

Crescent Springs Small Area Study

Task Force Meeting Minutes

Location: NKAPC Commission Chambers

Tuesday, June 24, 2009

6:00 – 7:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Bobbie Baker – Crescent Springs Resident Residing within Study Area

Joe Baker – Crescent Springs City Attorney

Jim Collett – Mayor of Crescent Springs

Matthew Damon – Crescent Springs Resident / Student at Villa Madonna Academy

Andy Eisner – Crescent Springs Resident

Dawn Johnson – Crescent Springs Resident

Matthew Johnson – Crescent Springs Resident / Student at Covington Latin

Daniele Longo – Crescent Springs Resident

Bob Mueller – Crescent Springs Resident

George Ripberger – Crescent Springs City Employee

Mark Rogge – Crescent Springs Resident / KCPC Representative

Scott Siefke – Co-owner of Crescent Springs Business within Study Area

Greg Sketch – Crescent Springs Resident

Tom Vergamini – Crescent Springs City Council Member

Edward Dietrich – NKAPC – Project Manager

James Fausz – NKAPC

ABSENT:

Ben Bratton – Local Resident

Bobby Chipman – Crescent Springs Resident Residing Within Study Area

Barrie Creamer – Crescent Springs Resident Residing within Study Area

Eric Haaser – Crescent Springs Resident

Louis Prabell – Crescent Springs Resident

Scott Santangelo – Crescent Springs City Council Member

Bill Toebben – Owner of Crescent Springs Business within Study Area

1. OPENING COMMENTS AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Dietrich started the meeting at approximately 6:10 p.m. by asking if everyone had a chance to look over the minutes. After a brief review Mr. Ripberger motioned to accept the May minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. Mueller. The motion passed unanimously.

2. STUDY LOGO

Mr. Fausz briefly presented the concepts for the study. He displayed the conceptual designs that were circulated via email and provided a review of comments staff received. The task force agreed they liked the general design of the logo concept pictured in Figure 1 below but requested new color variations of the design. Mr. Ripberger suggested one variation might include the color scheme already in use by city Public

Works and that he would provide staff with a photograph. Mr. Fausz informed the task force that he would create variations and that staff would send them via email before the July task force meeting.



Figure 1: Tentative Logo Design

3. VISION AND GOALS

Mr. Dietrich moved the meeting along to a discussion of the vision and goals of the study. He began by presenting the tentative vision and goals that staff prepared and comments submitted by task force members via email. The comments presented included:

Bob Mueller's suggestions:

Vision

The Crescent Springs Gateway Study Area will ***reemerge over time? transition over time ?*** into a mix of ***professional*** office, local business and interstate retail uses, that will compliment one another and ***represent*** harmonious site and architectural design. Imaginative and thoughtful design within this commercial center will produce a unified and impressive entrance into the city, ***fully*** accessible and inviting ***to*** pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and automobiles. The study area ***is expected to*** redevelop slowly, ***which will help ensure that*** each improvement, no matter how small, ***will*** be crafted with the long-term future in mind.

Daniele Longo's suggestions:

The Crescent Springs Gateway Study Area will represent an impressive entrance into the city providing full and inviting access and to pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and automobiles.

To be added to the goals:

- To deliver a mix of professional office, local business and interstate retail uses, that will compliment one another.
- To provide the community with a harmonious site and architectural design.
- To ensure that each improvement, no matter how small, will be crafted considering both slow redevelopment and long-term future.

Dawn and Matthew Johnson's suggestions:

1. Shorter is better.

2. Green Infrastructure should be more prominently mentioned.
3. We think protecting the property rights of landowners needs to be mentioned as this may reduce the amount of push back the project receives from the public.
4. There has been no mention of any residential uses at all.

Ms. Johnson added at the meeting that they had recently viewed a program on PBS that suggested residential areas be included in redeveloped area. Mr. Dietrich replied that having a mixed use area is very desirable in terms of planning and that it could be added if the task force desires residential. Mr. Baker added that the city already has a mixed use zone, which would allow for residential. Mr. Dietrich added that the area is unique based on its access limitations and that residential could be difficult to incorporate in the study area.

Mr. Mueller asked if staff did not include residential as a use because of the redevelopment cost. Mr. Dietrich discussed limitations foreseen by the market study and described that different uses have different life spans. Ms. Johnson asked if there were restrictions on the height of potential buildings. Mr. Vergamini answered that the airport would be a limiting factor on height. Mr. Dietrich indicated he would contact Mr. Harnish and inquire about the potential for including residential in the mix of uses before the next task force meeting.

Mr. Rogge commented that several buildings in downtown Cincinnati are converting from office to residential in the form of condos. He asked if it might be possible to convert the Toeppen building to residential at some point in the future. Mr. Dietrich replied that Mr. Harnish had indicated that if residential was a potential use the building would likely have to be 7 to 8 stories tall in order for a developer to recoup land costs. Ms. Baker asked if a building could be that tall due to fire constraints. Mr. Dietrich replied that staff had consulted with fire departments on this and previous studies and that buildings could be any number of stories due to the inclusion of modern sprinkler systems in new construction.

