

Meeting Notes

Date: August 18, 2005
Time: 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: Quincy Place
8111 Quincy Avenue, Suite 100
Cleveland, Ohio 44104
Attendees: CUY-Opportunity Corridor Committee
Re: CUY-Opportunity Corridor PID 77333
Workshop #2

The Power Point Presentation given at this workshop can be found on the project website accessed through www.innerbelt.org. The meeting minutes reflect the discussions generated as a result of the presentation.

1) Introduction

- James Ireland III, co-chair of the Opportunity Corridor Committee and president of the Musical Arts Association opened the meeting at 8 a.m. welcoming everyone to the second workshop. He said the purpose of this workshop is to go over the refinements made to the alternatives since the last workshop and to review the modeling criteria and matrix. He asked everyone to go around and introduce themselves.
- Terri Hamilton Brown, the other co-chair of the Committee and president of University Circle Incorporated (UCI) discussed the purpose and importance of this workshop and project updates. She said that the goal of these workshops is to narrow down the alternatives from four to one and to move the project from a study to a plan.

2) Project Updates

- Terri Hamilton Brown continued to give an update of what has happened since the last workshop. She said they were invited to give an update to the City of Cleveland's Development Cluster where Chris Ronayne informed them of Mayor Jane Campbell's full support behind this project and that the city is willing to share resources as needed. The City of Cleveland is also aware that a local match will be required for this project and that some of the existing infrastructure is in need of repair. Hamilton Brown also said that the city is working to help identify condemned and demolished properties in the study area. She also stated they were invited to give an update the Greater Cleveland Partnership, the point being, they are working to reach out to stakeholders. Greater Cleveland Partnership is also very supportive of this project.
- Bob Reeves of University Circle Incorporated (UCI) reported that UCI recently hired Desmond Associates to perform a parking study in University Circle near University Hospital and Case Western Reserve from E. 93rd Street to the tracks to collect information on traffic flows and requirements. The study will begin next month and will take approximately three months to complete.

- Terri Hamilton Brown commented that the funding is now in place for the Burten, Bell, Carr Development Corporation (BBC) Master Plan and the planning is process is currently underway. They will be holding their first public meeting on August 25, 2005 at 6:00pm at the Stokes Social Service Plaza on Woodland Ave. Also, the consultant team recently met with Urban Design Center (UDC), BBC's Master Plan Consultant, to update them on the project and explain the conceptual alternatives that are currently being evaluated. UDC will briefly discuss this project and how it relates to the master plan development for the Ward 5 portion of the Forgotten Triangle.
- Craig Hebebrand, Project Manager from ODOT District 12 discussed NOACA and TRAC application requirements. He said the Opportunity Corridor is an arterial road but will not be considered a highway. This, and the TRAC system of scoring completed by NOACA, will determine the amount of Federal/State funding. The Opportunity Corridor will be a highly traveled roadway so it will score well in the TRAC system. Hebebrand said another component of the TRAC scoring system is future economic development, and that the Corridor will also score very well in that category. He said they need to secure letters from businesses stating they are willing to relocate to the area to serve as proof for scoring well in this category. He also said they do not count retail jobs, and would need commitments from outside the region rather than moving from another area in the city.
- Hebebrand also stated they would like NOACA to take the project from a Tier 4 to a Tier 3. This project may include a local match of \$30 million. It is a big commitment and expensive because it is new construction in an urban area. The project will score low on cost effectiveness because it is a new roadway. It will have a high cost per mile for construction. He said to get to part B, which is the scoring section, NOACA must agree that it is a very important project and since we are currently conducting a feasibility study, which is a requirement of Part A, once this study is complete and NOACA concurs with the recommendations we should be able to move to Part B. Hebebrand also said the project needs to find a local agency to sponsor it. Cuyahoga County Engineer is one possibility. Jamal Husani from the County Engineer's Office is in attendance and we will be keeping them informed as the project progresses.
- Mille Caraballo, Manager of Industrial Development for the Cleveland Industrial Retention Initiative, asked if the TRAC scoring system takes into account job retention, not just job creation. Craig Hebebrand responded that job retention is taken into account. A copy of the scoring criteria for NOACA and TRAC was distributed to the committee for their information.
- David Goldberg from Ohio Savings Bank suggested that we get letters from University Hospitals, Cleveland Clinic and Case Western Reserve University stating how many new jobs they will be creating if the Corridor is built and the neighborhood improved. He then stated that letters from the Cleveland Clinic and Bioenterprise are not a problem, but letters from outside will be a problem. Institutions can do their own traffic studies and get projections needed for the scoring criteria. Jamie Ireland agreed that this is important because these are the largest employers there. Hamilton Brown also agreed and said that information like that would help this study.
- Mary Cierebiej reviewed the goals and objectives established for this study. See PowerPoint presentation or meeting minutes from June 9th workshop at <http://www.innerbelt.org/OChistory.htm>.

