

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Goddard Space Flight Center

MEETING REPORT

FACILITY MASTER PLAN  
EMPLOYEE AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

October 16 and 18, 2001  
GSFC and DuVal High School  
Greenbelt, MD

Prepared under contract to RS Information Systems

SUMMARY OF GSFC FACILITIES MASTER PLAN  
EMPLOYEE WORKSHOP

October 16, 2001  
GSFC, Greenbelt, MD

Opening Remarks and Presentation by Mr. Julyan

The meeting came to order at 8:30 a.m. as David Julyan introduced his facilitator and requested that participants recite the Pledge of Allegiance. He gave his preview of the session by observing that the Facilities Master Plan was still in progress and that no deadline for completion impended. He encouraged the audience to take advantage of the time remaining to contribute to the final document. Opportunities for input included a period set aside for questions during the morning plenary session presentations, as well as breakout sessions for specific planning issues.

Although the planning process extended back as much as 12 years, the last 2 years represented a new approach to the issues. The plan which began with general concepts in the overall FMP, was developing more detail. The Environmental Assessment, for example, presently included some engineering and topographic specifications based on State and Federal standards. Later plans will incorporate additional detail related to engineering, environmental impact, and benefit analysis.

During this discussion, Mr. Julyan emphasized the importance of public participation which took two different forms. One was represented by the involvement of the Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), a local, multi-jurisdictional authority with land use in the greater metropolitan area. The other channel for public participation originated in the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires community consultation in the planning of specific local projects like the Conservation Road realignment.

After the last series of public meetings, the GSFC leadership decided that external community participation in FMP activities would best be served by the coordination of an independent facilitator. As the individual selected for this role, Mr. Julyan reported how he had already demonstrated his independence by submitting an external community report directly to local leaders, without GSFC review.

At this point, Mr. Julyan noted that GSFC Director A.V. Diaz would attend the gathering and subsequently would remain for informal discussions with participants during one of the four breakout sessions.

Comments by Mr. Diaz

Mr. Diaz began by reassuring participants that the FMP under development would not suffer the fate of many such plans i.e., placement on a neglected shelf.

management intended to make the most of its investment in the planning the FMP as a tactical tool implemented in stages. It would serve as a 20-year period ahead for near-, mid-, and long-term changes at the conceptual phase, he said, would focus on the Transportation Management Plan and 2020. This effort would require the collection of additional data to traffic patterns. The analysis would cover a larger geographical area taken into account.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Diaz reiterated previous assertions that to contribute to the FMP and that the input would be taken seriously. In the history of employee participation in GSFC site planning, he encouraged everyone to get involved. He pledged that he and members of the planning team would be available to receive questions and comments. He thanked everyone for coming to the

#### Additional Remarks by Mr. Julyan on FMP Process and Schedule

Mr. Julyan resumed his presentation on the GSFC FMP by describing the institutional framework for the process. He noted that Federal agencies submit planning documents to the NCPC for review. In addition, GSFC will coordinate its long-term plans with the larger intergovernmental context of Greenbelt and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Such linkages could help GSFC address critical land-use and transportation issues affecting neighboring communities, such as northbound commuter traffic on the expanding area of new homes southwest of the facility.

Because of the key role played by NCPC in the FMP review, Mr. Julyan outlined the critical components of the planning document to be submitted to this commission: an overview, description of community participation, the Transportation Management Plan (including a presentation on existing and projected peak-hour traffic volumes), Environmental Assessment, the Site Development Plan for retained and new buildings, the Landscape Plan, and a Staging Plan. He offered to make available to interested individuals a copy of NCPC's 17-page Master Plan Submission

At present, the FMP team was continuing to develop the east and west side of Soil Conservation Road. Mr. Julyan assured participants that the team would use the 1990s data as a basis for its studies and projections, rather than rely on the 1990s. The refinement of the FMP would take several months as a draft shape and a final version emerged perhaps next spring. He anticipated that the commission would accept or reject the FMP within 90 to 120 days after its submission.

