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TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

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East Hartford Silver Lane Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

3:30 pm

Welling Conference Room – 2nd floor Town Hall

PRESENT - Mayor Leclerc; Robin Pearson, Redevelopment Agency; James Matos, The Matos Group; Val Povinelli, Planning and Zoning Commission; Tom York, Goman and York; Craig Stevenson, CTC; Emily Hultquist, Caitlin Palmer, Mike Cipriano, CRCOG; Casey Hardin, Nicholas Mandler and Pat Padlo, Transystems; Paul Mainuli, Board of Education; Eileen Buckheit, Development Director; Jeff Cormier, Town Planner; Rich Gentile, Assistant Corporation Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Eileen Buckheit provided an update on Showcase Cinemas. The town successfully has acquired the parcel and is moving along with pre-demo work and has posted an RFQ for developers.

Eileen also provided an update on a meeting that was held with the owners of Charter Oak and Silver Lane Plazas. The town is also exploring making Applegate Lane a city street (potential for EDA funding).

Emily Hultquist provided a brief introduction for the presentation and the work completed by TranSystems since the last Advisory Committee meeting.

Presentation by TranSystems:

- Casey Hardin provided an update on CRDA work and the CTDOT VIP program.

- Nick Mandler explained the potential safety benefits based on research of adding the center two-way left turn lanes.
- Nick described the traffic analysis procedure and results of the future conditions traffic analysis.
- Nick described the potential road configuration options that had been vetted throughout the corridor, which were then discussed in detail during the break out session.

The Advisory Committee broke into three different groups to look at the different sections of the corridor. A summary of all the comments provided during the workshop (report-out at the end of the break-out sessions and comments provided during the workshop) is provided below:

Section 1: From west of Route 15 to Roberts St Intersection

- Since the parcel is wide enough, the Route 15 on-ramp may be shifted farther to the west. Additionally, if the volumes are low enough that the ramp is not needed, its elimination may be considered.
- At the off-ramp, teams considered a roundabout acceptable.
 - It may not be cost-effective compared to signalization.
 - Off-ramp traffic should be slowed approaching the roundabout.
- Whichever treatment is used at the off-ramp, sidewalks on the south side should be kept as far away from the traveled way as practical.
- The diagonal parking shown may make it difficult for westbound traffic to access and exit the site, and should be vetted with business owners before being shown to the public.
- The loss of two parking spots may be more acceptable if nearby parking is made more accessible to pedestrians, e.g. via a mid-block pedestrian crossing.
- Teams agreed with the idea of extending the westbound merge from two lanes to one at least to the Dunkin Donuts driveway.
- The eastbound bike lane approaching Roberts Street should be merged with the sidewalk into the proposed mixed-use path at Clement Road and then continue with the mixed-use path on the far side of the intersection (as opposed to ending bike lanes at the intersection and requiring bicyclists to find the path on the other side).

Section 2: From Roberts St Intersection to approx. Dollar General Driveway

- The mixed-use path on the northern side of the roadway between Roberts St and Simmons should have designations for different modes: pedestrian vs. bike. Potentially including the use of textured concrete/pavement or markings.

- Gold Street: This location will be investigated as a potential demonstration location for restricting the street to one-way southbound by introducing a painted bump out. (If done, public notification required in advance)
- Investigate a mid-block crosswalk between the Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Club and the sidewalk on the south side of Silver Lane.
- A mid-block crosswalk could be warranted with build out of the residential parcel (Futtner Properties Farm)
- Investigate ways to ensure that drivers don't use the two-way left turn lane for passing.
- Evaluate installation of a rumble strips at either side of the shared left turn lane. Similarly, consider using rumble strips to help buffer bike lanes, where width is available. (MUTCD Section 6F.87)
- Consider the following revisions to the road-diet concept:
 - Remove westbound bike path (on north edge) between Clements Road and Roberts. Provide transition at Clements Road from bike path into mixed-use trail. Possibly utilize California intersection style (a shared bike and right-turn lane as opposed to bike lanes continue straight to the left of a right-turn lane).
 - The extra roadway width could allow a longer merge of the two thru lanes and better buffer between bike path and vehicular traffic in eastbound direction.
 - Could provide more snow shelf on the north side of Silver Lane

Section 3: From Dollar General Drive to Forbes

- Consider providing dedicated turn lane to development on south side of Silver Lane just to the west of Applegate Lane
- Would signalizing Applegate Lane reduce the required left-turn storage for eastbound Silver Lane?
- Consider ways to encourage potential Showcase site redevelopment to use shared access with Silver Lane Plaza.
- Look for an example of a similar length corridor where a road diet has been implemented, preferably in a similar environment.
- Identify locations where curbed medians can be provided.
- Ensure roundabout at Silver Lane Plaza could provide fourth entrance to potential development on the south side of Silver Lane (even though the site has environmental constraints).
- Any redevelopment or improvements to the Silver Lane Plaza should include or plan to accommodate for frontage improvements to improve aesthetics along the parking lot edge, such as a landscaped buffer.
- The post office would benefit from better signage / advertising.

- The Forbes Street intersection has high bus volumes due to the school on the east side of the intersection.

General Corridor-Wide Comments:

- All intersections should have 4-crosswalks.
- Include potential mid-block crosswalks
- Change the colors of the mixed-use path, bike lane, and snow shelf on the drawing to more easily distinguish between the bike lanes and the snow shelf.
- Include locations of existing bus stops and proposed bus shelters
- Provide gateway treatments into the corridor – including landscaping and street furniture, etc.
- Make Roberts and other streets more visually appealing
- Investigate usage of median islands to break up the continuous two-way left-turn

Anticipate making changes proposed by the Advisory Committee and showing revised alternatives at public hearing, anticipated late March.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting concluded 5:15 pm.