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SOUTH US 97 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #6

Redmond City Hall, 716 SW Evergreen Ave.

Thursday, December 5, 2013

6:00-8:00 PM

Meeting Summary

PAC members in attendance: Tommy King, Keith Sides, Solomon Kaleialoha, Charley Miller, Kenny Gilder, Craig Alacano, Ed Fitch, Paul Rodby, Jay Battelson, Briana Manfrass, Dan Serpico, ODOT, and City of Redmond employees Mike Caccavano, Heather Richards, Scott Woodford. Also in attendance: Cindy Alacano, Pete Wilson, and Leslie Pugmire-Hole, The Bulletin

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - Meeting called to order about 6:03PM
- II. **SPEED ZONE UPDATE** - Mr. Caccavano said that the Speed Zone Investigation submitted by the City to ODOT to lower the speed limit on US 97 through Redmond has been approved by the State office of ODOT. This will lower the speed limit between Yew Avenue to Wickiup Avenue from 55MPH to 50MPH, between Wickiup Avenue and Dogwood Avenue from 45MPH to 40MPH and from Dogwood Avenue to Greenwood Avenue from 55MPH to 50MPH (see attached Exhibit A). Mr. Serpico said that the speed limits will be officially be reduced sometime in the spring of 2014. Mr. Caccavano said that City Council approval is not required and that he can approve it on behalf of the City. The PAC voted unanimously to support the changes recommended in the Speed Zone Investigation.

On the speed zone, I said that I had provided the speed zone analysis results to the Council for feedback. City Council approval is not required, I can approve it.

- III. **RECAP OF OCTOBER 29-30 DESIGN CHARRETTE** - Ms. Richards explained to the PAC that since the design charrette, ODOT has approached the City about partnering with the City on a project for the South US 97 Corridor through Redmond. ODOT has indicated that they will have to do a pavement reconstruction project of the corridor in 5-7 years due to the poor existing condition of the roadway and want to combine that project with the City's plan for that section of highway. Ms. Richards said that ODOT feels that the funding prospects for the second phase of the re-route are poor due to the high cost (\$200-300 million) and is now instead looking at how they can ensure that the South US 97 corridor remains a safe and viable highway into the future. ODOT has leftover

design money that they are willing to use towards the investigation of the design concepts generated from the October 29-30 design charrette to see if they are viable. She continued that ODOT needs a commitment from the City by January 28, 2014 that they wish to enter into a partnership with ODOT for this purpose in order to take advantage of these funds. What staff is recommending to the PAC tonight is to forward a recommendation of support to City Council to go forward with this partnership and work. City Council is scheduled to review this proposal at a work session on January 14, 2014 followed by a review of a resolution on January 28th.

Charley Miller commented that this was a tremendous opportunity, but he wanted to know more about the design concepts being considered.

Mr. Woodford led the PAC through a Power Point presentation on the results of the October 29-30 Design Charrette, including the frontage road proposal for the Village Commercial section (Odem Medo to Veterans) and the backage road and other street improvements for the Urban Commercial section (Odem Medo to Yew Avenue). Mr. Woodford said that the charrette started out with a brainstorming session with the members of the US 97 PAC starting with what the group saw as the issues with the corridor followed by what they saw as the opportunities for improvement. Following that, the consultants split up the corridor by character areas and focused on their unique issues.

In the Village Commercial area, the consultants looked at the high number of access points to the highway and how they might be reduced to improve safety in the corridor while still retaining viable access. First they looked at a scenario where a cluster of four properties consolidated access points down to one with access back and forth in an access road across the front of each property (see attached Exhibit B). After taking several clusters of properties it became apparent that with a little more connectivity between properties, a two-way frontage road from Odem Medo all the way to Veterans Way could work and provide access from US 97 to all of the properties with less highway access points (see attached Exhibits C & D). With this concept, instead of fourteen (14) access points for sixteen (16) properties, there could now be five (5) access points for sixteen (16) properties. Each of the remaining access points would be full movement intersections onto the highway (i.e. right and left hand turning movements). Existing parking in front of the businesses would remain as perpendicular, diagonal or parallel parking and be located off of the frontage road. Pedestrian access along the highway would be vastly improved with the reduced number of curb cuts (i.e. conflicts with cars) and would provide the opportunity for a more uniform landscape buffer between the highway and the businesses making the corridor more attractive.

As this was a short two day charrette, Mr. Woodford stressed that the plans shown were very conceptual and specific locations for access points are conceptual. More refined design work is necessary to further test out the concept to determine its feasibility, but the initial review is that it has some merit worth studying further. The advantages of the concept are that it preserves and actually improves business access by making it safer to turn left in and out of properties, provides more cross business activity and provides predictability from ODOT that this plan would

become the approved Access Plan and would eliminate uncertainty about access limitations with future redevelopment.

