

## MEETING MINUTES

date: September 15, 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)

Marco Boyce, New Castle County (NCC)

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

Gina Crist, Nemours Children's Health System

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)

Rob McLucas, New Castle County Police

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

James Parker, Oakmont Civic Association

Jane Rattenni, New Castle County (NCC)

LaToya Rodriguez, Police Athletic League (PAL) New Castle

George Samuels, Rose Hill Gardens Civic Association

Jaywann Saunders, Simonds Gardens Civic Association

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)

Steven Wang, RCLCO

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

### Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

#### *Introductions:*

Bill Swiatek welcomed attendees and asked for introductions.

### ***Previous Meeting Notes:***

Cecily Bedwell asked for any comments, revisions, or questions regarding the previous Steering Committee Meeting Notes. No questions or comments were identified.

- ❖ Mike Hahn approved the meeting minutes. Lee Jarmon seconded.

### ***Blueprint Communities Update***

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

- ❖ Sophia Hanson Comment: Mentioned that the Steering Committee is waiting on further updates.

### ***Schedule***

Bill Swiatek reviewed the upcoming schedule. Public Workshop #2 was originally planned to be held in September. The extensive public outreach, data collection, and transportation modeling has required the team to push the Public Workshop #2 to November 1<sup>st</sup> (tentatively). Bill noted that the design team is currently working on Task 4 (developing design alternatives), with the hope of completing Task 5 (final report) by the end of the year. Bill asked for any questions. No comments were made.

### ***Public Visioning***

Bill Swiatek summarized the summer outreach efforts that have taken place throughout the months following Public Workshop #1.

- Review of Active Outreach
- Online Website and Facebook – Outreach was not as successful as hoped. Both efforts did not reach a large number of people/ participants. 11 individuals completed the online survey; thousands were reached through Facebook.
- Summer Outreach
  - WILMAPCO compiled all data at Public Workshop #1 and targeted neighborhoods through the summer outreach activities that were underrepresented; special attention was also given to youth outreach
  - Events included Unity Day, Bingo, Kickboxing, Basketball, Park Program, Mobile Outreach; 184 individuals were engaged
    - 3 questions were asked:
      - What is special about the Route 9 Corridor?
      - What are the greatest challenges for the Route 9 Corridor?
      - What improvements do you suggest for the Route 9 Corridor?
    - Summary of results:
      - Places and Community (Special)
      - Crime and Transportation (Challenges)

- Transportation, Business/Amenities, and Public Safety (Improvements)
  - Identified Community Needs:
    - Enhancing and expanding existing community amenities
    - Eliminating chronic crime, such as drugs and prostitution
    - Reducing the environmental and health burdens created by industry, such as pollution and truck traffic
    - Maintaining affordable housing
    - Pursuing additional owner-occupied housing development, particularly senior housing
    - Adding additional retail development, including a catalytic anchor store, a bank, pharmacy, quality retail, and additional healthy food options
    - Supporting education and job access and growth
    - Fostering alternative transportation, enhancing streetscapes, and providing transportation connections between communities
    - Better highlighting the area’s rich history
    - Tying any future expansions of Wilmington’s seaport to sustainable housing, retail, office and industrial growth
  - A vision statement was created for the Route 9 Corridor based on all outreach: The Route 9 Corridor Master Plan envisions the strategic revitalization and redevelopment of the corridor to enhance economic opportunity and quality of life.
- Bill asked for the committee’s thoughts and opinions regarding feedback from the outreach conducted.
  - ❖ James Parker Comment: Would appreciate a follow-up study throughout the Dunleith neighborhood. At the time the survey was completed, a lot of crime had recently occurred in the neighborhood.
  - ❖ George Samuels Comment: Lighting improvements are being made in and around the park in Dunleith which will hopefully help to prevent crime.
  - ❖ Lee Jarmon Question – Have we analyzed locations where crime incidents have occurred and what public safety measures (if any) have been implemented to determine and target appropriate recommendations for the corridor?  
Bill Swiatek Response: We have not, but will try to access these data and incorporate into the analysis

**Market Analysis Update**

Steven Wang said RCLCO's market analysis for the Route 9 Corridor targets real estate developers with a realistic program based on market demands/ trends and development solutions that are achievable.

