

Midtown-St. Albans Confirmation Group Meeting 7

October 30, 2019

Green Road Community Center, 4201 Green Road

Attending: Stephen Brechbiel, Ted Kunstling, Donna Rosefield, Willard Ross, Bonner Gaylord; Jevon Peterson (Duke Raleigh), Stephen Sposato

Consultant: Simone Robinson (P3, outreach study)

Staff: Jason Hardin, Hannah Reckhow, Sara Ellis

The meeting began at 4:06.

Hardin reminded the group of where we are in the process and overview of outreach activities. Goal of last stage is to confirm final plan recommendations and understand what community priorities are. Overview of this phases events, Seven Big Moves of plan, prioritization of projects with 'Midtown Bucks'.

Hardin gave an overview of input results. Top priority was six forks pedestrian bridge. There are still unknowns and challenges, but it is clear there is a need for this. Next priorities are pedestrian crossing improvements through study area, midtown waterfront park, I-440 multimodal bridge.

Kunstling asked about parking on green streets. Hardin responded that they wouldn't remove all on-street parking, but that it is a tradeoff to consider.

Less prioritized projects were local street connections and Bush/Wolfpack roundabouts. This phase also asked about Six Forks Rd recommendations – transition in building heights at Lassiter Mill Rd. Around two-thirds thought it was okay; Further study of street connections near Six Forks, around three-fourths thought it was okay. Hardin review land use recommendations, which received favorable feedback in summer input phase. Overall, walkability projects received a lot of priority, as did affordable housing.

Gaylord thinks input encapsulates what we've heard. Some surprise at six forks ped crossing, the reality may be different than people realize. It really needs to be baked into a building. Kunstling agrees, people may not end up using a crossing. Hardin agreed that location is key, but there is also a lot we can do in the meantime to improve safety of crossing.

Gaylord gave an update on Midtown shuttle.

Kunstling talked about setbacks. Hardin confirmed that City's UDO requires a setback at a certain height and discussed options for affordable housing funding. Voluntary conditions baked into rezoning cases or affordable housing bond.

Rosefield discussed intersection at Lassiter Mill with two right-turn-only lanes that is difficult to use. Gaylord offered that this design was driven by implementation of bike lanes elsewhere on Lassiter Mill. Jason will follow up on this.

Kunstling discussed bicyclists on Wake Forest Road and Falls of Neuse Road that use a travel lane. Hardin confirmed that general direction has been to separate cyclists and drivers on these higher-speed roads. Discussion of cycling safety, role of infrastructure and enforcement. Rosefield offered that consistency in cycling infrastructure is crucial. Kunstling brought up that commuting peak times are a challenge.

Sposato commended the process and confirmed that prioritization is challenging and important.

Hardin reviewed next steps. Land use recommendations as proposed, six forks recommendations as revised, strong support for walkability projects. Does this reflect feedback?

Brechbiel agreed that it aligns with feedback. Kunstling is concerned about how to strike a balance of needs of Wake Tech/Duke Raleigh and nearby neighborhoods. Hardin agreed that it's a tough call, Duke had preferred to not have those connections too.

Rosefield asked about City Council changes, how are they going to be brought up to speed? Hardin reviewed adoption process. Report projected to be delivered to City Council in January. District Council Member elect has been involved with project from beginning as well.

Rosefield asked if the group would see report before it is published. Hardin confirmed that the report can be shared with the group. Peterson asked what would happen if Council wanted to see a different approach. Hardin said the amount of input gathered throughout the process carries weight. Brechbiel sees input from study as aligning with new Council's priorities.

Meeting ended at 5:17 pm