

**Fairland & Briggs Chaney Master Plan Visioning
Workshop 7/6/2022 (6pm-8pm)
Notes from Breakout Group A**

Exercise 1: Ice Breaker – Envisioning

Prompt: What could be improved?

Transportation

- Improved connectivity to Viva White Oak & vicinity
- More parking at the Briggs Chaney Marketplace/shopping center
- There are no (street?) lights from NH Avenue to 198
- Like the Flash Bus, need a circulator
- Circulator route revolving around this area
- The area is hilly, so it is a car-based community
- Ride-on increased reach into neighborhood to link to BRT
- Connectivity
- Off-street parking etc. – there is sufficient parking
- There is enough parking
- Need ride on to bring people to BRT

Development and Design

- More opportunities to dine out at restaurants
- A more robust economy and jobs

Community/Arts/Culture-

- More mixed use/mixed use centers
- Multi-cultural
- More cultural highlights relative to the area
- Exposure to arts

Schools & Education

- Education focus

Public Safety

- Safety, lower crime
- More lighting in walking areas

Parks & Recreation

- Improve parks

- Indoor pools
- Improve the two parks on Randolph Road
- Extension of Paint Branch Trail to the east side of Rt. 29
- Trail needs extension and connection- SVU 4 to SVU 5
- Pool near East County Rec Center
- Ability to cross the parks

Housing

- Affordable housing
- Equitable, affordable housing, less section 8 housing
- Only residential in R Zone- no commercial development in (R?) zone
- Need more (residential?) development

Environment

- Environmentally stable
- Improve Briggs Chaney auto mall landscape

Food access

- Food courts
- More white linen restaurants
- Briggs Chaney Shopping needs parking improvement
- Stores on Fairland Market/Fairland strip doing well because they (provide diverse/specific) ethnic products, such as Ethiopian products/restaurant(s)

General Comments/Discussion

General

- The master plan area is too small

Traffic/Parking

- *Some members stated they wanted to see improvements to the interchange/grade separation.*
 - The grade separation within the community and interchange at Briggs Chaney is really uncomfortable. The interchange used to be more walkable, used to be synergistic, people could easily cross. Also, some of the stores (in the area) have closed down.
- *Some group members like the interchange/grade separation the way it is. Some folks see it as an improvement.*

- Makes it safer now, pedestrians were struck by cars in the past.
- *There was debate about parking. Some would like to see more parking at Briggs Chaney Center/Marketplace, others felt parking in general was sufficient. Some suggested lack of parking contributed to businesses not operating successfully.*
 - Narrow spaces for parking
 - 711 in the shopping Center, on Fairland Road, moved. It had terrible parking, a small store moved in, and it's barely surviving.
 - Stores on the Fairland strip are doing very well.

Multi-modal

- *Buses, bus stops and circulators were discussed- someone suggested a circulator route.*
 - Circulator route- Route 29/OC Pike- need that service to bring people in
 - Re-adjust the ride-on, to reach out into the community, bring people to the BRT.
 - I like the Flash Bus- only (use?) station 29 and Tech Road; not much there in the way of shade
- *Folks discussed the auto-oriented nature of the community*
 - This is a hilly area, biking and walking is not for all, especially for seniors
 - We rely on cars a lot, this is a car-based community

Exercise 2: Mapping - Locating

Prompt: indicate on the map areas you would like to see improved

Discussion (Note: many of the comments in this exercise are included above, as well)

Connectivity

- Viva White Oak will be transformational- how to get residents there? How do we want to connect folks there-walk, drive, and getting them to this other planning area?
 - One way to do this is via BRT, via Industrial Parkway link; or Industrial Parkway link to Blockway Drive
- The Viva White Oak footprint is bigger than Silver Spring; it has multifamily and single-family homes, a school, there will be conferences, hotels, etc.
- Intersection at E. Randolph and Cherry Hill-greatly improved w/ ability to get between community; people are able to walk to shopping center and it's safe

Traffic/parking/transportation

- Remove traffic light (north of Briggs Chaney Rd.)

- Division of east and west with the bridge-*some feel the divide was there before the bridge*
- Several accidents on Tech Road

Equity

- Differences between two communities- there are great disparities between these two communities
- This (one) area is really developed- how much new stuff are we going to get?

Parks/Trails

- Suggestion to add a pool near East County Rec Center
 - *A group member recalled having a community indoor pool and racquetball court growing up- felt this brought community together and was great*
- Extend trail to east side of Route 29
- Need more connectivity through the park; Pine Branch SUV 5
- Trail connection missing in a park- Paint Branch Stream Valley (SVU 4-5)

Housing

- My son is just starting out, looking for a one bedroom, and cannot find a place he can afford
- I'm against turning residential into commercial- there was land donated by the church, now they are trying to sell it, that wasn't the intent
- Market rate rentals behind Home Depot, near Viva White Oak- because there is an influx of people and businesses coming in from this development- it (housing/market-rate rentals?) will come

Food Access

- A grocery store by church would be a good addition
- Failed grocery stores several times- community doesn't support all of them
 - *Difference of opinion here and some debate. Some stated that there are plenty of visitors coming from the outside and that there is traffic, while others say the stores are not economically feasible because there isn't a large enough population to support them.*

Exercise 3: Open Discussion/Wrap-up

Prompt: can you expand on initial thoughts?

