

Attendees

- Matt Baker, MDOT SHA
- Darren Bean, MDOT SHA
- Kandese Holford, MDOT SHA
- Melissa Miklus, RK&K
- Monica Meade, RK&K
- Jessica Pilarski, MDOT SHA

- Rachel Anderson, SAG
- Daryl Braithwaite, SAG
- Jacqueline Davison, SAG
- Michael Houston, SAG
- David Koelsch, SAG
- Jessica Landman, SAG
- Richard Leonard, SAG
- Cynthia Mariel, SAG
- Lorraine Pearsall, SAG
- Andrew Strongin, SAG
- Betsy Taylor, SAG
- Emanuel Wagner, SAG

Observers/Residents (5)

- Robert Anderson
- John Blount
- David Cookson
- Sally Kern
- Roger Schlegel

Meeting Notes

(Please note that all SAG comments noted from SAG members are opinions mentioned during the meeting. The purpose of the SAG meeting notes is to best capture those discussions.)

1. Housekeeping

- An update on upcoming scheduled events was provided, including public workshops on June 4 and June 10 at the Takoma Park Seventh Day Adventist Church Center. It was noted that postcards are being mailed and flyers available asking for an optional RSVP.
- The community values survey was also mentioned which will run from May 10 to 11:59 p.m. on June 10.
- Stacks of materials (flyers and surveys) were available for SAG members to take with them with at the conclusion of the meeting.
- Regarding the materials for distribution advertising the workshops and survey, a SAG member noted that the City Clerk's Office has access to all list servs. A SAG member representing the City offered to share the TJVS materials with that office for an eblast. It was also mentioned that the Police Department sometimes posts this type of information.
- Another SAG member reminded the team that materials should be translated, and the team added that these are currently being prepared and printed for distribution.
- A few upcoming outreach meetings are in the works, one of which is scheduled for May 21 at the Old Takoma Business Association's (OTBA) office. Another community meeting with Victory Tower should be scheduled in the near future.

- The next SAG Meeting (#4) is planned for July 9. The location is still being confirmed and will be shared with the SAG shortly.
- SAG members asked questions regarding the upcoming workshops as follows:
 - *It was asked what attendees will learn at the workshop.* The study team explained that MDOT SHA will be learning from the community, not the other way around.
 - *Clarification on the targeted outreach meetings was requested.* MDOT SHA has received two requests to date to meet with specific groups-- Victory Tower and OTBA (May 21) to do onsite presentations.
 - *It was asked if there were any other public event opportunities.* Currently, the efforts summarized thus far include the community workshops: the survey and the scheduled outreach meetings. MDOT SHA can tailor public outreach to a group's needs, whether it be an informational presentation, a listening session, or discussion-based.
 - *A SAG member was concerned that OTBA represents very few businesses at the junction.* The study team clarified that although the meeting will be hosted at the OTBA office, all interested businesses are invited from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on May 21. The group is looking for a TJSV overview and to have their voices heard.

2. Presentation on Public Engagement Events

- Ms. Melissa Miklus introduced herself and her background in revitalization studies, active transportation and streetscape projects. She explained that she is a people person who likes visual learning and was there to learn from SAG members and their community. She asked the SAG members to be “expert facilitators” at the upcoming public workshops in June. She began to walk them through how they will help lead community members through the engagement activities.
- The goal of the first workshop on June 4 will be to write a vision statement with a structure similar to the following:
 - **Day 1: Crafting a Vision Statement**
 - People will look at displays upon arrival, and share the following about the junction:
 - What doesn't work?
 - What do you want to keep?
 - What do you want to add?
 - How do we take those bits and pieces and turn them into a vision?
 - What type of place will this be?
 - What will it be like to be there?
 - What kind of people will use this place? How?
 - Attendees will be assigned randomly to tables. The study team will lead off with a small presentation after check-in and viewing of display boards.
 - The exercises will result in the identification of what people love, what they want to retain, and what they would like to remove as it relates to mobility for any user in Takoma Junction.
 - Each table will develop a vision statement using “Mad Libs” method. The team will work together to refine the statement. Then, attendees will vote on their favorite vision statements.
- Next, the June 10 workshop (**Day 2: Bringing the Vision to Life**) was explained:
 - The goal of the second workshop will be to put the components from the first workshop together like a puzzle. For example, pictures of crosswalks, benches, etc. could be placed on a map. People will say what they like about each in more design-type exercises.
- SAG members asked the following questions:
 - *It was asked how the survey plays a role in the public workshops.* The team explained that the survey is another opportunity for people to participate and provide input in addition to the public workshops. It is another tool to collect data and will remain open until after the second workshop. Preliminary key themes may be available at the workshops; however, data will not be finalized until after June 10.
 - *A comment was made that it is hard for people to attend two meetings, especially parents with young children for instance.* The study team explained that the reason for two meetings is so that there are various opportunities for people to get involved. The team is doing their best using all of the tools they have available to provide opportunities to reach as broad of an audience as possible.

