



REPORT OF MEETING

Date and Time: Thursday, February 25, 2016, 1:00 PM

Location: Lyceum, 227 Lawrence Street, Hartford

Subject: Urban Design Working Group #3

NAME	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL ADDRESS
David Morin	Parkville Revitalization Association	barridoncorp@aol.com
Jackie McKinney	ArtSpace Residents Association	jackiemckinney@comcast.net
Jackie Gorsky Mandyck	iQuilt Partnership	jackie@thequiltplan.org
Mark McGovern	Town of West Hartford	mark.mcgovern@westhartfordct.gov
Lynn Ferrari	Coalition to Strengthen Sheldon-Charter Oak Neighborhood	lynn.ferrar@gmail.com
Rich Armstrong	Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)	Richard.Armstrong@ct.gov
Dave Stahnke`	TranSystems Corporation (TSC)	dkstahnke@transystems.com
Mitch Glass	Goody Clancy	mitch.glass@goodyclancy.com
David Spillane	Goody Clancy	david.spillane@goodyclancy.com

1. Meeting Location

The meeting was held in the upstairs balcony of the Lyceum with meeting attendees seated informally at a round table.

2. Presentation / Discussion

Mitch Glass began with an overview of the urban design materials presented during the morning PAC meeting. This included discussion of the urban design related to:

- Asylum/Broad air-rights and solid ground parcels
- Asylum/Broad development scenarios
- Sisson/West Blvd/Capitol Ave circulation and development pattern
- Sisson/West Blvd/Capitol Ave opportunities
- Overall corridor – potential land areas for transit use, TOD, parking, and public space
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The board overview was followed by a brief discussion of the new cap option idea over a lowered I-84 alternative.

David Morin noted that the cap option had potential to screen the highway and agreed with the assessment that buildings would not be feasible on the cap. Mark McGovern mentioned that the connectivity potential seemed strong but had concerns about long-term maintenance costs. Dave Stahnke referred to the recently completed Klyde Warren Park in Dallas which was constructed above a highway and has maintenance costs of \$3 million per year, shared through a public/private partnership.

Jackie McKinney asked if the lowered highway alternative could be done without a cap in the early phases and then be implemented later. Rich Armstrong answered that this scenario was unlikely given the need to minimize construction impacts.

D. Morin pointed out that there were potential land areas that should be colored yellow in the urban design analysis graphic for the Sisson/West Blvd/Capitol Ave opportunities board. He believes there are land parcels between the new highway, rail tracks, and Park Street that may offer economic development opportunities. M. Glass said that Goody Clancy would explore this in the next round of urban design analysis.

M. McGovern asked how new land made available by the highway construction would be distributed post-construction. D. Stahnke responded by saying there is a series of laws that would guide the process to determine who would have ownership of certain land areas (State agencies, City of Hartford, adjacent property owners, and/or open bid). This process would occur much later in the I-84 work and is yet to be defined.

Jackie Gorsky Mandyck asked how past mistakes in other states that have considered or implemented new highway projects and adjacent development informed the I-84 project. David Spillane responded by focusing on the challenges, opportunities, and solutions of the Big Dig in Boston which initially considered buildings on top of the underground highway but ultimately concluded that a linear park space was more feasible. He also mentioned the difficulty in building over air rights, using the Mass Turnpike through Boston and I-84 in Hartford between Main and Trumbull Streets.

J. McKinney strongly emphasized the need to plan for transit-oriented development, and not just the Yard Goats baseball stadium, in advance of highway reconstruction. She wanted to ensure that actions to make it happen were embedded in the project planning at this stage so that development as shown in the urban design scenarios would occur through the private sector after the highway was completed. R. Armstrong mentioned the City has a new planning and development team and that the I-84 team has been meeting with them to inform them of the urban design issues pertaining to the project.

M. McGovern mentioned his concern over market demand for development in Hartford. This led to a discussion over the right uses on top of a cap over a lowered highway alternative. J. McKinney said that green space does not equate to tax revenue. D. Spillane noted that public uses such as transit access, public parking, or green space are viable options but that private development on air-rights is highly unlikely given the high cost premiums.

J. McKinney asked what kind of development would be appropriate adjacent to the highway on solid land. D. Spillane responded that residential uses have high potential at this point in time but that it would be difficult to predict market demand in 10 years, after highway construction. Key principles for any type of development would include walkability, vibrancy, and active street level uses to ensure that future millennials will want to live and work downtown.

J. McKinney emphasized that the City and community need to be prepared to capture the opportunity of future private development. The parcels need to be set up to take advantage of post-construction demand.

J. McKinney asked about the role of the urban designers on the I-84 team moving forward. R. Armstrong responded by saying the urban design team will continue to participate in

discussions with the City, agencies, and communities about the best urban design approaches related to the I-84 work. J. Gorsky Mandyck noted that the team needs to be clear about expectations. What portion is public work as part of the highway project (and what remains after the highway construction) and what is done by private developers later?

R. Armstrong mentioned the need to continue the work of the Urban Design working group. D. Spillane noted the extraordinary opportunities to open up Bushnell Park and open up Asylum Street connectivity.

M. McGovern noted the need to update Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development *One City, One Plan* document before the highway construction. He suggested working with local communities to figure out what's desired in the future. The year 2020 is the next update for that plan.

J. Gorsky Mandyck noted that the new road, Bushnell Park West, must be a complete street for pedestrians and bicycles and not just for vehicles, which would block off the park from the west. The I-84 team confirmed that this was the approach for that new road.

3. Next Steps

D. Stahnke said that the Urban Design Working Group will be meeting more frequently in 2016 with dates and locations to be determined and that the work of this committee will be very important to the overall I-84 project moving forward.