

Nannie Helen Burroughs Corridor SAP Community Workshop 3.16.24 Notes

April 3, 2024

On Saturday, March 16th, the DC Office of Planning (OP) hosted the Nannie Helen Burroughs Corridor Small Area Plan (NHBC-SAP) Community Workshop from 11am – 1 pm at the Riverside Center (5200 Foote St. NE). Approximately 20 community members attended.

The meeting included an overview of the SAP process, existing conditions, a public space activity, and overview of a vision for the corridor ([here](#)). Participant provided feedback on work completed to-date and on a proposed community vision. The public space activity engaged participants in planning an event in public space.. All feedback will inform draft recommendations included in the SAP.

Key takeaways from the event are that OP accurately assessed existing conditions and there is public support for the vision. A meeting summary and copy of the presentation were uploaded to the [project's Public Input website](#).

The next scheduled engagement for the NHBC-SAP will be held virtually on April 24th, 2024. For more information on this event and future engagements, [check the Public Input website's Events page](#).

Small Area Plan and Existing Conditions Overview:

OP presented an overview of the Small Area Plan process, information about past engagement, and what OP had learned at previous events. OP also shared highlights from the existing condition report, including analyses of the Development Opportunities, History and Cultural Assets, Public Realm and Urban Design, and Green Space and Connections. [Information can be found on slides 2-14 of the presentation.](#)

General Comments from Participants During Presentation:

- Foote Street between Minnesota and Nannie Helen Burroughs avenues is not included in the study area and has been consistently ignored in planning efforts. Can it be included in the SAP?
- Industrial properties between Nannie Helen Burroughs Ave and Hunt are in poor condition and break up the park/retail area.
- Additional materials are needed to share concurrent planning efforts and all public resources available to support businesses, home repair, development, public space improvements, etc.
- Initial plan for Marvin Gaye Park following transfer from federal to DC government included additional safety and security measures, such as blue light system that have not been implemented.
- Cultural history is a key resource that needs to be incorporated into wayfinding signage, schools, libraries, and job opportunities via history tours and similar jobs.

- Service-related issues included requests for more trash cans on the corridor and a suggestion to use automatic electric trash compactors, an education program with updated signage for waste management, and issues with people crossing into DC to dump trash.
- Vehicle traffic discussion noted high traffic at 49th and 44th streets and on Nannie Helen Burroughs with a suggestion for a traffic circle, noting that circles installed at Rhode Island Avenue and Mt. Rainer, and 34th and Mt. Rainer, had improved traffic flow.
- An interest in youth employment opportunities with a focus on jobs related to historic preservation as tour guides. Requests for grants to support local businesses hiring youths. A request that the SAP include a compilation of city resources related to employment and economic development, and materials be available digitally and physically.

Questions and Comments from Participants on Key Themes

Retail + Services, Boundaries, and Safety

Question: Will the NHBC-SAP include funding to expand job opportunities?

- Answer: The SAP focuses on land use and its recommendations can support economic development. It can also include recommendations for partner agencies to fund programs supporting those recommendations.

Question: The current SAP boundaries do not include specific areas such as Hillbrook. Will the boundaries be expanded?

- Answer: The focus of the SAP is set to the area presented today. OP understands there are specific histories to neighborhoods and areas adjacent to the corridor, but the SAP is focusing recommendations to the area that best supports expansion of housing, retail, and improving public space. OP will work with relevant ANCs and community groups to ensure our recommendations support each neighborhood and provide opportunities to celebrate cultural aspects of each.

Question: How can residents track the District's various cross-agency planning efforts?

- Answer: The SAP will include a list of government and non-government resources that can support recommendations. These could include public space activation, business support, floodplain management, and parks management alongside other opportunities.

