ULI Washington Technical Assistance Panel

What’s Next for the Rock Spring Office Park and the Executive Boulevard area in White Flint?

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The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.
ULI Washington

A District Council of the Urban Land Institute

ULI at the local level: 1,900+ Members: developers, architects, planners, public officials, financiers, students...

Emphasis on sharing best practices and providing outreach to communities

- Technical Assistance Panels
- Regional Land Use Leadership Institute
- UrbanPlan Program
- Washington Real Estate Trends Conference
- Case Studies
- Regionalism and Housing Initiative Councils

http://washington.uli.org
TAP Panelists

- Bob Eisenberg, CHAIR, Clark Enterprises
- Robert Atkinson, Davis Carter Scott
- Dean Bellas, Urban Analytics
- Brigg Bunker, Foulger Pratt Development
- Barbara Byron, Fairfax County Office of Community Revitalization
- Matt Klein, Akridge
- Alex Rixey, Fehr & Peers
- Rebecca Snyder, Insight Property Group
- Stan Wall, HR&A Advisors
Office Space Trends (WDC metro area)

• Tenant Relocation Rate at Lease Expiration*
  – 2000 – 2008: 40% (from existing space)
  – 2009 – 2014: 60% (tenants moving where?)

• Absorption from 2008 – 2014*
  – Class A: 18.6 million square feet
  – Class B/C: -13.6 million square feet

• Lease Activity**
  – 86% occurs within ½ mile of Metro

*NGKF     **JLL
Office Space Vacancy in Montgomery County

• Montgomery County currently has nearly 11 million square feet of office space vacant in 2015*

• Office Vacancy**
  – Rock Spring 21.2%
  – Executive Boulevard Area 29.2%
  – Montgomery County 14.8%
  – Bethesda/Chevy Chase 9.4%

*PES (Partners for Economic Solutions) **CoStar
Flight to Quality in Office Market

• What does this movement mean?
  – Good news: Not unique to Montgomery County; happening all over the country
  – Bad news: What exists in the Study Area is not the office product that is currently in demand

• Functional versus Locational Obsolescence*
  – 16% of the regional office space is obsolete
  – Some office space is curable, some is not

*NGKF
Economic Development – Hope is not a Strategy

- Corporate HQ Migration (Past 6 Years)*
  - Fairfax County 8 (in) 1 (out)
  - Montgomery County 0 (in) 0 (out)

*Based on data provided to the ULI TAP panel members
Is the Study Area office market competitive?

- The ULI panel is here today to discuss how to change the status quo of the Study Area
  - Identity
  - Connectivity
  - Amenities
  - Land Use
    - Implementation of recommendations
City of Rockville

Twinbrook Sector Plan

White Flint Sector Plan

Master Plan Context: White Flint 2
Executive Blvd Existing Conditions
Discussion Framework

1. Connectivity
2. Amenities
3. Identity
4. Land Use
Challenges

1. **Connectivity**: Access to offsite amenities is automobile oriented and pedestrian challenged.

2. **Amenities**: The experience locally is unpleasant due to the lack of amenities

3. **Identity**: No ‘There There’

4. **Land Use**: All existing uses are office
CONNECTIVITY
Confusing Pedestrian Site Access from Metro

0.75 Miles
15 Minutes
“Goat Trail” Through Parking Lot

0.75 Miles
15 Minutes
Auto-Oriented Crossing at Old Georgetown Road

0.75 Miles
15 Minutes
Auto-Oriented Crossing at Old Georgetown Road
Auto-Oriented Crossing at Old Georgetown Road
Poor Local Pedestrian Site Access

0.75 Miles
15 Minutes
Lack of Local Pedestrian Site Access

Lack of sidewalk to facilitate pedestrian access
Pedestrians must walk through the drive aisle.
6 Minutes to Pike & Rose! (But it Feels Longer)

0.3 Miles
6 Minutes
1. All existing uses are office
2. Lack of amenities within study area (lunch, coffee, gym, drugstore)
3. Access to amenities via walking feels prohibitive due to unpleasant pedestrian conditions
Currently an Amenity Desert
IDENTITY
• Placeless
• Single Use (Office Only)
• Disconnected from Amenities
Recommendations

1. **Connectivity:** Prioritize Infrastructure Improvements to Catalyze Redevelopment.