Scott Siefke's suggestions:

Mr. Dietrich entered into a discussion of Mr. Siefke's statements. He discussed the idea that a majority of Mr. Siefke's statements were more geared toward the implementation side of the plan, rather than the broader vision of where the task force would like to see the plan go.

Mr. Siefke commented that he felt the vision statement was too limiting and that it should be broader to include more uses. He was concerned that the vision limited the uses so much that no developer would be interested in acquiring property for redevelopment. Mr. Dietrich suggested it might be beneficial to broaden the vision statement but that it is important to remain realistic about potential uses in the area as defined in the market study. Mr. Sketch questioned the validity of the current market analysis 30 years into the future. He suggested broadening the vision statement to include ideas such as mixed use because they might be more feasible in the distant future. Mr. Ripberger agreed with the statement and added that uses in the area should include interstate retail. He believed the inclusion of mixed use would allow some of the existing uses to stay in the area.

Mr. Sketch suggested the study will be a future land use plan and that it should make things easier for a developer, not more difficult. Mr. Dietrich informed the task force that the plan would ultimately change

the land use map for the study area, next the study would enter into an implementation phase and the zoning should be changed to match the land use. He suggested the plan would make the area more developable if the zoning matches what the developer wants to put in the area, but a proposed use that didn't fit the map wouldn't necessarily keep a developer away. Mr. Fausz added that even after the study concludes if a developer wanted to try and develop a piece of land that was identified for a different use they could always apply for a zone change and let the city decide if they wanted to allow the potential development.

Mr. Vergamini suggested that it would be best not to exclude uses based on zoning because it is difficult to foresee what may happen in the distant future. Mr. Dietrich suggested that perhaps the area would be well served by a form based code since the code defines the building's placement and aesthetics, not the uses within the structure. Mr. Vergamini commented that it was similar to a mixed land use zone.

Mr. Dietrich explained that non-conforming uses could be an issue discussed in implementation of the plan in the future. He suggested that using a form-based code would allow more uses and provide constraints on how the development looks. Ms. Johnson questioned whether a form-based code would affect current uses. Mr. Dietrich explained that the code could be written to work with existing uses but there would likely be constraints such as limiting significant improvements to the property or prohibiting expansion onto adjacent land. He mentioned that form-based codes provide the most flexibility in terms of use.

Mr. Ripberger questioned the likelihood of the redevelopment of the entire area within the next 25-30 years. He commented that people might not want to leave the area on their own within the timeframe.

Mr. Longo suggested that certain events could happen that may completely change the area. He discussed the possibility of a light rail station that may completely change the study area. Mr. Dietrich added that light rail in the area could drastically alter the look and uses that could potentially be in the area. Mr. Fausz commented that rail would likely require a new study if the option became viable. Mayor Collett questioned whether this study should look at the option of rail because it could be a vital catalyst in the area. He also mentioned the area is strategically located between downtown Cincinnati and the airport.

Mayor Collett suggested that one approach might be to start redevelopment in a core area and allow the redevelopment to radiate outward. Mr. Dietrich said the approach could work but it would depend on a developer's interest in the project to determine how likely the project would be to redevelop. Mr. Siefke discussed the problem of setbacks on the current land and that redevelopment isn't enticing to developers in the existing configuration.

Mr. Dietrich reiterated that much of the discussion seemed to center around aspects that were related to implementation and not the vision. He suggested it might be beneficial for the task force to work on the vision statement via email and that staff would send suggestions as well. He then moved the meeting along to a discussion of the concept scenarios created by staff.

4. SCENARIOS

Mr. Dietrich began the discussion of scenarios by presenting the ideas created by staff. A brief synopsis of the discussion of the scenarios follows:

a. Loop road scenarios

After Mr. Dietrich's explanation of the alternative Mayor Collett asked if the power line on Ritchie Avenue was problematic. Mr. Dietrich explained that the utility line was a concern and it would be addressed in more detail in the future.

Ms. Baker questioned whether the pedestrian access to the railroad bridge would be problematic because it cut through a road. Mr. Dietrich explained that the access would run alongside the road if the road still existed in the redeveloped scenario.

Mr. Siefke commented that he believed fast food restaurants would want to relocate to the new vehicular access near the current High Street access, even though they would be less visible from the Interstate.

Mr. Vergamini commented that the loop road looks like a good idea in all scenarios. He also questioned whether it might be beneficial to change Hazelwood to a right in right out intersection now. Mr. Dietrich suggested the change could help to start the redevelopment of the area because the fast food restaurants might want to be closer to High Street after the change. Ms. Johnson was fearful some of the restaurants may sue the city because they would view the action as reducing their property value. Mr. Dietrich suggested improving Hazelwood could help alleviate those concerns because it would be a better road after improvement.

b. Square footage, market analysis, and transportation demand discussion

Mr. Dietrich presented information of constraints of the amount of potential building square footage that could go into the area (Figure 2). These numbers were based on the space allowed by current zoning, market analysis, and traffic capacity.

| Scenario | Current Zoning | Market Analysis | Traffic Analysis |
|----------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Office 1 | 400,000.00 | 260,815.50 | 150,000.00 |
| Retail 1 | 200,000.00 | 106,112.16 | 75,000.00 |
| | | | |
| Office 2 | 330,000.00 | 210,285.90 | 60,000.00 |
| Retail 2 | 190,000.00 | 90,517.68 | 30,000.00 |

Figure 2: Potential building square feet constraints (in square feet)

Mayor Collett asked if the addition of a rail stop would change the traffic analysis. Mr. Dietrich replied that it would not change the traffic analysis because the numbers were based on the carrying capacity of specific intersections.

