

MEETING MINUTES

date: November 03, 2016

time: 4:30-6:30 pm

location: Garfield Park Recreation 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)

Sheila Berkel, Rose Hill Community Center

Carrie Casey, Dept. of Community Services, New Castle County (NCC)

Lauren DeVore, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

Lori Duerr, Colonial School District

Mike Hahn, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

Sophia Hanson, New Castle County (NCC)

Lee Jarmon, Overview Gardens/ Garfield Park Civic Association

Carol Kachadoorian, Toole Design Group (TDG)

John McCarthy, Toole Design Group (TDG)

Patti Miller, Nemours

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

Eric Pugliano, DART

George Samuels, Rose Hill Gardens Civic Association

Jolyon Shelton, DNREC

Sandra Smithers, New Castle Prevention Coalition

Tim Snow, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

Bill Swiatek, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Jake Thompson, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

Introductions:

Bill Swiatek welcomed attendees and asked for introductions.

Previous Meeting Notes:

Bill Swiatek asked for any comments, revisions, or questions regarding the previous Steering Committee Meeting Notes.

The notes were unanimously approved.

Blueprint Communities Update

Bill Swiatek asked the committee members for updates regarding the Blueprint Communities.

- ❖ Sandra Smithers Comment: They are currently working on a draft. They will continue to work with New Castle County community development throughout the project.

Schedule

Bill Swiatek reviewed the upcoming schedule. The design team is preparing for Public Workshop #2 and working towards completing a final report.

- ❖ Carrie Casey Question: When will the report be completed?
Bill Swiatek Response: after December/ January
- ❖ Mike Hahn Comment: Offered to place the report on DeIDOT's website once complete.
- ❖ Lori Duerr Question: How are we accessing student feedback?
She is willing to assist with this effort.
Bill Swiatek Response: Hoping to engage students in the Christina School District shortly following the public workshop. S.
- ❖ Sophia Hanson Comment: There is a writing program at the Rose Hill Community Center and thoughts from students grades 4-7 were recorded during the Route 9 Library visioning process. We can conduct a similar process for the Route 9 corridor.
Bill Swiatek Response: Agreed this was a possibility.

Letter from DENREC

Lauren DeVore with Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control (DNREC) summarized the comments made by the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) regarding environmental and health concerns related specifically to the following:

- Fugitive Dusts – particulate matter that is visible and suspended in the air
 - Solution: Better design and management of the roadways (specifically the incorporation of stormwater management and runoff best practices) will contribute to a decrease in particulate build up.
- Diesel Particulate Matter – Mostly emitted by trucks and potential for additional increase due to Port expansion
 - Solution: Truck traffic through residential neighborhoods should be reduced and better enforced.
- Cancer Risks and Hazardous Air Pollutions (HAP) – Route 9 Corridor has been identified as a “cancer pocket” that has a heavy presence of four HAPs. These HAPs contribute to 76-80% of the modeled cancer risk across the corridor.

- Formaldehyde
- Benzene
- Acetaldehyde
- Carbon Tetrachloride
 - Solution: The Corridor needs to remain heavily monitored as the potential for development increases.
 - ❖ **Carrie Casey Question:** The letter identified the area as a “cancer cluster”. In the summary of your numbers, how can we better decipher and understand the numbers?
Lauren DeVore Response: I can speak with DAQ about providing numbers that are more understandable.
 - ❖ **Lee Jarmon Comment:** Silicon dust from the concrete grinding on New Castle Avenue may be a contributor to the high percentages of fugitive dusts. This facility is located near Eden Park adjacent to Terminal Avenue.
Lauren DeVore Response: I will make note of this.
 - ❖ **Sophia Hanson Question:** What is the process for evaluating businesses that impose this threat to the community?
Lauren DeVore Response: There is a permitting process that is monitored by DAQ.
 - ❖ **Mike Hahn Question:** How does this area compare to other areas? Is this area considered hazardous?
Lauren DeVore Response: Route 9 Corridor is very close to several point sources. It is a major issue and needs to be resolved.
 - ❖ **Carrie Casey Comment:** This information should be incorporated into the Master Plan. Perhaps it can be addressed through truck traffic recommendations?
Bill Swiatek Response: Yes, the design team should review the recommendations given to us from DAQ as it greatly influences the future development of the corridor.

Design + Development

Cecily provided an update on the development plans for the corridor

- Route 9 Development Opportunities
 - Identified short and long-term development opportunities that build off of the new Library investment and based on the market analysis.
 - North Option highlights development opportunities north of Rose Hill Community Center between Lambson and Thorn Lane. The new development shows a mix of single-family detached and attached housing with a mix of retail and office along Route 9.
 - ❖ **Sandra Smithers Question:** Are you showing rental next to ownership? Are you showing affordable housing similar to Arbor Place?

