

**Bluemont Civic Association**  
**Safeway Task Force**  
**FINAL REPORT**  
**October 23, 2013**

The Safeway Task Force (STF) was formed in June 2012 to gather and disseminate information to the BCA membership and Executive Board about the potential redevelopment of the Safeway site at 5101 Wilson Blvd. and to help the BCA develop “broadly supported positions with respect to various issues associated with the redevelopment of the Safeway site.” To do this, the Task Force was to “develop and follow a highly participatory process for learning the Bluemont Neighborhood’s views on redevelopment and related issues.”

The primary accomplishments of the STF are as follows:

1. Creation of a website (<http://safewaytaskforce.wordpress.com/>) that continues to serve the BCA and community as a repository of important information about the Safeway redevelopment and contains the minutes and records of the STF deliberations and sponsored events.
2. The planning and execution of three well-advertised and well-attended BCA/neighborhood-wide meetings on the subject:
  - The first meeting, held on July 10, 2012, was attended by approximately 110 people and was primarily an education session about the redevelopment process and a review of what was then known and not known about Safeway’s plans.
  - The second meeting, held on December 12, 2012, was attended by over 100 people and was divided into three parts: first a presentation by Safeway on its plans, then a review by STF members, and finally a question and answer session. During the second part of that meeting, attendees broke up into small groups with the intent of discussing and ascertaining neighborhood concerns and wishes w/regard to the Safeway site redevelopment. The STF compiled and documented the small-group breakout session reports into a summary.
  - The third meeting, also attended by over 100 people, was held on April 3, 2013. It provided an opportunity for Safeway representatives and Mark Silverwood, their chosen developer, to describe their proposed redevelopment plan and to answer questions by a very engaged audience.

Taking the information gathered from these three meetings, extensive feedback from numerous sources and the neighborhood views expressed in the 2010 Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Plan survey results of Bluemont residents, the STF developed three different options/position statements on the Silverwood-Safeway development proposal to be voted upon by the BCA membership at the April 24, 2013, BCA general membership meeting: Option A supported existing C-1 zoning with a 35-foot height limit, Option B offered conditional support for rezoning with a 45-foot height limit, and Option C supported the Safeway-Silverwood redevelopment proposal presented to the membership on 4/3/13.

At the April 24, 2013, general membership meeting, 173 votes were cast with the following totals: Option A=98 (56.6%), Option B=43 (24.9%), and Option C=32 (18.5%). After the votes were counted and announced at the meeting, Option A was then adopted as the BCA's official position by a strong voice vote in the affirmative. Importantly, the voting percentages mirrored the results of the 2010 NC Plan survey, which was distributed neighborhood-wide and included several questions designed to help gauge residents' comfort level with the potential redevelopment of Bluemont's Safeway and other nearby commercial sites.

In addition, the STF has also arranged for three smaller meetings between Safeway representatives and the BCA Executive Board and STF members. These meetings were also open to the BCA membership at large and provided additional opportunities for mutual education and communication. The second of these meetings, held on 3/28/13, featured Mark Silverwood, who provided an overview of his then proposed redevelopment design.

With the withdrawal of Silverwood's redevelopment proposal, Safeway told the BCA Executive Board at a meeting on 7/10/13 that it is currently deciding how to move forward with the redevelopment.

Since the STF has largely carried out the original intent of its charter, the STF members believe that this is an appropriate time to disband the Task Force in its current form and reformulate it for a different role. We believe that role should include assisting the BCA to develop a concept or concepts of what an acceptable redevelopment of the Safeway site might be.

To this end, the current members believe that the next incarnation of the Task Force should be focused on

- Determining a fuller understanding of the redevelopment possibilities for the Safeway site and nearby commercial space within the envelope of "by right" development; and
- Developing, in an open and transparent manner, one or more possible recommended BCA "visions" for the Safeway site.

Summary approved by:

David Van Wagner, Co-Chair

Mark Haynes, Co-Chair

Paul Ducharme, Member

Maura Quinn, Member

Larry Smith, Member

Patty Stern, Member

Bernadette Wolford, Member