

Linden Gateway Small Area Study

Task Force Meeting Minutes

Location: Center for Great Neighborhoods

Thursday September 27, 2007

6:00-7:15 P.M

ATTENDANCE:

Rick Ludlum – Linden Grove Cemetery Board
Doug Chambers – St. Elizabeth Medical Center
Vada Smith – Westside Action Association
Helena Rodan – Owner of Crosstown Pub
Pete Nerone – Peaselsburg neighborhood resident
Betty Schumacher – Friends of Peaselsburg Neighborhood Association
David Foley – Southside Baptist Church
Chuck Eilerman – Kenton County Planning Commission
Rachel Hastings – Center for Great Neighborhoods
Adam Rockel – Center for Great Neighborhoods
Margert Aberseno – Center for Great Neighborhoods
Alex Weldon – Kenton County Planning Commission
Sharmili Sampath – Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission
Edward Dietrich – Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission
Adam Kirk – Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission

Those absent included:

Jack Toerner – American Sound and Electronics
Maureen Rabe – Blau Mechanical
Regina Haley – Westside Neighborhood Resident
Beth Robinson – City of Covington

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Task force members and staff introduced themselves. Copies of a revised timeline were handed out to the task force members. Ms. Sampath pointed out that the schedule of task force meetings has been revised slightly. The task force will meet next on Nov 29th, at 6 pm at the Center for Great Neighborhoods. There will be no meeting in December. Ms. Sampath said that beginning January the task force will meet every month on the last Thursday until July.

Ms. Sampath said that per the timeline the study is on schedule for completion in June. She said that staff intends to complete an Interim Report in time for review at the November task force meeting. This report will document all the items that have been accomplished including comments and concerns expressed at the first public meeting.



2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Sampath said that a copy of the minutes was emailed to task force members the week after the previous meeting. Ms. Schumacher made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 26th, 2007 meeting and Ms. Roden seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Ms. Sampath asked if anyone was interested in serving as chair and vice-chair of the Linden Gateway Study task force. Ms. Roden volunteered to serve as chair and Ms. Smith agreed to serve as vice-chair. The task force approved by a voice vote.

4. EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

Ms. Sampath started the review of the Existing Conditions Report explaining that it is a preliminary draft and asked everyone to email their comments by next Friday (Oct 5). She asked task force members to give any editing comments to staff later, but asked for comments on the content throughout the presentation.

Study Boundary

Ms. Sampath pointed out that the northern boundary of the study was modified to exclude the buildings that would be demolished after the widening of 12th Street. She pointed out that the buildings that would remain between Watkins and 12th Street were included within the study area.

12th Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan

Ms. Sampath said that the redevelopment plan was adopted by the City of Covington in 2004 to prepare ahead of the widening of 12th street. The study area for the plan included properties along 12th street from the Interstate to Scott Street. A few elements of the 12th Street Plan include:

- Interpretive/Linear Park between interstate and Main St.
- The removal of most buildings on the south side of street.
- 2 Historic buildings will be rehabbed and then relocated
- 3 levels of Gateways into 12th St
 - #1 at Jillians,
 - #2 at Russell Street
 - #3 at Lee and Holman Streets
- 2-lane widening of 12th Street to 4-lanes with a wide median and parking on both sides
- The median will be grass but the city can plant it if they want



The remainder of the area east of the 12th Street project will be covered by the Madison Avenue Form District Zoning project being carried out by NKAPC.

Ms. Sampath said that for the 12th street corridor the Linden Gateway Study will cover the area from the Interstate to the railroad bridge but will only focus on how to implement the recommendations for redevelopment that came from the 12th Street Plan. If any major changes are recommended for the 12th street corridor in the Linden Gateway study they will need to be justified according to KRS Chapter 99. Ms. Sampath said that copies of the 12th Street Redevelopment plan can be provided for those who would like to review it.

Historic Preservation

Ms. Sampath noted that the study area only contains one National Register District which is the Linden Grove Cemetery. The area also is home to three sites which are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These area the 5th District School/Academy Flats, the St. Augustine Church complex, and the Bavarian Brewery – also known as the Jillian’s Complex.

Mr. Nerone inquired about Historic Overlay Zones and the potential of one being established within the study area. Ms. Sampath responded that Historic Overlay Zones are different from the National Register of Historic Places in that overlay zones are guidelines which can determine such things as the exterior of buildings.

