

SUMMARY OF THE LAKE ANNE VISION WORKSHOP HELD 4/10/23**EVENT SUMMARY**

- Welcome & Table setting – Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn gave a brief welcome, followed by a brief presentation by Streetsense summarizing the project to date
- Icebreaker activity – A short internet game of Lake Anne Trivia
- Round robin – Participants rotated between six tables for conversations on the following topics
 - Parking
 - Retail/amenities
 - Infrastructure
 - Story
 - Residential Density
 - Accessibility
- Takeaways & next steps – Streetsense facilitators shared the top three takeaways from the evening and outlined upcoming project milestones
- Approximately 60 people participated, in addition to Fairfax County staff and local media.

KEY FINDINGS

- People are in different places in terms of their understanding of what the issues are and what needs to happen in order to move forward. This is to be expected as people have different experiences of and levels of investment in Lake Anne. In general, participants seem aligned on big picture ideas for the future, but the places where conflict seems to arise are places where people do not have the same understanding of what the problem is. To combat this, moving forward, describe the context with data-driven information whenever possible.
- The 2015 plan and prior Crescent Redevelopment plan are good places to start in terms of consensus around specific design ideas. Both of those plans included extensive community outreach and in general they were referenced favorably.
- As with any planning/development effort, not everyone will agree. While there were strongly voiced concerns, most participants were in favor of more density, of structured parking, of a change in the organizational structure of public space maintenance.
- The discussion around an economic vision was consistent with survey results: people want neighborhood-serving retail and dining, as well as cultural and arts experiences. Many would like to see an expansion of programming and amenities to serve multiple generations, including families with children.

INDIVIDUAL TOPICS - KEY TAKEAWAYS

Parking

1. Participants generally agree that a parking structure is needed to support event parking and any additional commercial density. In addition, people consistently expressed the opinion that a parking structure needs to be architecturally beautiful/appropriate to Lake Anne, and that preserving as many trees as possible is important.
2. Participants were asked to rate specific locations for a potential parking structure. Overwhelmingly, the preferred location was Land Unit B, either in the footprint of the existing public lot, or immediately north of it.
3. The desire for electrical vehicle charging infrastructure was a recurring theme.

Retail

1. There is a lack of cohesion throughout the property. The consumer doesn't know (or care) that there are multiple property owners. In order to achieve the cohesion that traditional project-oriented retail has, unity must be achieved by property owners and by merchants.
2. Most would love to see a grocery store but most understand that the submarket is saturated with this use. They also understand that the parking requirements are likely too significant to support such a use without compromising the rest of the property.
3. The property looks tired and both the building stock and the public realm are in disrepair.

Infrastructure

1. The upkeep and maintenance of the public space and infrastructure for Lake Anne is not sustainable for the LARCA condominium. No other condominium in the region is responsible for maintaining a large public plaza, lake and park/trail system that is used by the entire County and other visitors. The deferred maintenance costs keep increasing every year and is currently in the tens of million dollars amortized over only 171 units.
2. There are six or seven different condominium associations that are in the overlay district and there is confusion over which association has responsibility for different infrastructure assets. (ie. Sidewalks, bulkheads, parking lots, etc.) Clarification is needed such that the repair costs are properly allocated.
3. The historic designation of LARCA's asset requires special construction techniques that limit the number of contractors qualified and willing to repair damaged or failing infrastructure and building facades, etc. This has resulted in the condo association having difficulty finding contractors to repair their assets as well as inflated and increases costs for repairs which further burden the cost of upkeep.

INDIVIDUAL TOPICS - KEY TAKEAWAYS (CONT.)

Story

1. Originality // in history, design, vibe, culture, character
2. Vibrancy // in events, markets, festivals, energy, art
3. Diversity // in use, in culture, in generational appeal
People might not agree on everything, but everyone here loves Lake Anne.

Residential Density

1. People are overwhelmingly (though not unanimously) in favor of more residential development, particularly in Land Unit D (the Crescent site). Other areas mentioned with less consensus include Land Unit B (another tower), Land Unit A (current surface parking lot), and even some land just outside the CRA across from the Buddhist center. Some participants expressed concern that care be taken to integrate any new development at the Crescent with the amenities of the Plaza. New residential density was generally considered to be in keeping with Robert Simon's original vision of a walkable community.
2. People are in favor of preserving affordability, and of new development that includes mixed incomes though there was variation on what "mixed income" means (assistance for unhoused, for example). All groups expressed concern about displacing existing affordable housing residents with any new development.
3. People are in favor of mixed housing types, from townhouses and condos to multifamily. Some suggested additional towers. General consensus was no single family. All agreed that thoughtful design is important, that it feel "like Lake Anne" and not like "just anywhere."

Accessibility

1. Pedestrian safety is a concern on several levels. Fast traffic on Village Rd. and North Shore Dr. with few marked crossings, poor wheelchair/stroller access to the plaza, and low lighting levels combine to produce a fractured pedestrian network.
2. When it comes to bicycling to Lake Anne, the existing bike lanes and paths in the area are narrow, unprotected, and/or lack connectivity to the plaza. In addition, the lack of safe and visible bike parking once people arrive at the plaza is another deterrent.
3. The existing infrastructure is in poor condition, particularly some of the stairs in the area, and wayfinding is lacking.

PHOTOGRAPHS



