

Public Workshop #3 Report

- The workshop included a presentation of potential scenarios for the public realm of Pentagon City, and then breakout discussion in small groups.
- Over 100 people signed-up for the meeting; 44 completed the non-mandatory participant survey.
- The self-identified racial identity of participants is overwhelmingly white or Caucasian.
- There is strong participation from homeowners and family households, including households with or without children.

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Kathleen (Streets, Sidewalks, and Bike Lanes)

Protected Bike Lanes

- Bike lanes need to be protected and wide enough for 2-way, leisurely + passing bikers. add 1.5'. Favorite bike path is Eads because lanes are wide. Goal should be that kids can ride to get ice cream safely.
- Appreciate emphasis on bike infrastructure throughout scenarios

Center Square

- Don't think we need two squares, and think we need the future bus infrastructure.

Connections

- Find Green Ribbons concept resonant.
- Need strong emphasis on connections to Crystal City/surrounding area.

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Kathleen (Streets, Sidewalks, and Bike Lanes)

- Sidewalks along Army-Navy Drive are important – shouldn't have basic sidewalks be left to redevelopment. Prioritize pedestrian access.
- Think about innovation and new technology – scooters, golf carts, shuttles
- 12th Street connection through mall is important long-term – but want to make sure we can make progress if it does not happen
- Good to think about future transit needs – dedicated bus lanes, space for innovative service, connections between Metro/bus service

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Andrew (Parks Group)

VA Highlands Park

- Loves variety of activities at VA Highlands; trees and greenery are important; didn't like ribbon examples – too many manmade elements
- VA Highlands desperately needs a face lift
- like concept of putting a face on the park – current experience of the park from the perimeter is fence/parking lot – there's no “open door” to the park
- open space working group identified NE corner of VA Highlands as being an inviting gateway to the park
- VA Highlands needs openings/accessibility from all directions; really enjoy seeing the “park and rec” activity (active sports uses) in the park
- VA Highlands as a central organizing idea is full of possibilities

Grace Hopper Park

- Would love to see JBGS come up with design ideas for Grace Hopper connection to VA Highlands
- Hopper Park a good example of quantity vs. quality – that park is not well utilized, just open space; Bryant Park is a great example of a small park being vibrant because of activation
- reframe the VA Highlands scenario to be more about better using and better connecting existing spaces rather than growing them

Amenities

- Integrate casual retail into park areas (e.g., cafes) – makes parks feel safer
- need more community gathering space in addition to active uses

District

- Gratified to see Livability 22202 ideas showing up (e.g., green ribbons reminiscent of integrated pedestrian map from L22202, but not as extensive)
- Need green space, not open space (definitions matter)
- Connectivity is the most important part – from Arlington Ridge to RiverHouse through PC
- love the idea of utilizing Hayes better with linear parks

Participants

- Paul Pisano – lives in Aurora Highlands, likes to walk; favorite park is Long Bridge
- Faizan Qureshi – lives in Ballston, works for JBG; favorite park Lubber Run, least favorite Oakland
- Jane Siegel – lives in Arlington Ridge, where there are treacherous steps to PC; favorite park Teardrop Park in Manhattan
- Carol Fuller – chair of Livability 22202; favorite park Long Bridge, Water Park, BonAir, Bluemont
- Judd Isbell – lives in North Alexandria; fond of GW Parkway
- Margaret Burcham – lives in Arlington Ridge; favorite park VA Highlands, likes that there are a lot of different parks in Arlington

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Skip Graffam

- Green Ribbons Option was received very positively
- Focus on walkability for all of Pentagon City
- Make large blocks more porous
- All agree more green space distributed throughout PC is better

General Notes:

- Please make clearer the proposed improvements on all streets (not just the big idea) in each public realm option. It was a bit confusing to have the baseline improvements and the various options separated in the slide deck.
- Each streetscape should add green – not just primary roads
- All wanted more ways to walk (safely) within Pentagon City
- Improve porosity of River House site
- Simon (the Mall) has been given a “gift” of a Metro stop – they need to provide and improve pedestrian access from everywhere
- It is really hard to find the Metro from the West
- To succeed Hayes must be “controlled” – green streets will not be successful if pedestrian crossings do not appear safe, inviting and “controlled”. Vehicle speeds are too high and too many lanes
- Be upfront with every developer – what is expected of them to create this new public realm
- Can ideas be taken from each scheme?

