

**October 7, 2014**  
**Town Hall Meeting/Reinventing Task Force**  
**Minutes**

**Task Force Committee Attendees:** Bill McCormack, Kay Wisniewski, John DiTomasso, Tawania Williams, Reginald Avery, Virginia Thomas, Jonathan Edelson  
Sandy Cederbaum, Village Manager  
Approximately 35 residents.

Mr. McCormack gave a brief overview of CB29 – 2009 and the provisions for communities developing a community plan for village center redevelopment. As part of the plan a village association draws the boundaries of what they would like including in the defined village center area. Zoning dictates what can and cannot be developed.

Mr. McCormack stated what he has been told by meetings he and other board members have had with developers which is to think big, consolidate ownership and get the backing and support from the County. He talked about Plan Howard 2030 and the village centers being a focus of redevelopment. Mr. McCormack noted that the Wilde Lake Community Plan included schools and the interfaith center within its village center boundaries.

Process thus far: All Task Force and Board Meetings have been open meetings; all minutes have been posted on the OM Website; All contact information is posted on the OM Website; the process has been an open process.

Comments and Questions from attendees:

Resident would like to know where on the boundary line are the census tracts.

Response from Mr. McCormack that he will get that information included on a new map

Asked long the WLVC plan took.

Plan took at least 5 years. We have been told by Kimco that they will suggest to the County how to streamline the process for other villages to follow since there were many duplicate meetings.

We are creating a Master Plan 2/Community Plan, we are meeting with developers. A community plan gives a village leverage in the redevelopment process. It is an advisory document filed with County, not a legal document.

Resident asked if anyone present tonight that lives within boundaries.

Two were present who lived within the new boundaries.

Question ask as to what the committees plans to solicit input from residents living within the boundaries?

Response was that Task Force met with a Shadow Oaks resident/board member and will meet with Shadow Oaks Board on Oct. 21. Some committee members met with Tom Carbo, HC Housing Director (County owns Verona complex).

It was suggested that we have community organizer reach out to residents and ask simple questions pertaining to the Master Plan2/Community Plan. This requires active community outreach.

Response was that no one is blindsided. This process has been going on for a year and they plan to let property owners know the full plan.

Comments followed regarding lack of communication about the meeting with residents. Noted that 2000-3000 residents live within new boundaries and that is 1/3 of the population of Oakland Mills. Flyers should have been distributed to those residents. Response was that there will be more opportunity for input.

Questions were asked about the proposed bridge and why it was not proposed to have passenger vehicles. Response was that that would create a 3<sup>rd</sup> interchange and the volume of cars traveling into the community would be too much for the residential roads. Public transit/bicycles and pedestrians would get people out of cars, increase the use of public transit and provide walkability.

Comment as to who approved the new boundaries. Response was that it was approved by the OM Task Force and OM Board. Comment as to why the Holly Court Townhomes were not included and the Shadow Oaks Condominiums were. Response was that there is a large parcel of undeveloped land that Shadow Oaks owns and that given the location of the complex which is in the middle of the village center it needed to be included.

Comment as to whether including only apartments in the plan and not townhomes or single family homes would be construed as discrimination. Noted that no other village plans include single family or townhomes within boundaries.

The large number of property owners with many owning small pieces of property makes it difficult to redevelop. Smaller parcels may be purchased by a single developer who would buy the land, consolidate ownership. As downtown gets developed, the value of the land in OM could increase and in time redeveloped. Sited Grande Point as a complex that could be appealing to a new owner for redevelopment.

Someone asked how the redevelopment affects CA open space. Response was that zoning dictates what can/cannot happen on open space. CA has to maintain a certain ratio of open space and currently they are at the ratios needed. If CA wanted to redevelop they would need to go through the County zoning process. The petitioner is the entity who owns the land. Noted that a lot of CA open space is not buildable for environmental reasons.

Question was raised about a bike trail from downtown under 29 near Brokenland. No one had enough information to comment. Scott Templin (CA) will forward information. Comment to consider additional bike lanes when redeveloping. Response was that the new streetscape on Stevens Forest/Whiteacre will include bike lanes.

Question raised about where residents displaced by redevelopment will live. Many apartments will be vacated due to frequent renter turnover and attrition.

Discussion followed regarding ideas for an improved ice rink/arena and possibly to include a swimming component/climbing wall. Ms. Thomas and other board members have met with

Hockey Clubs and Ice Skating Clubs and were informed of the money these clubs spend for rink time outside of Howard County and how the current CA owned rink is in need of major overhaul if not a new rink with many upgraded amenities, food services, nice locker room facilities, pro shop etc. Current rink cannot accommodate needs or have adequate capacity. We need to partner with CA and County to get a sports complex. Need to be creative. Need to have Federal and State funding.

Residents encouraged to attend CA speaks on October 18.

Noted that businesses in Thunder Hill, Walgreens and Twin Knolls not within boundaries.

Question asked with regard to reducing FARM students – what amount of population do you want to have leave, what percentage. Response was that the current 62% FARM rate at SFES has a negative impact. Also we aren't talking about people leaving, many complexes have rapid turnover due to attrition. Goal is for an equitable distribution throughout County. FARM rate beyond 50% causes those kids to suffer the most. Adding Senior housing may change the FARM population.

Currently the 4 apartment complexes in Oakland Mills (984 units) accounts for 29% of the housing stock in Oakland Mills. Goal to reduce the number of apartments to 500 which would be 15% of total unites in village and have 25% rental. That would equal a 50% reduction in below/subsidized units.

With economic development in Oakland Mills there would be more jobs created, make OM environmentally self-sustaining.

Concern expressed about being uncomfortable moving people out of the community – flipside is that there may be jobs and business opportunities. Spoke about the undertone in the community and conversations going on about trying to get rid of the poor, minorities. Need to be very careful how we say things and be clear about what we mean.

Response is that the County thinks it is acceptable for low income housing in Oakland Mills. If we don't do anything things get worse.

With high apartment turnover rate the vision is that when people move out then they apartment owners do not re-rent. HUD has policies of less concentration of subsidized housing. Response to bear in mind that concentration is not necessarily having people leave but increasing other types of housing. Could never say “get those kids out of the school. No one should feel like they don't belong. Change ratios, look at from the perspective of opportunity.

Need to move conversation to positive, increase jobs, increase density. Come from a positive angle. Comments regarding love of OM as it is, top notch education, deeply diverse and not concerned about housing values. We need to talk about how great Oakland Mills is and become a model for other communities.

Others stated that we need to do something in Oakland Mills – going on a downward trajectory.

Meeting ended at 9:30 p.m.  
Sandy Cederbaum, Village Manager