

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: January 13, 2016

TIME: 3:00-5:00 pm

LOCATION: Rose Hill Community Center

PROJECT NO.: DCI #501-16

PROJECT NAME: Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

AUTHOR: Caitlin O'Hara

ATTENDEES (in alphabetical order):

Cecily Bedwell, Design Collective, Inc (DCI)

Carrie Casey, Dept. of Community Services, New Castle County

James Clem, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Mike Hahn, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

Sophia Hanson, New Castle County

Herb Inden, Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)

Carol Kachadoorian, Toole Design Group (TDG)

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

Eric Pugliano, Delaware Transit Corporation DTC

Jane Rattenni, Dept. of Community Services, New Castle County

Tim Snow, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

Lee Sobel, RCLCO

Councilmember Jea P. Street

Bill Swiatek, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Jake Thompson, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Caren Turner, Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc. (ICHDE)

Steven Wang, RCLCO

Tigist Zegeye, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING (MCM)

Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

Introductions:

Tigist Zegeye welcomed the participants, including members of the Management Committee Meeting and the Consultant Team.

Bill Swiatek addressed the participants as the Wilmington Area Planning Council's (WILMAPCO's) project manager for the Master Plan and introduced the Consultant Team.

Consultant Team Overview:

Cecily Bedwell introduced Design Collective: Urban Design and Lead Consultant

- Experience in neighborhood revitalization, Transit Oriented Development (TOD), mixed-use development, signage graphics

Lee Sobel introduced RCLCO: Land Use Economics + Market Analysis Consultant

- Currently working on Glasgow Avenue project with WILMAPCO in New Castle County

Carol Kachadoorian introduced Toole Design Group: Transportation Planning Consultant

- Specializes in multi-modal planning; includes experience in health impact assessments

Previous Meeting Notes:

Bill Swiatek asked for any comments, revisions, or questions regarding the previous MCM Meeting Notes

- No comments were noted and the Meeting Notes were accepted without revision for the project record.
- ❖ Cecily asked for additional information regarding County's Economic Empowerment District and Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District. Sophia Hanson said she would provide that information.

Existing Conditions Analysis:

Bill Swiatek reviewed the Existing Conditions map series prepared in TASK 1 and distributed by WILMAPCO

- State Strategies:
 - Identified as Level 1 throughout a majority of the site
- Zoning:
 - Mostly industrial and residential with pockets of commercial along Route 9 and 13
- Land Use:
 - Wide-range of uses; predominantly business trade along Route 9 with some residential and industrial
- Future Land Use:
 - Very similar to current zoning
- Population and Employment Change:
 - 16,500 people live in the area
 - 70% live on the west side of Route 9 corridor and 30% on the east
 - Projected to decline by 690 residents by 2040
 - Major impacts if we don't encourage more growth
 - Evenly distributed jobs (west and east of highway) - 400 new jobs projected by 2040
 - Senior population is growing
- Vacancies and Income:
 - Vary widely; lower income in the north and higher income in the south
 - Vacancy rates are low throughout, however some communities such as Hamilton Park and Rose Hill tends to have a higher level
- Demographics:
 - Ethnically segregated- African American in the north; Caucasian in the south; Hispanic cluster straddling I-295
- Route 9 Roadway Conditions:
 - 16,000 vehicles a day
 - Route 9 has the capacity to grow and take on more development
- Vehicle Crashes:
 - Almost all non-fatal

