



**TRANSIT-RELATED GROWTH (TRG)  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Meeting  
Wednesday, January 10, 2024**

The Transit-Related Growth (TRG) Area Advisory Committee of the Town of Herndon, Virginia, met on Wednesday, June 8, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town of Herndon Council Chambers, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Bryce Perry, Greg Riegle, Emlyn Marsteller, Ken Wire, Vice Chair Meron Yohannes, and Chair George Burke. Committee Members Rajesh Ramasubramanian and Andrew Snowwhite were absent.

Staff members present: Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Ahmad Zaki, Lead Planner, Long-Range Planning; and Collin Okoniewski, Planning Operations Manager.

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Burke called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and stated that five members of the advisory committee were present, which constituted a quorum.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

- a. December 11, 2023, Joint Planning Commission & TRG Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

On the motion by Committee Member Riegle, seconded by Committee Member Perry, the minutes from the December 11, 2023, Joint Planning Commission & TRG Advisory Committee Meeting were approved by a 5-0 vote.

The vote was: Committee Members Perry, Riegle, Marsteller, Wire, Chair George Burke voting "Aye." Vice Chair Yohannes was not yet present.

**3. New Business**

- a. **Formulation of recommendations to the Planning Commission and Town Council**

The committee decided to break down each section of the proposed plan into topics to formulate a recommendation. To facilitate discussion a variety of questions were proposed relevant to each section. The questions and the responses were used to formulate a recommending motion.

**Land Use & Density**

- a. Is the preferred balance of uses achieved?
- b. Is the correct degree of flexibility achieved?
- c. Is the AC comfortable with the loss of small office and light industrial uses?
- d. Does the two poles of activity (Metro Arrival and Sunset District) make sense?
- e. Is the transition to the SFD neighborhoods adequate?
- f. Should specific widths between buildings be indicated within the SAP?
- g. What other land use items should be considered moving forward?

Committee members had a directed discussion on land use and density within the TRG. Staff provided answers to questions.

Chair Burke inquired of staff on the development and use surrounding the Sunset District in the TRG draft plan. Staff provided comments and further explained the proposal.

Chair Burke inquired as to the density of office space. Staff provided information on the importance of retaining a good balance between office/business and residential uses.

Vice Chair Yohannes spoke about the importance of keeping multi-use in the mix and allowing for the most flexibility in the future as trends develop.

**Meeting**  
**January 10, 2024**

Committee Member Riegle spoke on the memo he submitted as part of the staff memo and the points relevant to the land use and density topic. He further spoke towards the idea of ensuring flexibility and the durability of that flexibility throughout the lifespan of this plan. Committee Member Perry further stated that specific measurements and requirements are not appropriate, and the plan should focus more on larger-picture issues, like character and community-suggested offerings. Committee members agreed with these concepts and further explained that prescriptive language for land use would not be something that should appear in this plan.

Chair Burke spoke about the retention of the Sunset Business Park being important, and the development of this area cannot be too aspirational, but some practical updates should be encouraged.

Commissioners agreed not to replace community-based valuable uses like those in the Sunset Business Park. This is a unique case for this type of land use in the Town.

Commissioners had no issues with height and density and the transition of buildings from commercial, into the current existing Downs neighborhood.

Commissioners had a brief discussion on the metro plaza.

New uses that may not be known shouldn't be excluded from the plan, and the plan should allow for future use innovation and development.

A motion to recommend the following four points of emphasis in the area of Land Use & Density as they relate to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Riegle.

1. The advisory committee generally supports the proposed land uses and density recommendations as proposed in the draft small area plan but furthers the idea that prescriptive land use be avoided.
2. Clarify in the TRG small area plan that specific design direction (such as site design, architecture, open space elements, etc.) and dimensions (including setbacks; building heights and footprints; separation between buildings, etc.) are conceptual and intended to show general massing, hierarchy of uses, scale and proportion, but are meant to be refined and finalized as part of final site design developed in subsequent land use processes in a manner that still respects the concepts and design principals generally described in the TRG Small Area Plan.
3. Clarify and provide guidance in the TRG small area plan regarding impacts to and needs for expanded public and community services.
4. The draft plan should recognize the logical evolution of uses and not preclude future, undefined uses that are otherwise compatible to the intent of the small area plan.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Yohannes.

