

**Citizen Advisory Committee
Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project
Denver Streetscape Project**

Wednesday, July 5, 2006
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Historic Kenton Firehouse



MEETING MINUTES

CAC Participants: Donna Lambeth-Cage, Rick Jacobson, Jerrie Johnson, Kimberly Shultz, Janice Thompson, Jean von Barga, Kert Wright

Portland Development Commission Staff: Joleen Jensen-Classen, Carol Herzberg, Kate Deane, Becca Uherbelau

Portland Office of Transportation Staff: Ellen Vanderslice, April Keithly, Will Stevens

SERA Architects: Tim Smith, Matthew Arnold

Handouts: (1) Agenda; (2) Draft of Kenton Streetscape Design Proposed Scope of Work (Revised 07.05.06 SERA Architects, Inc.); (3) "Market and Economic Analysis" and "Marketing and Leasing Strategy" from Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project (4) Results of Design Options Survey – Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Joleen introduced PDC staff, Kate Deane the new development manager for the Interstate Urban Renewal Area and Becca Uherbelau, the Interstate public relations manager. She also introduced Will Stevens, PDOT's Traffic Calming Manager. Tim Smith and Matthew Arnold from SERA Architects were also introduced. Tim worked on the initial streetscape plan and will be working with Matt to refine this plan.

Round-table introductions were made and the June 7th meeting minutes were accepted without changes.

Joleen said that Joe Annett, an at-large residential representative, would be unable to continue as a member of the CAC. She asked if another representative should be selected to replace him. Carol said she thought it was important to replace him so that Janice did not have to be responsible for all communication to neighborhood residents about the streetscape project. If CAC members have suggestions on who to recruit they should let Carol or Joleen know.

II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Committee decision-making process. The group continued their discussion from the June meeting on how the decision making should work. They concluded that decision-making by consensus was preferred with a fall back process when the committee gets stuck. A majority rule with a two-thirds vote was agreed upon as the fall back. Jean suggested that as the group moves forward that it may be necessary to go back to previous decisions and make adjustments as new material becomes available.

The five-finger vote method will be used to judge how members feel and get a sense whether consensus has been reached.

Pedestrian refuge islands. Ellen introduced Will Stevens, to talk about the traffic calming measures as part of Interstate Light Rail mitigation. At the June meeting CAC members wanted to know more about the Denver traffic calming project and public process.

He explained that federal money was set aside to mitigate increased east/west traffic due to the Interstate Light Rail. Traffic counts were done before light rail construction, and six months after, and it was discovered that not much traffic diversion had occurred except for some on Denver. It was determined that traffic mitigation funds would be used for multi-modal travel improvements, not just vehicular traffic.

Maps were presented showing the 13 proposed pedestrian refuge islands along Denver between Portland Boulevard and Killingsworth. The traffic island that is most relevant to the Denver Streetscape project is slated for the Denver/Watts intersection. This intersection also is proposed to contain a traffic circle and gateway as part of the Denver streetscape improvements. Will mentioned that this is the largest concentration of refuge islands anywhere in the city. Examples of a single-half and double pedestrian refuge islands were presented as well as mid block and intersection crossing. Which type is used depends on the intersection. At the Watts intersection, two halves are proposed at each side of the intersection.

Will stated that pedestrian refuge islands were built to provide safety and were not a design feature. The maintenance issue of landscaping refuge islands was briefly discussed. Will said it was important to maintain clear sight lines and visibility for safety reasons and in some cases landscaping can cause problems.

The public process is a series of three meetings. The third upcoming meeting will primarily disseminate information about the proposed pedestrian refuge islands, but if people have issues they will take a look at them. Will said he would coordinate with Ellen about the third upcoming meeting on pedestrian refuge islands

The ped islands need to be built by the end of the year. The cost for two ped islands is approximately \$20,000 to \$22,000 per intersection. Other traffic calming measures are speed bumps. Will explained that speed bumps cannot be used on streets designated as emergency

response routes or streets classified higher than a neighborhood collector. Denver is a higher order street from Watts to Lombard.

Will was asked if it was possible to change the location. He said construction drawings are currently at 90% completion and changing one intersection has an impact on others with regard to effective spacing for traffic calming. Kate asked if the money had to be spent now and Will said yes. Ellen stated that she had investigated the cost to demolish the ped island in the future if it ended up conflicting with the future streetscape design improvements and was told that the cost would be minimal and would likely be folded into the general improvement work on the street. Will noted that if future landscaping of the ped island was desired as part of the streetscape improvements, it might be possible to use paver stones for infill rather than concrete, which would be easier to remove. PDOT will investigate the feasibility of this idea. (ELLEN & WILL – can you follow up on this last item – sounds like using pavers would be a good idea here).

