

Reinventing Task Force Meeting
October 21, 2014

Attendees: Kay Wisniewski, Jonathan Edelson, Tawania Williams, John DiTomasso, Bill McCormack, Ginny Thomas, Sandy Cederbaum

Also in attendance: Scott Templin, CA Community Planner and 6 residents.

Ms. Wisniewski opened with remarks about that the Task Force is coming to closure on the update to the Master Plan 2/Community Plan. This is an update of the Master Plan 2007. Ms. Wisniewski distributed a Table of Contents to guide the task force through making actual changes to the current Master Plan.

- See attachment

Table of Contents broken down into 3 parts.

The new plan would conform with HC CB 29-2009. Included in the new plan would be an appendix with the Master Plan 2007 Process, 2007 Master Plan Committee member list.

New plan has expanded boundaries.
Need to highlight historical aspect of The Other Barn and The Barn

Attendees agreed to preserve the Vision which is in the 2007 plan.

Accomplishments (II): List what has been accomplished from 2007 plan; take photos of accomplishments/things already achieved; review what has not been achieved to see if it can/should be achieved.

Mr. McCormack likes the idea of an update.
Mr. McCormack noted the positive feedback received on the 2007 plan and noted that it has won an award. Needs to be updated to present day.

Ms. Thomas said Ms. Wisniewski is doing a fantastic job. Need to make it clear what the village center area is. New plan needs to place an emphasis on economic development and job creation, green technology and reusable energy etc. Mixed use housing and emphasis on home ownership with subsidies/incentives for those who need so that they can move into ownership. Ms. Thomas mentioned patio and zero lots.

Mr. DiTomasso- asked where full spectrum/deconcentration of subsidized housing would be in the new plan. Mr. McCormack indicate that it would be included in a full page in section III.

Ms. Wisniewski recommended an appendix to the document on work that was done.

Ms. Thomas suggested that on the current page 1 of Master Plan 2007 that we needed to emphasize Bridge Columbia. Ms. Wisniewski noted that 3B “gateway to Town Center” to include that progress has been significant. She informed the attendees of the bridge resolution passed by the board and that we received support for the bridge with public transit from the two candidates running for County Executive.

Suggestion from attendee that new plans for Oakland Mills dovetail into what is being done downtown and that we should not replicate what is already being done. Mr. McCormack agreed and mentioned the “spillover” effect. Public transit on the bridge will be a link to “Spillover” from downtown. Mr. McCormack mentioned the multi-use path and CA granting easement to HHC. He noted that once the path is built by HHC it will be maintained by the Downtown Columbia Partnership. Because the land will no longer be CA land HHC and Downtown Partnership will need to submit plans for the path and surrounding area to the OM RAC/AC for review. Mr. McCormack noted that the village board is currently doing everything it can to improve the multi-use path connection in Oakland Mills.

Mr. Edelson spoke to lessening the tree canopy and making the path “inviting” as users enter Oakland Mills. We need strong signage and as it is not only the gateway to Town Center but the gateway to Oakland Mills. Recommended signage and gateway of some sort to create an attractive and inviting entrance to the rear of the of the Oakland Mills Village Center. Ms. Wisniewski noted that the new plan needs to have a list of accomplishments from the 2007 plan and include photos.

Discussion continued regarding significant improvements from 2007 plan and how we proceed. Mr. McCormack noted that there should be a page on each new significant improvement in the new plan. Mr. McCormack said he would work on the Housing page for the next meeting.

Scott Templin (CA Community Planner) suggested that new short term/mid term goals be identified. Noted that some housing recommendations are short term goals. Suggested as examples possible short term goals are the bridge, lighting and signage improvements.

Ms. Wisniewski asked the group about how much detail we should go into. She read from the Wilde Lake plan about plans needing to change over time and that no plan is set in stone. We will need to continue to revise as we work with developers.

Mr. Edelson stated that we don’t want to pigeonhole potential developers. Mr. McCormack said that in certain areas we can be specific but in others we can come up with ideas but need to be flexible. Need to let property owners and developers bring their vision with consistency to our community plan.

Mr. Edelson said that we wanted an upgraded recreational facility to include, at a minimum, a new ice rink and other suggested amenities. We need a facility to be more than the ice rink we currently have.

Mr. McCormack said that based on conversations with developers we need to think big, work with the County and consolidate property owners.

We need to paint a picture of what can be. Lots of big ideas and “what ifs”. Developers want to go where they are welcome.

Mr. Edelson expressed caution with regard to consolidation of property ownership so that it does not make it an impediment if it can’t happen. Consolidation would need buyers with deep pockets and willing property owners who would sell to consolidate.

An attendee mentioned the great sports complex in PG County. Such a complex in OM would draw from all over the state and be a state of art complex. Consideration would need to be given to parking and infrastructure.

Mr. Edelson noted the importance of collaboration with CA and the County. Also noted that we have not mentioned Blandair park and parking lots and that the back of the current ice rink is directly across from Blandair.

Mr. DiTomasso asked Mr. Templin if there are examples fo CA/County sports facilities. Mr. Templin noted that there are a lot of projects that CA and the County partner on. He mentioned that in the Aquatics Master plan there was mention of a 50 meter pool. It that were to be built it is likely that it would be in partnership with the County.

The ice rink is the only one in the County. Would make sense to build a new rink and partner with County. Skaters are spending more money on rink time outside of HC than at the ice rink. Suggest the county do an economic development study on a new rink. A new ice rink could be a unique facility and new model. It could be a destination with other recreational amenities built around it. Mention was made of an ice rink w/pool and double decker rink.

Mr. McCormack noted we would have Blandair, and Ice Rink, Recreation and Restaurants. Noted that CA has 8 recreational facilities on the West side of Columbia and 4 on the East side. A new sports facility would be great for Oakland mills.

We should ask the County to do an economic redevelopment study of of OM. We have 40 year old ice rink. We need a new rink. Suggested swapping land stating that it could possibly be on the site of the Verona complex and then tear down the old rink and repurpose land.

County could create incentives, create vision and help with rezoning.

Ms. Wisniewski noted that hockey draws an adult crowd. It would be nice to be able to come home from to a new apartment in Oakland Mills and walk to the rink to play hockey then enjoy a meal in a new restaurant.

Attendee said that we should not stress “good price for housing”. Need to have our home value be market driven. If we have new and great facilities that will increase property values. Sports are part of life, we will always have people involved in sports. A new sports complex will entice people to want to live here.

Next Steps

Mr. McCormack noted the next steps in the process:

- Continue meet and greets with property owners and developers
- Host Milton Matthews, CA President at the 10/28/14 OM Board Meeting
- Key to reinvention is to keep focused on the Village Center Community Plan and reinvent Oakland Mills.
- Draft different sections of the new plan and post to web
- This has been and will be a multi-meeting process
- Plan will be an evolving plan, dynamic process and flexible plan
- Draft plan to be presented at town hall meeting in January, 2015 or as soon As we reasonably can
- Need to be flexible w/delivery date to insure a good product.
- Town Hall meeting is to present draft plan and get reaction to any changes that Are significant.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.
Sandy Cederbaum, minute taker