

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Westside Community Center

Monday, August 6, 2012

6 – 8 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

- The project was introduced as a collaborative effort among El Paso County, the Cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, and the Colorado Department of Transportation.
- The consultant team leading this effort includes the local firms of Felsburg, Holt and Ullevig (FHU), NES, Summit Economics, NV5 and Bachman pr.
- In addition to representatives from the consultant team, present at the meeting were:

| Name | Organization/Resident | Name | Organization/Resident |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Chris Baum | Organization of Westside Neighbors | Andre Brackin | El Paso County |
| Al Brody | Bike Colorado Springs | Commissioner Sallie Clark | El Paso County |
| Pete Coggeshall | Resident | Mike Crepeau | Hotel San Ayre |
| Mel Dahlberg | Citizen | Linda Day | Citizen |
| Kristin Flannery | Colorado Springs Utilities | Michael Flannery | Resident |
| Bob Fling | Resident | Nancy Fortuin | Resident |
| Robert Frei | Colorado Department of Transportation | Marcia Frye | Resident |
| Mary Gallivan | Grandview Neighborhood Watch | Beverly Johnson | Garden of the Gods Campground |
| Kenyon Jordan | Westside Pioneer | Margie Klimczak | Days Inn Manitou Springs |
| J A Knickerbocker | Resident | Kathleen Krager | Colorado Springs |
| Bonnie Lapora | Grandview Neighborhood Watch | Lisa Lundquist | Resident |
| Phil Marne | Resident | Christine Marne | Resident |
| Dave Munger | Council of Neighbors and Organizations | Chief Joe Ribeiro | Manitou Springs Police Department |
| Commander Pat Rigdon | Colorado Springs Police Department | Tim Roberts | Colorado Springs |
| Liz Rockwell | Resident | Jocelyne Sansing | Pikes Peak Library District |
| Gary M Snyder | Resident | Carol Schmitz | Resident |
| Dave Van Ness | Old Colorado City Association | Cary Vogrin | Papa Murphy's Pizza |
| Pattye Volz | Cheyenne Edition | Dave Watt | Colorado Department of Transportation |

*Consultant team members in attendance were: Bob Felsburg, Todd Frisbie, Steve Murray and Jessica Myklebust from FHU; Tim Seibert from NES; Mike Anderson from Summit Economics; and Lisa Bachman and Barry Grossman from Bachman pr.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A short presentation was given on project goals, purpose and process.

The goals for the project include:

- Provide Safe and Efficient Transportation
- Create Link Between Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs
- Create Catalyst for:
 - Economic Revitalization
 - Other Corridor Improvements
- Engage Stakeholders and Citizens

The purpose of the project is to:

- Assess Existing Conditions
- Evaluate/ Screen Multi-modal Alternatives
- Prepare Conceptual Design and Cost Estimates
- Develop Strategic Plan for Project Implementation

Aspects of the corridor not directly part of this study:

- Crime, Panhandling, Homelessness
- Annexation
- Jurisdictional code enforcement
- Fountain Creek Channel Improvements
- Rebranding the community with a new name
- Improvements resulting from the US 24 Environmental Assessment

SCHEDULE AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The project has a 10 to 11 month schedule (extended due to delays resulting from the Waldo Canyon fire) and will include a total of three stakeholder workshops. The next two workshops will be this fall and winter 2013. The importance of participating in all three workshops in order to bring their constituent's suggestions to the workshops and keep them informed as the study progresses was emphasized. The roles of the stakeholders are:

- Represent/speak on behalf of organizations, agencies and/or constituencies with an interest in or who may be impacted by the project
- Actively participate in stakeholder meetings and public open houses
- Review and provide input to the evaluation process and project deliverables
- Work toward informed consent

COMMUNITY VALUES WORKSHOP

Participants were shown a short video on the project that was produced by El Paso County. To guide participants in their discussions during the workshops, definitions of "value" and "issue" were given:

- Issue – a matter of public or personal concern
- Value – something deeply important to a group or community

To help participants focus discussion, a presentation with various examples of community values, such as historic preservation, pedestrian focus and strong community identity, was given. The group gave input on community values and issues.

