

Route 9 Monitoring Committee Meeting Notes

1/23/2018

Attendees

- Marco Boyce, New Castle County Land Use
- Lauren Devore, DNREC
- Ken Dryden, DCR4EJ, NAACP
- Penny Dryden, DCR4EJ
- Pat Gioffre, Moore Storage 440, LLC
- Mike Hahn, DeIDOT Planning
- Hazel Hall, DeIDOT
- Renae Held, DNREC
- Lee Jarmon, OVGGP Civic Association
- Patti Miller, Nemours
- Randi Novakoff, WILMAPCO
- Steve Ottinger, Delaware Transit Corporation
- James Parker, Civic Leader
- Kyron Robinson, ProRank
- George Samuels, Rosehill Gardens Civic Association
- Sandra Smithers, New Castle Prevention Coalition
- Tim Snow, DeIDOT Planning
- Bill Swiatek, WILMAPCO
- Jake Thompson, WILMAPCO
- Wade West, ProRank

Notes

- The committee reviewed the previous meeting notes.
 - Mike Hahn gave additional clarification related to page 5 in the meeting packet, where it states: "Mike Hahn said that the Council on Transportation is likely not relevant to the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan." He said that the Council on Transportation is relevant to the plan, but the Route 9 project is already on DeIDOT's capital transportation program, so there is no further outreach needed with the Council on Transportation. The Council will continue to be relevant when DeIDOT determines what to do with the projects recommended in the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan.
 - Patti Miller gave an update on the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. She said that the \$10,000 from Nemours was approved for the SRTS program at Eisenberg Elementary School.
- Pat Gioffre gave an update on the proposed storage project at the car wash location on Moores Lane.
 - Pat Gioffre said that they are proposing to demolish the car wash. The property line of the strip mall would be moved over into the car wash property. That will allow the shopping center to build an additional 15 parking spaces. 86 self storage units are also proposed.

- Ken Dryden asked if Pat Gioffre was aware that the committee is trying to attract small businesses and generate jobs for minority residents.
 - Pat Gioffre said that this is a non-job-generating project. He said that the self-storage facility is a kit-built facility. The manufacturer of the facility comes on-site to assemble it.
- James Parker asked if Moore Storage 440 has more facilities in Delaware.
 - Pat Gioffre said that they have 26 units in the city of Wilmington.
- Mike Hahn said that the plan he saw had two egress points. The plan that Pat Gioffre is showing has one.
 - Pat Gioffre said that the original plan was essentially the plan he is showing. At a planning meeting, participants did not like the original plan, and suggested building a second entrance to facilitate truck access. The County said that the second entrance did not make sense for the community and the site, so they suggested reverting to the original plan.
- Sandra Smithers asked for clarification about the disagreement about the number of entrances.
 - Marco Boyce said that as part of the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, the County wanted to have a nice streetscape. When the County saw the two entrances, they wanted the development to be consistent with the plan.
 - Sandra Smithers said that that is a concern because the community is looking at both aesthetics and functionality. That should be resolved in such a way that neither are compromised.
 - Marco Boyce said that other communities similar to Route 9 have hometown overlay. This means that all development plans must go through a draft board for approval. Another method is having a committee to review development plans, which is the purpose of the Route 9 Monitoring Committee. Regarding this development, the County and the developer will have to talk at a higher level and come back to the committee with a final option.
- Bill Swiatek gave a presentation on the contents of the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan. The presentation can be viewed at:
 - http://www.wilmapco.org/Rt_9/Presentations/Jan2018/Route9_1-23-18_Presentation.pdf
 - James Parker said that crossing guards are only on Memorial Drive. He asked if there are plans to hire crossing guards at other locations so that people will feel safe enough to walk.
 - Bill Swiatek said that the plan is recommending making improvements to the road itself that will reduce crossing distances and make traffic safer so that more children, parents, and people in general feel safe enough to walk.
 - James Parker asked if the residents of Eden Park and Hamilton Park could be asked if they are interested in relocating to the new residential development around node 3.
 - Bill Swiatek said that it would be a good idea for the survey to ask where respondents would like to relocate to if they are interested in relocating. The County will have to consider if the new housing development will be ready when and if the relocation happens.
 - Ken Dryden asked if the residents of those communities were involved in the planning process for the new residential development.
 - Bill Swiatek said that they were involved. The residents generally supported the concept of residential development around the library.