- *A question was raised about the end result, or the final destination of the TJVS. The study team explained that planning documents are not carved in stone, and the vision can evolve as the community sees fit. A vision statement is broad and usually it lives in planning type documents. The result of the study will be a cohesive document with a range of potential options that encompass the community's voice. The study team has outlined what the report might look like but first must let the community tell MDOT SHA what they want to see in the future. The MDOT SHA will document ideas captured through our public engagement efforts and the final report will identify potential strategies for implementation. Other entities (county, city, community groups, etc.) might have to implement other elements. After the June 10 workshop, it will take several months to document what MDOT SHA heard through the survey and the workshops and any other public involvement. It will be a report documenting what we heard and potential future conceptual elements to address what we heard, not a traditional planning study document with a selected alternative like some may have had experience within the past.*
- *A SAG member was very concerned that this study could be about more than transportation, when transportation has been the focus at prior meetings. The member stated that if something you love is clearly not about transportation (i.e., a survey respondent expresses their love for a particular business), then the study could totally change course. The team explained that they are only providing examples of things that MDOT SHA might hear that people want (i.e., ice cream shop) and that examples like these help MDOT SHA look at the human factor in transportation. For instance, if people want an ice cream shop, then they will have to walk, bike or park there. It is impossible for MDOT SHA to ask people to only talk about transportation in a community like this where there are so many other things that are important to the people that live here. Documenting all ideas is a way that MDOT SHA can be as transparent as possible and apply those values to a transportation framework however possible.*
- *Another member suggested that SAG members should get started in previewing/participating in the activities for the June workshops. MDOT SHA proceeded with the next item on the agenda.*

3. "Crafting the Vision" Activity

- What is a vision statement?
 - Contains key components of the community fabric and outlines what the community wants to see in the future
 - Not about what we are today...it's okay to dream!
 - It's okay if we're not there yet, and it's okay if it might not seem realistic.
 - It's about what you value.
 - It's about what you want to achieve.
 - For this study, a vision can be social, cultural, or economic, and should apply to all users of transportation.
 - A vision should be positive stating what do you want to be.
- The exercises and how they will tie back to the vision statement were explained to the group.
- Mad Libs activities:
 - An explanation of Mad Libs was provided for those not familiar.
 - A fill-in-the-blank framework was provided.
 - It was explained that the vision may not be exact at the end, but it is a starting point to flesh out.
 - Examples of vision statements not in mad lib formats were provided for inspiration.
- Next, the SAG was split into two groups to complete the Mad Libs activity. Each group reported out. Their results are included at the end of these meeting notes. Both groups were applauded for a job well done.
- SAG members were reminded that they need to be good, objective facilitators:
 - If you're uncomfortable being one, let us know.
 - If someone is taking over a table, let us know, we'll pull them aside.
 - If someone isn't speaking up, let us know, we'll try to encourage them.

4. Closing

- *SAG members were reminded to take stacks of flyers and surveys on their way out. The postcard mailer announcing the meetings would soon hit mailboxes. SAG members were encouraged to share with Ms. Kandese Holford where they distributed materials, whether hard copy or electronic.*
- *A SAG member asked if July 9 was the final SAG Meeting. For now, it is the last one scheduled, but MDOT SHA will consider additional meetings if needed. The July SAG Meeting will provide a wrap-up of activities and will make sure MDOT SHA is on track to complete the study. Allowing SAG members to review the vision document for comment is an idea that is being considered.*
- *A SAG member wanted clarification that the report is MDOT SHA's, not the community's report. Yes, the report will be an MDOT SHA report, documenting what they heard from the community.*
- *Another SAG member asked if traffic data be available at the workshops? Yes, there may be some traffic information at the workshops in the form of more user-friendly maps.*
- *A suggestion was made to include the VISSIM (traffic model video) on a loop at the June Workshops. Although the study team has not finalized how the traffic information will be presented at this time, all data is available to the public that has been shared at SAG Meetings. There is no privileged information shared with the SAG that has not been made available for public consumption.*

5. Observer Comments

- *Regarding the June 10 workshop, since we won't be at the junction, will you have materials (pictures) available to confirm the actual situation? The study team explained that no, instead "mind mapping" is a better tool for the exercises that will be used. People view and remember things in different ways, and instead of focusing on the nitty-gritty, this is about what you want, not whether a bench is broken or not, for example.*

The meeting adjourned.

