

Hub of Hartford Steering Committee
February 20, 2008
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Department of Public Works Conference

Attendees: Joe Barber, Kevin Burnham, Jennifer Cassidy, Julio Concepcion, Toni Gold, Tom Kurtz, Mike Marshall, Tom Maziarz, Jackie McKinney, Tomas Nenortas, Bob Painter

I. Review and finalize vision statement

The document was presented once more to the group and the following changes were suggested and agreed to:

- ◆ Changing the last section of the vision statement that states:

Cyclists, walkers and transit riders predominate and automobiles move slowly
to
Cyclists, walkers and transit riders share the road comfortably with automobiles

- ◆ Eliminating the word “dangerous” from the following sentence, “[e]nsure that the long-term redesign of this dangerous section of highway not be defined solely as an engineering problem and re-built as is for future generations.”
- ◆ Add the phrase “centered on Union Station” in describing the Hub of Hartford (because the Hub needs a hub).

II. Discuss deliverables to be requested from consultant

We want to define the products that consultant will produce. Our study needs to be the initial broad brush that can then influence and mesh with subsequent ConnDOT studies.

It seems like we want some criteria but nothing in great detail. Our criteria should evolve from our first phase study and not necessarily have it from the get-go. For example, we can place in our RFP something about the relative importance of various modes of transportation, reducing impact of the automobile, making all forms of transit easy to use, etc., and then have the consultants add further definition.

In the end we want a document that essentially says, “We want a consultant to do ‘x’”. The proposal should include scope of work (what consultants will examine and analyze), qualifications (what kind of consultant team we seek), and deliverables (public education materials). These three things are the core of what we have to do and must be in the RFP.

Toni also added that one of the things that we bring to this effort is the listing of all the projects going on in the Hub area. We want to make sure that these are on the table and on the ConnDOT radar screen at the beginning even if it is messy, and we really have not said anything in this document about this. One of our criteria should be that the study include all these projects in a way that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

The steering committee agreed that this issue should be included as well. Toni agreed to send out the spreadsheet of all the Hub projects. In addition, Tom Maziarz and Tom Kurtz agreed to work together to draw up a proposal and then send it to Toni for her review and distribution to the rest of the steering committee.

III. Norquist visit—April 15th and 16th

The progress on the Norquist visit planning, includes the following:

- ◆ Mayor's meeting at 3:00 p.m. on April 15th and perhaps there can be a tour. That evening will be a public presentation. The hope is that we can get some good neighborhood turnout and media attention through the public event.
- ◆ On the morning of April 16th, there will be a business breakfast presentation that Mike Zaleski is arranging and Oz Grievell is offering Alliance resources
- ◆ Later on the 16th, there will be a legislative lunch in Legislative Office Building private dining room.

There has been some talk about sharing the legislative luncheon event with New Haven. Toni received a call from Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC) and they have been talking to New Haven about a project similar to the Hub to turn Route 34 in into a boulevard and connect it to the train station. DeStefano is advocating for this project, so TSTC is trying to get Norquist to come to New Haven. Could Norquist attach an additional day for New Haven? Should we get both mayors at the legislative luncheon event or does that confuse the effort? In the course of the conversations with TSTC and Norquist, it sounded like Norquist could add another day to his trip, but then there is the question about whether we want to have any shared events with New Haven.

Tom Maziarz stated that if we are going for a shared event with New Haven, then it is a different event. It is going to be a much larger group, which is not bad, but we need to think differently about how we stage it.

Tom Kurtz added that it depends on the purpose of this Norquist's visit. If he is willing to stay an extra day to go to New Haven then we may not want to get too deep.

Toni stated that one purpose is to get state officials comfortable with doing a project this big. The legislators will most likely ask more technical and political questions about funding, etc., which Norquist will be able to address.

The issue of the Mayor's interest was raised and that this legislative luncheon would be an opportunity to showcase his leadership.

Bob responded by stating that the Mayor is on, but not able to keep up with the details. Bob has been keeping him up to date. Bob has suggested to the Mayor that the City should give money to the Hub effort in general and that the City pay for luncheon. The Mayor did not seem averse to the former and did not say anything about the latter. This visit by Norquist would be a good time to talk to the Mayor about "his" plan and Norquist will help with this.

The group decided to move forward with a Hartford-focused event. Details on individual responsibilities are in the “Next Steps” section.

IV. Meetings, Funding Requests

Bob had a meeting with John Rossi in Congressman Larson’s office and Rossi stated that this is earmark time and that we should ask for \$100,000 through Larson’s office. Rossi has told this to Al Martin as well. Rossi said he would not be doing anything unless Al Martin asks for an earmark, so Bob now needs to go back to Al Martin to discuss this issue with him.

Toni asked about State transit-oriented development (TOD) pilot project funding.

Tom Maziarz stated that he did not think that the State money is good for this. Our project is pretty broad and not specific, and the City has already put together its own proposal that has to do with Union Station (which Al Martin is aware of).

It was then suggested that we need to be sure what the City is doing so that there is no competition or even the perception of competition. A separate meeting with the Mayor seems to be in order.

Tom Maziarz reported on his meeting with Al Martin and Carmine Trotta. Most of discussion was about the New Britain-Hartford Busway, but Martin and Trotta were receptive to the study we are proposing. Two bureaus on board is good and going forward things will be easier.

Bob also reported on a visit with Jonathan Holmes, Deputy Commission of the Connecticut Department of Public Works, to let him know about the Hub of Hartford Project. There is a new commissioner now, so it is unclear how things will develop. However, Jonathan is overseeing the State’s study of the state’s parking properties, which they talked about a bit. Bob asked for another Capitol District study to be done that can hopefully influence some aspects of this parking study. Bob will look further into this.

Next steps

- ◆ Tom Maziarz and Tom Kurtz will draft an RFP scope of work, which will be sent to Toni to distribute to the rest of the group.
- ◆ Tom Maziarz is going to think about how best to go about the legislative luncheon meeting lunch with Norquist
- ◆ MetroHartford Alliance is working on the Norquist breakfast event—Julio will confirm
- ◆ Julio will talk to Mayor about how he would want legislative lunch meeting to go , and how to introduce the Hub project to the public and the press.
- ◆ Bob will ask the mayor about paying for the luncheon.
- ◆ Jennifer will work on getting Asylum Hill Congregational Church for the Norquist public presentation on April 15th. Jennifer and Jackie will work on a proposed program.
- ◆
- ◆ Toni will send around spreadsheet of projects in the Hub area.
- ◆ Bob will talk to Al Martin once more, particularly about the issue of an earmark for our study.
- ◆ Next meeting: March 4th at 8:30 a.m. at 525 Main Street, 4th Floor.