

**BEACON/GROVETON CBC**  
**CHARRETTE RESPONSES**  
**DEC 20, 2018**

**PART A: CHARACTER**

- Character should be more modern, not just tied to the past. Planners and designers should plan for 20-30 years out in terms of look and feel. Look forward!
  - Keep it modern, but human-scaled
- Create places for respite, peace and calm [Although the group accepted that Beacon/Groveton is planned to be the primary center of the corridor, they wanted to make sure there were also smaller, quieter, more intimate places that the people that lived there could use that didn't feel overwhelming or too grand scale.]
  - Green spaces with a lots of trees
  - Cooling features --- greening, shade, trees
  - Be thoughtful about materials used --- the plaza area shown in the rendering looks like it would be "hot/burning" on a hot day
- Balance of traditional look with modern technology related to lighting, heating/cooling [think about passive solar for warming outdoor spaces via thermal mass/sunlight as well as cooling materials for outdoor summer spaces]
- Pay homage to the airfield and other historic Beacon/Groveton sites (e.g., theme: "Soaring to new heights!")
- Provide opportunities for pop-up installations (rather than permanent ones) --- this allows for flexibility and for public ideas/input. Keep it fresh!
- Provide a village feel --- restaurants along the plaza; an "Old Town Alexandria" feel
- Allow spaces for small, locally owned businesses
- Don't focus all engaging elements in one place – encourage use of entire site as well as connecting trails and corridors
- Consider wildlife corridors (for animals, not humans!)
- Avoid lighting that disrupts circadian rhythms of both humans and animals

# CHARRETTE FINDINGS | PART B : VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

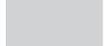
## BEACON/GROVETON CBC

EXHIBIT	MOST LIKED IMAGES	MOST DISLIKED IMAGES	TRADITIONAL	TRANSITIONAL	MODERN	
ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER			● : 3 ● : 3	● : 7 ● : 4	● : 4 ● : 11	
STREETSCAPES-PAVING			● : 4 ● : 3	● : 2 ● : 3	● : 3 ● : 4	
STREETSCAPES-FURNISHINGS			● : 0 ● : 4	● : 3 ● : 3	● : 10 ● : 5	
STREETSCAPES-WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE			● : 9 ● : 2	● : 3 ● : 1	● : 1 ● : 6	
STREETSCAPES-GREEN FEATURES			FORMAL/TRADITIONAL      INFORMAL/NATURALISTIC		● : 4 ● : 5	● : 11 ● : 1

INPUT DURING CHARRETTE

● LIKE

● DISLIKE



PREFERRED

## PART B: VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

### *Architectural Character*

#### **Likes:**

- Natural materials [People tended to prefer brick and stone cladding. Also, a general preference for “traditional” building forms and proportions.]
- Earth tones [See above.]
- Glass – use thoughtfully, eg., market... (??) [Where glass is to be used, it should be transparent, not mirrored or opaque.]

#### **Dislikes:**

- Large glass façade/glass towers – too shiny, kills birds, too high, not inviting [See glass comment, above.]
- Disconnected; not attractive [One image showed an adjacency of modern buildings that looked awkward or abrupt. Some found the bold fields of color off-putting.]

### *Streetscapes - Paving*

**Likes:** [People liked precast pavers with variegated color patterns.]

- Paving as part of wayfinding
- Pavers are really part of the overall streetscape (may not like the paver but like the overall effect)
- Smaller scale variation
- Interesting concrete/pavers (larger checkered-style concrete pavers)

#### **Dislikes:**

- [People disliked the sidewalk images that didn’t have any green in them. Not really a statement about materiality.]

### *Streetscapes – Furnishings*

#### **Likes:**

- Stone has durability vs wood
- Warm colors and materials – blends in [People showed a strong preference for wood (and a slight preference for stone) over metal for sitting on. Interestingly, they had no preference between modern or traditional seating styles, as long as they were comfortable!]
- Spaces for more people [Not sure what that means.]

#### **Dislikes:**

- Metal is hot in the summer and cold in the winter

### *Streetscapes – Wayfinding and Signage*

#### **Likes:**

- Traditional – warm and inviting
- Signs must be accessible and visible for all
- Natural colors (larger plaques – smaller plaques hard to read)

#### **Dislikes:**

- Not too much at one location – less is more! [Don’t overdo signage.]
- Colors look like Ikea [People generally responded negatively to big swatches of bold colors. Tending to prefer subtler uses of color.]

### *Streetscapes – Green Features*

**Likes:** [The group strongly preferred the two images of “naturalistic” streetscape edges over the two with straight, parallel edges. People said the straight lines felt too manicured. Whereas the others felt more inviting for people to interact with. One benefit of the more naturalistic look is its ability to incorporate a wide variety of plant types (ie: native, flowering, low/high, pollinator-friendly) without them looking out of place. More effort could be given to maintaining a healthy landscape rather than for keeping it looking tended.]

