

DRT DISCUSSION NOTES

June 10, 2014

Dave Dysard began the meeting by reviewing last meeting notes and project status. Ken noted two corrections: attendance correction (add Ken, delete John) and add note that initial capital cost of lights can be covered from the general fund of the lighting assessment fund. Also, three discussion items were added to the agenda under roundtable: TARTA bus shelter and benches, Toledo Museum of Art meeting and bike racks. Today's attendance consisted of: 9 residents (Mary Weil, John Kirkbride, Sue Postal, Carol Kutsche, Ken Schumaker, Lisa Kerrigan, Lewis Derr, David Neuendorff and Martin Jarret); 5 City staff/consultants (Dysard, Bartlett, Stookey, Meyers, Rick Butera – EDGE Group). Dave shared a note from Erica Schneider that State Historic Preservation Office had signed the No Adverse Effect letter July 22 and thanked the DRT for its hard work in this team process.

Rick Butera then reviewed construction diagrams and brick samples for the gateway piers and landscape areas. He presented pier designs with a ball on top of the piers. Team members said there was discussion at a past meeting of an acorn instead of the ball. Rick will provide a revised drawing with the acorn design and send it electronically to team members. Stephanie asked everyone to vote via email and she would tally and get the selected finial into the plans. Rick also presented designs for the landscape areas that reuse street brick. Dave Neuendorff discussed that he doesn't want to see sidewalks and curbs replaced. He feels these are the last historic elements. Team members countered that the decision on walks and curbs was difficult but had been thoroughly discussed by the team previously. There is a trade off and give and take to develop a facility that will meet modern standards and we did the best we could to maintain and improve essential neighborhood elements. Dave still felt the historic element was being lost. It was noted that to complete the street even sandstone pieces in good shape would have to be leveled and grade changes would require moving and re-setting most of the pieces. They are fragile and susceptible to breakage when moved. Dick mentioned that the landscape areas are substantial in size and would add a significant feel of brick texture to the street. Lisa discussed not having a "hodge-podge" look of new concrete with small areas of sandstone.

Attention turned to the three brick samples that Rick brought with him. There was not a consensus but it was agreed to include two styles (Rosewood Blend and Georgetown Brick) in the plans and include these two styles "or approved equivalent" that would be determined by the field engineer after consulting with the landscape architects. The team felt that you needed to see some of the street brick (as they are removed during construction) and make sure that the brick in the pier contrasted and didn't "clash" with the reused brick.

Stephanie discussed her utilities meeting. Columbia Gas will have extensive relocations. All above ground utilities agreed to move to Edison poles on the north side of the street. This eliminates many, but not all, of the poles on the south side of the street as utilities need to cross the street to go along the backyard lot lines for distribution to homes on the cross streets. Dave N. shared story of the steam system that used to serve the area. He believes there were four lines that cross Bancroft along the north-south cross streets. He shared that City staff do not want to admit that we now "own" the lines as they are abandoned street utilities in the public right of way. He requested that they be documented as an archeological item but that was not included in the requirements for the project. It was agreed that the field inspectors can photograph any locations they encounter and record the locations. It was agreed it's important to fill these so they don't collapse under the road.

Stephanie reiterated the team's decision to not stripe any of the crosswalks that don't have traffic signals, as Division of Transportation advises against striping across Bancroft at those locations. They are concerned with giving a false sense of safety to pedestrians where there isn't any positive traffic control to ensure that vehicles stop for the crosswalk. That was agreed to, with the caveat that the neighborhood can call upon Transportation staff to review this after six months of operation of the new project to see if this creates any problems. Lighting conduits will be placed three feet in from the sidewalk toward the street throughout the project area to maintain a consistent pole location. Trees are generally on 30 foot centers and species as specified in the planting plan.

Martin had asked for 20-30 minutes of the agenda for neighborhood team members to discuss pursuing funding for ongoing operation of ornamental lights along the street. All agreed that the change in assessment was too much for just the homeowners along Bancroft to bear. Good news was that the up-front capital cost can be covered by the assessment fund – not homeowners. It was estimated that the annual operations bill would be around \$7,000 each year. Martin outlined seven options (see Attachment below). The team discussed positives and negatives of each and agreed to set up a meeting with Councilwoman Hicks-Hudson and Councilman Steel to pursue an alternative to assessments for adjoining homeowners to pay for ongoing increased costs of ornamental lighting along Bancroft in the historic district. A separate subcommittee of the OWEA was suggested to pursue this.