In virtue of his role as a participation facilitator, Mr. Julyan reiterated the importance of employee and community input into the planning process. Responding to questions about the limited impact of local dialog in previous years, he asserted that the opportunities for participation now pending did not conceal a fait accompli. If the invitation for input was genuine, he continued. The FMP would not be decided by a closed circle of policymakers, but instead would reflect a broad range of institutional contributions. Those choosing to participate would engage

assessment of key, sometimes controversial issues. They would also gain a better understanding of the NCPC review process and lay the groundwork for improved community coordination of site planning.

Mr. Julyan encouraged the audience to use him as a channel for their concerns. He provided his telephone number (202-434-8954) and e-mail address ([julandjul@ao.gov](mailto:julandjul@ao.gov)) for that purpose. While he welcomed the opportunity to facilitate specific actions, he emphasized that he would not allow himself to be used as a tool for actions that would undermine the planning process.

In addition to individual conversations with employees and community members, Julian anticipated more structured occasions for public participation. He would continue to rely on a limited number of public meetings required by the NCPC guidelines. More frequent input could come from smaller, more manageable groups of facility-community representatives with local and Federal planning agencies. The method of outreach would depend on periodic status updates disseminated through various internal communication mechanisms. This task could be set up to provide information regularly and automatically to interested parties.

Mr. Julyan concluded his remarks by reminding the audience of the importance of public participation. Ultimately, duly appointed decision-makers would determine the final outcomes. The community, however, could still use facts, logic, and public input to influence agency decisions.

#### Question-and-Answer Period

During the final part of the plenary session, Mr. Julyan and Mr. Diaz invited questions and comments from the audience:

- Do Federal review procedures allow private individuals to be added to the record, as the Maryland process permits?

Mr. Julyan replied by first explaining the elevated status conferred by the NCPC designation. Sometimes persons living in neighborhoods directly affected by planned development can gain such status before Federal review. In the case of the FMP submission to NCPC, however, he doubted whether such status would be granted this standing. They nevertheless had the opportunity to voice concerns for a minute or two during the public comment period at the meeting, once the FMP had become an agenda item. In addition, the community could meet directly with NCPC staff after FMP submission but before final review. Mr. Julyan offered to facilitate such visits. He also offered to research the party-of-record issue to verify the facts.

- Because some Greenbelt community residents still harbored anxieties about the safety issues associated with possible road closing, it was noted that GSFC was taking additional time to receive public input.

Could anything more specific be said about development of the strategy?

This type of concern would best be handled in the breakout sessions Mr. Julyan suggested. There, members of the audience could review displays of the FMP and talk directly to planning staff working in the Session participants could list important issues and queries on flip charts provided. These would be collected at the end of the sessions and made available for later reference by planning staff.

- Will answers to questions appear on the FMP Web site?

The Web site will be the primary medium of response, Mr. Julyan promised that there would be periodic updates through the larger e-mail network.

- How can individuals make sure that issues of concern to them are included into the cost-benefit analysis? Whom should people talk to so that their concerns be brought forward to key decision-makers?

Mr. Julyan suggested that interested parties list their concerns on flip charts at the breakout sessions and/or e-mail him directly.

- Are additional alternatives to the eastern and western bypass being considered for the Soil Conservation Road realignment?

Although a number of different options have been considered at various stages, only the eastern and western alignments are now being actively evaluated. Planners have not foreclosed other strategies, however. Anyone interested in offering alternatives, including those they may have been premature to consider, The flip charts could capture this input.

- How should people present concerns that go back several steps in the planning process?

Mr. Julyan recommended that in such cases, individuals could talk to the GSFC Director Diaz or the Soil Conservation Service. The flip charts could be another channel for input. He could not predict how GSFC would respond to revisiting previous proposals and noted that the agency had even been reluctant to concentrate exclusively on the two options now in focus. Nevertheless, he thought that GSFC would consider persuasive input from the public. If suggestions did not fall within the current range of choices.

- What is the process for calling a forum to meet with the facilitator for a bar discussion?

The procedure would be to call Mr. Julyan. Listening to such comments of his job, he said. He could provide feedback about the likelihood suggestions would receive full consideration by the appropriate people. People could always proceed through another channel if they were not satisfied with his response.

- How would participants be informed that issues that they have raised on flip charts were being addressed?

Mr. Julyan indicated that he would respond through periodic updates. Additional information would appear on the FMP Web site.