Mr. Ripberger asked how much capacity the loop road could hold over the existing roadway network. Mr. Dietrich replied that the internal roads are not the limiting factor concerning the traffic capacity. The issue lies with the amount of traffic the Buttermilk intersections can accommodate. Mr. Baker asked if capacity could be increased if the loop road was restricted to one way traffic. Mr. Dietrich replied that he was unsure but would check with the commission's traffic engineer and report by the next meeting.

Mr. Dietrich informed the task force that access could be increased into the study area but it would require massive infrastructure changes to Buttermilk Pike. Ms. Johnson asked if changes on the roadway would

have to be implemented by the state of Kentucky. Mr. Dietrich replied that the state would have to be involved with recommended changes.

Ms. Johnson asked if it would be possible to change access in the vicinity of Chipotle and Ritchie Street. Her suggestion was to tie Ritchie Street to the existing Chipotle drive to effectively make the beginnings of the loop road. Additionally she suggested closing the left turn from Hazelwood Street to the Chipotle drive and redirecting traffic left on Terry Lane and left on Ritchie Street into the new access, thus eliminating some of the congestion on Hazelwood caused by the left turn movement. Mr. Dietrich replied the Chipotle drive is privately owned and would have to be purchased by the city to be turned into a street.

Mr. Siefke suggested moving the loop road to the outer regions of the study area boundary. He thought moving the street would allow for more developable land in the core of the study area. He also believed having the road on the outer extremities would help reduce the amount of less desirable land near the railroad. Mr. Dietrich replied that he believed there would be less usable land if the loop was near the outer boundary of the study area. He also believed that you would need more interior roads internally to provide access to the core area and that the external loop would make the area less walkable. He mentioned that he would check with the commission's traffic engineer for more details and report by the next meeting.

c. Rail station concept

After Mr. Dietrich's explanation of the alternative Mr. Vergamini asked if the idea of placing the station in the Buttermilk Crossing area was considered. Mr. Dietrich replied that staff considered the concept but felt access issues suggested the larger portion of the study area would make the best location.

Ms. Baker asked where the rail idea came from and when it might be implemented. She argued that the bus stop is underutilized and questioned the idea of holding the land in its current form until rail became an option. Mr. Dietrich informed the task force that a plan involving rail would not preclude the land from being developed. He said the area could redevelop with current transportation options and redevelop a second time if rail became a viable option in the future.

Mr. Dietrich also indicated that the presence of a rail station would require the removal of interstate retail and restaurant uses. He elaborated by saying both uses could not operate in the same area because Buttermilk Pike could not carry the quantity of vehicular traffic for both uses. Mr. Rogge questioned staff's reported number of trips generated by rail. He recommended looking at the Interstate 71 Corridor Study to find the number of rail trips expected at the Crescent Springs location.

Ms. Johnson asked why the scenario would recommend a new set of train tracks away from the existing freight line. Mr. Dietrich replied by saying it would be difficult to determine exactly where the rail line might run but that running it along an existing busy freight line may prove problematic. He also indicated that the plans included in the Metro Moves plan seem to show the rail alignment running along the Interstate corridor, rather than along the rail alignment.

Mr. Mueller asked if the addition of new vehicular connections over the railroad would change what goes into the area. Mr. Dietrich replied that it would not change the uses because the amount of traffic expected from a new connection would likely be small since there is little traffic coming from the southwest side of the study area.

5. PUBLIC MEETING DISCUSSION

Mr. Dietrich next discussed the upcoming public meeting. He suggested refraining from holding the public meeting until there was something other than the existing conditions report to present to the public. The task force agreed with staff's recommendation.

6. WRAP UP

Mr. Dietrich asked the task force if they would like to see conceptual plans for a broader area than the study area itself. He mentioned that other areas immediately adjacent to the study area could redevelop in the future and those areas might affect plans for the study area. He briefly outlined some of the ideas staff had generated such as having more of a traditional town center near the intersection of Anderson and Buttermilk Pike. Ms. Baker and Ms. Johnson questioned whether it would be less expensive to build in Buttermilk Town Center. Mr. Dietrich explained that it would be less expensive but other areas could be redeveloped in the future. After discussion the task force decided they would rather focus on the smaller study area for now and look at the larger context in the future.

Ms. Baker requested that mixed use be added into the vision statement. Mr. Damon also liked the idea and thought adding mixed use would broaden the vision statement. Mr. Dietrich indicated staff would look at the vision statement in more detail and requested input from the task force before the next meeting via email.

Mr. Dietrich reminded the task force the next meeting would take place on Wednesday, July 22, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting ended at 8:28 p.m.