Ken and Sue met with Tom at TARTA to discuss the ornamental shelter and benches. They recommended to the team that the shelter not be used along Bancroft but suggested it could be installed on Collingwood just north of Delaware in front of the Rosary Cathedral parking lot. There already is a shelter there and this would be more appropriate than the clear panel shelter currently there. TARTA agreed to research the bench manufacturer and costs further and see if they could provide the benches with lettering along Bancroft at the four stops with the funding they have. The benches cost around \$1400 per bench.

Dick Meyers and Ken met with Carol Benz to discuss TMA plans for the campus and surrounding area. TMA discovered that they had cared for an ODOT parcel for years and want to clear up ownership along I-75. They reviewed the Bancroft project with them and she was impressed by the design. She was unable to agree at this time to partner on signage or on landscaping for the interchange area but was open to discussions in the future when the funding situation improves. She said that ODOT has agreed to change signs on I-75 to proper name. It was also discussed that the current wayfinding for the TMA directs TMA visitors to use Detroit Avenue exit (and then presumably to Monroe – SR 51). It was noted that the City is responsible for wayfinding on City streets and Gary Stookey agreed to develop a signage plan for Toledo streets to direct visitors to the TMA. It was also discussed that using Glenwood might present a more appealing route for out of town visitors but that will have to be discussed with TMA, City and ODOT.

Martin shared that the Arts Commission has placed numerous art bike racks and wondered if this should be included with this project or in the commons or elsewhere since the project includes bike lanes. These can be placed after construction so there is no need to secure these now.

Next DRT meeting was set for September 23. The meeting adjourned.

**ATTACHMENT: Decorative Lighting Along the Bancroft Gateway
Options for Financing Annual Lighting Assessments**

One of the final remaining issues to resolve is how to finance the ongoing assessment of the decorative street lighting along Bancroft. The incremental annual cost has been estimated by the City at \$6,942. Here is an outline of the options discussed formally and informally.

1. **Abutting owners assessed** — The Committee has agreed that the traditional method of assessing adjoining owners for the full assessment load is not reasonable nor acceptable since the entire neighborhood benefits by enhancing this gateway through the district.
2. **Payment by City of Toledo** — City of Toledo agrees to pay the annual assessment cost for perpetuity based upon the community benefit of enhancing an historic district with city-wide importance.
3. **Payment by an alternative partner** — Instead of the City, an alternate party such as OWEA, WOVE or another partner agree to provide the dedicated annual funds for perpetuity.
4. **Establish A Special Improvement District (SID)** — Creating the SID requires petition by property owners (60% based on linear feet), City approval, a plan for the improvements and a governing board to manage the process. The cost would be spread among property owners of the defined SID based on linear feet. Depending upon the number of properties in the designated district, average annual cost per property could be about \$10-15/year based on the current lighting plan. Challenges include obtaining the necessary signees and being responsible for non-collection of the assessment due to foreclosures or other issues.
5. **Petition by 50% of property owners** — This option is similar to the SID, without the governing body to manage the enhanced lighting. The cost would be spread among property owners of the defined district based on linear feet. Depending upon the number of properties in the designated district, average annual cost per property could be about \$10-15/year based on the current lighting plan. The major challenge is obtaining the necessary signees from 50% of the property owners (based on linear feet) including absentee owners and vacant properties.
6. **Council ordinance to assess cost to district property owners** — This option is similar to the above, without the petition process. It is also based on the premise that enhancing the Bancroft Gateway benefits the full Historic District. Properties within the Historic District or a similar area would be assessed for the annual cost based on linear feet. As with the other assessment options, the average annual cost per property could be about \$10-15/year. Clear support from the OWEA and WOVE and a Council ordinance would be necessary.
7. **Capitalize a fund that would pay the assessment** — this approach would require a grant (about \$200,000±), and similar to an endowment, the interest generated would be used to pay the annual incremental assessment cost for perpetuity. The grantee would be a local organization (OWEA or WOVE) that would contract with the City to pay the assessment, with a likely clause to transfer assets and responsibility for payment to another identified group if the organization ceases to exist at some point.

I suggest we review this list at the next Design Review Committee meeting, reach consensus on a preferred approach and then develop a clear strategy to make it happen.