Rail-Volution 2006

Panel:
Transit-Oriented Communities
Monday, November 6, 3:00-4:30 PM

Presentation:
Columbia Heights: Public Realm Framework Plan

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Columbia Heights – “A City within a City”

2000 Census
Neighborhood Cluster:
45,000 Residents
50% African American
20% White
30% Hispanic
14th Street NW - A Streetcar “Suburb”

- North of the 1793 L’Enfant Plan, above the escarpment

- Initial Development:
  - Civil War Military Hospital – to escape the summer heat, humidity and malaria
  - Horse Race Track - current site of Metro
  - Columbian College – moved in 1884 downtown to become George Washington University
14th Street NW - A Streetcar “Suburb”
1968 Riots
Post Riots through 2003 – Along 14th Street and Adjacent
A Diverse Housing Stock
• Parcel 24 Dance Institute
• Parcel 29 Tivoli Partners – Theater, Grocery Store
• Parcel 27 DC USA – 500,000 SF Retail Center
• Parcel 38 Civic Plaza
• Metro Triangle II – Apartments
• Parcel 15 Columbia Heights Ventures – Apartments
• Parcel 26 Columbia Heights Ventures – Apartments
• Parcel 40 Urban League
• Parcel 5 NPCDC – Apartments
• Parcel 19 Triangle II – Apartments
• Parcel 11 Duron, Inc. – Paint Store
• Parcel 32 Triangle II Apartments
• Parcel 34 Apartments
The Charge from the Office of Planning:

- To create an urban design framework plan that respects the cultural and physical background and evolving history
- To create streetscapes with define a ‘design identity’
- To coordinate development projects with the public realm improvements
- To establish implementation strategies

DCOP’s Public Realm Plan was coordinated with DDOT’s Columbia Heights / Mt. Pleasant Transportation Study
Public Realm Framework Goals

1. Strengthen Community Identity
2. Celebrate Diversity
3. Create a Lively Urban Experience
4. Make it Easy to Walk
5. Make Public Transit Convenient
6. Make it Safe
Public Workshops – Communication Tools

Icon Cards: An Initial Menu
Community Ideas for 14th Street
Public Realm Plan - Neighborhood Identity – in the Residents’ words

1 Cultural
- multi-cultural
- humanity
- multi-generational
- ‘kaleido-cultural’
- multi-economic
- community oriented
- mix of faces
- neighborhood
- melting-pot
- multi-ethnic
- familiar faces
- multi-lingual

2. Ambience / Atmospheric
- Viva!
- ‘a lot going on’
- crossroads
- unrefined
- vibrancy
- urban
- crowds
- edgy-tension
- uncut/raw
- vitality
- density
- chaos
- ‘spike lee joint’
- skyline

3 Social
- open
- tolerance
- ‘kaleidoscope’
- colors
- multi-purpose/use
- welcoming
- accommodating
- old/new
- shapes
- flexible
- accepting
- diverse
- contrasts
- non-linear
- rooftops
- multi-generational

4 Temporal / Changing
- changing
- evolving
- history/historic
- emerging
- revival
- ‘renaissance’

5 Humanitarian
- soulful
- personal
- intimate
- we/the people as ‘art’
- people-focused (not object-focused)
Strengthen the Core Area, the Gateways, Links and Streets

Design Opportunities and Street Character
Right-of-Way Improvements include:

- wider sidewalks, curb extensions, improved crosswalks
- improved bicycle connections to Metro
- travel lane reconfigurations, on-street parking
Design Concept

Framework Design Concept

Civic Plaza – Design Concept
The Civic Plaza

Plaza Features:

- Design Theme: Kaleidoscope
- Predominantly ‘hardscape’ for the market and performances
- A “concentric ring” focus for the community
- An interactive fountain for the kids
- Ornamental trees to frame plaza
- Custom designed sculptural elements to provide light and shade
- Stepped landscaped seating
- Integration of public art
The Civic and Metro Station Plazas

Design Theme: ‘Kaleidoscope’

Plan

Civic Plaza

Metro Plaza
Funding Provided by DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities

Goal: Establish opportunities for Public Art throughout the Neighborhood

Plazas
1. Civic Plaza
2. Metro Station Plazas

Primary Corridor
3. 14th St NW & Irving St NW

Private Development
4. DC-USA

Public Institutions
5. Bell-Lincoln School
6. Tubman Elementary School
7. Giant Store
   Future Community Resource

Gateways
8. 14th St NW & Spring Road NW
9. 14th S NW & Oak St NW
10. 14th St NW & Newton St NW
11. 16th St NW & Park Rd NW
12. Park Rd NW & Sherman Rd NW
13. 16th St NW & Irving St NW
14. 16th St NW & Columbia Rd NW
15. 14th St NW & Harvard St NW
16. 13th St NW & Columbia Rd NW
17. 14th St NW & Girard St NW
18. 14th St NW & Florida Ave NW
Public Art – Preliminary Concepts
Recommendation:

Provide new custom shelters along 14th Street in the Core Area.
Streetscape Furnishings

**Recommendation:**

Provide a family of elements based on DC standards with a custom neighborhood color.
Focus Area Design Plans

Initiate improvements throughout neighborhood:
• Gateways
• the Right-of-Way
• Special Design Opportunities

Focus Area #3 – 14th Street / Columbia - Harvard

Focus Area Plans
Streetscape Framework

C2 Commercial Core Primary Street
14th St. NW (north and south of Core area)

**Sidewalk Treatment**
- Type: Concrete, 3’ x 3’ Typ.

**Street Tree**
- Species: Pin Oak - Replace or fill with species to be verified with City
  Horticulture
- Spacing: 30’ on center
- Minimum 4’ x 10’ with ground cover, perfcult paving or tree guard where necessary

**Street Lighting**
- Type: Single Globe No. 16 (Replace existing Corona heads)
- Color: Custom
- Border Pattern: Staggered across street
- Shade: Shade

**Bus Shelter**
- Type: Custom

**Bench**
- Type: City Standard
- Location: Gateway intersections

**Trash Receptacle**
- Type: City Standard
- Location: Gateway intersections
- Color: Custom
- Size: Custom

**Bicycle Storage**
- Rack: Rack

**Key Plan**

Recommendations for each street:
- Sidewalk widths, paving
- Street trees
- Lighting
- Trash Receptacles, Bike Racks

Example Street Page and Sidewalk Zones
Implementation Strategies

Cost Estimate for Core Area Public Improvements

- $6.0 to $6.4 Million
- Funding and Financing
### Implementation Strategies

**Phasing and Coordination:**

- Complete public realm improvements with private development
Implementation

Management and Maintenance Strategies

- Business Improvement District (BID)
- Main Street Organization
- Ownership
- Programming of Plazas
The Community:
Enforcing the Plan
First Completed Development

Public Realm Framework Plan - Sidewalk Recommendations
Award

2004-2005 Outstanding Award for a Plan
APA – National Capital Area Chapter

“After Mayor Williams reviewed the framework with Director of Planning Andrew Altman, both agreed that the design work and process should become a model for place-making in Washington, D.C.”

DCOP Project Manager Michael Downie
Development Completed and In Progress
Moving it Forward and Getting it Built

Contract with DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) for 14th Street “Core Area” Construction Documents

Funding for Plaza Construction Neighborhood Investment Fund
Streetscape Design

The Core Area

30% Design – In Progress
The Civic Plaza during the day
The Civic Plaza at night
Lessons Learned...