

Four Mile Run Valley Planning Update

By Shirlington Civic Association | February 2017



[photo: 4MRV WG 2016-06-01.JPG.jpg]

We are now in Month 7 of the 4MRV planning process. There is lots of time for YOU to get involved and informed before final decisions are made, but don't delay. This is a big deal.

Shirlington's representatives on the Working Group (WG) are Board members Edie Wilson and Richard Adler, backed up by two beautiful alternates who attend every meeting, Virginia (Ginny) Farris and Ellie McCann. Ginny and Ellie both have professional backgrounds in environmental planning. Any of us would be glad to talk to you or hear your ideas. Our contacts are on this website.

Lately, the WG has been reacting to rough sketches of possible park area designs (including the dog park) and approaches to improvements in the light industrial area along Four Mile Run Drive and up along Shirlington Road.

The intention is to come up with three designs that the WG, staff, and consultants think are viable. Then there will be a public notice (postcard mailing to all valley residents) letting everyone know that they can see these and give YOUR reactions. The project is not scheduled to go to the County Board until 2018, so there are lots to do.

Through December 2 – 6, there was the “Visioning Workshop” held at the Drew School where County residents worked with project consultants (impressive, caring folks with significant experience both locally and nationally) on creative ideas to maximize the use of the industrial, commercial, cultural, and recreational spaces in the valley – while respecting and protecting our natural areas, trees, flood plain, and stream. Not to mention the dog park. And building more parking near Four Mile Run Drive, so the Shirlington garages aren't used for this increased activity! (It is not, however, clear to us how much parking will be paid for.)

There was also a well-attended Sunday roundtable specifically to hear Shirlington views. We explained the concept paper that we wrote up to describe our needs and experiences. The SCA members were forthright that public safety and behavioral issues behind the scenes in our parks must be acknowledged, so we don't recreate the same conditions. As we saw in our pre-winter cleanup, there is too much drinking, smoking, and camping along

with the stream areas, accompanied by large amounts of trash. We asked project consultants to talk to the Park Rangers and Police for their informed views on what goes on, and they have now done this.

All the Working Group meetings are open to the public and held in the Trades Center Conference Center. Subscribe to the project website for updates and invitations.