- How likely was it that GSFC will treat the current FMP as if it were abandoned in previous decades? People have invested a lot in effort.

This was an excellent question for the GSFC Director, Mr. Julyan. Although he conceded that many plans were ignored for the sake of expediency, he also believed that Director Diaz intended to use the present working road map of the facility's development in future years.

#### Breakout Sessions

Before adjourning the plenary session, Mr. Julyan described the location of the four breakout sessions to follow:

- (1) Explanation of the master planning process, NCPC, relevant public participation (Mr. Julyan present as resource contact)
- (2) Explanation of the Director's vision for the FMP (Mr. Diaz)
- (3) Technical documents, Environmental Assessment, and Transportation Management Plan
- (4) FMP Soil Conservation Road alternatives (additional data and studies, as well as channel for input on previous options)

Mr. Julyan encouraged participants to visit several sessions to obtain clarification of different issues and to raise questions and issues with Mr. Diaz, or other parties. A designated individual in each group would record participant concerns on a flip chart.

SUMMARY OF FACILITIES MASTER PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

October 18, 2001  
DuVal High School, Greenbelt, MD

Opening Remarks by Mr. Julyan

At approximately 7 p.m., David Julyan brought the meeting to order by himself as a facilitator retained by GSFC to encourage and enable public participation in the Facility Master Plan (FMP) process. He emphasized that the agency was committed to providing enough time for the community to add input into facility development of the FMP in greater detail would continue for several months before its submission in the spring. In addition, he had already begun contacting community coalition representatives. The present meeting was therefore the last opportunity for community participation in site planning, but it was an important one. He invited the audience to make the most of the occasion by expressing individual concerns directly to planning staff and consultants, as well as to Director Diaz all of whom would be available in the breakout sessions. He also asked Mr. Diaz to present his views about how the FMP would be used.

Comments by Mr. Diaz

Referring to previous occasions for community input, Mr. Diaz observed that he had received three basic messages: that the planning process had been hindered by a lack of meaningful public participation, that insufficient attention was given to alternative strategies, and that planners were relying on old data. He noted that GSFC staff had heard these concerns and were addressing them.

In the view of Mr. Diaz, the FMP represented a serious matter for GSFC and his intention for it to be used as an agency roadmap in the years ahead. He expressed his interest in staying personally involved in the FMP process and reaching out to the community.

Further Remarks by Mr. Julyan on Project History, Public Participation

Next, Mr. Julyan provided an FMP process overview covering most of the topics addressed in his earlier presentations at the Employee Workshop (see the more detailed discussion of these subjects). Noting the 24-month history of the planning effort, he observed how draft documents were progressing toward greater levels of specificity as the project matured. He described the complex administrative and legislative framework that helped define both substantive study issues and the process. This framework included FMP review by the NCPC and other government agencies at various levels, including county and State. Compliance with the legal provisions of the framework played an important role. Ultimately, the information gathered through the process would inform three key documents: the FMP, the overall Environmental Assessment, and the Soil Conservation Road Environmental Assessment.

Turning to the project schedule, Mr. Julyan suggested that the current refinement, draft development, and continuing public input would lead to the submission of a final FMP by the spring of 2002. During this preparation, planners would conduct traffic flow analyses over a larger area than especially for the road network to the east and southeast of GSFC. Additional work on the 2020 projections for that geographic area. At the public would still have opportunities to influence outcomes as the proposal. He noted that NCPC representatives were present at the community answer community questions.

Continuing with the theme of public participation, Mr. Julyan highlighted his role in the process and encouraged meeting participants to contact him by telephone or e-mail (see page 3 of this summary). As at the Employee meeting, he outlined other channels of communication, including occasional public meetings mandated by NCPC and NEPA; his monthly updates; and the FMP Web site. Community questions would be posted until resolved. In addition, he suggested the formation of a 5- to 15-member community planning council to represent homeowners associations, citizens groups, and other interested parties in the community. This council could meet frequently with GSFC personnel, city and government planning staff to help define new studies. This last point was to assure participants that FMP staff would in fact gather fresh data rather than rely on statistics from previous studies.

