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SOUTH US 97 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #1

Redmond City Hall, 716 SW Evergreen Ave.

Thursday, May 16, 2013

6:00-8:00 PM

Meeting Summary

In attendance: Tommy King, Keith Sides, Solomon Kaleialoha, Kenny Gilder, Wendy Cummings, Charley Miller, Eric Jordan, Craig Alacano, Paul Rodby, Teresa Rozic, Brianna Manfrass, Ed Fitch, David Boyd, Cindy Alacano, Ted Roberts, Mike Caccavano, Scott Woodford

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - Meeting called to order about 6:03PM

- II. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** - Scott Woodford, project manager welcomed everyone to the second PAC meeting and addressed some questions that came up at the last meeting: There was a request that a member of City Council be a liaison to the PAC, similar to Planning Commission and RDC. Staff inquired and Council was not comfortable sending one member, as these issues will likely be coming before Council in the future as legislative items and they did not want one Council member to be more informed than the others. Second, there was a request to have a commercial real estate broker on the PAC. Staff inquired to see if Ken Streater would be interested and he did not respond back, so staff felt there was no interest. Mr. Woodford said if anyone knew someone else who could fit that bill to let him know. He also said that Brianna Manfrass, representative from the Redmond Development Commission, was nominated as chair of the PAC, given her experience and that the project is part of the RDC's Development Plan. There was no dissent.

- III. **UPDATE FROM TAC MEETING #2** - Mr. Woodford stated that the TAC met on April 30, 2013 and discussed the unresolved issues that we will be reviewing tonight in more detail as well as the possibility of applying for a Speed Zone Investigation along the corridor to try to get the speed reduced from 45MPH to 35MPH and that there would be more discussion on that later in the evening.

- IV. **DISCUSSION ON FUNDING OPTIONS** - Mr. Woodford stated that we would push this item to the end of the agenda so that we could spend more time on the unresolved issues and because the funding piece will make more sense after that discussion.

V. **UNRESOLVED ISSUES** - Mr. Woodford said there are a lot of items to discuss tonight and if we don't get through them all, we can continue the discussion at the next meeting. With that, he started reviewing a Power Point presentation, reviewing the nature of each issue, why they are unresolved and a potential solution. He said that he wanted feedback from PAC on ideas for resolution.

a. **Improvement threshold for complying with the building orientation requirements.** - Mr. Woodford stated that building orientation requirements are primarily the new minimum and maximum setback requirements, which would be a 20' maximum setback in the Village Commercial Character Area and a minimum 20' setback in the Urban Commercial and Gateway Character Areas. There are also other site design requirements in the US 97 Corridor Plan, such as a minimum amount of building frontage that needs to be built within the setback in the Village Commercial, minimum amount of ground floor windows facing US 97, street frontage requirements for street trees and sidewalks, landscaping in the interior of the site and prohibitions on parking in front of the building. These are all things that would be required of new development in the corridor or in cases of redevelopment where there is complete demolition and starting over. That is not in question. What is unresolved is when these standards become requirements on existing development that wants to expand.

Mr. Woodford reviewed what the Corridor Plan recommended for thresholds: tying it to new vehicle trips generated (50 additional PM peak hour trips) and/or where the value of the new construction met or exceeded 75% of the market value of the site improvements prior to construction. These thresholds were established high enough so that only substantial redevelopment would be required to meet the new building orientation requirements.

Discussion among the PAC was that instituting these new requirements could have a significant role in the cost and feasibility of redevelopment, including moving buildings, making changes to utilities and drainage facilities, and potentially being a disincentive to redevelopment. Ms. Manfrass recommended that there be a menu of site design requirements that could be implemented depending on the scope of redevelopment. A smaller remodel or addition could kick in the streetscape requirements, while a larger expansion could kick in the more significant changes. Mr. Fitch said that priorities should be the street trees and sidewalks before moving buildings and that the market should dictate when the significant changes occur-he recommends with new development or complete redevelopment. Other PAC members concurred.

- **PAC Recommendation:** That there be a sliding scale of improvement thresholds depending on the scope of the project with street trees and sidewalks being required at a relatively low threshold and more substantial requirements, such as moving

buildings to meet the setback occur with brand new development on previously undeveloped ground or complete redevelopment.

- b. **Exceptions for parking in the front of buildings.** - Mr. Woodford said the issue with this one is that the vision for the US 97 Corridor Plan is to bring the buildings closer to the street to create a more intimate highway environment to help beautify it and to coax drivers to slow down. In bringing the buildings closer to the front property line, there is a desire and need to move the parking to the side and rear of buildings. The Corridor Plan also calls for the use of frontage and backage roads across private property in order to consolidate access points to US 97 and to provide access from interior properties to lower order streets. In the case of a frontage road across the front, there would already be asphalt, so some felt that it would be appropriate to allow a single row of parking as well.

