

Working Group Meeting #1

December 11, 2013

Meeting Summary

Brandywine Conference Room, DTC's Beech Street Administration Building
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM.

The first meeting of the Wilmington Transit Moving Forward Working Group was held on December 11, 2013 from 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM. Ken Goon and Andrew Bing of the Project Team welcomed and introduced the Working Group members and the Project Team. Ken and Andrew led the Working Group meeting presentation and discussion by providing an overview of DTC transit, the role and goals of the Working Group, a review of the overall transit topics, and an open discussion on transit topics 1 -13 (see below). The following is a summary of the Working Group Meeting:

Welcome and Introductions

- Andrew Bing opened the meeting by asking each member of the Working Group to introduce him or herself. Andrew then reviewed the agenda and identified each of the handouts:
 - Meeting #1 Agenda
 - Updated Advisory Group Member Contact List
 - Advisory Group Meeting # 1 Meeting Summary
 - Working Group Member Contact List
 - Working Group list of Transit Topics
 - Copy of PowerPoint Presentation
 - Tabs for binder for each Working Group Meeting

Working Group Role/Participation

- Andrew reviewed the role of the Working Group which is to assist the Project Team in a more detailed assessment of the transit topics discussed during the Advisory Group Meetings.
- The scheduled dates for the five Working Group meetings are:
 - Meeting #1 – December 11, 2013
 - Meeting #2 – January 2014
 - Meeting #3 – February 2014
 - Meeting #4 – March 2014
 - Meeting #5 – April 2014
- A brief review of the ground rules that were handed out and discussed at the first Advisory Group Meeting was held to ensure that all Working Group members have an opportunity to speak and are respectful of each other and the project team.
- The Working Group recommended that the Project Team develop a “Mission Statement” that will state the goal for the project and of the Working Group.
- The Project Team will prepare a Mission Statement in advance of the next Working Group meeting.

Transit Topics

- The Working Group was informed that the transit topics that were presented and the additional transit topics identified at the first Advisory Group Meeting on November 18th, 2013 were reorganized to help facilitate the discussion through each of the five Working Group meetings.

- Thirteen transit topics were organized into three sub-categories for discussion purposed during Working Group Meetings # 1 and 2.
- The focus of the transit topics for Working Group meetings # 1 were Downtown Transit Hubs and Corridors.
- Each of the initial 13 transit topics were discussed later in the meeting and each Working Group member had the opportunity to provide comments on each topic.
- The following were the 13 topics identified for discussion during Working Group Meetings 1 and 2.

Downtown Transit Hubs and Corridors

Transit Hubs

1. Rodney Square as a transit hub
2. Amtrak Station as a transit hub
3. Redistribution of bus routes and bus stops from Rodney Square along King Street
4. Potential for multiple downtown transit hubs
5. Rail, DTC bus and intercity bus connections at one location
6. Layover locations where buses would not serve customers, but would only be awaiting their next trip

Transit Corridors

7. Orange Street, Shipley Street or Walnut Street as a Transit Corridor
8. Potential for transit corridor link between downtown transit hubs

Transit Service Quality

9. Noise level from DTC buses
10. Downtown Amenities
 - Enclosed shelters with better lighting
11. Cleanliness of bus stops
12. Safety at bus stops
13. ADA Accessibility

Background Presentation for Transit Topics 1 -13

- Ken provided an overview of DTC's transit services highlighting bus routes that serve Wilmington, Rodney Square and the Amtrak station.
- The overview presentation included tables identifying each bus route and the area it serves, daily ridership, frequency of service and number of trips per day.
- An interactive system map of DTC's bus routes was displayed that could provide street level details on each route, if needed, during the open discussion of the transit topics.
- There was additional discussion on the bus stops along King Street and what the years and number of trips represented in the summary table.
 - DTC's final phase of the redistribution of bus stops along King Street will occur after the Wilmington Library opens in February 2014

Open Discussion on Transit Topics

- The focus of the remainder of the meeting was the discussion of each of the thirteen transit topics.
- A brief discussion was held on how the remainder of the meeting would progress and the anticipated time of discussion allotted for each topic.

- The Project Team reminded the Working Group members that these transit topics were identified through prior studies and through interviews with stakeholders and NOT developed by the Project Team.

