

## Park Hills Small Area Study

Task Force Meeting Minutes

Location: Park Hills Fire Department

Thursday, February 12, 2009

5:30 – 7:00 P.M.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Jay Bayer – City Engineer

Elizabeth Dickman – Local Business Owner – Dickman Realty

Diane Geiger – Civic Association

Joe Geiger – Civic Association

Michael Hellmann – Mayor

Ted Kleymeyer – City Council

Chuck McHale – Local Business Owner – Gardens of Park Hills

Phil Ryan – KCPC Representative

Evelyn Stubbs – Resident

Jenna Haverkos – NKAPC – Project Manager

James Fausz – NKAPC

### **ABSENT:**

Todd Berling – Local Architect

Dr. Mark Collett – Local Business Owner – Dog’s Day Grooming and Boarding

Bill Gregg – Local Business Owner – Reality Tuesday

Pam Spoor – Village Green Committee Chair

Leo Stamm – Local Business Owner – Fort Mitchell Garage

Steve Ryan – City Council

### **GUEST:**

Jeremy Falica – University of Cincinnati Planning Student

## **1. WELCOME AND JANUARY MINUTES**

The meeting began at 5:30 P.M. Ms. Haverkos briefly discussed absent Task Force members and then progressed to the January meeting minutes. Mayor Hellmann made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, and the motion was seconded by Mr. McHale. The motion passed 9-0.

## **2. REVIEW OF PUBLIC MEETING**

### ***a. Public Meeting Tables Discussion***

Ms. Haverkos entered into a discussion of the January 22 Public Meeting. She began by asking Task Force members who were present at the meeting tables to provide highlights of the public discussion. Mr. Kleymeyer started discussing comments at his Community Facilities table by stating that a lot of the conversation at his table centered around the amount of space Covington Catholic High School (CCHS) and

Notre Dame Academy (NDA) occupy within the study area. He also stated that people on the southeastern side of the city feel “cut off” from the city by Dixie Highway, and that it might be a good idea to move the city building to the corridor. He discussed the former access from Old State to Dixie Highway and that several people liked being able to walk from the neighborhood to the highway. He mentioned there was discussion about whether the parcels in the corridor were more valuable as greenspace or if they should be commercial. Mayor Hellmann stated he liked the idea of moving the city building to the corridor but had concerns about the cost to accomplish such a project. Finally, Mr. Kleymeyer mentioned people wanted gateway features to let them know when they enter Park Hills and some type of architectural theme to tie the corridor together and let them know they are still in the city.

Next, Mr. Geiger discussed public comments at their table regarding Land Use. He said there were three main points that stuck out in the discussions; the need for more parking, having an open area (behind Reality Tuesday) connected by a walking path from Old State to Dixie, and residents on the southeastern side want a central area on Dixie (similar to Hyde Park or Fort Thomas).

Mr. McHale spoke about public comments at the Streetscape & Transportation table by stating he believed people felt parking was a big concern, especially in the group consisting of business owners. He mentioned that bike lanes on Dixie Highway were discussed as being important to some of the groups. Connection to the neighborhood for bike and pedestrian traffic was also mentioned as an idea that should be considered. He also added that realigning the intersection at Arlington and Dixie and that adding the access drive behind existing businesses were thought of as good ideas by most of the people. He relayed that landscaping and streetscape improvements were important. Finally, Mr. Fausz briefly discussed the differences he saw in the three groups and that a majority of the people who participated at the table were open to ideas such as; bicycle/pedestrian facilities (curbs and sidewalks), landscape improvements, traffic calming strategies, creating a sense of place, and other large scale changes.

Near the end of the public meeting discussion Mayor Hellmann raised some concerns about moving the utility “backbone” by Duke Energy. He was concerned that moving utilities off Dixie Highway might enhance the corridor but be an eyesore in the neighborhood where the utilities would be moved. Ms. Haverkos explained that from her discussions with Duke she believed the visual impacts in the neighborhood would be minimal as the lines would be placed on existing utility poles.

## ***b. Visual Preference Survey***

Ms. Haverkos began the discussion by explaining the methodology for scoring the Visual Preference Survey (VPS). She informed the task force that some surveys were not tallied because they were not completely answered or the respondent circled more than one choice for the visualization. She then described that results were added together for Desirable / Most Desirable and Not Desirable / Least Desirable. Once these combined scores were computed staff looked for the difference between the two scores to indicate whether an option was desirable or not desirable.