Ms. Weldon added that most of the City of Covington north of 8th Street is covered by Historic Overlay Zones and these guidelines are fairly general. The guidelines for 12th Street are a little more specific. Ms. Weldon mentioned that each district designs an overlay specific to their neighborhood and their needs. Often the concern of people within an overlay zone is that the district restricts what they can do to their property. Property values typically go up much faster when they are within a historic overlay zone. If an overlay zone is wanted for the study area the residents will be involved in establishing it and the specifics of the guidelines. The city will want a large citizen approval rating for such an overlay to be created. Ms. Weldon also mentioned that overlay zones can be set up by the city but can be administered by another agency if necessary.

Existing Land Use

Ms. Sampath reviewed the findings regarding land use within the study area. It was found that single family residential is the most abundant land use at 48 percent. Public/Semi-Public uses made up 18 percent of the study area, vacant land comprised 11.9 percent and industrial uses (along Russell Street) comprised 11.7 percent of all land uses in the study area.

Existing Zoning

Ms. Sampath informed the task force that most of the study area is zoned RU-2 (urban residential) which allows for attached and detached single family housing.



Ms. Sampath pointed out that in implementing the 12th Street plan, current zoning may not match the uses called for in the plan and it may need to be determined if the current zoning fits what is recommended for the area.

Mr. Eilerman questioned if the St. Elizabeth site has a unique zoning designation. Mr. Chambers responded that the area was rezoned last month. Ms. Sampath defined the difference between zoning and land use and explained that this study will be used to determine best land use for the area. Zoning would be addressed after the study has been completed and it will not be a part of this effort.

Ms. Roden questioned if the buildings along the north side of 12th Street would be required to conform to those existing along the south side of the street. Ms. Sampath clarified that new buildings on the south side may be required to look similar to those which already exist.

Mr. Eilerman raised a concern that to determine appropriate land use for areas around the St. Elizabeth site more information is needed about the site plan for the medical center and anything they have envisioned for the surrounding area. The area for the St. Elizabeth has been rezoned to commercial for the medical center and this zone will increase in size a little more to include additional parking space. The task force will examine and make recommendations for the land use along the St. Elizabeth access road. Mr. Chambers agreed to provide more information and drawings of the St. Elizabeth site. The positioning of the buildings on this site will determine the development patterns for the surrounding area. Ms. Smith mentioned that The Friends of Linden Grove Cemetery are making plans for the cemetery and these will need to be considered through this process.

Future Land Use Plan

Ms. Sampath presented the future land use plan which is part of the Kenton County Comprehensive Plan. She said that this plan is updated every five years and is used to help the Kenton County Planning Commission make decisions while reviewing applications for development. The recommended land use plan that comes from this small area study will eventually become part of the county wide comprehensive plan when adopted by the Kenton County Planning Commission.

Mr. Nerone raised the concern about the Hellman Lumber property. He said that Duke Energy wants to put a substation on the site and utilities have the ability to disregard zoning when placing their facilities. The substation is needed for St. Elizabeth and other commercial development expects in the area. It is thought that the owner of the property would not want to sell to Duke Energy.

Ms. Sampath mentioned that staff had met with Duke Energy and they had mentioned that they looked at over 30 potential sites north of the 12th Street and



Hellman Lumber is the best they have seen. Their existing lines run along the interstate. The sub-station will be in the back of the site and Duke will try to sufficiently landscape and screen the area. There are no sketches or plans for the substation at this time but Duke does not plan to screen with just a chain link fence. Ms. Sampath is trying to arrange a meeting between Duke Energy and residents close to the site to clarify concerns.

Mr. Eilerman suggested that a more official line of communication with Duke Energy be opened. He said that there are better sites for the substation than Hellman Lumber (ex. the brewery and along the railroad). Mr. Eilerman recommended trying to get underground power lines for the area in exchange for the Hellman Lumber site. He said that until the substation is built there is always a possibility that it could go somewhere else. Mr. Eilerman said that having a substation at the entrance of the clinic and all the work along 12th Street would a big mistake.

Demographics

Mr. Dietrich presented some of the finding for demographics in the study area which came from the 2000 census. The area has a lower average household income than the city and home ownership is at 55 percent which is higher than the city. The Not in Labor Force statistic is high at 42 percent and Mr. Dietrich could not determine why this number was so high. Vacant housing was found to be at about 12 percent which is above the recommended 10 percent.

Mr. Nerone suggested that staff find out which properties the city considers blighted in the study area, the properties that have been condemned, and which properties are vacant.

