

Long Branch Community Workshop Public Comments

June 25, 2012

Parks/Open Space/Environment

1. Expand the width of the stream valley - can homes be moved or purchased adjacent to the Long Branch stream valley to accomplish that?
2. Trail maintenance a continuing issue.
3. Green space/parks – concerns about security – should more police officers patrol them?
4. Explore places for community gardens.
5. Need an urban park in the superblock.
6. Expand the stream valley as a green corridor.
7. Much of the parkland is stream valley open space - not active parks.
8. Provide data comparing active recreation space with other urban areas of the county.
9. Is the focus on storm water management because of drainage problems near the dry cleaner?
10. Low impact design (LID) is recommended or emphasized - good.

Parking

1. Not enough parking when more density is added (especially apartments).
2. What are the parking requirements for residential and commercial uses?
3. Desire for a parking study to be done for the area.
4. How will the Purple Line impact parking?
5. Very concerned about parking – not enough at Flower Branch apartments. Roads packed with parked cars at night – on Plymouth and Walden - unsafe and over-crowded.
6. Parking pressure will only get worse.
7. Consider overnight parking at the library and Giant now.
8. Parking for most small businesses a concern - no discussion about this problem. Only structured parking discussed - very expensive and not an option for small businesses.

Mobility

1. Like the pedestrian focus of the plan.
2. Explore closing Arliss to through traffic near the Purple Line station - make it more accessible and reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.
3. County not enforcing “No Through Trucks” signs at University Boulevard and Franklin. Large trucks use Franklin and Flower as a “beltway exit” to Piney Branch and Wayne. Trucks should not be cutting through residential streets - keep them on Piney Branch and University Boulevard where they belong.

Plan and Planning Process

1. Very positive about the plan and process – summary reflects what the community said.
2. Broaden community input – use creative approaches to reach renters and minority community.

3. Will the plan recommend enforcing current land use laws and regulations? (code enforcement)
4. Quality of life issues - positive and community sensitive concepts, but only recommendations. Progress toward those goals must be measurable - how can we make that happen?

Land Use/Development

1. Business perspective is important.
2. Retain the food store at University/Piney Branch – a great asset.
3. Why does the plan focus on recommending smaller businesses?
4. What tools are needed to encourage reinvestment?
5. Concerns about gentrification – drives up rental costs and drives out small businesses.
6. Keep Giant - do not want it to leave.
7. Huge turnover in small businesses - will statistics be provided for last 10-20 years and change in the businesses and services offered?
8. Don't need more diverse small businesses - nearly 100% currently targeted to low income shoppers. Need true diversity appealing to different market segments - good coffee shop (independent or chain), etc.
9. Super block:
 - How does development happen (3 FAR/8 stories) without land assembly?
 - What prevents dense development in one area and nothing elsewhere?
 - Who are the key developers and land owners, especially in the superblock – have they been involved? What do they want to do?
 - Does all of the Flower Avenue shopping center have to be an historic resource - can't you just save part of the façade? Allow a density bonus to reuse the theater façade as part of a redevelopment plan.
 - Superblock needs a developer – get something started, but land assembly will be key.
 - Look at creative reuse of the Flower Theater to attract more day-time users – dance, arts, etc.
10. Washington Adventist Hospital potential move – what is in the plan to address that?
11. Reroute overhead wires rather than undergrounding them – that's expensive.
12. Add public art.
13. Accommodate a health facility as a public benefit during development review.
14. Purple Line impacts Fontana Bowl-arama building - do not want to lose this community asset and source of jobs.

Land Use - Residential

1. Support diverse housing costs – don't just focus on providing affordable housing.
2. The planning area is already over-populated with small apartments.
3. Concerns about rent increases.
4. Explore options for accessory apartments.