Ms. Haverkos went on to discuss the transportation section of the VPS. She elaborated that no choices had positive scores, thus indicating that respondents felt all transportation options were undesirable on some level. She informed the task force that the option with the highest desirability was the existing road layout.

There was much discussion about on-street parking generated by the results of the VPS. Mr. Geiger stated he would not want to park along Dixie Highway because it is too heavily travelled and would not feel safe. Mr. McHale countered that reducing the number of lanes from four to two would slow traffic down and make on-street parking more feasible. Ms. Haverkos added that if a goal of the study is to create a destination then the idea of the thoroughfare needs to be reexamined in order to slow traffic to allow people to notice the area. Mr. McHale and Ms. Geiger liked the idea of traffic calming as presented in the *Planning Commissioner's Journal* parking case study. Several specifics regarding on-street parking layouts including parallel parking and diagonal bays along the corridor were discussed.

Mr. Fausz suggested it might be important to step back and look at the big picture at this point in the study. He added that if creating a destination is a goal then it might be beneficial to look at the larger idea of traffic calming devices such as reducing the number of lanes and adding on-street parking right now and deal with the specifics of these actions in the future.

Ms. Haverkos moved the discussion along and elaborated on additional results such as; streetscape, parking, and building massing, height and placement. She described that respondents preferred sidewalks separated from the roadway by a treelawn and street trees. Parking preferences all favored off-street surface lots, with the highest preference being for parking in front of businesses. She went on to discuss that respondents preferred groups of buildings in the building massing portion of the VPS. She informed the task force that respondents preferred buildings with a mix of stories ranging from one to three levels. Finally she discussed that respondents would prefer buildings set back from the roadway 60 feet to accommodate parking lots in front.

Mr. Fausz presented a visualization of the combined 3D model based upon results of the VPS. Ms. Haverkos stated staff felt the VPS provided a much different design from what was heard and interpreted from discussion at the tables. Ms. Dickman noted the highest ranking street layout (four travel lanes) would not fit with the goal of the study to create a destination because traffic could flow through the area too quickly. She also felt that unless the layout changed whatever happened alongside the roadway would not make much of a difference in creating a destination.

Ms. Stubbs commented that several people feel maintaining traffic flow when the Interstate is congested is important and questioned whether or not the city could take actions to reduce the volume of Dixie Highway. Ms. Haverkos stated that based on recommendations in the existing *Dixie Fix* study the task force should be more concerned about Dixie Highway rather than what happens on the Interstate. Mr. McHale also pointed out the section of Dixie Highway immediately to the north is currently two-lane.

### 3. FINALIZE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Ms. Stubbs moved the meeting along to a discussion of finalizing the Goals and Objectives of the study. The task force discussed some minor changes to wording and reached a final version of the Goals and Objectives as well as the Mission Statement. Mr. Kleymeyer made a motion to approve the Mission Statement and Goals and Objectives with the changes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Hellmann and the motion passed 9-0.

## 4. CONCEPT DIAGRAM

The task force entered into a round-table working session on the transportation section of the concept diagram. The theme of the discussion was identifying pathways in the corridor. Ideas were drawn on the map and it was decided that the group would work on additional parts of the concept diagram such as land use in a future meeting.

## 5. CASE STUDIES

Ms. Haverkos provided the task force with case study handouts to review before the next meeting. She stated the studies are to give the task force an idea of what other communities have done around the country.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Ms. Haverkos informed the task force of potential dates for Market Study presentations and stated that staff is working to coordinate dates and times with Crescent Springs. She pointed out the first date was tentatively set for February 26, 2009, two weeks from tonight's meeting. Ms. Haverkos also stated that staff is working toward an interim report, which will include a parking count survey, crime, and traffic data. She asked Mr. Ryan if he would be amenable to providing the Kenton County Planning Commission with monthly updates of the study's progress at their meetings. Mr. Ryan agreed to her request. Finally she asked Mayor Hellmann if he would contact Erlanger Dispatch to obtain specific crime information about the study area. Mayor Hellmann agreed to her request and asked if she would send an email regarding the specific information she wished to obtain. Ms. Haverkos stated the next task force meeting would be on March 12, 2009 starting at 5:30 P.M. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 P.M.