1 – Rodney Square as a Transit Hub

- Prior to the discussion of the Rodney Square transit topic it was emphasized that this did not reflect that a decision had already been made that Rodney Square would remain as a transit hub. Rather, the focus of the topic was on how Rodney Square functions today and the pros and cons of Rodney Square as a transit hub. The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

Pros:

- Centrally located and well known
- Serves riders in a concentrated area
- Easy to make a connection
- Wide streets can accommodate
- Familiarity
- Safety; people feel secure with amount of open space
- Public space and bound by three large boulevards
- Rodney Square has become iconic as a transit hub

Cons:

- Premier civic space and overwhelmed
 - Buses can't layover
 - Disrupts traffic during peak hours
 - Changes ambience of what was a historic square
 - Does not have transit amenities
 - Does not have high peak periods in morning and afternoon rush?
 - Double stacking of buses; equates to difficult access particularly for disabled
 - Lack of consistency and signed locations
 - Difficult to cross streets for disabled pedestrians
 - Confusing and lacking in customer information for not regular riders
 - Greatly increases travel time
 - Shifting of jobs away from Rodney Square
 - No parking provided; constrained area; not multi-modal
 - Too many buses
 - Historically – put in wrong place; it was designed as a public gathering location
 - It's not connected to the train station
 - Transportation should a positive impact on city
 - Create more tax revenue in downtown
 - Negative effects on local economy
 - Buses create barrier leading to opportunity for drug dealing and crime
 - Eliminates social activities at the square
- There was a discussion on the availability of transfer data to help identify transfers occurring at Rodney Square.
 - DTC is currently finalizing the results of an origin-destination survey that will provide information on the transit customer travel patterns.

- The Working Group members felt that once the O/D data is available it should provide better information on where transfers are occurring to help identify hub locations.
- A follow-up item for the project team will be to provide more information and examples of transit hubs at the next Working Group meeting.

2 – Amtrak Station as a Transit hub

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- Connector to rail and bus transportation
- Area needs to be restructured; Geography; Land Use; Vehicular Circulation
- Accessibility
- Multi-modal service – must have hub at Amtrak or a good connection between Amtrak and hub
- Land near Amtrak to have an off-street hub
- Amtrak not convenient to employment centers; not centrally located to businesses
- Transit hub at Amtrak is functioning well today
- Enough space for buses to transfer at a hub
- Amtrak station does not have to be the end point of service as hub, service can continue to downtown
- Can people outside of the city use rail; do not have an efficient way to use rail in the city
- Rail and buses to get people from outside of the city into downtown
- Enhancing regional rail service
- Consideration of regional light rail to support the transportation and economic development framework
- Separate bus commuters vs rail commuters
- In addition to the comments received, it was noted that wherever the hub is located it needs to connect to the Amtrak Station.

3 – Redistribution of bus routes and bus stops from Rodney Square along King Street

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- Can there be fewer bus trips along King Street and still satisfy needs?
- Must increase transfers and the frequency of buses
- Movement of bus routes and bus stops; must take into consideration the customer
- Movement of bus stops could relocate the congestion problem
- Results from O/D Study may provide direction for redistribution
- Distance between transfer points important for mobility

4 – Potential for multiple downtown transit hubs

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- May be desirable; More than 1 preferable but need a good connection between the two
- Realistic on goals of multiple hubs
- Provide examples that might work in Wilmington
- Bus hub that is off street; DART would have control of that space
- Analyze where your transfers are taking place; demand analysis
- Wilmington has small downtown; limited off street opportunities
- Does the hub need to be in downtown?

5 – Rail, DTC bus and intercity bus connections at one location

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- Alternative Bus (New York and Atlantic City shuttles) - 4th and Market Street – Inconvenient to businesses but convenient to users
- Markets may be different
- All modes should have good connection with DTC buses

6 – Layover locations where buses would not serve customers, but would only be awaiting their next trips

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- A description of what a “layover” is considered in transit terms was discussed
 - Front Street for layovers

7 – Orange Street, Shipley Street or Walnut Street as a Transit Corridor

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- Shipley Street – because of loading zones – does not make a good corridor
- Traffic volumes on street are an important consideration
- Do not think any of these three streets are good corridors
- Orange and Walnut already serve as transit corridors
- Orange works well because of straight shot and limited loading
- Walnut is a residential street – concerns of buses being on street – north of 12th street
- There was discussion regarding what defines a transit corridor and how would it operate. The project team will follow-up with examples at the next meeting.

8 – Potential for transit corridor link between downtown transit hubs

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- High frequency
- Must be direct connections

9 – Noise Level from DTC buses

The following are the comments received from the Working Group:

- All members agreed that transit buses are noisy, but not unexpected
- The WG discussed consideration for alternative fuel vehicles such as hybrids and CNG buses to help

10 – Downtown Amenities (Enclosed shelters with better lighting)

11 – Cleanliness of bus stops

12 – Safety at bus stops

13 - ADA accessibility

- The remaining 4 transit topics (#10, 11, 12 and 13) were all similar in nature and were all open for discussion at one time

- The Working Group members agreed that safety, cleanliness and accessibility at all bus stops was an important issue that merited more discussion
- The following are the comments received from the Working Group:
 - Lighting is important and a safety issue
 - Important issue along all routes; may increase ridership
 - Not only specific to downtown
 - Appropriate curb cuts to get to bus stops safely
 - Stop light sequencing for disabled to get across street
 - Replacing bus shelter glass
 - Overflowing trash
 - Paint touched up
 - Metal deterioration on shelters from urine
 - Bad reflection on the city and transit
 - Does not make transit appear desirable
 - Expand adopt a shelter program
 - Community needs to be on board
 - Digital real time information at bus stops
 - Buses to announce stops – articulate at transfer points
 - Sensitivity training of bus drivers
 - Adherence to appropriate design standards at and near bus stops

Follow-up Required for Working Group Meeting #2

- Presentation on examples of various types of transit hubs and transit corridors
- Definition of purpose and need for a transit hub

Next Meeting of Working Group

- January 22, 2014 from 3:00 – 5:00 PM
- The Working Group members present urged the project team to start the meeting on time at 3:00. The project team committed to starting on time and reminded each Working Group member to arrive on time.