Mr. Fitch stated he would like to see this and other requirements be incentive-based on not prohibitive. He again felt the more impacting site requirements only be required with new development or wholesale redevelopment. He also said flexibility should be written into the code that allows an applicant to apply for relief from some of the requirements if they can't comply due to unusual site circumstances, such as size of lot or other.

- **PAC Recommendation:** To allow flexibility wherever possible in applying this requirement and possibly allow a variance option for those parcels that would have difficulty in complying with the requirements.

- c. **Multi-way Boulevard.** - This issue is related to the exceptions for parking in front buildings in cases of frontage road access. Mr. Woodford reviewed the concept of a multi-way boulevard as a possible design solution to the US 97 corridor because it separated through and local traffic, which is a problem, reduced access points to make it safer, provided a continuous business access lane that could function as the frontage road, and included a string of on-street parking directly in front of businesses. It also helps make the highway much safer for bicyclists and walkers. He showed some slides of existing multi-way boulevards and described how they function and how it could fit into the existing US 97 right of way (with provision of parking and access easements across the front 30' of private property). Mr. Woodford also explained that the design concept was being strongly considered in Springfield, Oregon for a stretch of their state highway that exhibited many of the same characteristics as South US 97 through Redmond.

PAC members questioned how it worked and expressed concerns for the cost of construction, the need for extra right of way and the use of medians, which they thought would deter business access.

- **PAC Recommendation:** There was no initial support for this concept.

d. **Exceptions for ground floor window requirements.** - Mr. Woodford explained the reason for the requirement - that it was related to making the corridor more pedestrian friendly and inviting by requiring that the buildings moved closer to the street have a minimum percentage of windows facing the street (in this case 30%). Retail uses can meet this requirement fairly easily and usually have an incentive to do so, so that their inventory is more visible to the public. The unresolved issue was whether this requirement should be applied to auto oriented uses, such as car washes, oil change facilities and other similar uses. Mr. Woodford showed some photos of how these types of facilities in Redmond can and can't meet the requirement, so staff recommended allowing an exception for those types of uses, but require that they don't have blank walls and use other design features to improve the aesthetics.

- **PAC Recommendation:** Allow an exception for auto oriented uses to the ground floor window requirement.

e. **Building frontage minimum facing the highway.** - The background on this issue, Mr. Woodford related, was several years ago when planners wanted to have buildings be constructed right up to or close to the property line, but there was resistance by property owners to being that close. A compromise was brokered, which became the 20' maximum setback in the Village Commercial, but with the requirement that 50% of the width of the front building façade extend into this 20' setback to bring a portion of the mass even closer to the street. The unresolved issue is whether this requirement is needed at all due to the other site design requirements to place parking to the side and rear of buildings, which will naturally push the buildings closer to the street. PAC felt the requirement was not really needed because of the maximum setback and due to the parking requirement.

- **PAC Recommendation:** Eliminate the building frontage minimum requirement.

f. **Trip threshold for secondary access.** - Mr. Woodford outlined the issue surrounding the trip thresholds, which are: at what point do the access management tools become a requirement? The access management includes taking access from a secondary or lower access street where practical by establishing cross access easements across multiple properties so that full access isn't necessary to the highway. The thresholds recommended in the Corridor Plan are similar to the thresholds for building orientation requirements, which are:

- A. Redevelopment proposals where the cost of proposed building improvements are greater than or equal to [75% of the Deschutes

County Assessor's estimate of Market Value) of the existing site improvements.

- B. Development or redevelopment proposals where proposed building improvements are expected to generate up to or greater than [50 PM peak hour trips].
- C. Proposals for a Zoning Permit where a change in use is proposed that will generate up to or greater than [50 PM peak hour trips].

Mr. Fitch said that if the City and property owners don't plan for future access, ODOT will require medians along the center of the highway and the corridor will stagnate because there will be no redevelopment. He said there was a reasonable access plan put together by the City with Quartz Avenue connection and backage roads providing access. Property owners need access certainty and it needs to work for the City, business owners and ODOT otherwise we're all going to be going different directions.

Mr. Rodby stated that the speed limit needed to be lowered from 45 MPH to 35 MPH and property owners can add the landscaping along the road to make the corridor look and function better. He wondered why the City doesn't enforce the speeds better on South US 97.

Mr. Jordan stated that the highway speed was reduced through LaPine from 45 to 35 and wondered how it happened there.

Mr. Caccavano explained the process for reducing speeds and that there are State rules that need to be followed. He mentioned that the City and ODOT have been discussing the feasibility of doing a Speed Zone Investigation, but first need to get the average speeds to slow down in order for it to be approved and interim methods for doing that include the "your speed is" signs placed along the corridor.

- **PAC Recommendation** - The next PAC meeting should be devoted to the access plan in order to understand all the different options and implications and to try to come to some level of agreement.

VI. NEXT STEPS/ADJOURN - The meeting was adjourned at about 8:05PM