

# SUMMARY OF MEETING



ENGINEERS  
PLANNERS  
SURVEYORS

This meeting summary represents the writer's understanding of the major issues discussed. If you wish to suggest edits or additions, please contact the undersigned.

- DATE:** May 10, 2017
- PROJECT:** Delaware Avenue Complete Streets Feasibility Study
- PLACE:** Town of Bethlehem Town Hall
- TIME:** 3:00 pm
- PURPOSE:** **The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the comments from the public information meeting and review the proposed alternatives with the Study Advisory Committee (SAC).**

## **ATTENDEES:**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Telephone Number</u></b>
See attached attendance sheet		

## **SUMMARY:**

1. Welcome – CM informed the group that since the last meeting, consultant efforts have been focused on compiling comments received at the public information meeting and developing design alternatives for the corridor. The objective of the SAC meeting was to verify the public comments in order to guide the continuing alternatives analysis effort and to review the draft complete streets alternatives with the SAC before moving into the more detailed evaluation phase
2. Public Meeting Recap – CM briefly covered the comments received during the public information meeting held on February 16, 2017 and noted that over 100 people attended. During the overview that CM provided, the following comments and topics were highlighted:
  - a. Jim Giacone stated that the attendance at the public information meeting was not a full representation of the business community within the study area and that the public may have overlooked unintended consequences that would adversely impact businesses.
    - i. In response, the group discussed the need to involve the business community and receive their input. It was suggested that CM schedule a business specific event, such as a focus group through the Bethlehem Chamber. Jen from the Chamber offered to help get the word out.
      1. Rob Leslie remarked that not all of the businesses within the corridor are members of the Bethlehem Chamber.
      2. Jim Giacone noted that business owners are often busy and might be more amenable to a short phone survey.
    - ii. **Action: CM coordinate with the TAC and plan to reach out to businesses after the next SAC meeting.**
  - b. Discussion of Pocket Parks
    - i. Rob Leslie stated that there is an opportunity to design a small pavilion on Town land adjacent to the Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail at Elsmere Avenue.

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- ii. Virginia Acquario stated that adding another pocket park along Delaware Avenue closer to the businesses would be beneficial for employees and customers.
    - 1. The CDTA Park and Ride Lot was discussed as a possible location due to low utilization. The group determined that it was not ideal due to its location and ownership by the Albany Water Board.
    - 2. The property adjacent to the car wash was also discussed as a possible location for a pocket park.
  - iii. The group discussed the possibility of enhancing green space within the corridor without adding a full pocket park, for example adding inviting spaces, even small ones, where a bench or two could be placed.
    - 1. Rob Leslie noted the enhancements being made to the Albany Medical Center Building in the form of additional landscaping in the parking lot.
  - iv. **Action: CM to continue looking for greenspace opportunities within the corridor.**
- c. Discussion of Trail Connections
- i. Virginia Acquario noted that there is concern that individuals using the rail trail will occupy on-street parking and asked if formal parking arrangements will be pursued.
    - 1. Rob Leslie stated that it may be possible to pursue an agreement with the American Legion where a majority of people are already parking.
    - 2. Debbie Murray noted that it could be possible to park at Delaware Plaza and access the trail if individuals were allowed to cross the City of Albany water line.
  - ii. Jim Giacone stated that the proposed connections at Lincoln Avenue and Booth Road were too close together and that the Booth Road connection would be preferred.
  - iii. The group discussed the possibility of restoring the old yellow brick road bridge for pedestrian access. It was noted that it had been explored in the past and ownership of the bridge is an obstacle. **Action: Rob Leslie will forward history to CM, regarding potential upgrades to the yellow brick road bridge.**
  - iv. The group discussed a connection and sidewalk enhancement along Delaware Avenue in the vicinity of Lenox Street and Grant Street.
    - 1. It was determined that it would be a good idea to extend the sidewalk on the north side of Delaware Avenue east to the car wash, provided it is determined to be feasible at a later time, but there was no need to extend it to the Town Line.
- d. Discussion of Additional Priority Enhancements
- i. A suggestion was made to add signage directing individuals to designated parking areas for the rail trail.
  - ii. Jim Giacone suggested looking at shared parking arrangements with schools (Elsmere Elementary School and Bethlehem Middle School) as they provide empty parking lots on weekends when people would like to use the rail trail.