The following is a compilation of the input given during the Community Values workshop:

- Sustainability
 - Collaboration between Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs

Stakeholder Meeting Summary

August 6, 2012

Page 3

- A support corridor as well as a destination (restaurants, lodging, shops)
- A corridor to support existing businesses
- Single jurisdiction
- Low-cost solutions
- A unique “green” district
- Make this an urban renewal project
- Examine segments and blocks separately (each has a unique nature)
- Capitalize on location in the center of several natural destinations/attractions (Red Rocks Canyon Park, Garden of the Gods, the Incline, Pikes Peak, Old Colorado City, Manitou Springs)

- Promote/celebrate historical nature of the corridor. Tell the “story”
 - Museums
 - Informational Displays
 - Architectural treatments

- Safety
 - Focus on public safety
 - Efficient public safety movement of all users (pedestrian, bicyclists, vehicles, etc.)
 - Accommodate emergency response agencies/responders (particularly in light of evacuations during Waldo Canyon Fire)
 - Transition away from undesirable uses

- User Mobility
 - Comfortable pedestrian environment
 - Walkable
 - Streetscapes (banners, sitting areas, lighting, patterned concrete)
 - Effective way finding/signage to local attractions (signage, information kiosks)
 - Sidewalks/crosswalks
 - Link Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs with wide sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles
 - Encourage greater pedestrian interaction with surrounding attractions
 - Segregate pedestrians, cyclists from vehicle traffic (mobility safety)
 - A seamless connection and transportation modes between two historic districts of Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs
 - Provide for, or don’t preclude option to add, several forms of mobility (Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, Streetcar, pedestrian and bicycle)
 - Make it easy for cyclists and pedestrians to transit corridor
 - Slow traffic speeds
 - Landscaping to help slow traffic
 - Americans with Disabilities Act compliant
 - Accessibility to transit

- Livability
 - Landscaping/trees
 - Public gathering places
 - Outdoor restaurant features
 - Bikeway/Trail enhancements

- Civic plazas (pedestrian only areas)
- Family-friendly accommodations/activities, make it easy for families to reach surrounding destinations
- Aesthetically beautiful (amenities, lighting, pedestrian accommodations)
- Variety of housing options (comments were submitted by email following the meeting):
 - Maintain existing neighborhoods
 - More compact housing options such as townhomes, condos, patio homes and garden homes and lofts
 - Housing options for the “empty nesters” who seek single-story living without the burden of responsibility for maintenance or landscaping
- Arts
 - Public art
 - Architectural themes
- Redevelopment and economic revitalization
 - Assure good access to businesses
 - Repurpose existing facilities vs. building new
 - Mixed-use as the market allows
 - Infill/higher density/compact
 - Transit-Oriented Development, but make sure it’s successful even without transit
 - Lay the foundation to attract businesses similar to those in Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs
 - Focus on quality hotels, restaurants and shops to force undesirable businesses out
 - Business nature
 - Destination:
 - Retail: Small shops/organic, service, grocery
 - Hotels/Motels
 - Restaurants
 - Entertainment
- Community image/community information
 - Create a new brand/identity for the community
 - Provide public information kiosks
- Parking
 - Ensure adequate parking is available
- Creek District/Parks/Greenways:
 - Mixed-used zoning along the creek to accommodate retail, restaurants, hotels and housing
 - Public gathering places
 - Parks
 - Water amenities
 - A walkway/path to enable interaction with Fountain Creek
 - Emphasize creek front

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES/ISSUES WORKSHOP

An overview of the issues that have been heard at previous meetings was presented. In order to focus discussion during the Issues Workshop, the participants were asked to discuss issues that have not already been mentioned.