Current Transportation Option:

- Not inspiring and appears to have minimal greening
- Does not bring large property owners in as community stakeholders

Green Ribbons Option:

- Probably the preferred alternative for this group – they all liked the flow of movement off of the main streets to create a more intimate pedestrian realm
- Some were unclear the amount of new green space proposed for Hayes – the diagram shows it is not a major green space.
- All felt this option with significant new green space on Hayes was very positive
- Can the Macy's site be used to increase the green space on Hayes – shifting lanes east to reduce the width of the road?
- Better connections to Rte. 1 and other edge spaces (Prospect Hill Park) should be shown

New Square Option:

- Great idea – but some worried that the amount of pedestrian traffic at the Metro and Mall would make it feel too much like circulation space and not a gathering/social space. Is a central spot too busy to be relaxing?
- Challenge of relying on private space to accomplish this option.
- Is the square created from only public space or a full property swap to ensure it is implemented?
- Does the plaza/square idea move to the edge of VHP which is public and could be implemented?
- Many liked the expanded area for a square at the Nordstrom site
- Others felt the square made the most sense near the Metro

Virginia Highlands Expansion Option:

- Some found this very exciting but assumed very difficult to implement. Would JBG honor their commitments to pursue this option?
- Liked the ability to use topography for improved views of the area
- Did not want to lose Grace Hopper Park's identity
- Adding to sports program with unprogrammed green space is very welcome
- Add focal points in the park to create a better space (regardless of option)
- Can some improvements to VHP be a part of every public realm option?

12th Street Axis Option:

- Excellent idea – can this be combined with the other options? Seems a no brainer.
- Make Hayes and 12th the two premier retail streets of Pentagon City – with Metro at center point – makes a lot of sense (but not focused on biophilic elements – those go on the Green Ribbons)
- Connecting through the Mall will be challenging. Is there a “public” corridor through the Mall that is open and accessible outside of store hours?

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Ben

- Appreciate the ambition of the public realm vision. Most resonant ideas are the “green ribbons” along key streets and making trail connections beyond the study area (no particular endorsement of the Central Square or other destination parks). Hayes better suited to greenway than retail. Hopper Park transformation idea welcomed.
- Ensure walkable and community-inclusive connections happen at the Pentagon City perimeter, not just core streets and spaces: Eads, Army-Navy, and VH Park/15th St especially. School should also play a connective role.
- Include sustainable local/community-based retail that endures and is welcoming to diverse community members including youth. Maintain mall as successful, valuable teen hang-out place.

Discussion notes

- Rob Mandle (NL Bid) – ensure public realm improvements connect east and north, not just to south
 - Eads should be a seam with Crystal City, not an edge – it should also be a “Green Ribbon.” Streetscape, section, adjacent sites all need further attention, especially sites on east with older development
 - Army-Navy drive: need good ped & bike environment both along it and across it
- Judith Davis (Arlington resident & parent of teens; coaches soccer at VH Park)
 - Desire more welcoming places for teens & families to hang out after soccer games – neither the park nor Pentagon City environs really support this
 - FC Mall IS valued as a good hang-out place for teens ... maintain this amenity, make it more accessible to teens/families
 - Urban design should appeal to “all of us” and not create an exclusive “designer city”
 - Need to counter negative comments on PC on Neighborhood App
- Kendra Briehele
 - It’s up to us to counter the naysayers and create the change we desire
 - Love idea of weaving 22202 trail network through Pentagon City. Ribbon idea is good – reminiscent of NOLA – need to replace poorly maintained sycamores in PC.
- Leonardo Sorb___
 - Further agreement on need for inviting connections along and across but Army-Navy Drive and Eads

Discussion notes

- Brian Harner
 - Appreciate the focus on public realm as foundation
 - Appreciate emphasis in VH Park as connecting seam – carry its green element down 18th to CC Metro. Endorse Hopper Park land swap/building idea
 - The potential school also offers an important opportunity to create connection – and perhaps belongs in the urban blocks of PC not a traditional lower-density site
- Arthur Fox
 - Impressed with scope of public realm vision
 - Endorse Hopper Park land swap/building idea (“terrific”) if it helps place density closer to PC core, further from lower density neighborhoods
 - Strong endorsement of 12th St corridor through mall and extending beyond. 12th St needs an urban development role, and it’s well-suited to ped-oriented retail – Hayes is not.
 - Also consider stronger 15th St east-west ped environment
- Gautam (Pentagon Row resident)
 - There’s been much turnover of Pentagon Row retail – how to encourage more consistent retail base?
- Judith
 - ...and encourage more local/small/inclusive retail