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- iii. Scott Lewendon asked if there would be any roundabouts considered on Delaware Avenue to provide people the opportunity to make a U-turn instead of turning left.
  1. CM noted that a roundabout at Elsmere Avenue was probably not feasible and that the only other possible location would be at the Plaza which needs to be further examined.
3. Overview of Draft Major Street Alternatives – CM outlined the preliminary limited list of pros and cons of the Null (i.e. existing road layout) plus three different draft alternatives (Null, Full Road Diet, Partial Road Diet, and 1-1-2 eastbound) that are being considered for Delaware Avenue. CM explained that for the east end of the corridor (east of the Delaware Plaza) all of the alternatives would transition to a typical three-lane road diet.
  - a. A question was asked about the crash reduction factor associated with the full road diet alternative.
    - i. CM stated that a typical road diet results in a 25% crash reduction and that crash severity will also be examined.
  - b. It was noted that in the road diet alternatives, buses were proposed to stop in the lane or in the bicycle lane, otherwise, road widening and ROW acquisition would likely be necessary.
  - c. Jeremy Martelle asked why the 1-1-2 alternative was oriented with 2 lanes eastbound and one lane westbound.
    - i. CM stated that this alignment was examined because it naturally ties into the existing condition at Elsmere Avenue and allows Elsmere Ave intersection to operate the same as it does today. Jeremy asked to have the 2-1-1 alternative also looked at with 2 through lanes westbound.
    - ii. Rob Leslie stated the alternatives should be renamed 1-1-2 eastbound and westbound 2-1-1 or something similar for ease of understanding which direction carries the 2 travel lanes.
    - iii. **Action: CM to consider the 2-1-1 alternate with 2 lanes westbound.**
  - d. Debbie Murray stated that there is concern on the impacts a road diet will have on businesses, noting that the economy is bad and extra travel time is not good.
  - e. It was noted that evaluation results on travel time and differences in motor vehicle delay related to alternatives will include delay related to lowering the speed limit from its current 40 mph.
  - f. Overall the road diet from the Albany City Line to Delaware Plaza was well received. There was some discussion about how the full road diet could transition to a partial road diet near Delaware Plaza.
  - g. A gateway concept was discussed on the east end of the corridor near the bridge over the Normanskill. The group generally agreed that it would calm traffic entering the Town.
  - h. Several potential enhanced pedestrian crossing locations were presented including one near Tasty Freeze with the possibility of a center median.
    - i. CM noted that the properties on the south side of Delaware Avenue between Lenox St and Grant St would still have access due to an inter-connected driveway behind the buildings.
    - ii. Rob Leslie asked if there were legal easements or if this driveway was an informal arrangement that could cause problems in the future.
    - iii. **Action: CM to look into easements.**

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4. The group discussed the Performance Measures to be used to evaluate the various alternatives. Rob Leslie asked if they will be presented in table format. **Action: CM/CDTC to confirm presentation format.**
5. Next Steps/ Schedule
  - a. The next Study Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting will be held towards the end of June after more analysis has been conducted and the alternatives have been further refined.
  - b. **Action: CM to confirm date of next SAC meeting.**
  - c. Following the SAC meeting the business owner meeting will held.

## Summary of Actions:

1. **CM coordinate with the TAC and plan to reach out to businesses after the next SAC meeting.**
2. **Continue looking for greenspace opportunities within the corridor.**
3. **Rob Leslie will forward history to CM, regarding potential upgrades to the yellow brick road bridge.**
4. **Consider 2-1-1 Alternative with 2 through lanes westbound.**
5. **Look into easements between Lenox St and Grant St**
6. **CM/CDTC confirm performance measure presentation format**
7. **Confirm date of next SAC meeting.**

The meeting concluded at 4:30 p.m.

Jesse Vogl  
Assistant Project Planner

cc: Attendees  
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