

Skyland Town Center



SKYLAND TOWN CENTER

Community Meetings

• **October 31, 2009 – Meeting with Akron Place**

Residents – The residents of Akron Place requested a follow up meeting to further discuss the open items from the last meeting of August 1, 2009.

- The Skyland Development Team presented a model to the Akron Place Residents showing the proposed layout of the future center including the location of all future improvements encompassing each of the proposed phases of the project. The team answered a myriad of questions regarding phasing of the project, proposed retailers, and affordable housing.
- The Skyland Development Team presented the residents with the results of their stormwater runoff analysis and proposed improvements to Akron Place within public space to address residents' previously-expressed concerns. The development team reported on 3 site visits to the Akron Place neighborhood conducted specifically to investigate the Akron Place residents' concerns and to clarify the teams' plans to address the issues raised by the Akron Place residents. Specifically, the team discussed the nature of the proposed improvements which include two storm structures to collect stormwater runoff from Akron Place and run it to a quality treatment structure on the Skyland property. From there, the stormwater will be released onto an existing swale to drain into a large stormwater catchbasin to be installed by the development team near 28th Street, SE and on the Skyland property. Residents also expressed a desire to have the trees in the area behind their houses to remain.
- Following up from a previous request of the residents, the development team provided a copy of the executive summary from the environmental investigation showing few recognizable environmental concerns on the subject property. The Skyland team answered questions regarding the existing landscaping

on the property and represented that where landscaping is being removed, most times it is being replaced with nicer landscaping.

- The development team discussed the timeline for redevelopment of the Skyland property including the relocation of an existing RCN facility on the property. The relocation can occur once the property has been rezoned with the existing street and alley closings having been completed, and a subdivision for the relocated RCN property being approved. The development team represented that in conversations with the District, the recommendation has been to enclose the generators inside the RCN building and make provisions for soundproofing the building such that noise from the generators is reduced substantially from its present level.
- **August 24, 2009 – Fort Baker Drive Residents Meeting** – Members of the Skyland Development Team (SDT), Gary Rappaport (The Rappaport Co.), Sam Rank (The Rappaport Co.), Carrie Thornhill (Washington East Foundation), and Matt Ritz (William C. Smith + Co), presented a project overview to the residents that live on and around Fort Baker Drive. The meeting was organized by Fort Baker Drive resident Cynthia Brock-Smith. The project plan includes approximately 468 condo units (including 20 townhomes) 325,000 sf of retail and approximately 1,700 parking spaces.
- The SDT reviewed the site plan as well as the status of the project. Currently the project is undergoing the PUD zoning process and the next step is a Setdown Hearing in the fall. Gary handed out brochures with an insert describing the PUD zoning process. Contingent on major issues such as PUD approval, road & alley closing, completion of the consolidated subdivision of the 43 different parcels, RCN relocation, existing lawsuits with the District, and the condition of the financial markets, Gary indicated that Late Fall 2011 is the earliest construction may commence on the site with the first phase delivering, at the earliest, in Late 2013.



