

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

TRAFFIC SUBCOMMITTEE
CLEVELAND AVENUE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT MEETING

APRIL 28, 2016
7:00 p.m.

In Attendance: A. Stuart Markham, District 6
Maureen Feeney-Roser, Planning & Development Department
Fred Nelson, Newark Police Department
Dave Gula, WILMAPCO/Newark Traffic Committee
Tom Parkins, Newark Traffic Committee
Susan Grasso, Newark Bicycle Committee
Karl Hassler, Newark Bicycle Committee
James Wilson, Bike Delaware
Amy Roe, NAACP/Newark resident
Eve Slap, Matt Slap Subaru
Jen Wallace, Newark resident
Candace Brooks, NAACP/Newark resident
Christine Herman, Business Owner

1. INTRODUCTION

Lt. Nelson thanked everyone for attending the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves.

Lt. Nelson said there was one correction to the March, 16, 2016 meeting minutes, paragraph one, page 9, change the word “insufficient” to “inefficient”.

Lt. Nelson said the purpose of the meeting this evening is to discuss stakeholder participation. Lt. Nelson distributed a list of stakeholders to date that have or are suggested to participate.

2. DISCUSSION

Ms. Roser provided a map to the attendees of the affected properties along the corridor using a 200’ buffer from the center line. Ms. Roe said she would like the map to extend further to encompass the entirety of Cleveland Avenue. Ms. Roe said it appears the map only includes east of Paper Mill Road. Ms. Roser said this mainly a starting point, and thought the majority of the initial discussion was making changes to the number of lanes on east Cleveland Avenue. Lt. Nelson said his understanding is to include the entire corridor and

should also include west Cleveland Avenue from New London Road to Capitol Trail.

Ms. Roe suggested moving forward breaking Cleveland into two sections and involving certain stakeholders at different times. Ms. Grasso agreed and feels the task force would be too large to involve everyone at the same time. Ms. Grasso suggested having separate focus groups. Mr. Gula agreed it would be a more manageable approach. Mr. Gula said there is a downside to involving the public too early in the process before ideas have been discussed. Mr. Gula suggested involving the public as issues and potential solutions arise with an organized agenda. Mr. Gula said all affected residents should be involved in open public workshops. Mr. Markham said he disagrees with this viewpoint. Mr. Markham said W. Cleveland Avenue residents will filter to E. Cleveland Avenue and will be recipients of the improvements. Mr. Markham said he could provide names of stakeholders.

Ms. Roe said she believes the task force is not normally consistent with the process in how the city proceeds with committees. Ms. Roe said normally the direction is given by city council and city council selects the stakeholders. Ms. Roe said city council is accountable to the voters and this committee isn't accountable to anyone. Lt. Nelson said he feels it would be a good idea to involve council. Ms. Roe asked if recommendations will go before city council as she is unclear how recommendations from the Traffic Committee go to DeIDOT. Lt. Nelson said any recommendations the Traffic Committee approves go to city council for approval. Lt. Nelson said DeIDOT is involved directly with the Traffic Committee in making recommendations.

Mr. Wilson asked Councilman Markham if it would be a good idea for one person to represent the residents west of Paper Mill Road and one person represent the residents east of Paper Mill Road. Mr. Markham said the majority of long term residents reside on the western portion of Cleveland Avenue. Mr. Markham believes the more residents involved the better. Mr. Wilson asked if Mr. Markham could provide names to the committee.

Ms. Roe said the Newark Housing Authority is moving forward with a resident survey for Alder Creek. Ms. Roe met with Mr. DeCollo regarding the survey and feels it would be a good start in obtaining resident input. Ms. Grasso asked if someone from this group should be involved in the task force. Ms. Roe said at this time there are no residents on Cleveland Avenue at the table and feels this needs to be corrected.