- Residential: 11 condominium units and 10-15 townhouses (for-sale); 18-28 units (for-rent); larger for senior housing
- Retail: 7,400 sf; naturally occurring; opportunity to tie new development into the library node
- Office: 25-50k sf of development over the next 5-10 years
- Industrial: Total cumulative demand will be 3.3 million sf of development over the next 5-10 years; land is available adjacent to the Port and should not have an effect on the core of the corridor

❖ **Carrie Casey Question: What determined condominiums? What area is considered part of the library node?**

Steven Wang Response: The demographics and household growth of the area determines the market demand for condominiums.

Cecily Bedwell Response: A walkable distance is considered 1/4-1/2 mile radius around the new library development.

❖ **Carol Kachadoorian Question: Is there a particular demographic attracted to condominiums?**

Steven Wang Response: Typically, condominiums are attractive to those upsizing from a rental apartment who want to stay in the area (age 25-35) or downsizing from a single-family, detached home (age 55-65).

❖ **Lee Jarmon Comment: The Steering Committee will need more time to read through the market analysis.**

Steven Wang Response: We should create a forum that allows time for members of the Steering Committee to review the information and respond with any questions or comments they may have.

Bill Swiatek Response: please review the document and e-mail questions directly to us; we will also discuss any thoughts at the next steering committee meeting scheduled for October 13.

### ***Library Node Development***

Cecily summarized the various 5-10 and 10-20 year master plans for the library node based on the RCLCO market analysis.

- Review of existing Innovation District Master Plan (conducted by Holzman Moss Bottino Architecture, Studio Jaed, and Landmark Science & Engineering)
- Option 1 (5-10 years; short-term)
  - Senior housing is proposed east of the library building for ease of walkability and convenient access. A mixture of for-sale and rental housing surrounds the library site to expand the neighborhood framework and create stronger connections from the existing neighborhoods to the library node. A small amount of retail with office

above is proposed along Route 9, north of the library to establish a mixed-use development that begins to provide a wide-range of amenities. An interconnected street and open space network provides opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle routes between Rose Hill Community Center, the library, and residential neighborhoods.

- Option 2 (5-10 years; short-term)
  - The senior housing is proposed south of the library building, leaving the potential for a future development site as shown in the Innovation District Master Plan. The program for Option 2 is similar to Option 1, except for a slight loss in rental townhouses due to the repositioning of the senior housing.
  
- Option 1 (10-20 years; long-term)
  - Focuses long-term development around the library node with the hope that initial development will drive additional incentives for more development. Retail and mixed-use development (retail with office above) is concentrated along Route 9 transforming surface parking lots and underutilized land. Residential is expanded to the south adjacent to West Avenue with the potential for a hotel highlighted at the intersection of West Avenue and Route 9.
    - ❖ *Comment: Detailed parking analysis regarding shared parking should be conducted based on existing tenants – particularly on the western side of SR 9 - and proposed development.*

Bill suggested that these options be shown to the community for feedback at the Public Workshop #2. Bill asked the Steering Committee for any objections prior to showing the public.

- ❖ *James Parker Comment: Concern for additional rental program as rental properties in the area have been problematic. There is skepticism regarding future rental properties.*
- ❖ *Sophia Hanson Comment: Facility management and maintenance plays a critical role in establishing a clean, safe, and livable environment.*

### ***Transportation Preview***

Carol Kachadoorian summarized transportation initiatives completed since Public Workshop #1.

- Community input identified an overall need to update, expand, and improve the existing transportation network.
- Toole Design Group is taking a 2-step approach:
  - Traffic Analysis – To demonstrate appropriate/ feasible solutions
  - Design Concepts – Providing options for the right-of-way along Route 9
    - Proposed Intersection Plans