Summing up the FMP process, Mr. Julyan declared that current efforts to shape GSFC's future with active community participation were genuine and that the outcome was not a done deal. He also reminded the audience that the final decision rested with the GSFC leadership and the NCPC review panel. Public input could significantly affect such decisions, he suggested.

Question-and-Answer Period. At this point, Mr. Julyan opened the floor for comments:

- Will questions be individually listed on the Web site as given and grouped with others? Will individuals be able to find their questions on the Web site?

Mr. Julyan replied that he did not want to routinely paraphrase questions. He wanted to retain the latitude to edit and group together similar questions from the community. If anyone subsequently felt misrepresented by such a paraphrase, they could notify him so that he could immediately fix the problem. He suggested that they would be clearly communicated to the public after information becomes available.

- Can the FMP team reference the information it gives out as an answer to a specific question posted on the Web site?

Mr. Julyan accepted the suggestion enthusiastically and promised the community to make such a system work.

- Will the final documents be reviewed next spring? Will the E Assessment be included? Will State and county transportation review these documents?

The FMP, overall Environmental Assessment, and specific Environmental Assessment for Soil Conservation Road were expected to be submitted next spring. At that point NCPC could begin its review, which could take more. State and local officials would contribute in two ways: before the documents for submission and during the NCPC review on a case-by-case basis.

- Which breakout sessions should participants visit if they were concerned about traffic along Greenbelt Road?

The two that Mr. Julyan recommended were the sessions on Technical Documentation and Soil Conservation Road.

- The planning process taking place at this meeting seemed frustrating because a number of the key players county officials, State Department of Highways, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, U.S. Park Service, possibly Patuxet Wildlife Research Center were not represented. The difficulty in persuading the Park Service to allow changes at the Baltimore-Washington Parkway illustrated this failure to coordinate among agencies. How could the process go forward with GSFC's constraints posed by external entities?

Mr. Diaz replied that there was nothing to prevent him from involving other parties mentioned and that in fact GSFC would be in dialogue with them. Although they would continue to play a role in the process, the responsibility for submitting the plans was solely that of GSFC. Mr. Julyan noted that local planning and transportation agencies had already been conducting preparation and coordination of the FMP components and would also participate in the NCPC review. Ultimately, the community impact of changes to the GSFC site extended beyond the immediate vicinity of the site; how the rapidly growing area to the southeast was affecting regional transportation patterns. It was therefore important for community agencies to participate not only in the FMP process for GSFC, but also to work with a wide spectrum of agencies active in the larger regional coordination and planning.

- Who has jurisdiction over Soil Conservation Road?

Mr. Diaz replied that GSFC had authority over the road within the boundaries but not beyond. The Agricultural Research Center controls a portion of the road on its property.

- Why isn't the Agricultural Research Center represented at this meeting? Representatives from such agencies could then report back to GSFC to coordinate efforts with GSFC staff.

Acknowledging the importance of the issue, Mr. Julyan stated that he would try to prompt local and Federal agencies to participate at the local level, but he could not guarantee that all stakeholders would do so.

- Comments from Ed Woods, Chief of the Glendale Fire Department. Participants were asked whether most of them had attended because of concerns about the road route. Many responded affirmatively. Safety was another issue that surfaced during this discussion. Chief Woods reminded the audience that in the event of an evacuation emergency at GSFC, employees rushing to work should not impede incoming firefighters to the scene. On another question, he questioned the appropriateness of NCPD jurisdiction in the FM

Most of Chief Woods' remarks focused on his alternative for road realignment. He suggested that the proper authorities acquire the right of way from the end of Forbes Boulevard (north of Route 193) across Soil Conservation Road and onto Federal property. Soil Conservation Road could be rerouted around the perimeter of the GSFC reservation, with a detour via Greenbelt Road and a point to be defined along the north-south major intersections would be involved in this scheme. One would be at Forbes Boulevard and Route 193, where a signal already exists. The approaching lanes now in place could be made into left-turn lanes to accommodate outgoing traffic. A single right-hand lane would be used for reverse flow during the evening rush hour. The second intersection occurs at Good Luck Road, where conventional lanes and signals are essential. He noted that his department's principal vehicle is a fire engine that negotiates traffic circles with small turning radii. He encouraged a design for unimpeded traffic flow at this junction.

