

BRAC Advisory Group Meeting

February 17, 2010

7pm – 9pm

Minnie Howard School

Roll Call –

Present:

John Komoroske, Chairman of the Planning Commission
Jim Turkel, Chief, Belvoir Integration Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jerry Dawson, Duke Realty
Geoffrey Goodale – Vice Chair, Brookville-Seminary Valley
Dick Somers, Seminary Park Community Association
Dave Dexter - Chair, Seminary West
Kathy Burns, West End Business Association
Don Buch, Citizen at Large
Nancy Jennings, Seminary Hill
Dave Cavanaugh, Seminary Ridge
Julie Edelson, Lincolnia Hills/Heywood Glen
Kai Reynolds, JBG
Jayme Blakesley, Alexandria Transportation Commission
Stephanie Landrum, AEDP
Gerry Chiaruttini, Beauregard Heights Civic Association

Not Present:

Colonel Moffatt, Fort Belvoir Deputy Garrison Commander for Transformation and
BRAC
Ronald Sturman, Seminary Heights
Mark Benedict, Parkside of Alexandria

United States Congressional Officials:

Congressman Jim Moran

Congressional Aides

Christopher Gaspar, Military Legislative Assistant
Austin Durrer, Chief of Staff

City of Alexandria Elected Officials:

Mayor William Eullie
Frank Fannon, Councilman
Alicia Hughes, Councilwoman
Rob Krupicka, Councilman
Redella S. “Del” Pepper, Councilwoman
Paul Smedberg, Councilman

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VDOT

Ronaldo T. “Nic” Nicholson, VDOT Regional Transportation Director for the Northern Virginia Megaprojects

Tom Fahrney, BRAC Coordinator

Army

Edward Travis, Fort Belvoir BRAC PAO

City Staff:

Jim Hartman, City Manager

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Faroll Hamer, Director of Planning and Zoning

Abi Lerner, Deputy Director of Transportation and Environmental Services

Bob Garbacz, Chief, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

Ravi Raut, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

Sandra Marks, Principal Planner, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

Pat Mann, Urban Planner, Department of Planning and Zoning

Dirk Geratz, Principal Planner, Department of Planning and Zoning

Pat Escher, Principal Planner, Department of Planning and Zoning

1. Roll Call
2. Congressman Moran’s Remarks: The previous administration interpreted BRAC law to enable the relocation of military and civilian personnel from leased office space to Federally owned office space. This action came in the wake of the September 11, 2001 and the desire for greater security. The objective was to save the government money spent on leased office space and provide greater security. Conversely this massive realignment has cost more than all the four previous BRAC realignments. Additionally the leased office spaces were located in urban areas with accessibility to mass transit and/or lent themselves to using alternate modes of transportation. It is estimated that the relocation of employees for Fort Belvoir may increase the current rush hour by 2 – 4 hours in both am and pm peak periods. Instead of providing necessary infrastructure improvements, the Army reallocated Fort Belvoir’s boundaries to include the Mark Center site. There were three sites that could have been selected, a Federally owned property in Springfield, the Victory Center and the Mark Center. The first two sites were preferable as they have metro access. Congressman Moran supported the site at Springfield. The Mark Center site was chosen as it was less expensive and no funding

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for transportation mitigation was proposed. The Congressman does not support any direct access alternative that will impact the Winkler Preserve. He believes that the remote inspection facility (RIF) is not necessary and an access point to the Mark Center could be located at that portion of the property. He also believes that the 2011 deadline is artificial and should be delayed.

3. Jody Smolik with the Preserve thanked Congress Moran, the City Council members and the BRAC Advisory group for their support.
4. The Beauregard Heights Civic Association was added to the group as a non-voting member. The motion was brought forth by Julie Edelson and seconded by Kathy Burns and passed unanimously. Gerry Chiaruttini was seated at the group's table.
5. Jim Turkel updated the group about the transportation management plan (TMP). The plan will be flexible and review all area plans, city plans and regional plans. The incorporation of transit and flex time will be important components of the plan and it will be monitored and evaluated.

