

## MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 23, 2016

TIME: 4:45-6:15 pm

LOCATION: Garfield Park Activity Center

PROJECT NO.: DCI #501-16

PROJECT NAME: Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

AUTHOR: Caitlin O'Hara

### ATTENDEES:

Cecily Bedwell, Design Collective, Inc (DCI)

Jerry Collins, Holloway Terrace Civic Association

Dolly Frisby, Dunleith Civic Association

Gloria Hunter, Rose Hill Gardens Civic Association

Lee Jarmon, Overview Gardens/Garfield Park Civic Association

Rev. McDuffy, Eden Park Gardens Civic Association

Captain Rob McLucas, Public Safety

Patti Miller, Nemours Health & Prevention Services

Caitlin O'Hara, Design Collective, Inc (DCI)

James Parker, Oakmont Civic Association

George Samuels, Rose Hill Gardens Civic Association

Jaywahn Saunders, Simonds Gardens Civic Association

Sandra Smithers, New Castle Prevention Coalition, Dunleith Civic Association

Lee Sobel, RCLCO

Bill Swiatek, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Jake Thompson, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Tigist Zegeye, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (ACM)

### Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

#### *Introductions:*

Bill Swiatek welcomed the participants and asked for introductions.

#### *Project Overview:*

Bill Swiatek summarized the project goals and outlined the project boundary.

- ❖ Lee Jarmon Question: Why was the study area not more expansive?
  - Bill responded: The study area was minimized due to budget constraints. This project encompasses the middle portion of a study area that was much larger. WILMAPCO hopes to receive funding in the future to study the two remaining portions of Route 9. The ideal study area would stretch from the Christiana River to SR 273.
- ❖ Patti Miller Question: Do you have economic and business stakeholders?
  - Bill/Cecily responded: Yes, a group of key business stakeholders was identified and contacted by RCLCO including the Port, Bowlerama, local real estate agents, and economic development

representatives. We have had responses and input from all to date with the exception of the economic development representatives.

Cecily Bedwell introduced the Design Collective team:

- Design Collective will be the Urban Design and Lead Consultant, with experience in neighborhood revitalization, TOD, mixed-use development, signage graphics
- RCLCO represented by Lee Sobel will be the Land Use Economics + Market Analysis Consultant and is currently working on Glasgow Avenue project with WILMAPCO in New Castle County
- Toole Design Group will be the Traffic/Transportation Consultant.

**Schedule:**

Cecily Bedwell presented a summary of the project schedule

**Tasks:**

Bill Swiatek, Cecily Bedwell, and Lee Sobel summarized the project tasks.

*Task 1: Completed by WILMAPCO; series of Existing Conditions maps were reviewed.*

- ❖ Jerry Collins Comment: Truck traffic is a major concern for the community. There is a combination of enforcement and physical improvements (signage) needed to help resolve the situation.
- ❖ Jerry Collins Comment: Super G is replacing Super Fresh.

*Task 2: Real Estate and Economic Development*

- Make sure the vision aligns with market feasibility
- Analyze the corridor's existing conditions and context to better understand its relationship and market potential
- Identify development opportunities, specifically nodes or specific segments to identify appropriate uses
- Communicate and maximize the economic potential while preserving the local history to align with the community's vision and needs
- **Goal:** Provide redevelopment strategies for the Corridor

**Market Analysis Update:**

Lee Sobel reviewed the preliminary analysis and findings for the corridor.

- Primary Market Area: Identified a majority of the Route 9 Corridor as being the primary market where 85-90% of the area's retail and services should be located.
- Median Incomes: Presented a map showing median incomes by block group. The PMA is not in the favored corridor of growth, which affects its ability to attract new retail, office, and MF development to the area.
- Distribution of Age by Householder: There is one land use that has some upside potential: senior housing. The graph below shows the distribution of households by age. Nearly 30% of households are 65+, demographics that are favorable to a senior housing development opportunity.
- Age of Householder: In terms of home-ownership, 65% of housing units in the area are made up of owner-occupied housing units, while renter-occupied housing units make up 25%.
- Retail Environment: The retail environment shows that, in terms of supply and demand, there is a need for retail, especially in clothing, food services, and general merchandise, which is supported by RCLCO's findings on the ground.
- Typology Analysis: The area is oriented towards I-295 and auto-oriented areas are performing very well compared to the corridor as a whole.
- Retail Rental Rates and Vacancy: Retail is struggling with a rapidly increasing vacancy rate and stagnating rental rates

- Industrial Rental Rates and Vacancy: Industrial is performing better in terms of vacancy rate trends, but the rental rates are extremely low

*Task 3: Community Visioning*

- Analysis is one platform, but the community's feedback is critical to understanding the desires within the area
- Facilitated through Public Workshop 1, Advisory Committee meetings, and stakeholder meetings

*Task 4: Draft Corridor Vision and Development Alternatives*

- Compile a community vision and create a range of options based on technical analysis and community input
- Develop a base case scenario and 3 alternative scenarios
- Shared through public workshop 2 and reviewed on the website

*Task 5: Preferred Alternative and Final Report*

- Final Product: Important to provide a document that is compelling and marketable
  - ❖ Question: If seniors own their own homes, why not encourage the development of apartments for the younger population?
  - ❖ Comments: If a majority of the community is homeowners who want to stay in the area, then we should prioritize attracting new residents, but provide apartments/senior living options that allow people to age in place and remain in the community.
  - ❖ Comment: Zoning should promote the needs of the community; An overlay district that keeps the current zoning categories in place, but allows property owners to electively apply alternative regulations may be required.

***Advisory Committee:***

Bill Swiatek and Cecily Bedwell reviewed the list of participants that will be involved in the Advisory and Key Stakeholders Committees.

- ❖ Potential Additions:
  - Neighborhood advocates near truck/ industrial areas and/or someone who is familiar with environmental issues/ contamination.
  - Colonial Superintendent or Principal/ Assistant Principal from a local school
  - Youth serving organizations
  - Environmental advocacy group
  - Fire department

***Stakeholder Questions:***

Cecily reviewed question topics that will be asked through the community engagement process.

- ❖ Comment: Include questions regarding handicap accessibility.

***Project Website, Facebook, and Logo:***

Bill Swiatek reviewed the Route 9 Corridor website:

- Serves as a clearing house for information and a way for all community members and stakeholders to receive information, get involved, provide comments, and explore related links.

Bill Swiatek reviewed the Route 9 Corridor Facebook site:

- DCI will provide a square logo for the profile photo. [This logo version was completed and sent on 2016-03-02.]
- The cover photo will be replaced with a rendering or photograph of the Corridor.
- The site will provide base materials regarding project scope and discuss findings as the project timeline moves forward.

Cecily Bedwell reviewed the Route 9 corridor logos. No concerns were voiced; the logo was accepted.

*Next Steps:*

- Team will wrap-up and finalize all maps and analysis in preparation for Workshop I in late April
- March outreach to publicize Workshop including updates to website and facebook content

❖ Meeting Preferences: Tuesday or Thursday between 5-6pm.

End of minutes.

The above is the author's interpretation of the items discussed. Any corrections or discrepancies should be brought to the author's attention within seven days, or the minutes will stand as written.

cc: Attendees  
File