Building Livable Communities

Lessons from Arlington

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Arlington

- Population: ~200,000
- Jobs: ~200,000
- Housing units: ~100,000
Arlington

- Daytime population > 260,000
- > 41 million sq. ft. of private office space
Arlington

Not to mention --

- League of American Bicyclists -- Bicycle Friendly Community designation
- APTA -- Outstanding Public Transportation System Award (for ART)
- American Podiatric Association -- Best Walking City in America
Planning Principles

- Development of two Metro corridors
- About 10% of the County’s land area
- Contain 90% of commercial office
Planning Principles

- Taper away from station
- Maintained low-density neighborhoods outside corridor, preserved green space
1970’s: The “Bull’s Eye”
TOD

Transit employed with supporting land use and urban design
Benefits of TOD

- Getting to work – transit use
  - National avg: 4.7 %
  - Fairfax County: 7.3 %
  - Arlington: 23.3%

And, those who walk to work are double the national avg, 5 times Fairfax
Benefits of TOD

- **Car ownership** (vehicles per household)
  - Nationally, almost 90% have a car; 55% have 2 or more
  - In Fairfax, 96% have at least one; two-thirds have 2 or more
  - Arlington: 12% have zero cars; less than 40% have 2 or more
Benefits of TOD

- Numbers are more dramatic in Arlington’s Metro corridors
  - Car ownership: 17.9% have zero cars, while less than 25% have 2 or more
  - Getting to work: Less than half drive
    - 39.3% use transit
    - 10.5% walk or bike
    - 2.3 work at home
Despite growth in corridors, and throughout region, traffic growth in corridors has been modest.

Major increases on the interstates (I-66 and I-395), but,

Stable to modest increases of traffic on most arterial streets.

Stable to modest increases in traffic on residential streets.
Transportation System Performance

- Wilson Blvd. @ Oakland
- Washington Blvd. @ Clarendon Circle
- N. Vetch @ Wilson Blvd.
- Highland St. @ Key Blvd.
- Kirkwood Rd. @ Washington Blvd.
Making it work

The Land Use Link
Land patterns & urban design

Only works if it is employed with supporting land use and urban design
Land patterns & urban design

It doesn’t work if land use is fragmented, isolating uses, if the built environment is designed entirely around cars.
Fragmented land use

with minimal connectivity
Zoning
“monoculture”
Coherent built environment
(creating attractive streets and other public spaces)
Transit-oriented development

- You do actually need development around the station
Wasted opportunity
-- and one-way ridership
Metrorail Access at 4 Suburban Orange Line Stations

(Courtesy of Dennis Leach)
Metrorail Access at 5 R-B Corridor Stations

- Walk: 73.0%
- Metrobus: 12.9%
- Other Bus/Vanpool: 7.5%
- Auto (incl. Drop-off): 3.6%
- Other: 1.0%
- No Response: 2.0%

(Courtesy of Dennis Leach)
Transit-Oriented

My 3 Big Rules:

1. The vital $\frac{1}{4}$ mile
2. Mixed use
3. Design for pedestrian

This is the key to “effective presence"
90% of riders within ½ mile of station

75% within ¼ mile

The vital ¼
(and the pretty important ½)
Mixed-use design
Balanced development yields balanced ridership

Arlington Metrorail Stations
Ridership by Time Period

- **AM Peak**
- **AM Off**
- **PM Peak**
- **PM Off**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Periods</th>
<th>Passengers (Thousands)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM Peak</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>AM Off</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM Peak</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM Off</td>
<td>10</td>
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</table>

- **Entries**
- **Exits**
Design for pedestrians?

If it isn’t walkable, it’s not transit-oriented
Design for pedestrians

Multi-modal, or “complete streets”
Examples
Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor

- Key decision was re-orientation of Orange line from I-66 to Rosslyn-Ballston corridor
- Enabled creation of new downtown
- Urban village, rather than suburban development
The R-B Corridor (Orange line)

- Instead of running on the highway up here . . .
- . . . the line was sent underground to Ballston
The R-B Corridor
(Orange line)

- 5 stations
- 24 million sq. ft. of office space -- over 17 since 1980
- 26,000 housing units -- 4 times as many as in 1980
ROSSLYN

... Then

& Now ...
CLARENDON

... and Now
VI RGI NI A SQUARE
Ballston “point” - Before
Ballston “point” - Today
BALLSTON
Pentagon City
Making it work

How we do it
Sector Plans & Site Plans

- Defined the corridor on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP)
- Adopted unique designations, specifying higher densities, mixed uses based on development goals
Then developed sector plans for each Metro station, focused on an area approximately 1/4 mile from the station.

