

Rosslyn Process Panel (RPP) Meeting #12, Summary

July 24, 2013; 7:00-9:30 pm

2100 Clarendon Blvd., Third Floor, County Board Room

Panel Members in Attendance: Brian Harner, Paul Holland, Stan Karson, Andrew McGeorge, Andy VanHorn, Jennifer Zeien, Jay Fiset (County Board Liaison)

Staff in Attendance: Gabriela Acurio, Kellie Brown, Bob Duffy, Anthony Fusarelli, Claude Williamson, (Ben Carlson, David Dixon)

1. Welcome

- Brian Harner, Chair of the Rosslyn Process Panel, provided opening remarks and led introductions.

2. Updates/Follow Up from July 10 Process Panel Meeting

- Next Rosslyn Process Panel (RPP) Meeting Date: Staff confirmed September 10, 2013, (7pm) as the date of the next RPP meeting. Meeting details and agenda will be forthcoming.
- Schedule Updates/Fall Community Forum: Schedule refinements are ongoing, and staff will query panel members on best fit dates for two panel meetings later this year and early 2014. Staff is targeting early October for a community event, and will also follow up with the panel on prospective dates/conflicts.
- Status Checklist for Work Plan Items: Staff shared updates on the checklist of work plan analyses.

3. Presentation on Commonwealth of Virginia Request for Information (RFI) pertaining to potential air rights development in Rosslyn

- Officials from Commonwealth of Virginia Office of Transportation Public Private Partnerships (OTP3) provided an overview of the current RFI pertaining to potential air rights development in Rosslyn.

4. Panel Discussion on Air-Rights Request for Information

- The panel had several questions on the RFI, including:
 - If the air rights are achieved, what type of development will take place?
 - Would the private developer purchase air rights or have a long term lease?
 - When in the process would the rezoning occur, as it relates to timing of any lease agreement?
 - What are the anticipated next steps after the 9/30 deadline?
 - What cost assumptions are being used for the development economics analysis?
 - Can this go forward without involving Arlington County in that process?
 - Is there a good sense of the amount of value that can be created through these air rights?
 - Has VDOT stated whether they'd accept any changes to the layout of I-66?
- With the RFI on the table, the key question is what does this mean for the Realize Rosslyn?
- Panel requested that OTP3 keep Arlington County staff in the loop to the greatest degree possible, to make sure they have access to as much information as can be made available to them.

5. Building Height and Form, and Urban Design Elements Presentation

- The presentation agenda focused on building height and form and urban design elements of the draft vision framework in greater detail, including:
 - Preliminary urban design qualities to support the plan's draft vision principles
 - Overview of current planning and zoning regulatory and policy framework for Rosslyn
 - Assumptions and methodology for performing building form/height analyses
 - Presentation of building form/height scenarios, performance criteria, scenarios, and findings

6. Break

7. Panel Discussion on Building Height and Form, and Urban Design Elements Presentation

- This good material may raise important questions for the County – namely, what is the acceptable balance between maximizing community benefits and achieving great place making?
- We should be cautious about planning for one building (although County policy calls for protected views from the observation deck). We need to keep in mind that if your view is blocked from one point on the observation deck, it may not be from another point. Need to always consider relationship between heights and the ground plane;
- From the neighborhood’s standpoint, the Central Place observation deck was critical to that project’s approval as a key community benefit, and the views from it should be protected.
- Appreciate the run through of a lot of scenarios. Having broad range of scenarios to start with is good – they all have their own very different issues. It’s important to see there are some challenges to applying strict taper policy in Rosslyn - especially with the existing topography;
- Variation in height is very important, and can help with achieving sensitive transitions from Wilson Blvd to adjacent residential areas. Adequate separation between building towers are important for view corridors, and also allowing people, trees, and building to breathe. The 1401 proposal is an example of how thoughtfully positioned towers can provide a successful transition. How can the plan encourage future development with thoughtful solutions for a lot of special interests?
- A key question to consider will be striking the right balance between varying amounts of prescription and flexibility in the planning or regulatory framework resulting from this effort;
- The Peaks and Valleys scheme seems to have a lot of merit, with more narrow footprints, towers can turn and allow more light and air; it seems to merit more in depth analysis and further study;
- It seems to make sense to consider height above 300 feet, in conjunction with certain parameters about what sites might be most appropriate for increased height – taking into account priority view corridors from the observation deck. Also need to identify sites appropriate for buildings below 300’;
- While peaks and valleys scheme has much merit, it may not be the right solution for all places in Rosslyn. Should consider merits of a hybrid approach, with elements of the open space buffer in certain areas;
- We need to determine whether views out to the horizon, for the sake of seeing the horizon are all that important – or should we focus on key view corridors and landmarks that people want to see most. Responses from the building top tour can provide insight in how people feel about certain views;
- Some observations and takeaways from the presentation include:
 - Residential buildings can have value in that their slimmer size and profile, which can help protect priority view corridors;
 - We should consider how we can use the topography to our advantage;
 - We can support the taper concept without a symmetrical dome (not feasible); and
 - Keeping all views out to the horizon may not optimize the overall mix of goals here;
- 1100 Wilson is a good building example with thin profile and shaped to provide great access to views;
- Should consider if it makes sense to stack residential above commercial. From development perspective, this can be done, but there are a lot of challenges to actually building such a project;
- Need to consider how a broad streetscape plan can fit into the vision framework – we need to figure out how we are addressing the streets, as that will inform what we might do with building form;

8. Adjourn