

Forest Hills Improvement Initiative

A Partnership for Building a Better Community

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Eighth Community Meeting – June 26, 2008

Following are community comments from June 26th Community Meeting that focused on the Final Recommendations of Forest Hills Improvement Initiative. *Italic text* has been added by staff to clarify statements.

Height, Scale and Density

- There is nothing close to 6 stories in Forest Hills; building heights should be scaled down to allow views across the valley.
- More density makes for better accessibility.
- Concerned that proposed Density is an issue; proposed density is too high.
- Forest Hills and these parcels are a good site for growth.
- New people (residents and workers) are needed for existing businesses to survive and new businesses to grow.
- I am In favor of proposed density and Transit Oriented Development.
- I love Transit Oriented Development, access to stores, people and no need for cars.
- I am concerned for the proposed density and against increased density.
- Forest Hills needs a town center; I support the Parcel S (Station Parking Lot) plan.
- I am concerned that proposed guidelines double the height (scale) and density; too much.
- I think 711 units of new housing are too much / no market study for parcel S.
- I believe the current design guidelines are out of scale with the current Forest Hills.

Site Specific Comments

- It appears the Arborway Yard site bears the brunt of impacts; this should not be the case.
- I am OK with the Arborway Yard site proposal but not Parcel S (Station Parking Lot).
- I believe Parcel S (Station Parking Lot) is key to improving Forest Hills and needs proposed density to be successful; we need double sided retail (both sides of the street) is necessary.
- Forest Hills needs a town center; I support the Parcel S (Station Parking Lot) plan.
- It seems the core of community concerns are with Parcel S (Station Parking Lot).
- I prefer triple-deckers for Parcel U.
- Parcel S should be commercial in use, not residential.
- I support keeping existing trees (planted as part of beautification program).

Affordable Housing

- I am concerned that growth will take away affordability.
- New growth will result in a lack of affordability
- New housing can ease the financial pressures of the housing market and for people.
- Please remember the need for affordable housing is still very great.
- I believe building affordable housing is an interest to all.

Transportation and Circulation

- Current transportation problems (20 years), still unresolved.
- No long term transportation plans; no development until these are worked out.
- At both Walk Hills Street and Ukraine Way traffic is very dangerous; how will these conditions be addressed?
- Include ZipCar spaces or other shared car facilities in the projects.

- Consider including / improving Intra-JP Transportation so folks can get around the neighborhood without cars.
- Wenham St is already very difficult to get in and out of, concerned that new development will worsen the situation.
- Public transportation is stretched; #39 bus is not acceptable. Plan must include provisions for increased capacity.

Other

- Guidelines should include all current accessibility standards for both buildings and the public way and avoid the use of bricks.
- I do not know who would want to live near the T (concerns for noise and vibrations).
- Concerned for the impacts of new development on the neighborhood especially security.
- I think 711 units of housing will bring more crime to Forest Hills.
- More housing will create security issues including gangs.
- Services for teens need to be included in the planning.
- Have the T capture the potential profit and build the new developments as community owned developments and use public funds.
- Concerned for the rate of absorption of potential new housing especially given current market conditions.
- The proposed buildings should be Green Buildings.
- Noise is a big issue for this area and should be considered.
- We should keep the trees.
- Policing and safety concerns must be addressed.
- You can't currently get adequate policing services, BPD districts need to be consolidated (district boundaries should be realigned so as not to divide Forest Hills).
- Access to and opportunity for a new school(s) should be included in the recommendations.
- No plans for community centers, youth centers, senior centers in the guidelines.

Process

- How will this process be controlled and who will be accountable.
- According to the zoning code Parcels U, V, W & S are zoned "Open Space"; designation is intended to be permanent; rezoning open space sets a dangerous precedent.
- Forest Hills is not just for local residents.
- Existing problems in Forest Hills should be solved first; it will build trust.
- The process needs to be slowed down or stopped; do one parcel at a time.
- This has been a good process, one of the BRA's best with a real commitment to listening and lots of community participation, information and illustrations.
- This is the 8th Community Meeting and folks should respect the recommendations that came before this (tonight's community comments).
- The community should make the final decision on what gets built.
- The proposed Potential Buildout figures represent maximum development.
- The Working Group is a representational body of the local community.
- Fix current problems around the T (traffic, cab stand) first, before new development.
- With no community consensus, what will process be going forward.
- Stop the process until we can achieve consensus.