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegle, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting "Aye."

**Transportation Network & Traffic Impacts**

- a. Is the overall grid acceptable?
- b. Is a reduction in LOS appropriate?
- c. Does the grid provide suitable access to the various property owners?
- d. Is the correct amount of emphasis placed on multi-modal improvements and TDM strategies?
- e. Should specific roads be identified as public vs private?
- f. Are the necessary intersection improvements acceptable?
- g. What other transportation/traffic items should be considered moving forward?

**Meeting**  
**January 10, 2024**

Staff advised of issues DPW Engineering staff have with the grid and its links to Herndon Parkway, specifically noting that the spine road is too short. The committee agreed that the spine roads relocation would help, but technically may not be at all possible.

The committee also discussed multi-modal transportation improvements.

A motion to recommend the following five points of emphasis in the area of Transportation Network & Traffic Impacts as they relate to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Riegle.

1. The Committee supports a land use pattern that reflects multi-modal transportation opportunities. The Committee further supports the use of reasonable TDM measures reflecting the proximity to the metro station.
2. The Committee supports the concepts of connectivity and the hierarchy of streets, both public and private, generally reflected in the draft small area plan.
3. This plan acknowledges that the proposed increase in urban development within the TRG will necessitate changes to the intersection level of service standards.
4. The final configuration of the street grid can and should be refined to reflect further feedback from town staff and practical development configurations.
5. Traffic impacts and mitigation measures should be evaluated in connection with specific development applications.

The motion was seconded by Chair Burke.

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegle, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting "Aye."

**Open Space Network**

- a. Is the overall open space network appropriate?
- b. Is enough open space provided?
- c. Should the plan include more specificity on intended active vs passive opportunities for recreation?
- d. Are the open spaces appropriately shared between individual property owners?
- e. What other open space and recreational items should be considered moving forward?
- f. Is the degree of connectivity to abutting neighborhoods sufficient?

Committee Member Wire recommended that the committee allow for flexibility in open space areas, to ensure that developers have options over time.

Chair Burke inquired as to whether the plan adequately incorporates public comment on open space, specifically the mix of active and passive open spaces.

Committee Member Wire commented that open space shouldn't only be limited to grass, but also include complimentary uses like kiosks, food trucks, and pop-up areas. Recommended that it may be more appropriate that the committee advise broad definitions of open space and programmable space to include these uses.

The committee agreed that the scope and depth of connectivity should be evaluated as it relates to existing residential areas like the Downs. Further, the committee wanted to ensure the connection of the linear park to Haley Smith Park.

A motion to recommend the following point of emphasis in the area of Open Space Network as it relates to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Riegle.

1. The Committee supports the concepts of the draft TRG plan with the expectation

**Meeting  
January 10, 2024**

of appropriate combinations of active, passive, and programmable opportunities within the open spaces.

The motion was seconded by Chair Burke.

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegle, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting “Aye.”

**Urban and Architectural Design & Character**

- a. What level of design and form guidance should be included within the plan?
- b. In what specific ways should the plan establish and reinforce a unique Herndon character and sense of place? Does the plan effectively address this?
- c. Should the TRG have a cohesive design narrative that is distinct for the TRG or that is more seamless with other character-defining townscapes?
- d. Should the various neighborhoods of the TRG have design elements distinct from each other?
- e. Are the building heights appropriate? Do they make sense for the various construction types?
- f. How should structured parking be screened? Should open parking garages be visible from public right-of-ways or highly visible viewsheds?
- g. What other design and character items should be considered moving forward?

Committee Member Perry explained that design guidelines should be objective because the zoning code does not get into aesthetic language.

The committee agreed that it should ensure that public input on character was acknowledged and incorporated into the plan.

Vice Chair Yohannes voiced that this section should be the section where ARB should have the ability to decipher. The plan should encourage multi-texture and encourage a variety of materials.

The committee had a brief discussion on building height and transition points.

Committee Member Wire voiced a recommendation that staff work with the consultant to make up a plan that provides direction for the ARB. This plan should utilize a handful of design principles to guide architects as they work on developments within the SAP.

