



Elizabeth Area Plan

Elizabeth Area Plan Citizen Advisory Group

Meeting No. 3

December 2, 2009

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

**Room 280, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte, NC 28202**

Meeting Notes

The meeting was begun at 5:30 p.m. The following Citizen Advisory Group members were present:

Nick Allmon; Emerson Bell; Tim Cleveland; John Hadley; Peggy Hey; Eric Jensen; Micki McDonough; Andy Misiaveg; Matt Nurkin; Monte Ritchey; Rich Rosenthal; Clifton Settlemeyer; Kris Solow; Rick Solow; Peter Tart; Robert Zabel; Andy Zoutewelle; Nina Lipton (Planning Commission).

Staff present were:

- Alan Goodwin, Planning Department - Project Manager
- Kathy Cornett, Planning Department
- Garett Johnson, Planning Department
- Danny Rogers, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)
- Brian Horton, Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Melina Dyk, Kimley-Horn and Associates

Mr. Goodwin opened the meeting by asking the group its opinions and thoughts about how the area plan process was working so far. He explained that the Planning Department has a method and procedure for preparing area plans, but that the process can be changed if the group desires.

Group members offered the following thoughts and comments on the process to date:

- The use of planning terminology and acronyms can be confusing.
- Information should be provided to the CAG ahead of time so that members can review it prior to the meeting, even if only in draft form.
- A recap of the previous meeting should be provided at the start of the next meeting, where staff could review what had been discussed and provide any follow-up actions that have been taken in the interim.
- Members should be able to offer additional input or comments during this recap.
- There should be a schedule or flowchart provided at each meeting showing where we are in the overall area plan process.
- The area plan process and plan adoption process should be explained, specifically what actions are taken/needed and when and in what order they occur.
- Consider finishing one area of the plan (e.g. Land Use) before moving on to another topic, rather than covering a different topic from one meeting to the next.

- The neighborhood may need to organize smaller focus groups to discuss upcoming meetings and to debrief afterwards.
- How does staff weigh the various suggestions and ideas that are received? Many of these are personal preferences and may not be the majority opinion on issues.
- Would like to have more interactive exercises and opportunities for give and take, such as the process used to formulate the draft vision statement.
- Members should be provided with interim work products to review between meetings.

Staff will provide written responses to these comments and questions and will incorporate the suggestions if possible and practical. It was also noted that this evening's meeting may run slightly longer than the specified 1.5 hour allotted time, and also that at least one additional CAG meeting may need to be added to the schedule in order to adequately cover all of the issues that will be addressed in the area plan process.

Danny Rogers of CATS made a brief presentation on the future Southeast Transit Corridor, the alignment of which will pass through the northern portion of the Elizabeth plan area as it transitions from Independence Boulevard into Uptown. The mode of this transit will be either Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or light rail (LRT). Mr. Rogers also spoke about the planned streetcar that will pass through Elizabeth, connecting the Five Points area of North Trade Street with the Eastland Mall site.

Brian Horton of CDOT and Melinda Dyk of Kimley-Horn gave a presentation on transportation issues, with particular emphasis on East Seventh Street. With the potential widening of the street from 3 to 4 lanes no longer being considered as an option by NCDOT, the area plan will address how this street will look and function in the future. It may be possible to "road diet" the street, reducing the 3 travel lanes to 2, possibly with a center turn lane and medians. Initial traffic counts and modeling indicate this could be done without a significant reduction in service.

A group "breakout" exercise was held, with the members dividing into four smaller groups. Each group was given the task of designing a new typical street cross-section for East Seventh Street, with the primary challenge being to incorporate all of the desired elements such as travel lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian refuge islands, planting strips, sidewalks, trees, etc. into the existing right-of-way and within the existing curbs. This was done by arranging scale cut-out shapes representing each of these elements onto a base cross-section diagram of the existing street. After a final cross-section was developed by each group, the cut-outs were glued to the base diagram and explained to the entire membership. The four cross-section plans were collected by CDOT for recording. They will be examined and evaluated when a street cross-section for East Seventh Street is developed and put forward for consideration in the draft plan.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:20 p.m.

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