Cecily Bedwell Response: I am not specifically familiar with the units types in Arbor Place, but, what we are illustrating in the plan are 2-3 story rental townhouses closer to Route 9 and then transitioning to for-sale townhouses adjacent to (backing up to) the existing for-sale (ownership) homes. The market study did show a greater demand for rental within the study area compared to for-sale units, therefore, we are showing a greater number of rental units.

- ❖ **Sandra Smithers Questions:** Concern that we are perpetuating the issue if we provide affordable and low-income housing. This area is socially and economically depressed. We need to develop with this in mind. We need a vision of where we want to go. We would like to see thoughtful development.

Cecily Bedwell Response: Absolutely. We want to incorporate a mix of housing that provides affordable options and proper transitions to existing for-sale, owner-occupied homes. RCLCO can speak to various incentives to keep certain properties affordable while attracting opportunities for market-rate housing. Our recommendation is that affordable housing (whether for-sale or rental) should not be concentrated in one location. Affordable housing should be integrated and indistinguishable from other market-rate residential and sustained by relationships and the ability to network within neighborhoods. Concentrations of affordable housing over 10% (I thought this was 20%) are not typically recommended.

- ❖ **George Samuels Comment:** Perhaps senior housing can be located along the corridor in place of the existing car wash.

Cecily Bedwell Response: It could; we were showing it back from Route 9 away from the roadway and associated with and within walking distance of the Library.

- ❖ **Carrie Casey Comment:** We need to convince developers to come here and do market rate. Look at Darley Green in Claymont.

- ❖ **Lee Jarmon agrees;** the areas in Baltimore that have progressed with new development are incredible (specifically noted Cherry Hill and neighborhoods surrounding the hospital)

Cecily Bedwell Response: Yes, noted that the renovation of Cherry Hill was a Design Collective project.

Bill Swiatek Response: We need to be careful of creating an exclusionary development and make sure that some affordable units are in place. Affordability was one of the top things residents liked about the area.

Zoning

Caitlin O'Hara of Design Collective provided an overview of the zoning analysis and recommendations.

- Route 9 Existing Zoning:
 - Mix of Industrial, Commercial (Office and Retail), and Residential zoning; in some locations, the Industrial zones surround residential neighborhoods, such as Eden Park and Hamilton Park. These existing neighborhoods are in a sense “stuck” as the current zoning does not allow (buy out from) Industrial or Commercial uses.
- Route 9 Zoning Recommendations:
 - Emphasis will be placed on making Nodes 2-4 (shown on the Existing Zoning Plan) mixed-use, allowing Commercial (Office and Retail) as well as Residential.
 - Caitlin noted that Node 1 was being looked at for Commercial along/fronting Route 9 and Industrial to the east/closer to the Port.
 - Hamilton Park, just to the north of Node 2, was being discussed with WILMAPCO; should mixed-use reach out to it from Node 2, or, should it be rezoned Industrial?
 - ❖ Bill Swiatek Comment: noted that as it is currently surrounded by Industrial and close to I-495 that it seemed more suitable to change the zoning to Industrial, with support from residents.
 - ❖ Cecily Bedwell Comment: We need to be careful in rezoning to allow residents choice; choice to sell/move by allowing uses other than Residential, or, choice to stay. [Post Meeting add: In rezoning, we will also need to explore regulations to allow only certain acreage for redevelopment (so that it does not happen in a piecemeal fashion) and, measures to protect any residential that remains in the transition.
 - Caitlin showed an example of a Zoning Assessment for a Node, stating that this level of detail would be shown on the boards in the Public Workshop and asked for feedback on the layout/content from the Committee.
 - ❖ General Comments: Keep the Zoning Overview brief in the presentation; allow stakeholders to view the detail for the areas that they are most familiar with at the board stations. Be sure to define what a “Node” is or use a different term.
Cecily Bedwell/Caitlin O'Hara Response: We will be sure to introduce the concept of Nodes in the Planning Principles portion of the presentation and be brief in the Zoning Overview. There will also be Zoning Overview boards at the station for stakeholder's reference.
 - Caitlin and Bill also noted that Design Collective and WILMAPCO would be having a call with Marco Boyce of NCC Land Use, prior to the Public Workshop, to discuss zoning regulation options, the current county rezoning

effort, and how best to dovetail this Master Plan's work with the rezoning effort.

Transportation + Traffic

Carol Kachadoorian and John McCarthy of TDG presented (by phone call-in) an update on the Transportation and Traffic.

