-development proposed for 7 Corners adhere to the countywide 12% or to

the current higher percentage for low income housing? If it is the latter, I agree that it poses a greater

challenge for attracting high-end development and seems patently unfair not to spread low income

housing evenly throughout the county.

Please let us know if you know the answer.

Thank you,

Ben and Kay

On Aug 12, 2014, at 10:31 AM, Debbie Smith wrote:

John Thillmann has provided the comment below on Marianne Gardner's reply.

From: Jhtcav@aol.com

Sent: Monday, August 11, 2014 7:24 PM

To: Marianne.Gardner@fairfaxcounty.gov ; dsmithie@verizon.net

Cc: Joanne.Fiebe@fairfaxcounty.gov ; Elizabeth.Hagg@fairfaxcounty.gov ;

Bernard.Suchital@fairfaxcounty.gov ; Michael.Garcia3@fairfaxcounty.gov

Subject: Re: Response to questions about Seven Corners density

One thing that the other areas did not have to contend with is that at 7 Corners we have a very large number of affordable housing units needing to be redeveloped. Please note that none of the other areas Marianne evaluated had huge VHDA and HUD financial and relocation requirements for redevelopment. Most of the redevelopment of the other areas were either vacant, large single ownership, or very under performing real estate industrial or commercial areas.

This specifically separates the 7 Corners situation further from the other redevelopment areas and indeed makes it even more important to create the proper incentives to get rid of the 60 year old obsolete units and replace them with new ADA accessible, pedestrian friendly, high quality architecturally wonderful units that are mixed into the market rate units.

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Best,  
John Thillmann

From: Don Smith  
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2014 2:50 AM  
To: Debbie Smith  
Cc: Bill Lecos ; Betsy Washington ; Catriona Macdonald ; Duane Morse ; John & Lisa Iekel ;  
friedman.matt@gmail.com ; Christine Trapnell ; lizchina@gmail.com ; Benjamin Y. Cooper ;  
jody@jodyandjake.com ; steveinchina@gmail.com ; BarcroftAction@aol.com ; Kilbourne, Jim (ENRD) ;  
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sfoxca@aol.com ;  
Kathleen Havey ; emailhayes@aol.com ; eswells95@gmail.com  
Subject: Re: Reply from Planning Division - Marianne Gardner  
Density matters. Density levels provide an objective measure of the likely impacts of a  
proposed development, and allow comparison with other successful developments. The  
density levels shown in Catriona's draft include all three "opportunity areas"  
totaling 77 acres  
within the Seven Corners CBC. They do not include surrounding areas where no new  
construction is planned, but they do include the areas where virtually all of the  
proposed  
redevelopment would occur. These density levels provide a reasonable basis for  
comparison  
with other projects. I believe our communities should stake out a position that the  
Task Force's  
proposed density levels should be reduced substantially.

Sheer size and scale also matter. For example, a development of 1,000 residences on  
ten acres  
has the same density as 10,000 units on 100 acres, but the latter will have far  
greater impacts  
on traffic, schools, and infrastructure.

In this case, a development of nearly 6,000 residential units at Seven Corners,  
without easy  
access to Metro, will have disproportionate impacts on traffic congestion and our  
overcrowded  
schools.

I believe we should continue to stress that in sheer number of residential units,  
the Task Force  
proposal for Seven Corners is twice as large as the largest current development in  
Fairfax  
County (Scotts Run South), and five times larger than the next comparable  
development  
(Shirlington) which is beyond walking distance to Metro.  
Don Smith  
Juniper Lane

On Tue, Aug 12, 2014 at 2:08 AM, Debbie Smith <dsmithie@verizon.net> wrote:

I'm still missing the part about how they came up with the numbers.

"The amount of development was determined through an iterative process among the

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work group, staff  
and the community”

This vague description lacks any real explanation of how the beginning and final numbers were determined.

Debbie

Ben Cooper