

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Landscape Architecture

Planning

Urban Design

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MEETING RECORD

To: Katherine Caffrey
From: Ryan Wight
Date: May 12, 2015
Project Name: Bell Boulevard
Project #: 5224
Subject: Work Group Meeting 4
Meeting Date: May 6, 2015
Start/End: 3:30/5:00
Location: 450 Cypress Creek Road,
Building 3 multi-purpose
Copy To: Rebecca Leonard

Meeting Telephone Conference Call

Following are the minutes of the above referenced meeting.

The following people were present: Rebecca Leonard, Ryan Wight, Rachel Tepper, Ryan Losch, Todd LaRue, John Cavallo, Brian Rice, Katherine Caffrey, City Work Group

- Welcome
 - Critical meeting
 - Need to determine direction moving forward
 - Public input sent to the generic email address for the project was passed around for review.
- Introductions
 - See sign in sheets
- Agenda
 - Refinement of concept
 - Three alternatives
 - April feedback
 - Moving forward with a refined concept
 - One more public meeting
 - Discussion related to the last public meeting, which was originally slated for May 27. Following the meeting, it was determined that this should be rescheduled for the summer in order to allow time for additional analysis.
- Community Outreach
 - Public workshop #1 and 2 recap
 - The public input received at the April 7 meeting regarding the three alternatives was discussed. Board on Board and Picket were the top choices, with Picket as the preferred alternative. Additional analysis will be conducted on both options.
- Bell and Buttercup Creek/Brushy Creek Intersection Improvements
 - Improved Level of Service is anticipated, even with projected demand.
 - Increased efficiency related to mobility is also anticipated.

- Work Group Member Grimes commented that Cedar Park does not have "bad traffic" compared to its more urban neighbor, Austin. General discussion related to traffic in Austin area.
- Where would Bell start to curve?
 - Not until after the Bell and Buttercup Creek/Brushy Creek intersection, so the intersection would not need to be reconstructed twice.
 - The curve would happen gradually in order to accommodate the right turning radius.
- Park and Parkway
 - The park would be primarily passive and would include amenities such as trails, picnic areas, gardens with active programming, and opportunities/space for potential festivals or events.
 - The park, parkway and shopping street would be designed to accommodate community events and the parkway and shopping street could be shut down to accommodate larger crowds for events and festivals.
- Identity
 - The different zones within the Bell Boulevard area should not be defined by land use, but by the things that you "do" there. Such as "play, work, do, live".
 - Use material that comes from the natural landscape such as limestone and cedar
 - Katherine - Would that get put into code?
 - The material suggestions could be incorporated into design guidelines or the code.
 - A few comments on the revised Bird's Eye Rendering:
 - Break up the architecture.
 - Creek and floodplain need to be adjusted to be more realistic.
- Gateways
 - All gateway images are draft and examples to begin the discussion. Only intended to give a general "feel" for a concept.
 - Gateway 1 - Mark the edges, similar to the existing gateway signage that Cedar Park has on the edges of the city.
 - Gateway 2 - Signature lighting – a hierarchy of visual cues, Cherry Creek North in Denver is an example.
 - Gateway 3 - Elevate the amount of civic art – use art itself to signify the special district.
- Sound Wall
 - Discussion related to whether a sound wall would be needed or required by TxDOT. Additional research will be done on this issue.
- Current Economic Realities
 - Historical sales tax and property tax analysis shows overall decline. Market conditions alone are not changing Bell Boulevard
 - Bell Boulevard sales tax has decreased, while the City's sales tax has increased.
 - This sales tax analysis did not factor in new growth, it only compared what was built in 2009.
 - 2009 wasn't even a great year for the national economy, but the numbers along Bell Boulevard were much better than they are now.
 - These numbers reinforce the need for this project.
- Phasing Options | Alternative 1
 - Start on the west-side – fix the intersection, parkway, open up the land for development.
 - Initial ROI will be lower on this alternative.
 - Concerns that "place doesn't really emerge" in this first phase were voiced.
 - Shopping street is short