- Specific areas need special attention for infrastructure improvements and to allow better accessibility for pedestrians
- ❖ Carol Kachadoorian Question: How many of the pedestrian crashes involved a bus? WILMAPCO will look into this.
- ❖ It was noted that pedestrian crashes involving trucks should also be analyzed. WILMAPCO will complete this.
- Transit Routes:
 - Route 15 and 17 are the main routes that serve the Route 9 Corridor
- Non-motorized Transportation:
 - Route 9 is a designated bike route
 - Solid infrastructure of sidewalks within some of the communities, however Route 9's sidewalks are sporadic and disconnected
- Planned Projects: No funded planned projects within the corridor
 - ❖ Cecily Bedwell requested the previous engineering drawings for the Route 9 improvements (unfunded). WILMAPCO will try to obtain.
- Food Access:
 - A large portion of the corridor is considered a food desert area; more communities will fall under this category once the Superfresh closes
 - It was noted that a new supermarket is advertised as "opening soon" in the vacated Superfresh space.
- Environmental, Cultural, and Social Resources:
 - Many community parks, community centers, and schools
 - 1 historic property in the area (Swanwyck)
 - Dunleith is an important historic neighborhood
- Environmental:
 - Wetlands line the Delaware River
 - Forested areas are rare;
 - All lands east of Route 9 are under the Coastal Zone which could discourage ecologically-damaging future development
 - 4 brownfield sites are located within the plan area
- Sea Level Rise:
 - Impacts certain areas to the north and south of the plan area.
- Flood Risk Adaptation:
 - Storm flooding plus sea level rise impacts felt within the study area
 - ❖ Mike Hahn requested information regarding sewer capacity. Sophia Hanson will help to gather these data from the County.
 - ❖ Lee Sobel would like to be in touch with the housing source contact for the GIS maps in an effort to evaluate home ownership vs. rental. (Resource- Delaware Housing Needs website) WILMAPCO will complete a home ownership versus rental map.
 - ❖ Lee Sobel requested information regarding planned development (pipeline) projects development activity is available here: http://gis.nccde.org/gis_viewer/
 - ❖ Carol Kachadoorian would like information from local schools related to where students live and commute from. These data are difficult to obtain, but can be accessed through the schools. WILMAPCO can explore if necessary.

Review of Scope/Schedule:

Cecily Bedwell, Lee Sobel, and Carol Kachadoorian presented a summary of the Scope and Schedule, as follows.

Task 1: Completed by WILMAPCO; series of Existing Conditions maps discussed above.

Project Goals:

- Improve access to jobs, healthy foods, recreation, community services, and affordable housing
- Promote mixed-use and mixed income redevelopment

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
- ***Recommendation from participants:*** Talk to City, State, County Economic Development Departments and coordinate efforts
- ***Needs noted by participants:*** Highest cancer cluster rate in the area; need for senior housing; reduce likelihood of displacement as reinvestment occurs (Councilmember Jea Street?)

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
 - ❖ **Carol Question:** Are there any specific community members or associations that have issues with the project and that should be contacted prior to a public meeting. **Bill:** advisory committee members and other stakeholders will be identified and engaged separately.

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
- **Sophia Hanson Question:** How do we get money and when should we begin the implementation phase?
Tigist: Funding will likely come from a variety of sources, including the Transportation Improvement Program.
- **Mike Hahn Comment:** Education for pedestrian safety, educational outreach is necessary in addition to enforcement (examples: identify new truck routes and engaging the industrial companies)

Schedule:

- Cecily Bedwell reviewed the schedule, starting mid-January and projecting final deliverables in October
- Tigist Zegeye Comment: Concern for Public Workshop 2 in July or August; Preference for September and advocate for early-evening workshops to accommodate a majority of people's schedules
- Cecily Bedwell noted that the shift of Public Workshop 2 would require an end date extension; Tigist Zegeye noted that this was acceptable and that ensuring public participation is essential.

Public Outreach:

Cecily Bedwell presented a summary of Innovative Strategies for additional public outreach.

- Sophia Hanson Comment: Community is well organized and easily accessible via email
- Distribution of information: flyers, community associations, email, and opportunities to join new forums such as Nextdoor
- Potential members for the Advisory Committee (10-12 needed):
 - Civic Associations (2)
 - Police and/or law enforcement
 - Trucking representative
 - Public safety
 - PAL
 - Colonial School District
 - Community Center
 - DNREC and Nemours
 - Rose Hill
 - Port Authority
 - Bowl-O-Rama Owner
 - DART
 - DelDOT Traffic
 - Economic Development (County + State + City)
- Inventive ways for outreach: festivals, bus exit polls, sidewalk/ storefront comment boards, mobile and accessible
 - Provides opportunities for ways to be interactive that may be more comfortable
 - Participant Comments: Recent, targeted polls have been successful, especially when a gift card was given; Should reach out to Reverend Bullock's church; Create an outline to guide conversations for each outreach coordinator; Very excited about a truck that can access as many members as possible.

Next Steps:

- Councilmember Jea Street Comment: A BIG thank you to WILMAPCO and council for approving funding. This portion of the County has been ignored and everyone looks forward to the opportunities that will come out of this initiative.
- [Design Collective to send a consolidated Information Request List and updated Project Schedule](#)

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
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