



Meeting Minutes

To: Jim Maslanka
Steve Sindiong
Organization: City of Alexandria

From: Paul Elman
David Whyte
Erin Murphy
Organization: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Meeting Date: November 18, 2010
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Landmark Mall – Second Level Retail Storefront

Subject: Transitway Corridor Feasibility Study High Capacity Transit Corridor Working Group Meeting 2

Attendees: **Corridor Working Group:** Councilman Rob Krupicka, Anna Bentley, Bill Denton, Donna Fossum, Dak Hardwick, Poul Hertel, Nancy Jennings, John Komoroske
City of Alexandria Council: Councilwoman Del Pepper
City of Alexandria staff: Rich Baier (T&ES), Abi Lerner (T&ES), Faroll Hamer (P&Z), Jim Maslanka (T&ES), Steve Sindiong (T&ES), Jeff Farner (P&Z), Pat Mann (P&Z)
Kimley-Horn and Associates: Paul Elman, David Whyte, and Erin Murphy
Members of the Public: 21 Citizens signed in

Agenda

1. Introduction (3 minutes)
 - a. Opening Remarks – *Councilman Krupicka and Councilman Smedberg (not present), CWG Co-Chairs*
 - b. Meeting Objectives and Goals - *Abi Lerner, T&ES*
 - i. Input and confirmation on existing conditions (Corridor C)
 - ii. Input and confirmation of draft evaluation criteria and priorities
 - iii. Outline Corridor C Needs (Origins/Destinations/Other)
2. Background – *Kimley-Horn (8 minutes)*
 - a. Distribution of Oct. 21 meeting minutes
 - b. Overview of revised project schedule
 - c. General project flow and anticipated CWG meeting topics
3. Beauregard/Van Dorn (Corridor C) Existing Conditions Discussion – *Kimley-Horn (22 minutes)*
 - a. Multimodal overview
 - b. Traffic operations summary
 - i. Corridor travel time
 - ii. Bottlenecks/congestion
 - iii. Intersection operations
 - c. CWG input and observations
 - d. Public input and observations
4. Preliminary Evaluation Criteria – *Kimley-Horn (30 minutes)*
 - a. Purpose and use of criteria
 - b. Review of criteria and values/weights
 - c. CWG discussion of criteria and priorities
5. Discussion of Transitway Concepts for Corridor C – *Kimley-Horn (40 minutes)*
 - a. Land Uses and decision making
 - b. Connection Points / Origins & Destinations / Areas to stay away from
 - c. Modes
 - d. Other Characteristics
6. General CWG & Public Comment (15 minutes)
7. Logistics and Next Steps – *Abi Lerner, T&ES (2 minutes)*
 - a. Next meeting date
 - b. Next meeting topic



Summary of Discussion

Background

- Comments on Meeting Minutes from Corridor Working Group (CWG) Meeting 1 on October 21, 2010
 - Comments from Poul Hertel on page 3 revised to the following:
 - Transitway systems require an identified need, a means to finance the system, and should not adversely impact quality of life
- Overview of revised project schedule by David Whyte
- Presentation on general project flow and anticipated CWG meeting topics by David Whyte
 - The coordination with other Citywide processes including Beauregard planning process were discussed later in the meeting
- Meeting focused on Corridor C: Beauregard/Van Dorn

Beauregard/Van Dorn (Corridor C) Existing Conditions Discussion

- Presentation by David Whyte
- CWG discussion/questions on **Transit**
 - Where do the buses take people?
 - Response: Route 27 – Pentagon, Route 28 – Seminary/Tysons, Route 25B – Van Dorn Metrorail Station/Ballston, Route 18-1 – Van Dorn Metrorail Station/Southern Towers, Route 18-2 – Franconia/King Street Metrorail Station, Route 5 – Van Dorn Metrorail Station/Bradley Shopping Center/King Street Metrorail Station
 - Include in the base conditions the shuttle/transit services to Mark Center
 - Include in the base conditions the transit riders on residential shuttles to the Van Dorn Metrorail station, not just the bus services
 - Interest in getting a handle on transit service coverage, i.e. population, population served, peak hour and off-peak coverage
 - A breakdown of DASH and Metrobus service:
 - 5,000 riders/day on DASH is equivalent to approximately 1.8 million rides/year
 - 7,500 riders/day on DASH is equivalent to approximately 2.7 million rides/year
 - There are a lot of existing riders in the West End
 - What is the length of existing bus rides?
 - Interest in quantifying the current speed and comparing to future speeds in order to understand impacts
 - A faster route would mean that fewer buses are necessary
 - Response: existing schedules can be used to quantify speeds, but it will be difficult to quantify speeds of a future service as part of this study. The existing layovers are at the ends of the routes and will not be used in computing existing speeds
 - Recommend taking a survey of residential shuttles by observation at the Van Dorn Metrorail Station
 - 5,000 riders/day means that approximately 5% of the West End population uses available bus transit
 - Interest in the CWG setting goals for how many riders the system can support and how many riders the system will serve
 - Response: rather than focus on a ridership target as a specific measure of success, the plan will focus on the numbers and types of origins and destinations served to gauge the level of potential ridership that could be generated
 - As the CWG makes choices relative to the system, the staff and consultant should provide guidance on whether the choices will increase or decrease ridership
 - Will the CWG discuss the purpose of the transit service? i.e. Columbia Pike will serve corridor retail
 - Transit system needs to provide service at all hours of the day