Discussion

- *There was a wide range of opinions about the overpass for 29, grade separation and intersections*
 - Safety issues are a concern
 - Need to keep people safe on route 29
- *The idea of inter-generational communities mentioned in the larger group discussion sparked a lot of interest*
 - Need housing for seniors as well as for young 1st time homeowners
 - Expand the size of homes, types of homes; for both owning and renting; people appreciate when they have something they can call their own.
 - How to do that w/the cost of land?
 - Regional County East Service Center-rebuilding this to multi-family- there is a plan underway, w/an expanded parking lot

Other ideas heard

- Need more offerings of food varieties at grocery store- something like Mosaic, on our side of the county
 - Mosaic is a model suburban center. It's a destination, has a park in the center, mixed-use, shopping, dining, etc. Perhaps something like that here?
- Pink Bench Trail is a great park

How do we get there?

- How to achieve road improvements?
 - Issue w/intersection improvements is coordination with State Highway/DOT
- How to achieve connectivity?
 - Green Castle Blvd.- can't drive through north, needs sidewalk, lots of lights; how else to connect?
 - Extend Robey Road to 298 & Spencerville

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Notes from Breakout Group B**

1st Activity

- Need a good sit-down restaurant – something like a Bone Fish Grill or good steakhouse
- Maybe a 2 Michelin Star restaurant
- Need outdoor eating options
- Need more sidewalks that aren't along such dangerous roads
- Want a restaurant that people actually want to come to
- Want an AVEDA Salon
- Want a Pizza Café
- Want an experience
- Want sidewalks with locals and strollers using them. Want to see people out casually walking.
- Need a way to gather, in a public space in the neighborhoods where we live
- Need a MOMs grocery store
- Need a Wegman's
- All retail is on one side of 29 and the neighborhoods are on the other side and there is no friendly way to get there walking
- Activity is low in the service areas – lack of people

Mapping Activity

Not working

- 29 during rush hour – very heavy
- Tech Road intersection
- Industrial Road intersection – depending on the time of day, its just gets more sand more ugly
- East Randolph Road – a lot of collisions and deaths at the bend. People go very fast along this road. Don't feel comfortable taking a stroller along this road.
- For Trail in Paint Branch Park – need more access. Would be nice to have lighting too for safety reasons.
- Shopping not working because 29 is so hard to cross when walking so have to drive to shopping.

Working?

- Now that there is the Flash, all the riders have to cross 29 to get back to their neighborhoods

Large Map Discussion

- Don't go to Fairland Rec Park because I only go if there is an event (birthday party, cookout).
- What might bring more people to the Fairland Rec Park is more events and programming
- Fairland does not have features that attract me like playgrounds, programs (recycle programs) in a fun interactive way like Candy Cane City style of park. You can walk around Candy Cane Park and before you know it, you've walked 2-3 miles.
- Want boutique coffee shops
- Lots of industrial spaces but not as attractive as art spaces or historical interpretive markers and spaces
- If bring in Art spaces, we could have outdoor art exhibits in the park
- I would love to know more history about my community
- Create a loop that connects Pain Branch to Fairland rec Park
- Make it safe to get to the park

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Notes from Breakout Group C

1. Streets need to be better lighted. It's not necessarily that there are not enough light fixtures, it's also that lights are not well maintained, creating dark patches along walkways.
2. Columbia is a good model of what the group would like to see for their community. Although they do sometime go to Downtown Silver Spring for activities like the Farmer's Market, they all spoke of going to Columbia, Silver Spring, as their best place to go for activities, particularly going out to eat. Activities mentioned include:
 - a. Quality of Shopping – variety of shops, including a variety of grocery store types.
 - b. Sit-down places to eat that can include a nice outdoor setting connected to walking paths
 - c. Lush, shaded outdoor experience. This includes walking paths to and from and within the town center
 - d. Variety of activities – often programed
 - i. Mini golf
 - ii. Midnight walks
 - iii. Board game tables
 - iv. Bowling
 - v. Beautiful walking experiences
 - e. Intergenerational Planned Activities
 - f. Placemaking Events
3. Would like to see a Farmer's Market established at the Tech Road Park & Ride Lot
4. Adult Night Activities
 - a. Mini-golf
 - b. Board Games
 - c. Yoga

- d. Thai-Chi
 - e. Zumba Dance
5. Forcey Memorial Church and Christian School could sponsor community activities?
 6. Paint Branch High School needs to be more activated within the community for both indoor and outdoor community activities in the evening and on weekends.
 7. The voting Precinct is clear down at White Oak Middle School – way too far away. Need to be able to Vote in their own community.
 8. There needs to be safer ways for walkers and bikers to cross Columbia Pike so as to reach shops and eateries.