- Discussion related to more uncertainty regarding future with this first phase.
- Discussion from RCLCO related to the quality and level of density and commercial development that would be received during this phase.
- Phasing Options | Alternative 2
 - Re-align Bell Boulevard to existing Old Bell first.
 - This option may be more desirable for developers because the uncertainty of what will happen to Bell Boulevard is removed from the equation.
 - How much developable acreage does Alternative 1 open up in Phase 1 compared to Alternative 2?
 - Access to all existing businesses will be maintained throughout and after construction
 - Constructing the new Bell may be easier on businesses as construction will not occur right in front of their property (for those businesses on Bell)
 - Questions related to the park development.
 - Park development may be a community driver, but the road development may generate commercial development needed to energize entire project.
- Return on Investment
 - Revenue assumptions:
 - Low range (very conservative) and high end (somewhere between the Domain and a lower-end product)
 - Which blocks get developed and when?
 - This is determined by many factors and can be modeled many different ways.
 - RCLCO explained that each block is analyzed to determine what type of density and product could be achieved, and then when the market would be ready to absorb it.
 - Do the costs include land acquisition for Right-of-Way?
 - Still under development for phase 2.
 - How did you factor in cyclical business growth?
 - RCLCO explained that business cyclicalities is not factored in. The model assumes an average escalation of 3% which is an average increase in value for the Cedar Park and Austin area. This average includes the ups and downs in the business cycle.
 - Initial period of decline was also factored in, but will be explored further on a parcel by parcel basis.
 - It is also common to see a temporary business decline during periods of construction. However, analysis shows overall positive ROI for the city and businesses from redevelopment.
 - Does the cost include acquiring land for development?
 - If land is purchased for redevelopment, it is not a sunk cost because this assumes the City would act as a developer and see a return when sold.
 - Currently this does not include the assumption that the city would be purchasing the land for redevelopment.
 - How does this impact existing property owners and businesses?
 - Questions/concerns regarding the possibility of businesses being impacted by altering traffic patterns.
 - Work Group Member Carr shared that if the road were to be moved, it would impact his property and he would have to rebuild his building in a different configuration in order for it to function the same way it does today.
 - The more uncertainty, the more decline.
 - Do the revenues include the initial decline?
 - Initial period of decline was also factored in, but will be explored further, on a parcel by parcel basis.

- What will happen to the parcels on the east side of Bell Boulevard in the Board on Board option?
 - Businesses may not redevelop as quickly as businesses on west side.

Overall Comments

- The Picket option is the most ambitious.
 - Cost
 - Businesses will be impacted
 - This will extend the timeline.
 - Concerns related to impact on business community, and their impact on implementation.
- The park does not create as much value - but it is a great amenity
 - Allows some development to happen

Next Steps

- Additional analysis on Board on Board option needed. Group requested apples-to-apples comparison of all financial analysis for Picket (completed) and Board on Board (to be completed).
- Need to continue business community outreach, but may not generate their attention until a preferred alternative is finalized.
 - Discussion related to business and tenant outreach:
 - Many property owners are engaged and understand.
 - Business owners concerned about impact on their businesses and bottomlines.
 - Until you make decisions it is hard to engage them – this happened in 183 historically
 - Once we have a decision we need a communication plan to move accordingly.
 - Work Group discussion related to Picket option versus Board on Board. Decision made to conduct more analysis on Board on Board and come back to review both options.
 - Preferred alternative will be determined after more analysis.
 - Katherine will tweak the schedule to adjust based on feedback and will be in touch with next steps.

The meeting concluded with a brief discussion and action plan to revise costs, revenues, mobility and postpone the May 27th meeting to extend the overall timeline.

Next Meeting

Date: TBD
 Time: TBD
 Location: TBD

END OF NOTES

The record herein is considered to be an accurate depiction of the discussion and/or decisions made during the meeting unless written clarification is received by Design Workshop within five (5) working days upon receipt of this meeting record.