3) Refinements of Conceptual Alternatives

- Matt Wahl with HNTB discussed preliminary traffic modeling and potential impacts of each of the four alternatives. He said that alternatives 2, 3 and 4 would react very similarly to the model so NOACA is running Alternative 4 and Alternative 1 for modeling purposes. Alternative 1 is close to the “no build” option.
- For alternative 1, NOACA projected the traffic counts through 2030. Matt Wahl compared the volume of the Corridor to that of Mayfield Road, it is fairly heavy. The model showed that even with improvements made to E. 55th and Woodland, the traffic volumes would be lower than existing volumes. It is not clear why this happened, but it is possible that the model did not respond well to moving the Kinsman and E. 55th St. intersection south of the existing 5 legged intersection with Woodland.
- Alternative 4 has been modified since the last workshop. The intersection at Woodland Avenue was changed to a four-leg intersection instead of the proposed “S” curve in the road. The modifications showed the traffic counts are significantly less on East 55th Street which was consistent with Burgess & Niple’s study, and that there is a high demand for a through movement from I-490 to the boulevard.
- Terri Hamilton Brown questioned the speed limit used in the traffic model. Mahmoud Al-lozi responded that NOACA used a posted speed limit of 35 mph and design speed of 40 mph for the model.
- Matt Wahl then began discussing potential “red flags.” He commented that there are a lot of abandoned factories in the study area and that the subconsultants have been gathering data on the various structures and land that may be affected. There are three main historic concerns: Woodland Cemetery, St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Church and the Ken Johnson Recreation Center/Bath House. He then outlined other areas of concern: religious and cultural sites, parks, public housing (ex. CMHA, Section 8 housing and Mt. Sinai Senior Center), educational sites, community services (GCRTA, post office, library and the fire station), as well as environmental concerns. For the environmental concerns, there are many sites that are registered as having underground storage tanks, which doesn’t necessarily mean they are polluted, but they still need to be listed. In addition to the listed sites, there are numerous sites that have the potential to be polluted due to the current or past land use of the site.
- Wahl then went over potential new structures (bridges and retaining walls) needed with each alternative.
 - With alternative 1, it is estimated that four new roadway bridges, and three new rail bridges would be required, but has no significant retaining walls. Wahl stated the intersection/structures at Quincy and East 105th Street will be difficult. If we attempt to meet standard clearances, one road requires its height to be lowered and the other needs to be raised. It will become a pinch point. Another thing to consider is the RTA facility under reconstruction. Widening E. 105th and/or Quincy would impact the new E. 105th St. station. In terms of the E. 105th St. improvements, he said if the modification was made to widen to the east or west, instead of on both sides, property takes can be minimized on E. 105th St. but then you need to consider whether or not you want all the residential access points along the boulevard.