- Terminal Avenue: The proposed scheme incorporates a round-a-bout to create a more monumental gateway into the corridor, while still accommodating room for truck circulation and access. The round-a-bout will be designed to slow traffic and create greater visibility for pedestrians crossing the street. A bike lane and planted, swale buffer will be incorporated along either side of the right-of-way north and south of the round-a-bout. The proposal is consistent with Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study.
  - ❖ Cecily Bedwell Comment: Intersections that have heavier pedestrian traffic should not include a round-a-bout condition. A signalized intersection to stop traffic is more ideal and encouraged.
  - ❖ Mike Hahn Comment: The entry drive to the industrial parcel along the west side of the round-a-bout will not be permitted. The egress to this parcel will need to be relocated.
- Rogers Road: The proposed scheme reconfigures Rogers Road as a 90 degree intersection with Route 9 to create stronger site lines and capture space. Land to the south would be redeveloped into a park for the community. Bus facilities along Route 9 will be accommodated along the eastern edge near this intersection.
  - ❖ James Parker Comment: How will traffic timing be affected by the proposed changes? There are tremendous traffic issues in this specific location.  
Carol Kachadoorian Response: We will have to review the traffic analysis and determine appropriate improvements to the traffic timing in response to the realignment.
- Memorial Drive: The proposed scheme adds a round-a-bout to create a southern gateway to the corridor and an anchor to the Innovation District/ library node. On-street parking is provided along either side of the right-of-way to encourage a park-once mentality. Street trees and pedestrian accommodations are also included.
  - ❖ Sandra Smithers Question: Would the speed limit be altered in response to the proposed changes?  
Bill Swiatek Response: these features will help to physically slow speeds without relying on the police to enforce the speed limit.
- Memorial and Karlyn Drive: The proposed cross-section maintains the existing width along the length of Memorial Drive and converts one of the travel lanes in each direction. Crosswalks are incorporated at the intersection.
  - ❖ Mike Hahn Comment: The TDG proposal limits the opportunity to expand the roadway if necessary in the future.

DeIDOT will require added lane capacity if development improvements increase traffic in the area.

Carol Kachadoorian Response: Traffic analysis long-range still does not require current road conditions.

- ❖ Sophia Hanson Comment: There is a concern for single lane streets.

Carol Kachadoorian Response: We can show alternative design schemes that take this into consideration.

- ❖ Sophia Hanson Comment: There is also a concern for navigating round-a-bouts with the high traffic volumes in our area. Showing successful precedents with similar traffic conditions would help ease this concern.

- Cherry Lane: The proposed scheme adds a round-a-bout and incorporates a multi-use sidewalk that runs along the center of a landscaped median. The median extends from the Cherry Lane round-a-bout to the Memorial Drive round-a-bout.

- ❖ Mike Hahn Comment: Route 72 and 1 will have a similar design and is a good precedent for Cherry Lane. He completely supports and encourages this proposal.

- Proposed Right-of-Way Scenarios for Route 9

- Option 1: Repurpose parking lane into a buffered bike lane on either side
- Option 2: Center median is narrowed and converted to turn lane. The parking lane is converted into a buffered bike lane on either side. A planting zone is added between the buffered bike lane and existing sidewalk. There is no need to move curb and change underground infrastructure which saves costs.

- ❖ Bill Swiatek Comment: The buffered bike lane could be used as a travel lane in an emergency, such as a general evacuation.

- Option 3: Center median is narrowed and converted to turn lane. A parking lane and travel lane is converted into a buffered bike lane and planted swale on either side. A planting zone is added between the bike lane and existing sidewalk, leaving a single lane of traffic on either side. Major infrastructure improvements would be required.

- ❖ Bill Swiatek Comment: The concern with this option is that it does not allow for a space for cars/trucks when they break down. When they do, it will block all traffic. A shoulder/lane of some type should be provided as a breakdown lane.

- Proposed Bike/Path Facilities – Creating a dense network that provides connections along and across Route 9 to access neighborhoods and amenities throughout the corridor.

- The bike facilities identified will include a variety of solutions: shared-use paths, separated bike lane, designated bike lanes, sharrows, and signed bike routes.
  - ❖ DCI to edit map: Identify access through the park as existing NOT proposed

### **Public Workshop #2**

Bill Swiatek will coordinate another Steering Committee Meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup> @ 4:30pm to discuss Public Workshop #2's (tentatively held for November 1<sup>st</sup>) agenda and format for presenting the design scenarios.

- Step 1: The design team will need to determine if traffic analysis is ready in time for Public Workshop #2 by the end of this month
- Step #2: The design team and Steering Committee should review the information shown to the community for review/ feedback.
  - ❖ Bill Swiatek Comment: I'm fine with showing three options. I want the steering committee's review of the content prior to showing the public.
  - ❖ Cecily Bedwell Comment: It may be best to show the community Option 1 (the base scenario) for each intersection improvement and then break out into stations for targeted feedback related to all alternative design concepts.

### **Other Business Tasks**

Bill Swiatek asked for any further comments.

- ❖ Mike Hahn Question: Is any additional information needed from DelDOT.

Bill Swiatek Response: The design team will be in touch to schedule a separate meeting to review the traffic analysis.

No additional comments were noted.

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