- Road Diet for Route 9 – Reallocate existing roadway to be multimodal and create an enhanced streetscape while maintaining existing and projected vehicle capacity. Roadways with less than 15,000 vehicles per day are good candidates for a road diet. Roadways with 15,000-20,000 vehicles per day may be candidates for a road diet, but require study. The Route 9 intersection at Cherry Hill is at 19,500, so this triggers a study.
- Traffic Analysis is being conducted along the Corridor, assuming a 1% growth rate/year for an overall 20 year growth period.
- Analysis will identify future traffic conditions and indicate appropriate improvements for the following 5 intersections:
 - Stamm Boulevard
 - Cherry Lane
 - Memorial Drive
 - Rogers Road
 - Terminal Avenue (gateway feature)
 - Plan - Incorporates a roundabout with a truck apron for trucks to easily navigate; Bus stop has been moved to better accommodate pedestrians and bus access
 - Section – Showing a road diet that would provide space for bikers, pedestrians, bus traffic, and still serve overflow of traffic; Center lane provides flexibility to accommodate overflow
 - Perspective Section (Existing) – Prioritizes motor vehicles and is overwhelming for pedestrians; Sidewalks are one-sided; Utility poles are constraints; Tremendous amount of impervious hardscape
 - Perspective Sections (Proposed Alternatives) – A range of low to high cost options; Alternative 1 and 2 provide a center median; Separated bike lanes are accommodated, but vary in design; additional pervious green space
 - Memorial Drive

❖ **Mike Hahn Comment:** In the assessment of Terminal Avenue area, are there a lot of utility conflicts? Concern for how utility companies will react.

Carol Kachadoorian and John McCarthy Response: There is the removal of street signals. There are no drainage changes or utilities for the most part in Option 1 and 2. Option 3 does require more extreme changes.

- ❖ Bill Swiatek Comment: The various intersection improvements show opportunities that will help address the dust concerns coming out of the DAQ analysis.
- ❖ Bill Swiatek Question: Will the center median encourage jaywalkers to stand in the center turn lane? May be better to keep the hardscape median to create a refuge for inevitable jaywalkers.

Carol Kachadoorian Response: Hardscape median may discourage these acts. Signalization, more frequent pedestrian crossings, and tighter cartways at the intersections will create a safer pedestrian experience and encourage pedestrians to cross in appropriate locations.

Cecily Bedwell Response: One of the goals of narrowing the distance curb-to-curb, as shown in TDG's options, is to reduce the crossing distance and time for pedestrians so that they do not get stranded in the middle of Route 9 and, with proper signal timing, have an adequate time to cross, for able-bodied people as well as those with strollers or with mobility impairments. (FYI post meeting: Just note that car traffic queues should also increase with lane removals, perhaps offsetting these benefits a bit.)

- Pedestrian + Bicycle Facilities
 - Important crossings across Route 9 and at major expressways
 - Connection along Garasches Lane
 - ❖ Carrie Casey Question: Can you provide us this information separately so that we can take a closer look and provide feedback?
- Transit Access Improvements
 - Connections between neighborhoods
 - Complete sidewalks between bus stops
 - Repair and widen sidewalks
 - Relocate some bus stops
 - Add roadway crossings between stops
 - Improve streetscape with lights and benches

- ❖ **Sophia Hanson Comment?:** Do you have examples of creative bus shelters we could recommend or specify along Route 9? Preferably affordable options?

Eric Pugliano Response: Size of facility needs to be ADA compliant. We are open to alternative ideas. We would conduct a ridership analysis to determine which locations have shelters or should be upgraded.

- Truck Management Recommendations
 - Support Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study
 - Recommendations in addition to the study include:
 - Support all recommendations in the Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study
 - Establish overnight parking locations
 - Update mapping software to show designated truck routes
 - Better signage & enforcement of designated truck routes
 - Establish commercial loading zones where appropriate
 - Establish more direct routes to the Port
- ❖ **Bill Swiatek Comment:** Show proposed new road from Garasches Lane to Terminal as a dashed line ; Same for Pigeon Point Road Extended (new direct routes)
- ❖ **Carol Kachadoorian Question:** How should this be labeled? Garasches Lane Extended (Potential)

Public Workshop #2

Cecily Bedwell discussed the agenda and format for Public Workshop #2, to be held November 29th @ 5:30pm.

- Presentation: 5:45-6pm
- Break-Out Stations: 6-7:30pm
 - Facilitators to be located at each station to answer questions; Each station will include an introduction board to describe overall goals of the station; community feedback will be noted
 - Overview + Public Outreach
 - Market Analysis
 - Traffic + Transportation
 - Development + Design
 - ❖ **Cecily Bedwell Comment:** Maybe “Development + Design” should be changed to “Development + Zoning”
 - ❖ **Bill Swiatek Question:** Are there any volunteers from the Steering Committee willing to help?
Tim Snow, Mike Hahn, and Carrie Casey volunteered.

Other Business Tasks

Bill Swiatek asked for any further comments.

- ❖ Mike Hahn Comment: There will be a separate webinar regarding the engineering and detail of the infrastructure improvements with DeIDOT. Mike emphasized the importance of the webinar with DeIDOT members so that the information is vetted prior to showing the community. He suggested being realistic and careful about the details shown to the public.
- ❖ Bill Swiatek Response: Yes
- ❖ Carrie Casey Question: You are also going to meet with the Land Use Department, correct? I would like to be there.
Bill Swiatek Response: Yes
- ❖ Bill Swiatek Question: Would anyone else like to be involved in the two webinars?
No response.

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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