Green Infrastructure

Mr. Dietrich mentioned that green infrastructure is a concept that places as much importance on the un-built land as on roads, bridges, sidewalks, and utilities. Impervious surface for the study area was found to be 42 percent which is good for an urban residential area. Tree canopy for the area was calculated to be 20 percent which is a little below the recommended 25 percent. Ms. Sampath noted that many residents have expressed a concern for more open space.

Community Facilities

Mr. Dietrich informed the task force that the study area is well served by all public services. Staff is still looking to get specific information from the police and fire departments. The number of elementary school children in the area is declining. Only public school information was used to find specific numbers. Mr. Dietrich then mentioned that the study area contained less than ¼ an acre of park land. For the 3,000 plus population of the study area it is recommended that there be at least 1.5 acres of park land. Linden Grove Cemetery is not considered to be park land.



Mr. Nerone suggested that enrollment numbers for St. Augustine School be found and added to the section. Ms. Weldon suggested that the Center for Great Neighborhoods be added to the map. Pastor Foley said that the Southside Baptist Church had been omitted from the community facilities map and text and needs to be added.

Buildings Conditions Survey

Mr. Dietrich presented information collected through the building conditions survey. The survey found almost 1,100 occupied buildings in the study area with an average condition of 22.8 out of 30. This placed the study area into a category of “minor deterioration” which is very good considering the age of most of the structures. Mr. Rockel pointed out that the survey did exclude the houses removed for the access road to the St. Elizabeth Medical Center.

Transportation

Mr. Kirk gave an overview of the transportation chapter. He informed the task force that a transportation study looks at how the transportation network is laid out and analyses how the stop lights, stop signs, one-way streets, parking and street size affect the circulation patterns. Mr. Kirk noted that with the development of the St. Elizabeth site there will be a number of changes made to the surrounding street network. This includes Lee and Banklick Streets being converted to right-in/right-out streets which will require further analysis of the one-way street system. Euclid Avenue and Jefferson Street will be closed with the changes made to the St. Elizabeth site.

Mr. Kirk pointed out that he had noted an inconsistent pattern of traffic control throughout the neighborhood. He said that the study is an opportunity to look at the current traffic patterns along with the changes in the near future and plan the system in a holistic manner. Mr. Kirk said that to do this the residents’ opinions of the transportation system need to be known.

Mr. Kirk said that 12th Street will remain the primary east-west route for tractor-trailers. Ms. Roden asked if the turning radius for tractor trailers was sufficient and said that if lights were to be eliminated, it might increase speed along the corridor. Mr. Kirk responded that the turning radiuses will be enlarged and four lanes will allow better movement for trucks. Mr. Kirk informed the task force that traffic on 12th Street will move faster than it does now. There will be fewer stop signs and four lanes of traffic will provide more room for traffic.

Mr. Kirk said that he will look into alleys that were planned but never built to increase off street parking and to reduce the number of accidents involving parked cars. He said that the majority of accidents in the area involve parked cars. Mr. Chambers pointed out that there will not be public access to the medical facility from Euclid Avenue or Jefferson Street. He said that the hospital is



concerned that traffic will stream through the parking lot as a short cut to 12th Street and the interstate and affirmed that the access will probably be used only for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Kirk said that he is working with TANK to reroute an existing bus route along Pike Street to go to the St. Elizabeth site. Mr. Kirk will also check into any light rail plans that might impact the area.

5. VISION AND GOALS FOR THE PROJECT

Ms. Sampath asked if the task force wanted to develop the vision and goals for the project through email communication. Task force members agreed. Ms. Sampath noted that vision and goals will need to be developed prior to the public meeting later this month. She said that staff will send out some examples to help with this process.

6. FIRST PUBLIC MEETING

Ms. Sampath stated that the current idea for the public meeting is to have a four hour open house. Citizens will be able to come and look at the ideas developed from the task force meeting and talk with NKAPC staff regarding the ideas and their concerns. It would be good for some of the task force members to be in attendance at the public meeting to get an idea of what the residents are most concerned with. The public meeting will be held on October 25, 2007 from 4:00pm to 8:00pm. at the Center for Great Neighborhoods. Ms. Roden said that the meeting was on the same night as the parent teachers meeting for the Covington School District.

7. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The task force agreed that the next meeting would be held on November 29th at 6:00 P.M. Ms. Sampath said that at the last task force meeting a meeting was proposed in December per the timeline but was suggested to be cancelled and moved to January. The January meeting of the task force was agreed to be held on January 24th, 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