The following is a list by segment of issues previously mentioned plus additional issues given during the Issues Workshop:

Segment 1 (US 24 to Beckers Lane):

- Previously mentioned issues:
 - Too many curb cuts
 - Little separation between parking areas and road
 - No non-motorized facilities
 - Speeds too high
 - Lack of drainage infrastructure
 - Blighted conditions
 - Lack of landscaping
 - Lack of sidewalks and crosswalks
 - Constrained corridor – buildings close to road
 - Too many signs

- Additional issues identified:
 - Lack of clear wayfinding signage to attractions
 - Adequate infrastructure to accommodate traffic in emergency situations
 - Improvements in this section may require improvements on the west side of the interchange
 - RV traffic requires wider lanes
 - Sewage connections across creek are inadequate
 - Wide road encourages faster vehicle speeds

Segment 2: (Beckers to 33rd)

- Previously mentioned issues:
 - Creek erosion
 - Bridge at Columbia Road too narrow
 - Inadequate traffic control at intersections
 - Confusing intersection at Columbia Road
 - Ridge Road intersection needs improvements
 - Inadequate transit facilities
 - Historic structures near road
 - Missing trail connections (Midland)
 - Narrow right-of-way
 - Need to protect existing vegetation
 - Sewer lines across creek are inadequate

- Additional issues identified:
 - Adequate infrastructure to accommodate traffic in emergency situations
 - RV traffic requires wider lanes
 - Storm sewer system is inadequate

- Above issue stating “need to protect existing vegetation” will be changed to read “need to protect existing vegetation planted and maintained by property owners.”
- Little separation between parking areas and road.
- Parking

Segment 3: (33rd to 31st)

- Previously mentioned issues:
 - Deficient traffic capacity
 - Lack of on-street bicycle lanes
 - Need to coordinate improvements with other bridge/drainage projects
 - RV traffic requires wider lanes
 - Sidewalks obstructed by utilities
- Additional issues identified:
 - Adequate infrastructure to accommodate traffic in emergency situations
 - The majority of the turn movements occur to/from the west

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS

- The image/perception of the area is both an issue and a value.
- Segment 1 is not as blighted as other segments but still needs improvements.
- Transportation system changes could potentially require changes to Manitou Avenue into Manitou Springs and Colorado Avenue into Old Colorado City.
- The condition of segment 2 is a good example of why news media refer to the corridor as “No Man’s Land.”
- Can the Manitou Springs Urban Renewal District be utilized in El Paso County and/or Colorado Springs?
 - Response: It cannot. The Urban Renewal designation for Manitou Springs is only available within Manitou Springs city limits. Counties are not able to use Urban Renewal and its tools. Land would need to be annexed either into Manitou Springs or Colorado Springs before Urban Renewal can be used as a tool.
- Would the cities and the county be willing to consider moving the creek or road to make the land more usable in order to attract new development?
 - Response: Manitou Springs is considering these types of options with regards to land use. The ability to consider moving the creek or the road alignment will largely depend on private sector interests. However, potential transportation solutions will consider these opportunities.
- Annexation is an issue that should be considered.
 - Response: a decision on annexation is not part of this study. However, after the study is completed and recommended improvements are constructed, it is likely that Manitou Springs and/or Colorado Springs would be interested in annexing the right-of-way of Colorado Avenue. This step would clarify roadway maintenance responsibilities and could be the first step into annexing adjacent land.
- May the Stakeholder Committee make recommendations to the sponsor entities?
 - Response: Yes.

- Existing master plans will be reviewed and development potential will be evaluated in considering utility changes in the corridor.
- Since economic development in the corridor is an issue, does the Avenue Merchants Association have a role in economic development?
 - Response: The association does play a role in economic development in the sense that it looks for ways to attract new business to the area. This is why they support efforts by The Avenue Task Force and Westside Avenue Action Plan because dealing with the panhandling and crime issues and improving the roadway infrastructure will be catalysts for economic development. In addition, these efforts have created synergy and cooperation among the jurisdictions which can only further encourage economic development in the corridor. The association can use economic development tools such as Business Improvement Districts, but this would require businesses in the area to agree to pay an additional tax to implement improvements in the corridor.
- Since the Waldo Canyon fire, traffic and visitors have declined in the corridor.