Future area demographics. Carol handed out excerpts from the *Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project* on market and economic analysis and marketing and leasing strategy, in response to questions raised by the group at the previous meeting. The following were highlights:

Market and Economic Analysis

- The majority of the retail space in the primary Kenton market area lies along Lombard Street.
- Over the next five years the primary market area is expected to maintain a course of very slow retail growth. The categories indicating the greatest demand over the next decade include general merchandise stores, followed distantly by clothing & accessories stores and eating & drinking establishments.
- The primary market area is largely built-out and as a result, residential demand has historically been limited by a lack of new supply.
- The primary market area represents a deep residential market dominated by older single family detached homes.
- Over the last decade North Portland has outperformed the remainder of the metropolitan area in terms of home price appreciation.
- New homes being built will be infill properties, many likely in a townhouse style layout. Further, home projects receiving public assistance programs will continue to constitute a notable share of inventory.
- Income distribution is forecast to continue to shift toward higher incomes over the next five years.

Marketing and Leasing Strategy

- Population and household growth has been modest, reflecting the largely built-out nature of the North/Northeast Portland area. While population growth has been modest, average household income gains have exceeded the rate of inflation over the last five years, reflecting a general increase in affluence in the area.
- There are a number of current and emerging commercial districts that the Kenton area will be competing with for tenants. These include the Interstate Corridor, Lombard

Corridor, North Killingsworth/Greeley, Saint Johns, Mississippi/Albina and NE Alberta. In addition, regional-serving retail concentrations in the Lloyd District as well as Hayden Island compete for many national retailers with a more regional draw.

- The area's strengths include local access, daytime population (Columbia Corridor), mass transit access and location within an Urban Renewal Area. Weaknesses include exposure, proximity to more developed concentrations in the Interstate and Lombard Corridors and a lack of development momentum.
- Finding a sustainable competitive niche for the area will be essential for long-term success. We would group the Kenton area as a neighborhood-serving district. While referred to as neighborhood-serving in our classification, many of these districts have generated a regional draw. Previous work in the district has suggested a restaurant-based approach, which has been successful in other neighborhood districts such as Alberta and Mississippi/Albina.

III. NEXT STEPS

Refining current design options. There was discussion at the June meeting about refining the current streetscape design alternatives or possibly developing a third alternative. SERA Architects was asked to prepare a revised Proposed Scope of Work, which Matt handed out and reviewed with the CAC. The work scope would begin with analysis and background research – examining in more detail what conceptual ideas of the existing proposed alternatives are feasible, and if not what other solutions might work. A technical field day is proposed to study streetscape elements and logistics, ie., parking, turning movements, etc. Streetscape case studies of similar streetscapes would be researched in the summer. In September a streetscape tour of other streetscapes in Portland is proposed. Also goals and criteria would be refined from existing plans as well as drawn from the CAC suggestions and survey. These will be used to guide development of the streetscape design. A design workshop is proposed for October.

CAC comments. Members offered feedback on coordination issues with other projects and how to determine what conceptual ideas will function in reality.

- Parking and loading issues are very important functional issues that need to be resolved for future businesses.
- Need a timeline showing other projects in the area, like I-5 Project, so group can effectively make decisions in a timely fashion.
- Need more reality of how street functions.
- Need coordinated effort to know what other agencies are doing.
- What about the Kenton Downtown Plan? It contains important visioning information that may still be appropriate.
- More information about streetscape elements – how are they working.
- Revisit initial plans – and reasons for design elements, and also the Kenton Downtown Plan and the recently completed Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project plus the neighborhood plan.
- Like proposed tour – to look at what's important for a good retail district, as an example.

Tim said that one important goal was designing a streetscape that works for existing businesses and the type of future businesses that would likely settle on Denver. He noted that it was

important to take the extra time to look around because whatever you do will be there a long time, 30 to 50 years. Looking at examples of design elements and functionality in the city will require PDOT's expertise and input, because there is no detailed survey.

CAC time schedule. Under the proposed work scope, the CAC would meet until spring of 2007. After the schematic design is developed the CAC would meet periodically on as-needed basis. **Carol asked if the group was willing and able to participate in the process as it would take longer than initially anticipated.** The majority said they were but some thought a half-day commitment might be too much time; Jean mentioned that she had commitments in the fall that could preclude her from participating in the fall.

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY

Ellen briefly reviewed the survey results of the on-line "Design Options Survey – Downtown Kenton Redevelopment Project" (see handout). There was a good response, 13 CAC members completed the survey. The survey highlighted streetscape elements from the streetscape plan and from the June 7th brainstorming session.

Question 5. asked what was essential to a viable business district in the redevelopment plan of Downtown Kenton. The most responses were for well-lit at night and clean, fresh paint on buildings. There was 100% agreement to add area signage leading people to downtown Kenton - Question 4. District Identification). If there are any ideas of combinations or cross tabulations let Ellen know.

V. NEXT MEETING

The CAC will not meet formally in August. A field day to look at streetscape design elements and whether they are feasible will be organized. A few members said it may be difficult to make a time commitment for the tour. Joleen and Becca said they would see what could be worked out and would contact members.