A question was asked if the land for the frontage road would be public or private.

Ms. Richards replied that the consultants recommended it be public right of way owned by either ODOT or the City to ensure continuity of access and more efficient maintenance. This would involve purchase of right of way from private property to accomplish. It could also be done by an access easement dedicated across private property, but that has issues in terms of ensuring better long term maintenance and maintaining access rights for all users.

Mr. Serpico said that ODOT could purchase the right of way and construction could be done in phases to make costs more feasible.

A question was raised about the location of an access drive off of US 97 adjacent to Odem Medo and how it looked to be unsafe and too close to the intersection.

Mr. Caccavano replied that he agreed with the comment, but the concept shown on the screen was very preliminary and that we shouldn't focus too much on details that will be evaluated more closely with additional design. The point of the drawing is to illustrate the general concept.

Mr. Rodby asked if other access alternatives were considered. The reply was that the clustered access option was looked at (where several properties consolidate and share access), but the frontage road concept was deemed better because of its ability to both improve safety along the corridor at the same time opening up new access options for businesses.

Mr. Fitch asked if this new plan become the approved ODOT Access Plan for the corridor. The response was affirmative.

Ms. Manfrass said the community is going to continue to grow and we need this corridor to be able grow along with it by making the necessary improvements.

Mr. Woodford continued his presentation and provided the background on the issues with the Urban Commercial Character Area from Odem Medo Avenue to Yew Avenue. The issues here are:

- Lack of east/west connectivity due to the canal and the railroad being obstacles.
- Constrained access for properties adjacent to the Yew Avenue interchange.
- Local and regional/through traffic all must utilize US 97.

Based on those constraints, the consultants made the following recommendations for improvements (see attached Exhibit E):

- A new backage road on the east side of the US 97 extending from Odem Medo to Yew Avenue via the old Wal-Mart property to improve access to US

97 to the properties in between to allow access to intersections with stoplights for easier left hand turns.

- Extension of existing streets on the west side of US 97 to Canal Boulevard (i.e. 17th Place, Umatilla, Wickiup) to provide better access to residential properties to the west
- New signalized intersection at Wickiup and US 97 (pending ODOT approval) to allow for better/easier connectivity east/west and to slow down traffic on US 97.
- New recreational path along the canal in this area to improve pedestrian and bike access.

Mr. Woodford added that the consultants did not study the Gateway District (from Yew Avenue to the southern Redmond Urban Growth Boundary) because no issues were identified during the charrette or through the US 97 PAC process.

Mr. Fitch asked if we considered doing a frontage road instead of a backage road. Ms. Richards noted studies that show frontage roads are better for business access identification due to the visual connection drivers have with the frontage road, allowing them to better understand access options from the highway.

Mr. Rodby noted his building and drive through location and the high number of vehicles entering and existing his property every day and a concern that there wasn't enough room to fit the frontage road in with existing constraints. He also noted what he saw as reduced pedestrian safety by forcing folks to park and then walk across the frontage road to access a business.

Mr. Sides wondered what other options there were to address the issues of safety and business access. He said the one presented seemed the best of available options.

Mr. King noted his support for partnering with ODOT due to the availability of funds for further design.

Mr. Fitch stated his concern of pedestrian safety with having to cross the frontage road from the on-street parking and also pedestrian safety in the interim until final improvements are made - recommending that we make enhancements such as flashing lights for crossings and improved pathways.

Mr. Rodby inquired as to the costs and who will be responsible for it - how much will the private property owner be responsible for? City Council will want to know this. Mr. Rodby also said if the costs from private property owners are too great, you will surely hear concern from them.

Mr. Caccavano responded that we don't know what the costs will be yet and how it will specifically be funded. We need to have more design work done to be able to determine that.

- IV. **ACTION ITEMS** - Mr. Fitch moved that the PAC recommend that City Council approve a resolution to enter into a partnership with ODOT to do further design

study along the Redmond South US 97 corridor utilizing the design concepts generated from the October 29-30 design charrette, but with the noted concerns included for reference. This was seconded. The PAC unanimously voted to approve the motion.

Ms. Richards asked if we want to revise the Redmond South US 97 Corridor Plan to incorporate all the recommended changes or do we just include the items that the PAC has reviewed and made recommendations on as part of a summary? The consensus was that it be done as a list of recommendations as part of a summary.

- V. **NEXT STEPS/ADJOURN** - The PAC wanted a summary of all the decisions the group has made through this process to present to City Council. A tentative next meeting date was established for January 9, 2014 to review the summary, but will only be held if PAC members have issues with the summary that they want to discuss. First the summary memo will be shared via email for initial review.

The meeting was adjourned at about 7:30PM