

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 3, 2010

Subcommittee Members: Council Member Sheryl Cole, Chair
Council Member Laura Morrison
Council Member Chris Riley

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 5, 2010, regular subcommittee meeting.

Minutes were approved by a vote of 3-0

2. Staff Update and possible action on Morrow Street Traffic Analysis.

This was a continuation of the discussion from the April 5, 2010 meeting.

Molly Scarbrough, Planning and Development Review, discussed traffic volumes on Morrow Street west of Lamar, and traffic assumptions if the existing traffic barrier is removed. She stated that removing the barrier will increase traffic on Morrow, but the traffic volume will be less than before the installation of the barriers. She said the City does not have a compelling reason to either remove or leave the barrier in place, but noted that there will be staff costs associated with removing the barrier. Options include pursuing long-term improvements to provide better east/west access, a recommendation that the neighborhoods continue to work together to find a solution, and that the neighborhood work with Midtown Commons and others to provide needed neighborhood services. She added that the traffic assumptions did not take into consideration future development, and that although a traffic calming plan has been approved for Crestview, it has not yet been installed.

Council Member Morrison requested a map of neighborhood services in the area, and Ms. Scarbrough stated that staff had prepared a map which indicated that there were more residents from Highland wanting to get to the Crestview neighborhood due to the number of neighborhood destinations in Crestview, hence the desire to travel west on Lamar. There are fewer residents from Crestview wanting to travel through the Highland neighborhood.

Eddie Gary, Crestview Neighborhood Association., said they oppose any changes to the intersection of Lamar and Morrow that would allow westbound traffic to proceed across Lamar, and they do not support any changes that would increase traffic in the Crestview neighborhood. He noted that the cornerstone of the traffic calming plan was to keep the intersection of Lamar and Morrow intact.

Collette Kuemmel, Speaking on behalf of Damon Howze of Highland Neighborhood, spoke about the low traffic volumes on Morrow and said she did not understand the concerns about high traffic volumes on Morrow.

George Frimpten, Crestview Neighborhood, said the new Crestview station and Wal-Mart will substantially increase traffic volumes in the area. He said Crestview is a unique neighborhood with pedestrian safety issues, therefore increasing traffic on Morrow does not make sense. He said he participated in the traffic calming working group and their desire was to retain the barrier on Morrow to prevent an increase of traffic through Morrow.

Dorothy Johns, Highland Neighborhood Association, said the traffic issue is not simply an issue of convenience, but a safety issue. She said the neighborhood desires to travel east and west across Lamar like they used to before the barrier was installed.

Katherine Patton, 906 Morrow Street, said she lives 6 houses west of Lamar and is affected by the traffic on Morrow. She said there have been no meetings to solicit community input on the problems and potential solutions of both neighborhoods. She proposed placing pylons across the intersection for the north-half of Morrow Street to prevent increased traffic on Morrow.

Council Member Cole said the neighborhoods are in a state of growth and there is a need for a long term solution for two neighborhoods with traffic congestion issues. She said she was not in a position to make a recommendation to Council because the neighborhoods have not come to any agreement on a proposed solution. She therefore suggested that staff hire a facilitator to reconvene the two neighborhoods in order to make a recommendation for a solution to CPTC and the City Council.

Council Member Morrison said she supported Council Member Cole's recommendation and added that she did not feel they were in a position to pick a winner or a loser in this situation.

3. Staff Update on Conservation Single-Family Residential Zoning Category

Rob Heil, Planning and Development Review, said the proposed amendment will create a new residential use, Conservation Single Family Residential. This use will allow the preservation of open space and the protection of critical environmental features by allowing detached single-family housing on smaller individual lots, with the remainder of the site being held as commonly owned open space. The use would be allowed in single-family residence large lot (SF-1) zoned districts, and would not increase the allowable density of one unit per 10,000 sq. ft. or roughly 4.3 units per acre. The Planning Commission is scheduled to consider this item at the end of May, and a public hearing is scheduled at Council on June 10, 2010.

Council Member Riley asked if this amendment was a product of previous discussions at the Codes and Ordinances Subcommittee with regard to County regulations.

Jerry Rusthoven explained that this amendment was a directive from Council Member Morrison and would apply only to properties within the city limits. The amendment was initiated because there were several situations whereby an SF-1 zoned property with environmental features would require an upzoning to SF-6. As a result, the zoning change would be fought by the neighborhood because they did not want SF-6 zoning on the map. This amendment will allow a property to remain SF-1 and still achieve the same clustering, open space and environmental protection measures without the need for a zoning change to SF-6.

4. Staff Update on Comprehensive Plan

Greg Claxton, Planning and Development Review, provided an overview of Community Form Series #2 and Speak Week which occurred the week of April 20-29 and consisted of 42 stations throughout the city. Participants also participated in a chip exercise where they rated general preference of redevelopment over new development; mixed use corridors and centers over single use;; a reluctance to develop to the west, preservation of flood-prone areas to provide connected greenspace; and a preference for transit over roads. He also spoke about index indicators and explained the summary and geographic breakdown of each indicator.

Council Member Morrison said she did not feel the indicators adequately addressed each of the elements, and she wanted assurance that the health and social services perspective of the community is addressed.

Council Member Morrison also noted that the committee had discussed having a task force member update the committee on a monthly basis. She questioned whether that would occur.

Matt Duggan, Planning and Development Review Department, stated that Judge Cooper had discussed this with the task force and they had decided to rotate among the members, but unfortunately, none of the members was available for this month's update.

Council Member Cole said the Council had previously committed to holding a press conference in an effort to increase public involvement. She asked that staff work with her office and Assistant City Manager Sue Edwards' office to pinpoint a date and time for a future press conference. She also suggested that the Commissioner's Court be invited to participate in the press conference.

5. Staff Update on Waller Creek District Master Plan

Jim Robertson, Planning and Development Review, provided a previous of the proposed master plan presentation that will be presented to Council in June. He provided an overview of the master plan, the framework for development standards, and the implementation program and budget estimate.

Due to time constraints, the item was continued to the June 7th meeting.