2. **Amenities:** Improve Local Experience and Provide Diverse Amenity/Use Mix

3. **Identity:** Leverage Pike & Rose and White Flint

4. **Land Use:** Diversify
CONNECTIVITY
Recommendations

1. Accelerate Implementation of North/West (Pike & Rose) Metro Entrance

2. Implement planned Old Georgetown Road and Executive Boulevard Realignment (Western Workaround).

3. Improve Pedestrian Connection to Nearby Amenities (Pike & Rose & Metro)
New Metro Entrance & Western Workaround
Western Workaround
Improved Pedestrian Connection

0.75 Miles  
15 Minutes

0.5 Miles  
10 Minutes
Leverage & Link To White Flint Recreation Loop

White Flint Public Amenities Report
Extend Implementation of White Flint Pedestrian Amenities
Introduce Bikeshare As a Multimodal Connector
AMENITIES
A Clean Slate – Ripe For Opportunity!
Provide Diverse Amenity/Use Mix

1. Introduce Retail Catering To Office Workers & Future Residents
   - Coffee Shops
   - Cafes
   - Drugstore
   - Drycleaner

2. Decrease Perceived Distance Between Building Entrances & Street
   - Encourage Small Floor plate Retail
   - Implement Pop-Up Amenities (Food Trucks, Coffee Shop, Parklets)
   - Implement Outdoor Seating (moveable chairs)

3. Embrace & Enhance Existing Green Spaces
Provide Diverse Amenity/Use Mix
Areas of Opportunity
Mature Trees and Landscaping are Assets
Ample Existing Greenspace
Leverage & Link To White Flint Recreation Loop

White Flint Public Amenities Report

Legend:
- Major Vehicular Connectors
- Public Green Space
- Recreation Loop
- Regional Bike Connections
- Strengthen North/South Connection

Connection Study
IDENTITY
Leverage & Link to Pike & Rose Identity
Create Consistent Wayfinding & Streetscape Package
Diversified Uses
Executive Blvd Framework Plan
Rock Spring Existing Conditions
IDENTITY
Rock Spring - Identity

- Live Well
  - Build upon existing medical tenants and open space/park like environment
  - Create an anchor for wellness/central community uses
  - Lifestyle environment will be key to attracting tenants and residents
  - Mixed-use environment is favored by corporate tenants and residents alike
  - Enhance pedestrian-oriented environment
Rock Spring - Identity

• Improve entry points: create gateway theme through artwork, signage, etc.
CONNECTIVITY
Rock Spring - Connectivity

• Transit technology tools to enhance rider knowledge
• Direct shuttle to the Metro with appropriate headways
• Mall/bridge connection (civic plaza – 11th Street Bridge, Wilson Bridge)
• Bikeshare stations
Rock Spring - Connectivity

- Pedestrian connectivity – break up superblock with mid-block crossings
- Pedestrian experience along the routes
AMENITIES
Rock Spring - Amenity

• Infuse communal amenities into a central location on the site for activity (village center, community center, library,) instead of individual building amenities.

• Create mixed use ”Village Center” centrally located and walkable within the campus; include relocated library, arts facilities, etc.
Rock Spring - Amenity

- Leverage existing green assets by building trail network, seating, open space
LAND USE
Rock Spring Park – Land Use

- Designated staff position to facilitate redevelopment
- Catalyze development of DRI mixed use site
Rock Spring Park – Land Use

• Flexibility of uses – change zoning to eliminate constraints and make it market responsive

• Explore creative approach to address school issue to include adding another school on Walter Johnson site, adaptive re-use of existing office building or building new school on site within Rock Spring Park
Rock Spring Framework Plan
Implementation Strategies for Both Study Areas

• Land-Use Policy
  - Implement zoning to allow maximum land use flexibility
  - Encourage “The Better Idea”
  - Accelerated entitlement process
Implementation Strategies (cont’d)

• Financial Tools
  - Tax abatement to create public benefit or other desired uses
  - Special assessment taxing districts to accelerate desired infrastructure improvements
  - Acquisition by the County of vacant/underperforming office buildings to spur a change in use
  - Tax-Increment Financing
  - Public Private Partnership
Implementation Strategies (cont’d)

- Event Programming
  - Farmers market
  - Craft festival
  - Wellness fair
  - Food Truck-a-Palooza
Implementation Strategies (cont’d)

• Community Education to Create Buy-In
  - Fiscal burden of underperforming real estate
  - Impact on Schools from new multifamily development
THANK YOU!