

Rosslyn Process Panel (RPP) Meeting #16, Meeting Summary

January 14, 2014; 7:00-9:30 pm

2100 Clarendon Blvd., 7th Floor, Conference Room 710-A

Panel Members in Attendance: Brian Harner, John Grant, Tim Helmig, Paul Holland, Stan Karson, Andy VanHorn, Jennifer Zeien

Staff in Attendance: Kellie Brown, Kelly Cornell, Anthony Fusarelli, Scott McPartlin, Lida Aljabar (Ben Carlson)

1. Welcome/Opening Remarks

- Brian Harner, Chair of the Rosslyn Process Panel, provided opening remarks to initiate the discussion;
- Several concerns raised, specifically on the process going forward, and the role of the process panel;
- The broad arc and general proves approach seems to make, in terms of completing a plan framework first and then building a Sector Plan around that - but there is a lack of clarity or understanding about the remaining process in detail;
- Need more information on the overall work plan, resources, meeting schedule and how active the Process Panel is to be in the process;
- This information may help the Panel better understand its role, in terms of how the panel should relate to the end product and how involved it should be in helping to shape and advocate for the plan;
- One member was concerned with the introduction of the framework at this point; it raises questions about what happens after the framework is adopted;
- Some on the panel struggled with not having enough clear direction from the beginning, need more County Board support for this effort;
- Collective desire for the process to yield a compelling plan; while course-corrections have helped, buy in from all levels are needed to build momentum;
- This framework and plan needs really good renderings and imagery – and this plan deserves the resources to get there;
- Efforts have been more focused since November, and having these working format meetings can help;
- For effective meetings, we need clear meeting objectives ahead of time, and should get the material more than 24-48 hours in advance; is there value in a work session with the County Board?;
- Does staff have enough resources? Panel can go to the board to advocate for more resources if needed;

2. General Discussion on Draft Framework Approach

- Without graphics, it's hard to review this document and understand it in a way to advocate for it; high quality renderings for the framework almost seem necessary;
- One way to approach it would be to consider what are a few really bold ideas to “frame” the framework;
- One thing that's missing is the major rationale for being in Rosslyn, which is its connection to D.C.; perhaps this can be addressed early on with some narrative about Rosslyn's role in the greater region;
- Broad support for the “Big Idea” approach – and feel really strongly the big ideas should partly be communicated through high quality renderings; Consider establishing one big idea around each of the vision principles – not necessarily limiting, but more as an example; and then one really good rendering to help communicate that big idea;
- Maybe there is another approach to telling the story of the future vision – use a creative writing approach to describe “a moment in the life of Rosslyn” at plan buildout – what it could be like;
- The framework should be structured in a way that addresses priority to some degree, even if just preliminary at this point – this will be valuable in letting the County Board know what we want to do first, because this will inform the work we develop in the complete sector plan;

- Overall, the framework should be at a high enough level to provide an organization to Rosslyn, but have flexibility to consider ideas that might emerge a few years from now;

3. Panel Discussion on Transportation Section

- To open with T1 is a downer; it would be better to have the bolder ideas captured first;
- There looks to be the opportunity to reduce the number of directives from 13 down to 5 or 6; T8 and T9 could be logically combined, and perhaps combine T10, T11, and T12;
- Civic associations are concerned about conversion to two-way streets, unless it is conditioned on data, surveys, and research on how it could work; and thoughtful mitigation programs to avoid potential adverse impacts to abutting neighborhoods;
- Seems like the pyramid should be inverted, whereby we start with a transit network that serves Rosslyn well today and better in the future, then address ped/bike, then address the street network as it relates to the pedestrian network and experience;
- One of the big ideas for this section could be “Rosslyn as a premier regional transportation hub”
- Also, how to address buses as a more important and cohesive part of the system;
- The key thing to focus on with the street network is really the enhancement and transformation of the pedestrian network;
- Is the orientation of Fort Myer and Lynn more of a detail?

4. Panel Discussion on Public Parks and Open Space Section

- Several different ways to approach themes for this section;
- Could be 1) improve what you have and 2) create new great spaces,
- Alternatively, the open space themes can be structured in a way that is based on specific park typologies or based on functionality; for instance, themes can be based on active versus passive recreation spaces, or based on experiences such as engaging the waterfront, enjoying the urban squares, or recreating in neighborhood-serving parks;
- Open space can also include vertical open space; providing the ability to see – space between buildings;
- Wilson School needs to be addressed in some way and recognized for its potential open space opportunities;
- What is the appropriate role of the Green Circle? Should it be a distinct streetscape type? Maybe it gets lower priority, and is excluded from the framework but addressed as more of a detail in the Sector Plan;
- Big ideas for this section seem to be: Engaging the waterfront (and address the boathouse), 18th Street, Gateway Park, Esplanade, and Freedom Park;
- Need to also make sure we don’t have parks everywhere, and that each park has a specific purpose;
- The Panel is mindful of all the good work that the project team has done to date, particularly with respect to assessing Rosslyn’s open space needs. The open space typology could both be informed by and informing of this needs assessment.
- Need to make sure that NPS and other important agencies and partners are part of the discussion where needed;

4. Panel Discussion on Urban Design and Land Use Section

- This includes a very mixed-list, some items are very broad, others are very specific;
- For example, U4, U7 and U8 can possibly be combined; or deferred to the Sector Plan since they are very detailed and may best be left for post-framework;
- What’s really important here is ground level experience, pedestrian interface with buildings, pedestrian scale, retail, and public art projects; the life on the street!
- The view looking down from buildings is also a component of this;

- There should be a policy directive that speaks to and addresses the hill, or alternatively integrate the idea of topography into a number of directives;
- Also need to pay homage to environmental and energy sustainability;
- With respect to U6, we are already getting more housing and residences naturally – why do we need incentives?
- Also, how should affordable housing be addressed as part of the framework; as a community benefits issue, it needs to be looked at as part of the Sector Plan Update in the context of all other community benefits that may be wholly or partly implemented through the plan;
- U6 can say more about recognizing the value of economically and socioeconomically diverse community;
- This section seems to be lacking a big idea;
- What's unique in this section is Land Use....maybe focus more on land use...
- Is there a broader policy directive missing? – What about clusters of residential areas / neighborhoods - land use; Rosslyn doesn't have enough of a pattern to have an exception, do we impose a will? How about making Rosslyn a place for people?
- Need to consider the transportation foundation of where we are creating blocks, what happens is ground plane, and should leverage it; then at some point these patterns start to fit together;
- If we can make transportation happen, people will be enticed to walk around, to get the area:

5. Next Steps

6. Adjourn