- Native Plants
- Ecosystem function
- Green feels more natural; not as “man-made”

# PART C: OPEN SPACES / PARKS | BEACON/GROVETON CBC : OPEN SPACE NETWORK

BEACON - GROVETON

## OPEN SPACE NETWORK INCLUDES "LIVABILITY SPINE" - THE CHARACTER DEFINING STREET WITHIN THIS CBC

**QUESTION 1:** Identify which open spaces should have passive, medium, or active types of uses. [Label on the drawing]  
When determining the level of activity (active to passive) consider the adjacent uses, such as: Is the open space adjacent to commercial or residential uses on the ground floor of the adjacent building?  
How close is the space to the BRT station? How close is the space to existing residential communities?

**QUESTION 2:** Identify the images (from the materials handout) that best match the activities for these open spaces. Feel free to suggest others that are not on the list.  
[Affix images from 'Materials M1 and M2' beside the activity]



*Pictures are generally "character defining" rather than "pasted" there location should be noted (unless noted)*

*Flexible uses*

PLACE IMAGES HERE

## PART C: OPEN SPACES AND PUBLIC REALM

### ▪ Overall Comments

- Play structures should be dispersed along the Livability Spine, rather than clustered in one spot
- Don't put most active spaces close to residential areas [Higher intensity uses should not be located too close to residential]
- Things people want to see happening outside (without identifying specifically where...) – open spaces should allow for flexible uses:
  - Centrally located:
    - Active Event Space: Cultural fairs, performances and festivals/Farmers' Market
  - Gathering places [smaller, informal gathering spaces dispersed along the livability spine]
  - Climbing Structures (airplane theme?)
  - Outdoor movie nights [central square or on the playing field]
  - Stage or amphitheater [near the playing field, but not close to residential]
  - Fountains/splash pads/water park (Who will be maintaining these?) [dispersed along the spine]
  - Dog park [at the parks at either end of the CBC]
  - Lush, natural plantings
  - Public art [Dispersed and scaled to its setting. Integrated, if possible, rather than stand-alone objects.]
  - Little Free Library [everywhere!]
  - Calm green spaces [see "gathering places, above"]
  - Shaded seating areas (benches, tables/chairs, lawns)
  - Native species gardens
  - Trails and walking paths
  - Butterfly gardens [see "outdoor classrooms, below"]
  - Near Residential Areas
    - Less active uses
    - Coffee shop
    - Community gardens
  - Outdoor classrooms that can be used for other types of gatherings as well (engage Fairfax County Schools, "Get2Green" program (Donna Volkmann))
  - Bike Share and Bike Repair stations [along the livability spine, but close proximity to central plaza]
- Open Space in NW corner
  - Community gardens
  - Active field(s) with spectator area

### ▪ SIGNATURE OPEN SPACE (Central Area Adjacent to Station)

- Central location [There was some discussion (not reflected in these notes) that the central plaza not have a lot of built-in streetscape or park-like elements. Rather, it should be designed in a way that allows for the most possible flexibility for programming. (Thematic, seasonal, whatever.) So: More trees in planters than in the ground. Movable seating rather than fixed. Lighting that's suspended rather than on fixed poles. Etc.]
- Needs to be well connected to station area – consider features that establish the relationship between the station and the Public open space/buildings
- Needs "destination features" (e.g., Christmas tree, markets, gathering spaces)
- Needs to be flexible to a variety of uses and events (e.g., concerts, Farmers' Markets, holiday markets, craft shows, etc.)
- Needs modular utilities (e.g., for plug-ins) in order to allow for flexible uses
- There need to be features for residents and also for those who don't live immediately adjacent to this area

- Not all hardscape --- put in planting beds and large planters
- “Right size/right scale” this central space
- Circulation design (pedestrian paths) and plaza features need to consider – and not obstruct - - the ped/BRT traffic
- Each CBC should feature local artists and art themes
- Interactive art
- Architectural features to reflect light onto this space in the winter, and provide shade in the summer
- Vertical green spaces
- Highlight airport history through the use of pavers, mosaics, images, etc.
- Use changeable public art --- feature different local artists periodically

**Parking Lot of Ideas for Future Use (but not a specific recommendation for this discussion on design and character)**

- Central Civic Plaza should have vehicle access
- Metro should be underground with station at Livability Spine/civic plazas
- Think about the public space in relation to the future Metro
- Keep the community feel --- street in the middle with shops on either side, like Shirlington. But, provide better parking than Shirlington since many people will need to drive to get here.
  - Underground most of the parking
  - But, provide convenient parking for neighbors who live outside the CBC
  - Areas currently used for parking can then be repurposed into better uses