Skyland Town Center

- Several issues were discussed at the meeting. One issue relates to the visual impact and location of the proposed retaining wall and new buildings and townhomes. In addition, if the lighting from the townhomes will have any impact on the existing homes. The SDT will prepare perspectives and exhibits to present at next meeting to offer a better idea of the visual impact. The residents also expressed their desire to see landscaping that serves as a buffer year round, therefore the plantings installed should be ones that do not lose their leaves in the fall. Matt Ritz asked the residents to provide the SDT with ideas of the type of landscaping they would like to see.
- Another concern raised by the residents centered on the impact of construction on the existing homes. Due to the poor quality of the soil, a soil improvement technique such as Dynamic Compaction will be required to stabilize the soil to allow for construction. Residents expressed their concern of potential impacts to the foundations to their homes. The SDT assured them every precaution will be taken to minimize impact and before any work commences a 3rd party firm will document the existing conditions of the homes to be able to hold the contractors liable if damage does occur. Several questions were raised such as: what can the SDT do to minimize the impact or eliminate the potential for damage? Can another soil improvement technique be utilized that can assure no damage will occur? How long will the dynamic compaction take? How difficult will the insurance company be if a claim is made and how long will it take to be remedied? Is there another project that we can show to get a sense of the size of the equipment? The SDT agreed to try to answer these questions at the next meeting and perhaps have a consultant/contractor and a District representative at the meeting as well.
- Traffic was another issue raised by the residents. Currently, Fort Baker Drive is used as a cut through for traffic as well as an emergency route for emergency response vehicles. The residents are concerned that the new project will increase the amount of cut-through traffic and would like DDOT to install measures to ensure the safety of the residents by implementing measures such as speed bumps, additional stop signs, and possibly making 27th Street a 2-way street. The SDT said they will request DDOT to attend the next meeting to express these concerns.
- Other issues raised were noise, rodent control, setting up an HOA, and preparing a 3-D model. The SDT agreed to work on these issues to respond at a follow up meeting this fall.
- **August 1, 2009 – Akron Place Residents** The last meeting on March 14, 2009 produced three issues the Skyland Team was to report back on. The three issues were: 1) results from the environmental investigation, 2) the proximity of the RCN building to the existing home at 2841 Akron Place, 3) addressing the storm water issues at the end of the street. The Skyland Development Team presented plans depicting how they planned to handle the storm water issues. Storm water inlets will be installed in the unimproved area at the end of Akron Place to pick up the water runoff as it flows down Akron Place. The water will then be piped through a new storm water system, treated, and then discharged into an existing swale on Skyland's property.
- The SDT presented elevations depicting the distance from the property line and scale of the future RCN building and the home at 2841 Akron Place. The distance from face of the building to the face of the home to the RCN building will be approximately 90 feet. Another elevation was presented showing the distance from the property line and scale of the townhomes and the home at 2914 Akron Place. The distance from face of the home to face of townhomes will be approximately 90 feet. The SDT indicated screening through landscaping will be added to minimize the visual impact. SDT asked the residents what type of trees they would like planted as a landscaping buffer.



Skyland Town Center

- Regarding the status of the environmental investigation, SDT provided an update that the Phase I and II reports had been completed by a third party environmental consultant. The results of the report were there was no evidence of widespread contamination in either soil or groundwater. However, due to the long term use of a parking lot it is likely there may be some “hot spots” encountered during excavation where pockets of contaminated soil may be found. The SDT explained this is not uncommon for urban sites and explained how this will be handled during construction.
- Other questions/issues were raised by Akron Place residents including the following: will the existing trees in the corner of the lot by 2914 Akron Place be left in place; concerns about structural damage to existing homes during construction; limit cut through activity by incorporating fencing; storm water running down the back of people’s yard along the alley and becoming a cesspool where the swale is supposed to be located; noise from the center especially emergency generators, and the fallen tree at the end of Akron Place. The SDT will follow up on the RCN generator, the cesspool of storm water, and the issue of existing trees. A follow up meeting was not scheduled, however, we discussed meeting in the fall onsite to review the trees, the existing swale, and other issues.
- **August 1, 2009 – Hillcrest Community Civic Association** Steve Green (William C. Smith + Co) and Gary Rappaport (The Rappaport Cos.) provided an update on the Skyland Town Center Project. The Skyland Development Team (SDT) submitted the PUD application to the Office of Zoning this past April. The next step is a Setdown Hearing in the fall. Gary handed out (50) brochures with an insert describing the PUD Zoning process. Steve Green presented a few slides outlining the major issues impacting the schedule which are: PUD approval, road & alley closing, completion of the consolidated subdivision of the 43 different parcels, RCN relocation, existing lawsuits with the District, and the condition of the financial markets. Contingent on these major issues, Steve indicated that Late Fall 2011 is the earliest construction may commence on the site. SDT fielded several questions from the community such as:
 - o **Question:** What about community benefits?
 - o **Answer:** A meeting was held on July 8, 2009 with three commissioners from ANC 7B. A follow up meeting will be held in September including members from ANC 8A, ANC8B to discuss further.
 - o **Question:** Will the design be more pedestrian friendly and will the design of buildings be integrated with surrounding buildings in the neighborhood?
 - o **Answer:** Yes. The design will place an emphasis on being a pedestrian friendly town center with appropriate sidewalks and a paseo that connects “Main Street” with Good Hope Road that is for pedestrian use only. The design of the center will include brick facades consistent with the characteristics of the existing buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.
 - o **Question:** Are you going to demolish KFC? Where is RCN being relocated?
 - o **Answer:** Yes, KFC will be demolished. RCN is being relocated to southeast corner of the site closer to Alabama Avenue and “New Street.”
 - o **Question:** Are you buying the land from the City? What is the value of the land? What will the project cost us [the community]?
 - o **Answer:** Yes, we are buying the land from the District. Due to the significant amount of subsidy needed for the project to be developed, the land value is zero. The subsidy for the project will be provided by the District through the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The District sells tax-exempt government revenue bonds to finance public redevelopment such as Skyland Town Center. To