- For alternative 2, it is estimated that ten new roadway bridges would be required, three new rail bridges and +/- 3,600 ft. of retaining walls would be required. One of the significant new structures that would be required for this alternative would be a bridge from I-490 over the NS/GCRTA rail yard just west of E. 55th St.
- For alternative 3, it is estimated that nine new roadway bridges would be required; two rail bridges, and +/- 8,900 ft. of retaining walls. The large structure of the rail yard would also be required as part of this alternative. It is estimated that the retaining walls would be approximately 20 ft. high along the railroad right of way.
- For alternative 4, it is estimated that six roadway bridges, three railroad bridges, and +/- 1,400 ft. of retaining wall. The major changes made to this alternative is the shift just south of the proposed GCRTA station at E. 55th St., and providing a continuous intersection at Woodland. Because we are farther from the railroad with this alternative there are fewer retaining walls required. What will have to be explored further is whether we go over or under the NS Cleveland Line east of E. 79th St.
- David Goldberg pointed out that one of the goals of Opportunity Corridor is to serve the major institutions in University Circle. Goldberg questioned the potential access through to Cleveland Clinic and asked if the spur can be extended to Case Western Reserve and University Hospitals. He noted that the alignments along E. 105th Street are not good but that the alignments with the spur to E. 107th were better, but asked if there was another option. Goldberg also suggested moving the spur to another location closer to the railroad tracks east of E. 105th and making a connection to Mayfield.
- Jacek Ghosh, economic development director of the Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation, asked if NOACA can model the alternatives without including the traffic on E. 105th Street. Mahmoud Al-Lozi responded that traffic originally on E. 105th Street would move to the spur.
- John Motl of ODOT District 12 noted that planning level traffic is approximate and the model may not include some planned improvements such as the West Quad and VA expansion.
- Hamilton Brown then stated that East 105th Street is important to the VA, Clinic, UH and CWRU. She said dumping the traffic out at East 107th Street and Cedar won't help. She went on to explain there is another study that will be happening soon that will look into improvements to the bottom of Cedar Hill, Martin Luther King and land redevelopment around it. Hamilton Brown suggested they should look into how the Opportunity Corridor study would mesh with that study. Urban Design Associates (UDA) will be conducting this study. Funding was received through a NOACA grant. The study will begin in October 2005 and coordination between the two studies will be very important.
- Jamie Ireland said that we should give all development projects consideration. If the Corridor can push through to MLK, it is definitely worth studying, that is a hot spot. Mary Cierebiej said that HNTB will look into it.
- Michael Armstrong from Federal Highway Administration noted that we should not limit the design based on current one-way streets because they can be changed in the future. Hamilton Brown asked if there was access to E. 93rd Street in the model for alternative 4. Matt Wahl said that E. 93rd Street would be accessed from the Woodland or Quincy intersections.