Public Space Activation

Participants engaged in a public space activation activity by planning an event using materials available via the Public Space Activation Lending Library to plan future events. During the activity participants discussed previous neighborhood events that they would like to see return to the neighborhood:

- Nannie Helen Burroughs Day/History Celebration
- BBQ Competition
- Farmer's Markets
- American Indian Event for Ward 7
- Fitness Classes

Vision

OP shared a draft vision for the corridor that included two more intense areas of development at either end of the NHB corridor to focus new housing and retail, and a “town square” in the center of the corridor for public activities and smaller scale development. There were three sections described and discussed as part of the vision:

1. Housing and Retail
 - Active ground floor retail for entertainment, shopping, and dining with outdoor café seating
 - Support retention of existing businesses
 - Provide new employment opportunities
 - Engaging and human-scaled building facades that establish gateway entries into the corridor
 - Activation of public space for leisure
 - Multi-unit housing providing a mix of market rate and affordable units to help support the retail businesses Expanded access to homeownership for first time homebuyers
2. Town Square
 - Activated public spaces for leisure and gathering with outdoor seating and recreational spaces (i.e. playgrounds)
 - A hub for community events, giveaways, presentations, and youth programs
 - Engaging building facades of a smaller scale that indicate more intimate social settings
 - Place-based connectivity that encourages strong bonds amongst community members
 - Recommending commemoration of local subjects important to Deanwood
3. Parks and Green Space
 - Commemorative works and public art installations that reflect neighborhood history and culture
 - Wayfinding and signage in public space to provide community identifiers
 - Recreational and playground space for cross-generational interaction
 - Community gardens and urban forestry to provide resilient sustainable strategies and human connection to nature

Discussion on Vision

Question: How can OP support specific retail needs on the corridor, such as grocery and pharmacy?

- Answer: The SAP will review existing and future land use along the corridor. Recommendations will take retail needs into account and propose potential changes to better support the needed mix of housing, retail, and professional services.

Question: How will the plan address Marvin Gaye Park and feelings of safety within the park?

- Answer: Marvin Gaye Park’s management will continue under DPR and through their ongoing work such as the proposals within the Ready2Play Master Plan. OP is engaging relevant government agencies like DPR as we prepare the SAP, providing information about our

engagements and feedback. Our recommendations will be informed by this community input and focus on access points between the park and retail corridor.

Question: What opportunities are there to improve public transportation access in the neighborhood, as well as the conditions of transit stops?

- Answer: OP is working with DDOT and WMATA to understand existing plans while sharing feedback from our engagements. Opportunities could include improvements to existing stops, suggestions for new stops, and route expansions.

Additional feedback from the community included:

Public Space

- Request for more trash cans on the corridor, an education program with updated signage for waste management, noting issues with persons crossing into DC to dump trash, and suggestions to use automatic electric trash compactors.
- Importance of expanding park space and creating historic + cultural preservation in new spaces
- Hunt Place should be added to NHBC-SAP boundary.
- A desire to maintain small town feel (5 story).
- Marvin Gaye Park feels disjointed, needs infrastructure to clearly connect as it crosses streets and other obstacles.
- Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue was one of the first streets in DC to be designed using green infrastructure to manage storm water and bio retention areas.

Transit + Safety

- Vehicle traffic discussion noting high traffic at 49th and 44th and Nannie Helen Burroughs with a suggested traffic circle, noting that circles installed at Rhode Island Ave and Mt. Rainer + 34th and Mt. Rainer had improved traffic flow.
- Safety and traffic concerns: Minnesota Ave (vehicle speed), shootings, homeless, mental health issue.
- Transportation along the corridor is key to this vision – must create new bus stops at retail and housing centers, consider non-glass bus stops that will be more difficult to break.
- Establish emergency notification system in Marvin Gaye Park.
- Interest in bike lanes.

Economic Development

- An interest in youth employment opportunities with a focus on jobs related to historic preservation as tour guides. Requests for grants to support local businesses hiring youths.
- A request that the SAP include a compilation of city resources related to employment and economic development and materials be available digitally and physically.

- Town Square should include resources like an information center, senior center, trauma center, support family activities (such as skating), commemorative works and a transportation hub. Also, a desire for coffee shops and coworking spaces.
- Need some retail between the two ends, particularly grocery and pharmacy.
- Food desert – area lacks groceries, desire large grocer like Walmart. Existing corner stores not enough, not confident they can become grocery anchors. Desire for farmer’s market.
- Currently have to leave neighborhood to “do everything a family needs”.
- Concern about empty storefronts, want to support temporary activations/pop ups
- Corridor needs an identity established by small businesses and regular events.