Skyland Town Center



secure the repayment of the TIF bonds, the District will utilize the real estate and sales taxes generated by the future retailers of the project.

o **Question:** What retailers are coming to Skyland? Where are you getting input from Community?

o **Answer:** Several charrettes have been held over the past 7 years soliciting information from the community about the retail mix. The anchor of the town center will mostly likely be a general merchandise type retailer such as Target or Wal-Mart. Until the lease is signed with the anchor tenant, the other retailers will not be willing to sign leases to locate to the project. Once we are closer to signing a lease with the anchor then we can revisit this issue.

- **July 21, 2009 – ANC 8B Presentation** The Skyland Development Team (SDT) provided an overview of the project that included renderings and a site plan. Steve Green from William C. Smith + Co reviewed the program of the project, which will include approximately 450 – 475 condominium units and approximately 315,000 sf of retail. The retail will be anchored by a large format retailer such as Wal-mart or Target. The site will include 3 above-ground parking garages as well as one-half floor of parking under the retail anchor as well as one floor of parking above the anchor. Gary Rappaport indicated that due to the condition of the financial markets and the ongoing lawsuits against the District, the earliest the project will commence construction is Spring 2011. SDT requested that ANC 8B vote on the project.
- **July 18, 2009 – ANC 7B Presentation** Skyland Development Team (SDT) updated ANC 7B on status of the project. PUD was submitted in February and the project was approved for a Setdown hearing this past June. Issue of community benefits was raised and SDT agreed to meet with ANC members to address the issue. Project brochures were distributed.
- **April 21, 2009 – ANC 8B Presentation** Steve Green reviewed the overall project using rendering boards. Job and contracting goals raised by Commissioners. Brochures distributed.
- **March 14, 2009 – Meeting with Akron Neighbors** Meeting included presentation of the project. Residents raised environmental related issues such as the existing storm water runoff problems and the proximity of the RCN building to the neighborhood. Brochures distributed.
- **February 19, 2009 – ANC 7B Presentation** Overall project update and presentation of site plan and elevations including parking garages. See slides on the website for project overview. Brochures and 50 copies of slides also distributed.
- **February 7, 2009 – Hillcrest Community Civic Association** Nkosi Bradley from the Deputy Mayor's office reported that with the authorization from the city, Skyland developers will be submitting the PUD to the Zoning Commission on February 17, 2009. He also noted that a decision from the court on the Franco property is expected to be made in May 2009. Brochures distributed. (noted in Hillcrest Community Civic Association's meeting minutes)
- **July 17, 2008 – ANC 7B Presentation** Presentation by traffic consultant, Gorove Slade, focusing on the traffic improvements as a result of the Skyland Project. Brochures distributed.
- **October 16, 2008 – ANC 7B Presentation** Presentation included project overview of traffic improvements, three above-ground garages, the residential program of 470 units and 280,000 sf of retail. Draft renderings and site plans completed to-date for PUD submission were presented to the group as well. Brochures distributed.