- CWG discussion/questions on ***Bicycles and Pedestrians***
 - None
- CWG discussion/questions on ***Intersection Operations***
 - Additional locations on Van Dorn are congested
 - At the intersection of Van Dorn Street and Maris Ave (stop-controlled, near I-395) vehicles sit for 3-5 minutes and get out of their cars to trip the hawk signal
 - Level of service (LOS) ratings on lower Van Dorn are too optimistic
 - Corridor traffic depends on what is happening at the Eisenhower/Van Dorn intersection where there are heavy trucks
 - Lack of southbound left-turn lanes on Van Dorn Street at Comcast/McDonalds backs up traffic
 - What are the consequences of poor LOS on transit? Transit will have to be faster for people to get out of their cars
 - Response: Do not want to make any locations worse for the traffic that is there, but need to move the transit effectively. There are techniques that can be used to move the traffic such as queue jump lanes
 - Urge consideration of shifting lanes so the bus travels in its own lane in the peak direction of Van Dorn Street
 - Interest in data on the content of vehicles in the traffic
- CWG discussion/questions on ***AM Peak Travel Speed***
 - What makes travel speed better in some sections?
 - Response: Less congestion and fewer signal-related delays
 - Northbound traffic dumps off at Seminary Road, then of the remaining traffic, three-quarters turn at Braddock Road
 - People avoid the Route 7 intersection
 - People turn off Van Dorn Street at Edsall Road to avoid other congestion at other intersecting streets
- CWG discussion/questions on ***Travel Speeds in General***
 - Is this recent data?
 - Response: the data was collected about 3 weeks ago
 - The data is effected by the construction at Beauregard/Seminary
 - Both AM and PM congestion occurs near the Metro stations, especially related to the shuttles that go to the Van Dorn station
 - The travel time route studied makes conclusions to the transit route
- CWG discussion/questions on ***PM Peak Travel Speed***
 - A lot of people go to the Metrorail Station
 - Shuttles to the Metrorail Station will not use Pickett Street
 - Parking on Sanger Avenue is only allowed off-peak, but cars parked in peaks add to congestion
 - There is pretty bad congestion in the AM and PM peaks
- ***Public Comment*** on Existing Conditions
 - Problems on I-395 make the corridor is much worse than reported
 - Look at time distribution for bus ridership
 - Can the City afford to run transit if it is only used in peak hours?
 - Many residents do not have other options beyond transit and it is important that transit operates at reasonable headways throughout the day, not just during peak periods
 - Southern Towers is a transfer point for a lot of buses during the AM and PM peak periods
 - Need to look at existing land uses along the corridor and where people want to travel for services
 - Look at what is in the Eisenhower valley (heavy industry, Washington Post, salt storage facility, and recycling facility) – right now the only connection is Van Dorn Street – there is a high proportion of trucks along southern Van Dorn Street as a result of the Eisenhower valley industry



Preliminary Evaluation Criteria

- The categories for draft evaluation criteria are based roughly on the FTA Alternative's Analysis categories – This was done intentionally to prevent the city from having to re do evaluations at a later date
- Two sets of review criteria were developed – one set is used for a preliminary review, to screen out infeasible/undesirable options; the second set is to be used for a comparative evaluation
- Presentation on the draft measures by David Whyte
- Comments/questions from the CWG on the ***evaluation criteria***:
 - Civic association perspective re: effects on neighborhoods
 - Do not want to require lifestyle change
 - Transit must be time-competitive with cars
 - Quality of life aspects are not properly addressed in criteria, i.e. removing the median strip/trees on Beauregard is a drastic quality of life impact
 - Dedicated lanes need to be built in a manner that does not have dramatic impacts to neighborhood character, such as impacts to parks, historic buildings, parking, traffic calming
 - Response: an email will be sent asking for a list of high value items that must be avoided
 - Criteria does not address elements such as impacts to the existing streetscape (Citywide). One example would be potential impacts to a narrowed Powhatan Street "park" along Corridor A
 - There are functional and aesthetic infrastructure with value – need to understand the changes to these
 - Add "tradeoffs" to the criteria
 - Create a criteria: streetscape impacts
 - Include positive and negative impacts
- Comments/questions from the CWG on the ***screening criteria***:
 - Interest in having a discussion re: economic criteria is not a preliminary screening criteria
 - A transportation solution could be a catalyst for redevelopment of the mall property
 - Many of the parameters are yes/no – can be used to take a large pool of options quickly to a small pool
 - There will be different preliminary screening criteria for different corridors
 - Direction from staff: focus on Beauregard/Van Dorn criteria right now
 - Running-way configuration should not be up for debate, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) says dedicated
 - The TMP premise was that the transit would be faster than driving, need to eliminate options where transit would get stuck in traffic
 - Is there a criterion that has to do with making transit more attractive as a mode? Is that effectiveness?
 - Response: Yes. For example, for travel time, we will not try to compute travel time due to the limitations in detail of the study, but will use surrogates such as ability to avoid congested intersections as a measure of travel time savings.
 - Discussion re: interoperability
 - Interest in a realistic discussion about streetcar in Arlington
 - When you get on Metro in Rosslyn, it looks the same as Dupont because it is the same system
 - Response: the study will look into governance
- Councilman Rob Krupicka indicated that a follow-up email regarding evaluation criteria will be sent out and public comment will take place later in the meeting

