

SYMMES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
July 25, 2002

Bailey*	Dohan*	Hurd	
Carey*	Greeley*	Reedy*	
Carr-Jones*	Friedman*	Rehrig*	
DeCoursey	Foskett*	Walkinshaw*	

*Indicates Present

Participants: Alan McClennen, Director of Planning and Community Development,
Ken Schwartz, Catherine Donaher and Scott Schilt, VHB Consultant Team

Charles Foskett, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Due to the absence of the Committee Secretary, review of the minutes of the previous meeting was postponed.

FIRST WORKSHOP PLANNING: Mr. Schwartz reported that, with assistance from Ms. Friedman, planning for the first Symmes workshop was substantially complete. The evening will begin with tours of the site from 6 to 7 p.m., immediately followed by the community workshop. A tent will be provided for the event along with a PA system and refreshments. The workshop will begin with short presentations by VHB and the SAC on the history, goals and process for the Symmes project, and then will be open for community participation. Publicity for the event has included posters and press releases in the Arlington Advocate and Boston Globe.

PROJECT UPDATES: Mr. Schwartz announced that the new Symmes web site, at symmesarlington.org, would be up and linked to the Arlington web site by the 26th of the month. He thanked Mr. Rehrig and Dan Foskett for their work on the web site. Mr. Schwartz also announced the development of a data list and project notebook for the Symmes project.

Mr. Foskett mentioned a memo for proposed Working Group and Consultant Team coordination, and requested that Mr. Schwartz distribute the memo to the consultant team for review as a management system for the evaluating the project.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT PRESENTATION: Lee Ellis began the presentation by the residents of the neighborhood surrounding the Symmes site with an outline of the material to be presented and an introduction of the presenters.

Barbara Miller presented the history of the Symmes site from the perspective of the neighborhood. She explained that while Symmes Hospital was originally a small facility welcomed by the neighborhood, the hospital eventually taxed the trust of the neighbors with broken promises and large-scale expansion. Ms. Miller ended her presentation by stating that the current Symmes project is an opportunity to return the hospital to the good graces of the neighborhood.

Paul Morrison presented the neighborhood impact history of the Symmes hospital. The impact history consisted of a listing of specific problems and concerns collected at neighborhood meetings over the past year. Traffic, operations, design and construction, and protection process problems were presented.

Deborah Dill presented the neighborhood concerns and desires for the Symmes site. Ms. Dill stressed the importance of maintaining a quiet, neighborly neighborhood environment by reflecting the human scale of the neighborhood on the Symmes site and providing natural buffer zones between the project and the abutters. Concerns were presented with regard to traffic, noise, construction, environment, open space, remediation, housing and long-term goals.

Lee Ellis presented the basis for an ongoing impact identification and protection matrix under development by the Symmes neighbors. The matrix, similar to the one developed by the Symmes Public Use Working Group, could be used to evaluate neighborhood criteria in the categories of traffic, noise and neighborhood quality.

John McDermott presented the long-term goals of the Symmes neighbors. Mr. McDermott communicated that the neighbors would define a successful project on the Symmes site as one that would: create an asset to the neighborhood, preserve the natural beauty of the site, provide long-term protection for financial use goals, provide construction phase protection for neighbors, maintain active communication with the neighbors, set restrictions on construction locations and schedules, and provide a clear documented process for grievances.

On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Foskett thanked the neighbors of the Symmes site for presenting their hopes and fears to the committee and the consultant team. Mr. Foskett also urged participants to attend the first Symmes Workshop, scheduled for July 30th, to attend SAC meetings, to participate in the Working Groups and keep informed of the project progress on the web site.

Introductions of the members of the Symmes Advisory Committee and the Vanasse Hangen Brustlin consultant team, and a brief question and answer period followed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.