Ms. Grasso said both of the business owners west of Cleveland Avenue feel as though they haven't been involved at this time. Ms. Grasso suggested having one (1) business owner and one (1) resident involved in the committee both east and west of Cleveland Avenue. Ms. Grasso also would like to engage the student population as well. Ms. Roe said there are two (2) churches in this area. Ms. Roe said St. John UAME church would like to be involved. Mr. Markham said Mike Horney business owner of the Bookateria would like to be involved. Ms. Grasso said Christine Herman, business owner of Herman's Meat

Market has many ideas and would like to be involved. Ms. Grasso said Heather Dunigan informed her that the owner of the Wood Fire Pizza Shop would like to be involved.

Lt. Nelson asked the committee members to what extent do they be included. Mr. Markham said he feels the public workshop is important to include everyone. Mr. Wilson said he feels the best would be to err on the side of potential inefficiency and include everyone.

Mr. Gula suggested having two public workshops. Mr. Gula said it is important to have a public workshop in the beginning when ideas are still being considered. Ms. Roe said she agrees with the early public meeting. Ms. Roe said she feels the meeting should be held before the end of May. Ms. Roe said the timing is getting very tight. Lt. Nelson said the public meeting will need to be held around the end of May and invite everyone. Lt. Nelson said an initial stakeholder discussion could be held as well. Ms. Roser requested that DeIDOT provide the same presentation as provided to the committee members. Ms. Roser believes the stakeholders will come from this meeting.

Ms. Roe said initially the site visit was scheduled for May and suggested pushing this back.

Ms. Roser suggested after the public meeting is held and stakeholders are discussed provide an informational report to council and ask for their approval or to help appoint the members. Ms. Grasso said she feels everyone along the corridor would be aware of the process and is confused on the process of bringing in city council and feels the process is just going to get prolonged. Mr. Wilson said he feels that city council should be involved in the process. Ms. Roe said she feels city council should also be notified during the planning process.

Mr. Gula in the past when WILMAPCO has planned a public workshop it was held before a council meeting. Mr. Gula said this helps to get more people to attend. Mr. Gula suggested a public workshop from 5-7 p.m. before the council meeting inviting council members to attend and then follow up with a presentation at the council meeting. Lt. Nelson feels it would be a good idea to push back the site visit until all the stakeholders have been confirmed. Mr. Gula said WILMAPCO could help with notification. Ms. Roser said she would volunteer to work on getting a date together for the meeting. Mr. Gula said we need to also confirm DeIDOT is available. Lt. Nelson said he would coordinate schedules with DeIDOT. Mr. Wilson asked if DeIDOT could expedite the results of the modeling scenarios. Lt. Nelson said due to the timeframe it would be unlikely, however he would follow up with DeIDOT. Ms. Roe said she doesn't believe DeIDOT's results are necessary at this point. Ms. Roe said she feels residents should be notified of the workshop, and should include DeIDOT's presentation, and listen to the public's ideas. Ms. Roe asked that the presentation be forwarded to Mr. Wilson for his review. Mr. Gula said notification regarding the public workshop should occur as soon as possible to get the best possible attendance.

Ms. Herman introduced herself to the committee as the owner of 64 E. Cleveland Avenue and said she has a vested interest in the project and would like to be a part of the committee. Lt. Nelson thanked her for attending.

Ms. Grasso said it will be difficult to get all suggestions and information captured at the public workshop with such a large group. Ms. Grasso recommended more of a focus group approach. Mr. Gula recommended providing comment sheets for public feedback and suggestions to those in attendance. Mr. Gula said the committee members could be positioned at display boards showing existing problems with potential solutions. Mr. Gula agreed a speaking engagement approach could be extremely time consuming. Ms. Grasso likes the idea of visualization boards to promote conversation. Ms. Roser asked who would handle the visualization boards. Mr. Gula said we should reach out to DeIDOT to provide the display boards.

Mr. Markham said he has the traffic counts from DeIDOT for the peak rush on Cleveland Avenue. Mr. Markham said there is approximately 1,000 vehicles in both directions during rush hour. Mr. Markham said Cleveland Avenue is essentially used as a bypass.