Give detailed guidance on County expectations for development.
Sector Plans

- The sector plans identify
  - Desired public improvements
  - Location for retail
  - Urban design standards
  - Public infrastructure needs
  - Open space, streetscape standards

- They are intended to tell landowners, developers and residents what the future of the station area will be and how individual parcels can be redeveloped
Aside: The Virginia Context

- Limitations on local authority
- “Dillon’s Rule”
- Property Rights

And now back to our show . . .
GLUP, sector plans for Metro corridors indicate County’s willingness to rezone for higher density. In response to development proposals, county will rezone for higher density use shown on GLUP. Lower (pre-existing) zoning remains in place until proposal receives County Board approval of a special exception site plan.
Site Plans

- The site plan allows significantly higher density & height than underlying zoning (1.5 - 3.8, 55 ft - 153 ft)

- Site plan is approved only if:
  - It complies with the standards of the zoning ordinance,
  - Is in compliance with the mix required by the GLUP
  - Provides the features called for in the sector plan for the area - including public improvements
Site Plans

- Property owner always maintains underlying by-right zoning until they implement approved site plan.
- The zoning categories for site plans actually have lower base rights than the existing zoning.
- Since owner requests rezoning reduced rights is not an issue.
Shirlington
Shirlington

- One-block shopping center, originally built in 1940s
- Extension of street through former department store parking lot
- New development with retail, residential, office, public library and theater
Shirlington

- South end of County
- Adjacent to major highway (I-395)
- Outside Metro Corridors
- No rail, but good bus access
Shirlington
Shirlington

- Adjacent to major highway (I-395)
- No rail, but good bus
- Total site area ~ 25 acres
Shirlington

1. The Village At Shirlington
2. Existing Office
3. New Retail And Apartments Homes
4. New Condominium Homes
5. Arlington Library & Signature Theater
6. New Parking Garage
7. New Retail Office
8. Proposed Hotel
Shirlington

Note:

- Structured parking in 5 garages, tucked behind buildings
- Use of liner retail along old theater
- Civic presence (library/theater bldg.)
- County land swap
Shirlington
Columbia Pike

- 3 ½ mile corridor
- Garden apartments, strip shopping centers
- Car-oriented, but good bus service
Columbia Pike Initiative

- To create a vibrant, walkable community
- using new tools, zoning concept
- a recognition of the importance of transit
Columbia Pike

- Medium density development
- Pedestrian and transit oriented
- Anticipates higher capacity transit
- Form-Based Code overlay district
Columbia Pike Revitalization District

COLUMBIA PIKE
General Land Use Plan

Legend
- Low Res. 1-10 units/acre
- Low Res. 11-15 units/acre
- Low Medium Res. 16-30 units/acre
- Medium Res. 30-72 units/acre
- High Medium Res. 73+ F.A.R. Residential
- High Res. 1.5 F.A.R. Residential
- 2.5 F.A.R. Hotel
- High Office/Office-Adm-Hotel
- Service Commercial
- Public
- Semi-Public
- Government & Community Facilities
- General Land Use Plan Proposed Changes
- Special Revitalization District

Notes:
1. These areas were designated a "Special Revitalization District" on Columbia Pike on 1/18/98 and amended on December 17, 2002; Lee Highway/Cherrydale area on 1/1998.
Form-based Code

- Optional Zoning category
  - Prescriptive vis-à-vis siting, massing
  - No density limits, but height limits

- Expedited Approvals
  - Limited developer contributions (e.g., utility under-grounding, public art, etc.)
  - No density bonus
  - Limited modifications
Review Process

- 30-Day Administrative (Staff) Review - Sites less than 40,000 Sq. Ft.

- 55-Day Use Permit Review - Sites greater than 40,000 Sq. Ft.
  - One community meeting
  - Planning Commission review
  - County Board approval
How we got there – The Charrette
Designing in public
Designing in public
The Code – How it works
The Regulating Plan

- New Streets
- Public Open Space
Town Center Regulating Plan
UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATING PLAN

- **This is your block address**
- **Required Building Line (RBL)**
  The red dashed line indicates the RBL for your site. The building shall be BUILT-TO the RBL.
- **Street Trees**
- **Parking Setback Line**
  Vehicle Parking (except basement level) not allowed forward of this line.
- **Property Line**
- **Street Tree Alignment Line**
- **Building Envelope Standard Designation Hatch** (see below)

**Main-street Frontage**
**Avenue Frontage**
**Local Frontage**
**Neighborhood Frontage**
**Civic Buildings and Monuments**
Main Street Building Envelope
Standard

Special Condition:
Within 100 feet of Columbia Pike:
Block A, MAX 7 St.
Block B, MAX 4 St.

Within 75 FT of Local Street Lot
or existing single family use
MAX. 28 FT Eaves or parapet height

Privacy Walls Required on
Required on ALLEY and
Common Lot Lines
5 TO 15 ft
HEIGHT

Height

MIN 2
STOREYS

MIN
15 FT
CLEAR®

MIN
9 FT 4 IN
CLEAR®

18 in
MAX

MAX 6 St

How Tall?
Main Street Building Envelope Standard

Elements

- Balcony Spec.
- Balcony Required For Top Storey Units*

How Much Glass?

- Upper Facades Fenestration
  - Max 70%
  - Min 30%

- Street Facade Fenestration
  - Max 90%
  - Min 60%
Main Street Building Envelope Standard

Where Does the Building Go?
Main Street Building Envelope Standards

Uses

- RESID. or OFFICE
- RETAIL or Temp. Office ONLY
## Approved Projects

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Retail / Commercial</th>
<th>Approval Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia Station/ Halstead</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>42,000 sf</td>
<td>FBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petros/ Columbia Village</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>7,500 sf</td>
<td>FBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safeway/ Sierra Park</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>34,000 sf</td>
<td>FBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penrose Square</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>97,000 sf (including Giant)</td>
<td>Site Plan</td>
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Arlington Hardware Site
Columbia Station
Columbia Station / Halstead
Petros Site
Columbia Village Project
Approved project

WDG Architects
Penrose Square

Approved Fall 2006:

- New 61,000 sq. ft. grocery store
- 36,000 sq. ft. additional retail
- 299 apartments