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Ryan Delaney

- **Key Takeaways:**

- Green Ribbons scenario resonated the most:
 - The East-West Axis may be the most difficult to achieve, but is the most necessary. Make sure it extends from VA Highlands to Long Bridge, and consider a 2nd E-W ribbon to the south of the study area.
 - **Good design standards will be key**, let's aim for a signature element like the Highline!
 - The ribbons need to be sited to work with people's current pedestrian patterns to ensure adoption...**where are the desire lines** and how can we enhance them vs. creating new use patterns?
 - **The advantage to this scenario is the more equitable distribution of green space around the study area.**
 - Do not neglect the biophilic element and role the ribbons can play as habitat/wildlife corridors: refer to Livability study recommendations

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Ryan Delaney

- **Other Notes:**
- New Square and Growing VA Highlands seem less feasible, and concerns about concentrating new public space in terms of equity and room for biophilic elements and habitat dominated the discussion.
- That said, the location/vision of the New Square could combine nicely with the Green Ribbons.
- 12th Street scenario was considered a less feasible/desirable version of the Green Ribbons during this group discussion: less room for biophilic elements/habitat was the central problem/trade-off the group identified.

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Kris Krider / Jannet Arevalo

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hayes Street improvements are very relevant and must be in all the scenarios.
- Mall passage is an old planning idea and constraint to when/how the mall will be redeveloped. We should allow more flexibility on how this long-term goal could look like now.
- Focus more for a strong connection of 12th St. to the east outside the study area to access Long Bridge Park and trails.
- The streets in Pentagon City are seemed like dividers instead of connectors, in the streets are where the big ideas should be.
- Importance of locating a plaza where people gathered more and will be the big public space for all.

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Kris Krider / Jannet Arevalo

NOTES

- Expansion of Virginia Highlands Park to the River House Site is not “the right big idea”, unrealistic? Importance of the development of more Housing there. Also, the development in the site must allow several east-west connection and green spaces.
- The consolidation of green spaces and pedestrian space in Hayes St. is very important, specially in the intersection with 18th St. and the connection to the park.
- The group thought that the New Square at the center proposal located the significant plazas and spaces better. Like the location at the Nordstrom more.
- There were doubts and questions thinking in a plaza close to Pen Place and Amazon as the big open space for all. A space there is important, but will feel like a corporate campus and will not have the equity standpoint for the signature plaza of Pentagon City.

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Kris Krider / Jannet Arevalo

Group 3 – Comprehensive Planning

- Susan English – Arlington resident
- Bailey Edelson – JBG representative
- Richard – resident
- Lowell N – resident
- Judy Freshman – Crystal City resident
- Collier Cook – live in Boston / work in Crystal City
- Brandon Mansur – Arlington resident
- Hung Twong – Environmental planner
- Brian Earle – 22202 resident / Architect of Amazon MET Park

Pentagon City December February Workshop Report – Max Dickson (OLIN)

- **Green Ribbons & 12th Street Axis emerged as favorites**
 - There is something poetic about the green ribbons concept
 - Winding paths, smaller spaces intertwined with well programmed areas
 - Both provide an opportunity to create an identity, sense of place for PC
 - They would be things residents, neighbors, etc would like to show their friends and family when they visit
 - Both have the possibility to create a vibrant area of culture
 - Interested to see how the green ribbons concept evolves in feasibility when team starts to think about widths, where they go, & how they hit the ground
 - 12th Street as intimately pedestrian, easy transportation as street level

Key Takeaways (Cont)

- **Make PC as green as possible**
 - Glad that public realm is being considered first
 - Focus on pedestrian and experience walking
 - Would like to see more focus on smaller green spaces – they seemed to be missing at this level in the concepts
 - Enjoy the intimate spaces at PenPlace and Met Park
- **Focus on Edges**
 - Continue to think about the connections to adjacent neighborhoods
 - Think about edge conditions & repairing connectivity
 - Idea that PC & Crystal City are one urban place
 - Eads St needs more thought

Additional Thoughts

- Hayes is lacking as an arrival space
 - Pretty dead, but has the importance/opportunity of being a public space
- ‘Virginia Highlands Grows’ seems pretty aggressive as a concept
 - ‘New Square at the Center’ was also a least favorite concept
- How do these concepts affect crime in PC? Recent increase in crime, how can the planning study/public realm help solve this?
- Participants liked the concepts that had Fashion Centre interventions, but overall thought that Simon would want to do this anyway for economic reasons
 - Ballston Mall renovations were used as a comparison
- Participants had a neutral reaction to community gardens, dog parks
 - Overall thought that they will be included in the developments