- Goldberg asked if there were other options besides E. 105th Street because E. 105th Street isn't great for the Clinic. It might be too far east. Molt rebutted that the Clinic said they had no problem with the use of East 105th Street. Wahl said there is a lot of housing fairly close to the street that needs to be taken into consideration if E. 93rd Street were to be widened. He said it is a tight road. Ghosh said he is not opposed to looking at E. 93rd Street, but it is the heart of the Fairfax neighborhood. He suggested they look at all options, and then decide what is best.
- Robert Jackimowicz (for Councilman Frank Jackson of Ward 5) asked if the area north of Quincy should be looked at as a separate study. The UCI's study led by UDA will have alternatives by January 2006. He said they will work closely with UCI to make sure nothing is missed.
- Terri recommended a meeting of institutions including Murray Hill, Little Italy, etc. to get their input on the connection north of Quincy. There was no representative of the Cleveland Clinic present at this meeting.
- Brian Drobnick of Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation (FRDC) noted that with the spur located at E. 107th Street, the eastern triangle is useless. Hamilton Brown pointed out that as we continue to identify existing conditions, it will help determine things.
- It was asked if E. 93rd Street would be a benefit and it was recommended that we ask the Clinic's opinion. Hamilton Brown said we need to include Fairfax in that discussion. She asked if anyone had any other concerns regarding this.
- Steve Standley of University Hospitals Health Systems asked if they were considering having industrial businesses along this road, in terms of number of access points. Yes, but some of the drives may be consolidated to limit the number of driveways fronting the new boulevard.
- Millie Caraballo of CIRI stated that people have been calling about properties wanting to know where the road is going so they can buy property in the area. David Goldberg stated that the information discussed at these meetings should be kept within the committee. Armstrong expressed that because it is a public process, the public has a right to know what is discussed at the committee level.
- Brian Drobnick pointed out that Alternative 3 renders the Youth Intervention Center useless, and that would not go over very well with Cuyahoga County.
- Terri Hamilton Brown said alternative 4 seems to provide greater potential for economic development but we still need to study all of the possibilities. She added that alternative 4 is the most cost effective too.
- Hebebrand said the NEPA process balances all issues: costs, impacts, benefits, etc.
- Kim Scott from Burten, Bell, Carr Development Corporation (BBC) asked about pedestrian access at E. 55th Street station. Craig Hebebrand stated that there is a possibility of providing a grade separation at E. 55th Street, or a pedestrian overpass located mid-block rather than at the intersection of E. 55th Street and I-490 to access the station.
- Hebebrand said there will be a signalized intersection but it is still a concern because of its size. He said that if you put a pedestrian bridge at a signalized intersection, people won't

- use it, they'll cross at the cross walk instead of going up stairs and over a street. He said they would consider a mid-block overpass but that still doesn't guarantee people will use it.
- Hebebrand continued to say that the I-490 and East 55th Street intersection is a problem. He said they have been looking into taking the I-490 traffic underneath East 55th Street, like a freeway interchange. It is a possibility.
 - Terri Hamilton Brown recommending a meeting with Slavic Village, BBC, and the RTA to discuss station, access, etc.
 - Andy Cross from City of Cleveland Traffic Engineering noted that if that area was a 4 way intersection at E. 55th Street, most traffic would be thru-traffic; very few would be turning there. He said just that the grade separation would be a vast improvement for pedestrians.
 - Matt Wahl continued with talking about vacant and underutilized land in the study area. Maps were shown of each alternative and how many acres of land could potentially be opened up for development by each alternative. Each alternative assumes 62 acres of planned and/or existing development.
 - Alternative 1 could potentially open up 56 acres for redevelopment adjacent to the new roadway. This alternative differs from the other three because it currently has acreage available for redevelopment adjacent to the existing street network. It is estimated that there is approximately 222 acres potentially available for redevelopment without changing access to those parcels. Approximately 3,900 ft. of new frontage will be created with Alternative 1.
 - Alternative 2 would allow for 9,800 ft. of new frontage, but it has impacts to Orlando Bakery. However, it does not impact the proposed Youth Intervention Center. Alternative 2 could potentially open up 232 acres for redevelopment adjacent to the new roadway. This is in addition to the estimated 22 acres available for redevelopment without changes access to those parcels.
 - Alternative 3 allows for 5,000 ft. of new frontage. This alternative has impacts to the proposed Youth Intervention Center. Alternative 3 could potentially open up 69 acres for redevelopment adjacent to the new roadway. This is in addition to the estimated 206 acres that are currently available for redevelopment with existing access.
 - Alternative 4 allows for 15,200 ft of new frontage because it opens up property on both sides of the road, unlike Alternative 3 that backs up to the railroad tracks leaving the area for development on one side of the road. Alternative 4 could potentially open up 204 acres for redevelopment adjacent to the new roadway. This is in addition to the estimated 62 acres that are currently available for redevelopment with existing access. Wahl asked if there were questions or comments.
 - David Goldberg said that frontage is the key to redevelopment. We should not look at current zoning when making estimates of potential areas of redevelopment, because land use and zoning in the area could change in the future.
 - Hamilton Brown spoke with the City of Cleveland is already looking at rezoning as part of their Citywide Plan. This committee will continue to work with the city and the CDCs in the study area on the development of the Citywide Plan.

