



**RED BANK CORRIDOR PROJECT
MEETING SUMMARY**

Medpace · February 15, 2012

Prepared by:

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Meeting Attendees

Red Bank Corridor Representatives

- Jay Andress, Wasson Way
- Bob Betsch
- Luke Brockmeier, Resident & State Rep. Candidate
- Mike Burson, Cincinnati Public Schools
- Bill Collins, Madisonville & John P. Parker
- Tim Daugherty, Children's Home
- Caroline Duffy
- Frank Henson, Queen City Bike
- Kathy Harrison, Madisonville
- Bob Igoe, Madisonville
- Mike Judy
- Ron Kull
- Mike Lam, Columbia Township
- Susan Schultz McDaniel, Red Bank CAC
- Charlene Metzger, Fairfax
- Don Mills, Ohio River Way
- Kay Nolen, Medpace
- Jennifer O'Donnell, Vice Mayor Qualls office
- Ben Ross
- Craig Rozen, Oakley Community Council
- Curt Tiettmeyer, Village of Newtown

Eastern Corridor Implementation Partners

- Steve Mary, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Joe Vogel, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Andy Fluegemann, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Keith Smith, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Jay Hamilton, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Todd Portune, Hamilton County Commissioner/Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District
- Ted Hubbard, Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District
- Michael Moore, City of Cincinnati
- Martha Kelly, City of Cincinnati

Project Team Members

- David Wormald, URS Corporation (Red Bank Corridor Project)
- Steve Curless, URS Corporation (Red Bank Corridor Project)
- Vanessa Frisch, URS Corporation (Red Bank Corridor Project)
- Deb Osborne, Stantec (SR-32 Relocation Project and the SR-32 Improvements, Eastgate Area Projects)
- Laura Whitman, Razor Marketing Communications
- Betty Hull, Razor Marketing Communications

Meeting Summary

The following is a summary of discussions during the Feb. 15, 2012 meeting. A full meeting transcript was recorded and is available for review on the Red Bank Corridor project's Public Involvement page of the Eastern Corridor website, www.EasternCorridor.org.

Introductions

At the beginning of the meeting, participants introduced themselves and stated their affiliations. Bob Igoe, president of the Madisonville Community Council, thanked Medpace for hosting the meeting. He then stated that the Red Bank Community Advisory Committee's (CAC) goal is to work with ODOT and project engineers to develop plans for the Red Bank Corridor project.

Overview of Statement of Desired Outcomes

Following introductions, Susan Schultz McDaniel presented a summary of the CAC's collective goals and desired outcomes for the project, as well as individual comments from community businesses and stakeholders. CAC representatives then distributed a series of position statements from stakeholders and a discussed a chart highlighting project priorities (POST MEETING NOTE: a compilation of these materials has been placed on the Red Bank Corridor project's Public Involvement page on the Eastern Corridor Program website, www.EasternCorridor.org). A summary of points made by CAC members includes:

CAC Goals:

The goal of the CAC is to collaborate on a design that benefits the communities, businesses and future development of Segment One [the Red Bank Corridor] while meeting the needs of the current and future traffic demands.

To this end, the CAC seeks a real voice in the design and development of segment one of the Eastern Corridor Project.

Desired Outcomes:

- Connect existing developments to each other and the community
- Develop and preserve as much green space as possible
- Explore opening/expanding surrounding roadways currently closed
- Implement an economic impact study of the project on current and future development
- Develop a final design appropriate for an urban and residential community
- Identify a final design that increases the safety of school age children crossing the roads

Other desired outcomes discussed include:

- Efficient traffic flows at speeds safe for pedestrians, bicycles, moms with strollers, etc.
- Maintain and improve access to businesses in and around the surrounding area; improve

- access of the residential community
- Create connections to surrounding and future bike trails
- Improve climate for economic development
- A roadway solution that doesn't split the community into two sections
- Support business redevelopment, attract new residents, retain existing residents
- A decision that is made soon so local businesses can move forward with future planning
- Wider sidewalks

ODOT invited the CAC to share additional statements as they come in.

Following the goals and outcomes discussion, the City of Cincinnati's Michael Moore provided an update of other projects taking place in the area, including the development of the Medpace area and its impact on traffic needs, utility coordination, property purchases.

Funding Update

Red Bank CAC members requested an update on project funding. They explained that they need a better idea on how the project may advance considering that funding is limited; having a better understanding of this will help with development planning. Also, there was concern that if the project is not funded for ten to 15 years, how will the community work with the City on repairs, improvements, and implementation of portions of the project before more work can be completed? New businesses considering moving to and investing in the area are going to need these questions answered.

