

TRANSIT CENTERED DEVELOPMENT STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP 04/08/10

Members Present: Denise Nelson, Michael Vickerelli, Mary Dean, Paul Corvino, Daniel Pato, Robert Galeello, Thomas Yemm.

Others Present: David Killeen (Town Planner), Steven Cecil (The Cecil Group), William Lawrence (TR Advisor), and Vince McDermott and Jason McCabe (Milone & MacBroom).

The Transit-Centered Development Steering Committee held its third and final public workshop on Thursday, April 8, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., in the main room of the Baldwin Center, 1000 W. Broad Street, Stratford, CT.

Chairman Nelson gave her opening remarks. Tonight's workshop was planned as a "charrette," the process by which the public collaborates in designing solutions.

Mr. Cecil of The Cecil Group, the consultant for the project, then gave a power point presentation summarizing the possible benefits of transit-centered development, such as mixed use redevelopment, preservation of residential areas, increased building heights, reduced parking needs, increased connectivity (bikeway, pedestrian and streetscape improvements), reduced truck and thru traffic, highway exit to parking. Although transit-centered development typically includes an area within ½ mile of the station (the furthest most people are willing to walk), that area can be expanded with the use of shuttles to sites outside that radius. He also reported the results of the visual images survey conducted at the second workshop. Respondents liked mixed use (commercial on ground floor, residences above) but preferred single family homes and townhouses to mid-rise or multi-family buildings. However, they weren't sure where to locate the townhouses. They also preferred a traditional look to contemporary.

Milone & MacBroom discussed the current parking activity at the railroad station. Approximately 1,320 people take the train from Stratford each week and 90% drive a car to the station and park. Many of these people are not Stratford residents. Currently there are 400 parking spaces available for commuter parking. The proposed parking garage would have about 700 parking spaces. If you had direct access from I-95 to the parking garage, this would free up thru traffic in town. Possible sites for locating the station and parking garage are (1) Main Street (would need incremental development to reinforce mixed use concept); (2) Barnum Ave/Ferry Blvd, which already has a lot of parking in this area and the potential for parcel assembly and increased density. Also possible residential mixed use (location may be too noisy for residential); (3) the current Station Area with the addition of mixed use, a parking garage and improved platform structures; (4) Station Area West (Broad Street area) using former industrial property and the I-95 interchange. This may be a good location for the parking garage with an elevator and a pathway to station, although space is a little tight; (5) Station Area East (Stratford Square).

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The public broke up into three groups for approximately an hour to discuss possible options and designs:

Group 1: Main Street and Barnum Avenue/Ferry Boulevard.

Group 2: Current Station, Station Area East, and Station Area West.

Group 3: Connectivity, shuttles, everywhere, nowhere (anything goes).

Some of the conclusions reached by the groups were:

- Did not like Station Area East or West as possible locations. Station Area East better suited for office space, like Norwalk.
- Did not like present location proposed for parking garage. Traffic nightmare!
- Location needs connectivity . If train station or parking moved to Barnum Ave/Ferry Blvd location, would people be able to walk there comfortably? Would it tie into the Greenway? Benefit is that platform could be extended two cars.
- Barnum Ave/Ferry Blvd area lends itself to high density development (5-6 stories). Can also bring in retail or mixed use. If location is too noisy, locate residential on other side of Burlington (big parking lot area).
- Improve West Barnum with Special Services Taxing District.
- Convert Center School into high density residential, but keep park as open space.

The Cecil Group will take all these ideas and come back to the next meeting with a Draft Report.

The Public Hearing ended 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail J. Nobili
Secretary