- The next item discussed was Potential Residential and Commercial Impacts. Wahl noted that it is difficult to tell if many of the houses are being renovated or are abandoned because of newly boarded up windows, so we are still working on differentiating between vacant and occupied structures that may potentially be impacted.
 - Alternative 1, if you do a widening to the South, Mt. Sinai Senior Center and the CPP substation could be impacted. For East 105th Street, if you widen to one side or the other, you can save takes but it is in question whether they want to leave driveways fronting on the new boulevard. If you widen symmetrically, you will impact houses on both sides of the street. Drobnick pointed out that we don't want to be creating vacant lots that the city will end up having to spend money to take care of. Jacek Ghosh said that we may want to consider taking all of the houses on the west side of E. 105th back to E. 103rd St. so you are not looking at backyards from the new boulevard. Matt Wahl said you could consider landscaping or mounding as a buffer between the road and the houses. Armstrong said that Federal money will only be given to take houses that are a necessity; not what we think will aid in economic development.
 - Alternative 2 impacts may include a CMHA storage facility on E. 79th St., Orlando Bakery, vacant warehouses and possibly a small shopping center on E.55th St. Again Wahl raised the issue of leaving driveways on existing Grand Ave. off of E. 55th and E. 105th fronting on this road, because it would slow traffic and increase the number of access points.
 - Alternative 3 impacts may include the Community Apartments (low income housing), St. Joseph Cemetery, the proposed Youth Intervention Center site and the proposed Mt. Sinai Multi-Plex site.
 - Alternative 4 potentially has the most residential impacts of the four alternatives. This alternative comes close to McTech Corporation, and potentially impacts Empigard Metal Finishing, and L. Gray Barrell and Drum Company. This alternative does not impact Orlando Bakery's building.
- Wahl said they assumed for these estimates that we would not take half of a street or leave a few houses fronting the new road. He said the matrix has a range of impacts associated with each of the alternative. At this point we have estimated on the high side rather than estimating low and then coming back later and increasing the number.
- John Hamilton asked about potential impacts to Micelli's and Elsons with Alternative 4. Wahl said Micelli's facilities are not impacted, but the small former grocery store that Micelli's is currently using would be. Elsons would be impacted, but most likely they could be relocated in the area.

4) Evaluation Matrix

- Wahl pointed out that the existing routes to University Circle that can be taken from the west or the south include 16-21 signalized intersections. The new road will have only 8 or 9. We do not have travel time studies at this point because NOACA's model is not able to differentiate the travel times within a short distance. The model is set up to do that on a regional basis, so distances and signals on existing roads vs. the new roadway will be used to as a measurement.

