

meeting notes

Date: May 26, 2010

Project: Harrison Albany Corridor Strategic Plan

Subject: Advisory Group Working Session #9

Attendees: Michael Cannizzo, Bill Conroy, Jim Fitzgerald, Jeong-Jun Ju, Sue Kim, Randi Lathrop, Carlos Montanez, Alexa Pinard, Kenya Thompson, Michael Hall - See attached list for Advisory Group Representatives

- This was the ninth meeting for the Harrison Albany Strategic Plan Advisory Group. All meetings have been scheduled at the Franklin Square House in the South End but may be relocated in the summer months.
- Next working session tentatively set for ~~June 23rd at 8:15am~~ – location to be updated – next session will be rescheduled for late summer
- Tonight's Powerpoint presentation is available on the BRA website - <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/Planning/PlanningInitsIndividual.asp?action=ViewInit&InitID=135>

Overview – Carlos Montanez provided a recap of the Harrison Albany Corridor Strategic Plan process to-date, the purpose of the Study and the Vision Statements drafted to-date for each of the four subareas.

Transportation – Jim Fitzgerald explained the presentation by Mike Hall of Tetra Tech Rizzo would include the Existing Conditions at 5-years-out (2015 only including development projects within the Study Area that have at least started Project Review at the BRA) and then transportation conditions for 5-years-out with possible network changes (nine separate ideas) discussed at previous AG working sessions.

Public Realm – Michael Cannizzo introduced potential connections throughout the Study Area as well as streetscape types, possible streetscape improvements, and potential street designs.

“As-of-Right” Build Out – C. Montanez reviewed the existing zoning categories in the Study Area and introduced diagrams showing what an as-of-right build out of the Study Area might look like. Massings, heights, and other urban design concepts will be further explored and discussed at the next AG meeting.

Questions/ Comments/ Responses –

- AG: Referring to transportation concept #7 – why would anyone go down Frontage Road to take a right to get to Albany? In the afternoon, Frontage is bumper-to-bumper, and with the hospital's parking garage, a new connection might make things worse. *M. Hall:* Only makes sense if there is redevelopment.
- AG: Continued issues with the traffic on the Mass. Ave. Connector and the regional traffic. The local issues will never get resolved if the regional problems remain. *J. Fitzgerald:* Agrees that there are regional fixes needed to make effective changes, and this plan could advocate for those changes.

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- AG: Transportation concept #5 – Making Traveler St. two-way would be difficult since it's not really four lanes (the striping isn't how the lanes are used). Similarly, for concept #9, the striping on E. Berkeley St. isn't reality of how the street is really used. *M. Hall*: Agrees and adds that the widths of the streets are there, but the use today doesn't match the striping.
- AG: What is the latest on the Mass. Ave. /Melnea Cass intersection construction? Will there be changes to turning lanes and signalization timing? *R. Lathrop*: Mass. Ave. lights will be re-timed per the Mass. Ave. reconstruction project. (BRA/ BTD will try to get updated information about the Mass. Ave. reconstruction project to the AG.)
- AG: If there's discussion about narrowing streets in the Study Area, does it take into account snow removal storage, buses on Harrison Ave., or ticketing by BTD? Wasn't there supposed to be an entrance to the Southeast Expressway for Newmarket that would fix the gridlock? *R. Lathrop*: Any new connections (i.e., concept #7) would only occur if there was redevelopment of the property, and it could be for site access for that new development. *J. Fitzgerald*: The City has continued to advocate for additional I-93 access and the State has agreed to conduct some analysis of potential improvements. We will update and brief the AG on this study after coordinating with MassDOT.
- AG: There's supposed to be a connection between Frontage Road and Bio-Square that MassDOT approved, but it's being held up. *J. Fitzgerald*: This connection is being held up because its MEPA permitting is tied up with larger Bio-Square permitting issues and once these are resolved the MassDOT approved connection will be made.
- AG: Would any development on the north side of Washington Street add-back on-street parking? *M. Hall*: This was not assumed in this traffic model, but if that was desired, it could be done.
- AG: Perhaps it would be better to extend concept #6 to close down Union Park Street from Washington St. to Harrison Ave. since it's not heavily used.
- AG: Opening the connection from the BUMC parking garage to the Connector would appear to improve circulation/ traffic.
- AG: Regarding concept #8 with East Concord Street, perhaps signalizing both ramps could improve the weaving.
- AG: For concept #2, there are a lot of cars trying to turn into the CMart parking lot on that block of Washington Street. The queue seems bad now.
- AG: Curious about the different scenarios for public realm and open space. Is there a strategy for citing open space? Could there be more discussion on how a linear park might work on Harrison Ave. or other creative ways to use the Right-of-Way? *R. Lathrop*: There will be more discussion of the public realm at the next AG working session, but we have to keep in mind that the green space would need to be actively used.

All of the PowerPoint presentations will be on the BRA website, and we look forward to continuing discussions at the next AG working session.