- Lee Jarmon said that this planning process has been an open process. He said that a plan has to start from some place, and along the way changes will have to be made. He said that he is proud to be part of the steering committee, and that he has learned that we still have to be vigilant and that our voices have to be heard. He said that he is excited about the changes in this area.
 - Bill Swiatek said that he appreciates Mr. Jarmon's comments and that he has tried to make the process as open as he could and made adjustments where necessary to ensure that the process remains open.
 - Sandra Smithers said that to a large extent, it has been an open planning process, and WILMAPCO has done everything they could to get as many people engaged as possible.
- Lee Jarmon said that the County has a level of service (LOS) plan. He asked what the level of interaction is between the County and that plan.
 - Bill Swiatek said that in the Route 9 plan, we looked at level of service. None of the scenarios showed an increase in traffic that would negatively impact level of service.
 - Marco Boyce said that the County is looking at ways to measure traffic congestion in some areas. He said that LOS is measured from A through F, and below D is considered failing.
- Penny Dryden asked if there have been conversations about the existing housing when planning new development.
 - Kyron Robinson suggested looking at the zoning recommendations on page 57 in the Master Plan. He said to also look at page 49 to see the vision for what the corridor will look like.
 - Sandra Smithers suggested that the committee begin to work on the hometown overlay.
- Ken Dryden said that we are being asked to monitor and prioritize the 20 projects and what is being proposed. He said that it is important to know where the taxes are going and make sure that the community is not being gentrified.
 - Bill Swiatek said that having a committee such as this one helps ensure that projects proceed in a way that is best for the community.
- Mike Hahn suggested inviting the property owner (of the development that was presented by Pat Gioffre) to the next meeting in order to let them know about the mixed-use vision that is preferred by the plan. This would help the property owner prevent future hurdles, such as compliance with a hometown overlay.
 - Bill Swiatek agreed, saying that it should be an open process and that we should engage property owners.
- George Samuels asked if the roundabouts will be able to handle overflow traffic in the event of a crash on I-95.
 - Bill Swiatek said that the roundabouts are designed to keep traffic moving, which will reduce congestion.
 - Mike Hahn said that the option was coordinated heavily with and approved by DelDOT's traffic division.
 - James Parker expressed concern that overflow traffic will respect right-of-way at a roundabout. He said that since the community is located near major interstates, many drivers are not local and may not be familiar with roundabouts.

- Bill Swiatek said that the transportation alternatives went through the public process. He said that we did hear those concerns, but the reaction to the roundabouts was overwhelmingly positive.
 - George Samuels asked if Memorial Drive will also have a roundabout.
 - Bill Swiatek said that a roundabout was also proposed at that intersection.
 - George Samuels said that especially in the summertime, there are a lot of crashes. He asked if that will make it harder for residents to get through the roundabout.
 - Bill Swiatek said that the idea is to keep traffic moving so that people can easily enter the roundabout. In the traffic study, the proposed roundabout is expected to improve the level of service from E to D at Memorial Drive, so traffic should improve.
 - Sandra Smithers said that there will be traffic backups either with roundabouts or with traffic lights, so it is important to look at what will make traffic flow more easily. She said it seems to her that the proposed roundabouts will improve traffic flow.
 - Mike Hahn suggested having a separate opportunity to ask DeIDOT questions about the proposed roundabouts. This could be on the agenda at a future meeting. Many committee members agreed with this idea.
 - Hazel Hall said that ADA compliance is very important, especially for senior citizens. She suggested having someone from her department to come in to talk about how ADA compliance can impact the community.
 - Bill Swiatek said that it's a good idea, and that ADA regulations are ever evolving.
- Bill Swiatek asked the committee if anyone has thoughts about the draft mission and vision statements. There were no comments. The committee agreed to accept the draft mission and vision statements.
- Bill Swiatek said that there will be updates on the OJT program at future meetings as it progresses.
- Renae Held said that on Wednesday, January 24 at 6:00 pm, DNREC and the Division of Air Quality will be presenting about their air quality project in Eden Park and Hamilton Park at the all civics meeting. She said that she would be willing to present about this project at a future Monitoring Committee meeting.