—See next two pages for Flip Chart notes from Mad Libs/Vision Statement Exercises. —

Mad Libs Activity Results

–SAG Group 1–

Qualities/Unique Characteristics

- Safe
- Efficient
- Attractive
- Multi-generational
- Charming historic
- Small town
- Exciting
- Business-friendly
- Human-scale
- Community-centered
- Walkable
- “Takoma-esque”
- Bike-friendly
- Calm & bucolic
- Ped-friendly
- Accessible to all
- Healthy
- Green
- Rockwellian
- Commutable
- Public-welcoming

Qualities/Unique Characteristics (continued)

- Residents
- Shoppers
- “Loiterers”
- Employees
- Seniors

Who?

- Children
- Commuters
- Stroller-pushers & riders
- Bike-riders
- Walkers
- Scooter-ers
- Motorized-wheelchairs & other wheelchairs
- Pets & their people
- Artists & musicians
- Trukgardeners
- Students
- Families
- Crossing guards
- Small business owners (a junction tradition)
- Transit riders
- People from all over!

Do what?

- Hang out & chat/ visit leisurely
- Park/shop safely
- Converse
- Walk (by, to school, etc)
- Enjoy themselves
- Enjoy the ambiance
- Pass through with a smile
- Admire the trees 7 buildings
- Earn a living wage
- Can afford to live & shop
- Feel welcome
- Eat
- Learn
- Exercise
- Park
- Gather
- Fix a car
- Have community events
- Sit and read
- Contribute to Takoma Park’s vitality
- Bicycle (park a bike)

Why?/What Makes It Special?

- It has a strong sense of place
- All are made to feel welcome
- There is a variety of small independent businesses
- There’s a great/ natural grocery store to draw us in
- It’s the center of our community
- We can walk there easily & safely
- The small scale feels welcoming
- We can experience the historic charm
- The atmosphere reflects our progressive values
- The diversity of businesses and people attract us all to the progressive mobility values, pro-ped, bike & transit
- Permeates the place
- “Green” atmosphere of plants, trees & shade invite us.

Mad Libs Activity Results (continued)

Group 1 Vision Statement

Historic Takoma Junction is more than just a commuter route, it is a thriving community & commercial hub, serving residents & visitors of every age, ability & income with welcoming and independent shops, services a local natural food store, green and shady public gathering spaces. The Junction is safely accessible by foot, bike, transit & private vehicle. It is the physical center of our proudly progressive People's Republic where we can gather, talk politics, hold protests, listen to music, buy our groceries and eat an ice cream cone in the shade.

-SAG Group 2-

Qualities/Unique Characteristics

- Inviting
- Diverse
- Inclusive
- Safe
- Efficient
- Small town
- Beautiful
- Commuter friendly
- Vibrant
- Fun
- Welcoming
- Thriving (econ, culture)
- Artistically pleasing
- Green space (not all parks & bldgs.)
- Walkable/ Bikeable
- Kid friendly
- Reasonable density
- Unique
- Surprising element intriguing
- Affordable

Qualities/Unique Characteristics (continued)

- Commuter oriented
- Envir. responsible
- Not frantic
- Clean
- Bold/ Visionary

Who?

- Seniors
- Students
- Disabled
- Commuters
- Shoppers
- Delivery vehicles
- Business owners
- Emergency vehicles
- Renters/ Owners- residents
- Newcomers
- Old timers
- Biker
- Pedestrians
- Transit users

Do What?

- Shopping
- Walking
- Driving
- Eating/ drinking
- Sitting
- Using services of businesses
- Efficiently delivering materials
- Building community
- Point A to Point X
- Transcending community divisions
- Waiting for bus (comfortably)
- Exercising
- Accessing useable business services

Do What? (continued)

- Having fun
- Enjoying special events

Why?/What Makes It Special?

- To allow aging in place
- To welcome growing families
- Because of diverse activities
- Different types of neighborhoods around it
- Historic area
- It is the heart of the community
- Walkable grocery & independent businesses
- Successful businesses
- Welcoming & beautiful friendly

Group 2 Vision Statement

The historic Takoma Junction is more than a commuter thorough-fare. It connects diverse communities and provides a friendly, walkable, attractive a surprising destination.