Meeting Materials Provided

- Meeting #1 Agenda
- Updated Advisory Group Member Contact List
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- Working Group Member Contact List
- Working Group list of Transit Topics
- Copy of PowerPoint Presentation
- Tabs for binder for each Working Group Meeting

Attendees

See the list of attendees following this page



Working Group Members Present

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Email	Phone
Carol	Aiken	NCC Community Advisors Committee	aiken_carol@yahoo.com	302-655-5580
Jerry	Bilton	Community Services Building	JABilton@aol.com	302-229-3266
Dave	Blankenship	City of Wilmington, Department of Public Works	dblanken@WilmingtonDE.gov	302-576-3084
Rob	Buccini	The Buccini/Pollin Group	rbuccini@bpggroup.net	302-691-2138
Darlene	Cole	EDTAC	Darlene.Cole@state.de.us	302-255-9846
David	Dooley	DTC	david.dooley@state.de.us	302-576-6064
Jim	Eversman	Wilmington Initiatives	jimwpa@aol.com	302-420-1984 302-984-0130
Carrie	Gray	Wilmington Renaissance Corporation	carrie@BigIdeasWilmington.com	302-425-5500
Dave	Gula	WILMAPCO	dgula@wilmapco.org	302-737-6205
John	Janowski	New Castle County	JPJanowski@nccde.org	302-395-5426
Gwinn	Kaminsky	City of Wilmington, Department of Planning	gkaminsky@wilmingtonde.gov	302-576-3105
Albert	Loyola	DTC	albert.loyola@state.de.us	TBD
Nancy	Mazaris	Neighborhood Planning Council, 2nd District	Mazaris@earthlink.net	302-562-8518
Kathy	McCool	EDTAC	Clancy118@aol.com	302-545-1721
Megan	McGlinchey	Riverfront Development Corporation	mmcglinchey@riverfrontwilm.com	302-425-4890
Will	Minster	Main Street Wilmington	wminster@downtownvisions.org	302-425-5373 302-383-1199
Charlie	Moulds	DTC	charlie.moulds@state.de.us	302-576-6201
Rich	Palmer	DeIDOT	richard.palmer@state.de.us	302-326-4411 302-540-4256
Ray	Petrucci	DeIDOT	raymond.petrucci@state.de.us	302-760-2281 302-242-6751
John	Rago	City Council	jrago@wilmingtonde.gov	302-576-2149
Harold	Schneikert	Neighborhood Planning Council, 8th District	haroldschneikert@comcast.net	302-652-8322
Stan	Soja	Wilmington Parking Authority	ssoja@wilmingtonparking.com	302-655-4442
Lenny	Sophrin	City of Wilmington, Mayor's Office	lsophrin@WilmingtonDE.gov	302-576-2109
Barbara	Washam	Council of Transportation	yvonne101@verizon.net	302-654-1509
Tigist	Zegeye	WILMAPCO	tzegeye@wilmapco.org	302-737-6205

Working Group Members Absent

David	Batchelder	Neighborhood Planning Council, 6th District	Davebatch66@hotmail.com	302-576-3012
Bud	Freel	DeIDOT	Bud.freel@state.de.us	302-577-5100
Herb	Inden	Office of State Planning Coordination	herb.inden@state.de.us	302-577-5188 302-242-1481
Larry	Manuel	Wilmington Free Library	larry@lib.de.us	302-571-7402
Cathy	Smith	DTC	cathy.smith@state.de.us	302-576-6071
Julie	Theyerl	DTC	julie.theyerl@state.de.us	302-576-6005



Project Team Members Present

Carolann	Wicks	RK&K	cwicks@rkk.com	302-468-4881
Ken	Goon	RK&K	kgoon@rkk.com	410-462-9314
Steve	McCarthy	RK&K	smccarthy@rkk.com	302-468-4875
Kim	Troiani	RK&K	ktroiani@rkk.com	302-468-4874
Andrew	Bing	Kramer & Associates	abing@kramerassociates.net	410-268-3035
Tamika	Graham	WILMAPCO	tgraham@wilmapco.org	302-737-6205
Randi	Novakoff	WILMAPCO	rnovakoff@wilmapco.org	302-737-6205