Skyland Town Center



- **September 6, 2008 – Hillcrest Community Civic Association** Guest Speaker Gary Rappaport gave a report on the Skyland Project noting that phase one of the project should start January 1, 2011 with 24 months of construction that should end in 2013. Brochures on project and development team distributed. (noted in Hillcrest Community Civic Association's meeting minutes)
- **January 8, 2008 – ANC 8A** Nkosi Bradley of the Deputy Mayor's office reviewed the status of the legal issues and the major elements of the project. Carrie Thornhill of the Skyland Development Team requested support of the project by the ANC. ANC 8A voted to support the project.
- The second session was held on August 19, 2006, at East Washington Heights Baptist Church. More than 70 residents attended. About 10% were Ward 8 residents. The purpose of the meeting was twofold: report to the community the status of the redevelopment and obtain community input regarding planning issues crucial in moving to the next stage of development. NCRC noted that in order to make the redevelopment of Skyland financially viable, a robust program with mixed residential and retail would have to be implemented; thus the town center concept was introduced by Leo Daley and Michael Marshall, Architects and Planners. The master plan design provided for 1,233,800 square feet of commercial and 770 units of housing.
- The third session was held Saturday, February 10, 2007 at the Hillcrest Recreation Center. The two hour town hall meeting was sponsored by NCRC and attended by 43 residents of Ward 7, six from Ward 8 and one from Ward 6 for a total of 50 residents. The purpose was to allow residents to participate in the final review of the master plan. Two thirds of the audience present identified themselves as being new to the process and had not attended previous public sessions. The architect/planners shared a PowerPoint presentation that placed emphasis on those changes which had been incorporated into the design based on the previously shared citizen concerns. The housing component had been reduced to 470 units and the retail commercial space was reduced to 325,000 square feet for a 1.0 FAR.

Historical Meetings

There have been six area wide community meetings on this project from November 2004 through November 2007.

- The first was a Skyland town hall meeting on November 13, 2004, at Winston Elementary School and attended by more than 60 participants over a 5-hour period using a 21st century town meeting technology driven format facilitated by America Speaks. Participants at the town meeting represented neighborhoods throughout wards 7 and 8. More than one third were from Fairfax Village, Naylor Gardens, Hillcrest and Summit Park. Eleven percent was from historic Anacostia. Nine percent were from Twining, Fairlawn, Randle Highlands, Penn Branch, Fort Davis and Fort Dupont. Another nine percent were from Woodland/Fort Stanton, Garfield Heights, Knox Hill and Skyland. Eleven percent of participants were from elsewhere in Ward 8. The agenda centered around presentations about the redevelopment process, the retail mix, the look and feel of the development, and how the community could best take advantage of the economic opportunities created by the redevelopment.
- The fourth session was held Wednesday, August 15, 2007, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center. The three-hour, area-wide community meeting was sponsored by the Skyland Development Team and attended by more than 100 people. At least 67 were Ward 7 residents and eight were from Ward 8. The focus of the discussion was on the introduction of the new architectural team of Torti & Gallas, refinement options for the Master Plan, key elements of the housing component, and an affirmation of retail mix and review of new project timeline.

The logo for Skyland Town Center features a stylized graphic of three people in a circle, with the text "Prominent Living, Shopping & Gathering Place" curved around them. The main title "Skyland Town Center" is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font against a dark teal background.

Skyland Town Center

- The fifth area-wide community meeting sponsored by the SDT was held at the Hillcrest Recreation Center on Wednesday, September 12. It was attended by about 50 people. Approximately 29 were Ward 7 residents and three were from Ward 8 at this two-hour session. The focus of the agenda was on a review of community input from the August 15th session, a presentation of revisions and refinements to the Master Plan and group discussion of the community's architecture, with particular emphasis on unique architectural features that should be a part of the new Skyland design. The group cited examples of architecture in the neighborhood, Ward 7, city and region that the Skyland design should emulate.
- On July 31, 2007, a group of critical stakeholders, including Council members Vincent Gray, Kwame Brown, Yvette Alexander and Marion Barry, ANC 7B, 8A, 8B, Hillcrest Community Civic Association met and were given project presentation materials and site plans. In addition to the city government, this group is first to know important issues related to the project from the SDT.
- A sixth area-wide community meeting was hosted by Deputy Mayor Neil Albert on November 27 at the Hillcrest Recreation Center to update the community on the status of the project. He emphasized the status of a court case of one property owner and implications for the project; he noted that the project would continue to move forward in terms of preparation of architectural drawings for PUD submission next year and negotiations for an LDA; the city's commitment to 425-475 housing units within the project, with 80% being homeownership and 20% rental.
- Presentations, site plans and notes from community meetings sponsored by the SDT are posted on the Hillcrest Community Civic Association website at www.hillcrestdc.com.