Overall, such a plan would allow Soil Conservation Road to be used as originally envisioned and would permit adequate emergency access to virtually all of the reservation. The only drawback mentioned was acquiring right of way through the commercial area adjacent to the property. Responding to an audience query, Chief Woods indicated that he was not aware of any plans to connect the isolated residential area on Forbes Boulevard (in a townhouse development) to the commercial road that most people knew.

Mr. Julyan responded by reiterating that GSFC exercised control over its own property and planning activities and that the agency's FMP would facilitate but not guarantee the desired participation of other stakeholders. Regarding the role of the NCPC, he suggested that Congress had already determined that Federal installations within Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties and other nearby jurisdictions, fell within NCPC's purview.

Monica Michewicz of the Greenbelt Woods community asked a series of questions about the future entrance to GSFC along Greenbelt Road. What would it be like? Would it resemble the present intersection across from K...? What would be the impact of any new intersection on her residential community? Would employees and the public jointly use it? Has the State Highway Department been involved in the planning process?

Mr. Julyan suggested that these concerns should be captured now for future evaluation, perhaps after decisions had been made about the exact schedule for entrance changes along Greenbelt Road. GSFC Planning Director Kim Toufexis noted that in the short term, there would be no major changes to the present entrance, which would remain open to employees; he would like to hear about public access during this period. For the long term, he would like to continue using the present entrance, but he hoped that the plan would be to build a new entrance near the Visitors Center. Mr. Toufexis recommended that Ms. Michewicz and other interested parties explore these issues in greater detail during the breakout sessions. He also reported that the State Highway Department had been actively engaged in the FMP process.

- Would problems be defined and resolved by the planning team before the issues were presented to the community for comment? Would all communication between the community and GSFC pass through Mr. Julyan? Could ordinary citizens even know what questions to ask if they were involved in the technical planning studies and discussions?

It was Mr. Julyan's stated desire to facilitate interaction between the community and FMP team, not to dominate it. Rather than serve as sole liaison to the community, he wanted residents to be able to meet and speak directly with GSFC/FMP personnel. Such an opportunity was at hand because staff and expert consultants were presently in the room to field questions during the breakout sessions. He volunteered to coordinate future communication between community members and planning staff when specific issues were raised. A large number of community questions had already been raised, he would like to see more accumulate in his e-mail and on the flip charts and sticky notes at the meeting. At this point, Mr. Julyan turned to the next item on the agenda.

### Breakout Sessions for the Community Workshop

The four sessions that followed paralleled those at the Employee Workshop. Mr. Julyan asked the audience to engage the staff specialists who were present to list continuing concerns and questions on the flip charts or small yellow sticky notes. Ultimately this diverse input would appear on the FMP Web site, with links referenced to particular questions. Mr. Julyan also suggested that participants be organized into different workshop areas so as to take in the full range of issues and provide a written comment.

### Wrapup

After the plenary session had reconvened, Mr. Julyan asked whether anyone had found the opportunity to speak to someone about their particular concerns. Several individuals indicated that they had felt thwarted in pursuing their issues of interest.

The next question was how to move forward. Mr. Julyan noted that he had contacted a range of organizational stakeholders, including homeowners associations, a local coalition of community groups, and others. Would it be acceptable to use these contacts as a basis for a new communications network and an evolving community council? Additional organizations could be added as they became known to Mr. Julyan. Individuals could possibly form a steering committee. He interpreted the absence of objections to these ideas as a signal to proceed. He also encouraged any community organizational representatives present to introduce themselves to him at the end of the meeting so that he could include them in his list of contacts.

Mr. Julyan said that his next responsibility was to communicate back to the workshop participants through the various community associations and through correspondence with individuals. He agreed to provide biweekly updates and promised to communicate by e-mail as well.

The workshop came to a conclusion as Mr. Julyan thanked participants. He was uncertain when the next workshop would occur, although he expected it to occur within the next 2 weeks. With no alternatives being suggested, DuVal appeared to be the likely site for this event. Mr. Julyan invited participants to look at the exhibits and staff planners to talk informally. The meeting ended at approximately 9:30 p.m.