- Looking at the matrix, Jackimowicz asked about environmental justice. He wanted to know if these issues (property takes) are being raised with city planning and if there is a way to show the number of takes by area (ward) associated with each of the alternatives.
- Cierebiej responded that the matrix is not final, it will continue to evolve. We will be working with the city to identify if houses are occupied or vacant, condemned or demolished, so that rather than just showing a total number we can break it down into categories, so we can also include impacts by area.
- Armstrong said they need to work on one category at a time and the matrix helps to organize thoughts. The numbers shown on the matrix don't suffice as an explanation but this is a method of organization.
- Hamilton Brown said the matrix will be completely filled in by the next meeting to help make decisions and evaluate the conceptual alternatives against one another.
- Caraballo said some of the roads in the study area are so narrow that it may be a necessity to take houses if you do any type of widening.
- Armstrong said another option is to pay damages to the owner of a partially impacted commercial structure or property, in lieu of a complete take.
- Goldberg also asked why they don't further narrow it down to blighted structures and good structures.
- Hebebrand pointed out the definition of blighted is very subjective, and Hamilton Brown agreed that people would challenge it.
- Armstrong cautioned to be careful about civil rights. It is still someone's home. He said the committee must practice environmental justice and keep their value judgments to themselves. He suggested it would be best to stick to the terms occupied and unoccupied.
- Hamilton Brown said once we choose an alignment, we can get down to more details about the nature of the takes because we will know where the road is going.
- Wahl then pointed out to the committee that they included potential impacts in these numbers because they didn't want to surprise anyone later on. He said the count will change with the selection of an alignment. He also noted they didn't want to put the road through the middle of a neighborhood and isolate it so they tried to stay to one side or the other.
- On the topic of potential church takes, Armstrong said the committee needed to specify which churches are storefront churches and which are historical or significant. He said it is easier to relocate a storefront church. Hebebrand said they will have it subdivided by the next meeting. Hamilton Brown said they will do that for commercial structures too.
- Armstrong proposed they be more specific with stating whether they took a corner of a factory or if they went down the middle. Hebebrand said no, that they need to list it as a take, and then explain it in the documentation that accompanies the matrix.
- Kelly Brooker from ODOT Central Office asked if the number reflected an actual structure take or if they included things like yards. Mary Cierebiej responded that the takes involve structures only and that they will continue to gather information and in the next phases quantify the impact.

- Hamilton Brown asked the committee to please call Matt, Mary or Craig with any information they find regarding these topics that should be added into the matrix so we can move ahead.
- Hebebrand said they will have the matrix completely filled in by the next meeting. He said however long it takes them to pull together all the information will coincide with the date of the next meeting. Cierebiej said the next meeting is currently schedule for September and would notify everyone once a date and time is scheduled.

5) Next Steps

- Hamilton Brown said they need to discuss how to advocate for this project and try to do it with others too.
- Ben Campbell announce that there is a public meeting to discuss the design of the new GCRTA station at E. 55th St. on Monday, August 22nd.
- Hamilton Brown said we need to have a consultant at that meeting. Molt said himself or another ODOT representative will be there.
- Kim Scott from Burten Bell Carr announced there is a public meeting for the Forgotten Triangle on August 28th. Consultants or ODOT will be present.
- Steven Standley asked if we could speed up the process and eliminate one or two of the alternatives today. Hebebrand said the process needs to be defensible and documented. Studying all the alternatives equally is something that has to be done.
- The meeting was concluded. They will keep the committee updated via e-mail on the next date for a workshop.

Meeting Attendees

CUY-Opportunity Corridor Workshop #2 – August 18, 2005

Name	Organization
Mahmoud Al-lozi	NOACA
Michael Armstrong	Federal Highway Administration
Kelly Brooker	ODOT-Central Office
Ben Campbell	Slavic Village Development Corporation
Millie Caraballo	CIRI
Mary Cierebiej	HNTB Ohio, Inc.
Freddy Collier	City of Cleveland Planning
Andrew Cross	City of Cleveland Traffic Engineering
Brian Drobnick	Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation
Marka Fields	Cleveland City Planning
Jacek Ghosh	Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation
David Goldberg	Ohio Savings Bank
Terri Hamilton Brown	University Circle Incorporated
James Heviland	Midtown Cleveland
Craig Hebebrand	ODOT District 12
Lora Hummer	ODOT District 12
Jamal Husani	Cuyahoga County Engineer's Office
Jamie Ireland	Early Stage Partners
Robert Jackimowicz	Cleveland City Council
Ben Limmer	University Circle Incorporated
John Motl	ODOT District 12
Clair Posius	Cleveland City Planning
Bob Reeves	University Circle Incorporated
William Riley	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church/Mt. Sinai Ministries
Kim Scott	BBC Development Corporation
Aubrey Sippola	Whelan Communications
Steven Standley	University Hospitals Health Systems
Matt Wahl	HNTB Ohio, Inc.
John Wheeler	CWRU
Joel Wimbiscus	University Circle Incorporated