

Highway 29 Boulevard of Opportunity Study Community Meeting #3

Minutes of Meeting

December 16, 2010/ 6:30pm/ Providence Christian Academy

Agenda

Welcome & Introductions

Study Overview and Process

Review Placemaking + Community Values + Corridor Components

Present Alternative Concept Plans & Comparison

Interactive Exercise

- Select Corridor Components for the following project elements:
 - Land Use & Urban Design
 - Circulation

Next Steps

Meeting Outcomes

The following are agenda items with corresponding feedback from attendees.

Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Gerald McDowell, Executive Director of the Lilburn Community Improvement District, welcomed attendees and introduced Ms. Alison Smith, Project Manager for Pond | Ecos, who provided the following presentation for Community Meeting #3:

Project Presentation Summary (via PowerPoint Presentation)

- **Study Overview & Process**
 - *The goal of the Highway 29 Boulevard of Opportunity Corridor Study is to provide land use, mobility, urban design and implementation recommendations for the 4-mile corridor between Ronald Reagan Parkway and Rockbridge Road.*
 - Additional overview information reviewed included:
 - Why is it important?
 - Who is involved?
 - Where will this occur?
 - How will the plan be completed?
 - What have we done so far?
 - Existing Conditions inventory/analysis
 - Previous Studies inventory/analysis
 - Establish Vision & Goals via feedback from the Core Team and Community
 - Community Engagement, including the Community Survey, Business Focus Group Meeting, Mayor's Forum, Core Team and Community Meetings
 - Core Team Design Charrette

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- **Review Placemaking + Community Values + Corridor Components**
 - **Placemaking:** created through the combination of balanced elements, appropriate scale and quality design
 - **Quality Design** that supports community...
 - Values & Goals
 - Identity
 - Preservation
 - Sustainability
 - **Appropriate Scale**
 - Neighborhood
 - Community
 - Center
 - **Balanced Elements**
 - Land Use
 - Circulation
 - Urban Design
 - **Community Values:** What the Hwy 29 Boulevard of Opportunity Study wants/strives to be for the benefit of the community in the future.
 - **Review of Vision Statement for the Highway 29 Boulevard of Opportunity Study**
Highway 29 will be the Boulevard of Opportunity, a desirable address that is visually appealing, economically competitive, expansive in the options of shopping and dining, and efficient and safe for motorists and pedestrians throughout Greater Lilburn and Gwinnett County.
 - **Review of Goals for the Highway 29 Boulevard of Opportunity Study**
 - Land Use
 - *Facilitate 'destination development' opportunities for both the County and the Greater Lilburn community to promote redevelopment and economic growth.*
 - *Strengthen the corridor's future viability by offering housing choices, employment diversity and daily services for all.*
 - *Encourage and promote development types commensurate with community needs and the corridor vision that are of high quality, distinct character, walkable and fiscally responsible.*
 - *Support a variety of uses along the corridor that incorporate community gathering spaces, cultural and social facilities and greenspaces in an aesthetically pleasing setting.*
 - Circulation
 - *Provide compatibility, connectivity and continuity in community-wide transportation solutions for all modes of travel.*
 - *Offer a safe, efficient and continuous network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities both along and connected to the corridor for improved health of the community.*
 - *Sustain efficient vehicular movement along the corridor while employing appropriate safety measures, maintaining accessibility to local businesses, and meeting the walkability needs of the community.*

Urban Design

- *Develop and promote the identity of the corridor through quality architecture and design cohesiveness of streetscapes.*
- *Enhancement of the corridor aesthetically through strategies that promote consistency, beautification and safety.*
- *Improve both the safety and the aesthetics of the corridor by promoting uniform signage, pedestrian friendly amenities, building placement and landscaping.*
- **Review of Corridor Components:** Description/example imagery for Land Use, Circulation and Urban Design elements depicted on the Alternative Concept Plans.
- **Present Alternative Concept Plans & Comparison**
 - The Alternative Concept Plans are categorized by Focus Area. Focus Areas are defined as areas of different scale and unique character that may be the result of the location, quantity or relationship of different elements, such as topography, age, architecture, land use patterns, etc.
 - During the presentation, each alternative concept was reviewed by focus area; including a list summarizing key points and example imagery. Typical cross-sections within each focus area were also reviewed, as well as two alternative cross-sections for the Town Center Focus Area. Please refer to the Community Meeting 3 presentation for detailed information.

