

Meeting Summary
Northwest Plan
Advisory Committee
May 12, 2005
Northwest Library

Attendees

Lori Baudro, Columbus Planning Division
Ted Beidler, Franklin Co. Engineer's Office
John Best, Far NW Coalition
David Brehm, Brookside Woods
Mike Brown, Summerwood Civic Assoc.
Bernice Cage, MORPC
Mike Duffy, Worthington Resident
Paul Feldman, City of Worthington
Chris Holmes, Brookside Civic Assoc.
Jim Hutcherson, COTA
Charles Johnson, Cols Board of Realtors
Robert Lawler, MORPC
Bill Lewis, Columbus Transportation Division

Rosemarie Lisko, NW Civic Assoc.
John Macomber, Brookside Woods
Greg Marietti, Augustine Development, LLC
Matt Montague, Friends of Delaware County
Kimberly Nixon-Bell, Raulane Civic
Vince Papsidero, Columbus Planning Division
Bill Schuck, NW Civic Assoc.
Alice Scott, Brookside Civic
Steve Soble, Columbus Neighborhood Services
Vera and Bob Tedrick, Shaker Square Civic
Suzanne Vais, Columbus Planning Division
William Watterson, City of Worthington
Jane Weislogel, Shaker Square Civic Assoc.
Scott Whitlock, Rau Lane Civic Association

Suzanne Vais, Senior Planner with the Columbus Planning Division, opened the meeting at approximately 7:05 p.m. Ms. Vais indicated that the main topic of the meetings was to develop guiding principles for SR 161.

First, there was a brief update on the status of improvements to SR 161. Ms. Vais indicated that staff from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) could not make the meeting but that someone will be at the June meeting to answer any additional questions regarding improvements to SR 161. Ms. Vais stated that she has recently spoken to staff at the FHWA regarding SR 161. From that conversation it was learned that the FHWA is not prepared to make a judgment in terms of what improvements to fund. They would like to review a study of different scenarios prior to making a decision. This study would be initiated locally.

Robert Lawler from the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) was in attendance. Mr. Lawler also indicated that he has had recent conversations with FHWA on the topic of SR 161.

The following points were made regarding the issue of widening SR 161:

- Mr. Lawler stated that past studies have shown the need to widen SR 161 to five lanes with a service drive and a grade separation at the railroad tracks. Worthington has objected to the five-lane section from Flora Villa Drive to SR 315.
- It was suggested that a regional approach be taken. An approach similar to what is occurring for Hayden Run.
- It was suggested that specific studies and improvements be made to improve the situation now. This would involve studying specific intersections.

Next, Ms. Vais facilitated a discussion regarding developing guiding principles for the future of SR 161 in terms of streetscape, land use and inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Ms. Vais presented photographs of the existing conditions on SR 161 and examples of streetscapes.

The committee members had the following thoughts regarding streetscape:

- Look at other alternatives than a service drive. Plan ahead to get adequate internal circulation and connections between developments. Proper access management is a crucial part in creating a quality roadway.
- Create a more winding design.
- Amenities must be provided for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Consider burying the utilities adjacent to the roadway.
- Merge lanes on SR161 near Sawmill Road going eastbound create many problems.
- Consider specific improvements to improve the quality and function of the roadway. These can include the Linworth Road intersection, the Olentangy River Road intersection, grade separation at the railroad tracks, and the creation of a bikepath system to connect to existing paths in Worthington and Dublin.
- Consider impact of roadway widening on existing businesses, especially near Linworth Road.

Next, Ms. Vais presented a map illustrating the existing land use pattern along SR 161. The following key points were highlighted:

- Going west to east along SR 161 the following are the existing conditions:
 - Concentration of retail uses at Sawmill Road.
 - Multi-family and single-family uses along the north side of SR 161.
 - Land owned by The Ohio State University (OSU) on the south side of SR 161.
 - Small commercial and office uses approaching Linworth Road.

- Residential through Worthington.

Ms. Vais indicated that the areas that are most ripe for change are the area owned by OSU and the area near Linworth Road. The committee agreed with this observation and in general agreed that:

- Large retail uses and centers should remain near Sawmill Road.
- Maintain residential on the north side of SR 161.
- Preserve residential through Worthington.

The committee members had the following additional thoughts regarding land use:

- Look at some of the OSU land for public open space.
- Consider a research park for the OSU land.
- Examine the existing zoning, especially around the airport, to determine if changes should be proposed.
- Consider the possibility of mass transit in planning future land use.
- Need to consider density and capacity of future developments.
- Integrate development near Linworth Road. Consider – mixed use, mass transit, and development standards.

The meeting concluded at approximately 9:00 pm. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be June 9 at 7 pm at the Northwest Library.

Note: The presentation and maps that were used during the May 12 meeting can be accessed by going to www.columbusinfobase.org and looking under the Northwest Plan Update page.