The current schedule is as follows;

- a. Draft Released for Stakeholder Input April 23
- b. Draft Final May 17
- c. NCPC Coordination June 9
- d. Site Specific TMP
- e. Will both feed and draw from the other area, city and regional planning initiatives that are underway

The goals of the TMP are;

- a. 40% SOV reduction to BRAC 133
- b. Improve mobility and access to BRAC 133

The components of the TMP will include;

- c. A review of the site characteristics;
- d. A review of the proposed land use and hours of operation;
- e. Traffic impact analysis;
- f. Proposed parking plan;
- g. Transportation management strategies;
 - i. Includes use of transit, ridesharing, biking, walking and travel outside of peak hours

There was discussion if it would be possible to further reduce the amount of parking provided to encourage transit use. The group requested geographical information about

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the future employees which the Army indicated that they are still compiling and formulating. The group will receive this information in a timely manner and will have adequate time to evaluate. The Army is inquiring into the future employees preferred mode of transportation and traveling routes. The Army will begin discussions with the local transit authorities in March. The Army has authority over their existing shuttle service and will coordinate this service with the other authorities. There is no Federal funding for the local transit authorities if they will require additional facilities to accommodate the increase in ridership demand.

6. Bob Garbacz – TES, David Jennings – Duke Realty and Kirk Fisher - Shirley Contracting presented the proposed road improvements for Seminary Road and Beauregard Street. The improvements consist of a triple left at the intersection of Seminary and Beauregard and a double left at the intersection of Beauregard and Mark Center Drive. The construction will begin this spring and continue through the fall. You can find more detailed information on the City's BRAC web page. (<http://alexandriava.gov/BRAC>) Some citizen's expressed concern with the hours of lanes closures as they relate to morning rush hour and Saturday traffic. Congressman Moran raised the issue that the improvements would provide left lane turning movements that would have to face on coming traffic and that the traffic study that was prepared for the initial application was inaccurate and not reviewed by the state until after the site had already been selected. Duke replied that the traffic study was reviewed as part of the 2004 development review process and the proposed improvements were part of that process. Tom Farhney indicated the VDOT did not review the study until after the site was selected as this information was proprietary until after the site selection and concurred that the Seminary/Beauregard intersection would function at a failing level with the additional traffic. Dick Somers addressed the group's principle #10, stated there needs to be coordination between the local jurisdictions and that he would be meeting with TES to discuss further.
7. The utility work will be performed by Dominion Power and will be coordinated with the City.
8. Nick Nicholson with VDOT presented the findings of the draft Interchange Justification Report (IJR) indicating that Alternative D, which would impact the Winkler Preserve, would provide better traffic/transit management with none of the five intersections in the area failing; while Alternative A-2 would negatively impact the I-395 corridor and four of the five intersections would fail. VDOT is open to different alternatives and would seek to get all the stake holders and jurisdictions consensus before proceeding with any alternatives. There will be a community meeting on March 11th. Abi Lerner with the

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City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services presented all 19 alternatives (including the VDOT Alternatives) and discussed the pros and cons of each. All of these alternatives can be found on the City's BRAC web page. The group is considering having an additional meeting to discuss these alternatives further.

Kathy Burns questioned the Army's inability to charge for parking which would serve as an incentive for transit ridership. It was explained the Federally owned property can not legally charge their employees for parking. There was discussion that since the north parking garage is no longer within the secured perimeter that there may be a possibility to charge those users by relinquishing the property ownership to a private sector entity.

Jamey Blakesley wanted to know which Federal law prohibited charging for parking and felt that the neighborhood's transportation challenges should be reviewed with the Beauregard Plan and not just focused on the BRAC site.

Don Buch stated that with the limitations of the RIF, the Army's secured perimeter and that any impact to the Preserve is not an acceptable option, the alternatives are down to the either impacting the Preserve or having the Army accommodate and help facilitate resolution of the challenge they have created.

Owen Curtis proposed that the Seminary Road interchange is obsolete and should be designed.

9. Public Comment:

- The public commented that the impacts of the additional cars would have a negative impact on air quality and wanted to know if the Army has an evacuation plan in the case of an event?
The air quality would be reviewed as part of the environmental assessment required by the IJR and the Army is discussion evacuation plans with the local jurisdictions.
- It was also suggested that a pedestrian bridge across Seminary Road from Southern Towers might be a benefit to the neighborhood.
- It was discussed that the bus routes from the Southern Towers site would have their routes extended to take advantage of the proposed transit center on the Mark Center site.
- It was also suggested that a combination of ideas from the different alternatives may better serve the site.

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- Road work/lane closures at 9 am maybe too early as the roads are still congested.
 - There needs to be attention paid to all the school children's safety during the road construction.
10. Meeting was adjourned.
11. Next meeting TBD