Interactive Exercise: Select Corridor Components for the following project elements: Land Use & Urban Design and Circulation.

This exercise allowed the community to provide focused feedback on the two alternative concept plans and the proposed corridor cross-sections utilizing two break out tables; a Land Use & Urban Design table and a Circulation table. Listed below are comments and suggestions received during the interactive exercise:

Land Use & Urban Design Questions/Comments:

- Several community members expressed their preference for more mixed-use land uses, as shown in Alternative Concept B, because they provide flexibility.

Focus Area Specific Comments:

- West Focus Area
 - Like residential opportunities in Concept A but not all seniors are active.
 - Suggested increasing housing options and providing access for all
- Town Center Focus
 - Prefer Concept B- Mixed Use
 - More options and creativity
 - Prefer the configuration Town Center in Concept A, but with more mixed-use land uses as shown in Concept B
 - Like idea of a Pedestrian Street, as shown in Concept A, but would also like flexibility in terms of the alignment. The pedestrian street does not have to follow the existing Main St. ROW exactly when adjacent parcels are redeveloped.

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- Suggestion of a traffic circle @ Hwy 29 and Indian Trail. Community members discussed the unlikelihood of this given that Hwy 29 is a state route.
- East Focus Area
 - Prefer Concept B because less commercial, more mixed use
 - Like inter-parcel access/ reduced curb cuts
 - Like Office/Professional as shown in Concept A rather than residential uses in Concept B
 - Reduced curb cuts
 - Opportunity for senior housing/medical uses at the intersection of Beaver Ruin Road and Hwy 29, on the north side of Hwy 29, because of close proximity to services
 - Suggested that the college located at the southwest corner of the Hwy 29 and Beaver Ruin Road intersection may not be the best use.

Urban Design Comments:

- How to create an identity for Hwy 29?
 - Keep Street Trees a consistent species along the corridor.
 - Enhance/expand recent branding initiative by city
 - Consistent architectural style – prefer a bit more historic style

Circulation Questions/Comments:

- Some community members stated that they could not see how a better streetscape and improved sidewalks/trails/medians would attract new businesses.
 - A big goal for the corridor is to attract new businesses. Citizens want to find a way to bring more money into the study area.
 - One suggestion was to give tax breaks to businesses instead of doing streetscape improvements
 - Some concern was expressed that the improvements to the streetscape would require road widening.
- Questions were raised about the effectiveness of significant additions to the corridor's sidewalks. One citizen expressed the lack of use of existing sidewalks and did not see the benefit of adding more.
- Several community members concurred that the Indian Trail/Hwy 29 intersection was an important node that needed to be improved.
- Corridor Cross-Sections:
Between options 3A and 3B at the Town Center Focus Area, most community members agreed that option 3A would be the most aesthetically pleasing and would help designate the Town Center area.
- Concerns were expressed about constructing bike paths throughout the corridor. Comments included:
 - The possibility of crime or illegal activities on the trails
 - Whether the amount of usage would justify the costs of construction
 - Concerns that new trails will not attract new businesses
 - Concerns of trails going into the “undesirable” areas north of the corridor

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- Concerns were raised about the trail crossing Indian Trail, south of the corridor. The trail currently terminates here and there have been ongoing discussions on how to cross the road safely.
- Citizens would like to see a connection between the school and the trail proposed to the area south of the corridor study area.
- Despite opposition to the trail, several citizens think the connection between the Future Bryson Park and Lion's Club Park would be beneficial for the community.

Next Steps

- Community Meeting #4: Review Draft Corridor Study
Thursday, January 27, 2011 at 6:30 pm
Providence Christian Academy

These minutes constitute the author's understanding of the items discussed and conclusions reached. If there are any errors or omissions, please notify the author in writing.

END OF MINUTES

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