The committee agreed further that cohesion along public and private rights of way and in open spaces within visible areas would be positive, but at the same time this should not reflect uniformity or duplication, but urban design cohesion.

A motion to recommend the following three points of emphasis in the area of Urban and Architectural Design & Character as it relates to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Riegle.

1. The Committee directs staff to work with the architectural consultants (SOM) to further study and provide guidance and high level design principles within the TRG small area plan to assist the ARB and subsequent land use processes.
2. The Committee recommends consideration for architectural backs, but appropriate levels of screening and design should be implemented.
3. The Committee recommends that architectural variety and creativity should be encouraged.

The motion was seconded by Chair Burke.

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegle, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting “Aye.”

**Meeting**  
**January 10, 2024**

**Parking Strategies**

- a. Does the reliance on shared parking make sense?
- b. Should on-street parking be leveraged to the degree recommended?
- c. Should parking ratios be permitted to be reduced from current standards?
- d. What other parking items should be considered moving forward?

The committee held discussion and agreed upon the following:

- Shared parking is the goal where you have common ownership.
- On-street parking is encouraged on primary streets and should be on-site.
- Developers should build parking to meet demand. Ratios should not be explicitly stated in the plan but saved for zoning approvals down the road.

A motion to recommend the following four points of emphasis in the area of Parking Strategies as it relates to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Wire.

1. The Committee supports staff's efforts to work with SOM to reduce and correct graphics for streets and parking that are not currently labeled correctly in the draft TRG plan. The alignment between parking strategies and actual street designations should be the same.
2. The Committee supports parallel parking on primary and secondary streets.
3. The Committee is supportive of flexible parking options as part of the subsequent zoning ordinance updates.
4. The Committee endorses shared parking where common ownership is present, but not otherwise.

The motion was seconded by Committee Member Riegle.

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegle, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting "Aye."

**Plan Implementation & Phasing**

- a. Is the current approach to how best to implement an incremental plan appropriate?
- b. Should mitigating off-site impacts be shared amongst the property owners?
- c. Should more guidance be provided on interim conditions?
- d. What other implementation/phasing items should be considered moving forward?

Committee Member Perry voiced that the implementation part of the plan will be an intense administrative endeavor. The committee won't play as big of a role.

The committee agreed that mitigating offsite impacts should be shared amongst property owners.

A motion to recommend the following two points of emphasis in the area of Plan Implementation & Phasing as it relates to the draft TRG plan was made by Committee Member Riegle.

1. The Committee recommends that mitigating off-site impacts should be shared amongst property owners.
2. The Committee recommends that there should be guidance to existing businesses which acknowledges the retention of successful community service uses.

The motion was seconded by Chair Burke.

**Meeting  
January 10, 2024**

There was no discussion on the motion. The question was called on the motion, which was carried by a vote of 6-0. The vote was Committee Members Marstellar, Perry, Riegler, Wire, Vice Chair Yohannes, and Chair Burke voting “Aye.”

**5. Comments**

**a. Comments from Staff Members**

No comments were offered.

**b. Comments from Committee Members**

Committee members voiced an appreciation for the staff for putting the meeting together and seeing this project through its development.

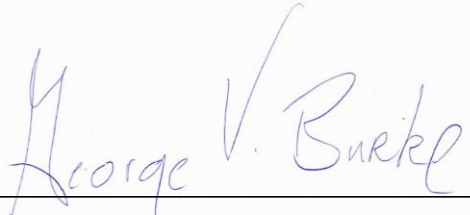
**c. Comments from Members of the Public**

No members of the public were present to provide comment.

**6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, and without objection, the January 10, 2024, TRG Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m. on the motion of Committee Member Wire and seconded by Committee Member Reigle.


**\*As these are the minutes of the final meeting of the TRG Advisory Committee held on January 10, 2024, there was no opportunity for the committee to formally approve them. I certify in my capacity as Chair of the TRG that they are an accurate account of that meeting to the best of my recollection.**



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**George Burke**

**Chair, Transit-Related Growth Area (TRG) Advisory Committee**



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**Collin J. Okoniewski**

**Planning Operation Manager**