Discussion on Transitway Concepts for Corridor C



- The CWG and public were asked which origins and destinations they would like Corridor C to connect to. The following responses were provided:
 - Marc Center
 - Landmark
 - Shirlington
 - Pentagon
 - Bailey's Crossroads
 - Skyline
 - Kingstowne
 - Eisenhower Corridor
 - Northern Virginia Community College
 - Seminary Plaza & Brad Lee shopping centers
 - Van Dorn Metrorail Station
 - All surrounding Metrorail stations
 - Springfield proper (including the mall)
 - Landmark Plaza
 - Old Town
 - Beauregard Shopping Center
 - Shops at Mark Center
 - Bailey's Crossroads – major shopping centers
 - Potomac Yard
 - Burke and Charles E. Beatley Jr. Libraries
 - Senior citizen high rises
 - Alexandria Hospital
 - T C Williams High School
 - National Airport
 - Clarendon
 - Ballston
 - Pentagon City
- The CWG and public were asked which areas should be avoided and/or not impacted. The following responses were provided:
 - All parks including the Winkler Preserve, Fort Ward Park, Brenman Park, Holmes Run, Dora Kelley Park
 - Fire stations
 - Schools
 - Libraries
 - Historic areas at Seminary
- Abi Lerner presented land use options regarding the Beauregard Plan, which is an ongoing process.
- CWG discussion/questions on **Beauregard Land Use**
 - The Beauregard Plan Stakeholder Group has been developed and will start having meetings in November
 - Already have a set of workable land use numbers for Beauregard, good numbers for Arlington, good numbers for Van Dorn and other areas. We may have a high and low number for Beauregard to use for ridership projections, but we can move forward
 - Take issue with options 3 and 4 because land use is what the Beauregard Plan Work Group is going to work on
 - Use intelligent guestimates to move forward and adjust later
 - The CWG and the Beauregard Plan Stakeholder Group need to interact
 - Regardless of how Beauregard Plan ends up, Landmark/Van Dorn necessitates transit planning
 - How does this plan affect the Beauregard plan effort? Interest in clarification on issues
 - Response: the two processes are at their beginning now and both will be more defined



in the Spring of 2011

- Need to focus on the April/May timelines
- This process should inform the Beauregard Plan land use
- The next two Beauregard Plan Stakeholder Group will define the parameters for land use alternatives
- The CWG likes the idea of Option 2
- Rich Baier summarized the CWG decision to use the 4 million square feet from the existing zoning as a base number and adjust the number later in the process with correlation to the Beauregard Plan
- CWG discussion/questions on ***Transit Modes***
 - None

Public Comment

- Re: evaluation criteria
 - Stimulate economic activity – there’s a variety of old commercial uses on the corridor
 - Provide connections to local shopping to residents
 - In the measurement method add trip sources – residential and Metrorail stations
 - Need an idea of whether the running-way is dedicated or mixed flow to understand the property impacts
- Re: existing transit
 - Survey bus services to see who is traveling on Saturdays and Sundays
 - Look at where people are already going
 - Would an alignment serve the existing bus route riders?
- Re: traffic impacts
 - The CWG and West End residents need to say what they want the corridor to be. If it will serve local trips, okay with replacing vehicle lanes with transit lanes
 - The corridor is a local road and provides access to I-395. Opposed to something that reduces vehicular capacity on Beauregard
 - Important to look at the transit and vehicular capacity of the corridor and see what the corridor can handle in terms of additional capacity after BRAC
 - Baseline conditions should include BRAC
 - Mobility is an important quality of life issue
 - I-395 HOV lanes may be changed to HOT lanes
- General
 - There has not been much discussion about how to get to the future transit system other than walking. There are people living in single family homes areas that cannot walk to the corridor

Logistics and Next Steps

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- The next meeting will be Thursday, January 20, 2011. The standing meeting is the third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm.
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- Comment cards were available on the table
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- An email will be distributed to the CWG regarding evaluation criteria and impacts
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- Kimley-Horn will revise and summarize the existing conditions
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