Michael Moore stated that it is important to advance a design that incorporates a collective vision for the project so that it's ready to go as soon as funding is available, or, so that portions of construction can be begin as soon as funding is obtained. Having that collective vision will help the community with making development decisions during the time period before construction begins.

ODOT representatives as well as Hamilton County Engineer Ted Hubbard and Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune noted that funding was secure for the current study phase (preliminary engineering) but that construction funding had not been identified at this time. The timeline for construction is dependent on state and federal revenues and spending. It was noted that completion of preliminary engineering and environmental documentation in the near term would better position the project for future construction funding if and when it would become available.

Jay Hamilton, Traffic Planning Engineer for ODOT District 8, stated that the cost for the current Red Bank Corridor Tier 2 study is just over \$3.5 million. Eighty percent of that amount is federal funding and 20% is local, from the Hamilton County TID earmark.

Further discussion was held on other possible funding sources:

- Transportation Bill – if adopted, it would yield funding that the project could likely access.

- TRAC Funding – While TRAC funding is very limited, the Eastern Corridor Program remained on the list for future funding when many other qualified projects were dropped off. This is positive news.
- The proposed Regional Infrastructure Investment Zones (RIIZ) bill – would provide favorable tax incentives for private investments into public infrastructure
- Bonding against future funding streams
- Transportation-related TRAC funds
- Reallocation of OKI funds
- Public Private Partnerships (P3s)

Madison Road Expansion

Michael Moore, Director of the Department of Transportation and Engineering for the City of Cincinnati, led a discussion on the status of Madison Road work. He mentioned that Medpace's new building will bring in new workers and more vehicles and an additional right turn lane on Madison will be needed. The City is in the process of coordinating with utilities, particularly Duke, to move telephone polls in relation to this new lane. He also stated that the City is going to try and get an easement to widen sidewalks from the planned 5 ft. Work in this area will hopefully begin in May.

Mr. Moore reported that he has not heard anything further about the proposal to change the road's name to Dunbar but will look into it.

Red Bank Traffic Count Update

ODOT representatives explained that while traffic counts are in, the full forecasts are not yet complete and should be available in mid-March for review and discussion. There was some follow-up discussion regarding the level of service the project team hopes to achieve with the roadway modifications and what would likely best serve the community. Also discussed was the nature of the traffic modeling on both regional and localized (intersection) scales and how this information is used when developing alternatives to address congestion.

The effect of the Kennedy Connector on both traffic and the community, once completed, was also briefly discussed. ODOT stated that the traffic model will include the Kennedy Connector link and assess projected impacts in correlation with the Red Bank project.

Working Group Session - Review of the Project Corridor

Madisonville CAC representatives along with the ODOT and the URS design team reviewed aerial maps to discuss existing issues and design constraints throughout the corridor progressing from north to south. URS also provided for the CAC's use several plots with aerial maps of the corridor and major intersections. The maps illustrated existing topography, right of way and utilities.

Items discussed during this portion of the meeting include:

North of Duck Creek Road

The lack of shoulders and access in this area often result in significant congestion when there is an accident or disabled vehicle. Additionally, the current cross section with the setback guardrail is unsightly and is not an inviting gateway into the community. ODOT representatives noted that while access to I-71 will not be altered as part of this project, the addition of shoulders, spot improvements on I-71 or other treatments for the I-71 access ramps to Duck Creek Road could be considered. This is not necessarily a capacity issue but a functional consideration of safety and aesthetics. URS noted that a review of crash rates in the corridor (2007-2009) did not indicate significant safety issues. Records of disabled vehicles not associated with an accident have not been reviewed.

Duck Creek Road

There is significant congestion at Duck Creek and Red Bank Expressway. The CAC expressed concerns with pedestrian safety in the area and possible need for additional turn lanes. There was also some discussion about the potential impacts of the Kennedy Connector project and increases in traffic volumes on Duck Creek. ODOT and the design team noted that the Kennedy Connector is included in the traffic modeling to be done for the 2030 forecasts. The City noted that signal controllers for stop lights in the area were replaced recently and there may have been some temporary problems with signal timing, etc., which should now be corrected. A follow up discussion was held on the timing of the light, the modeling process used to determine an optimal schedule and how that ties into the larger regional traffic flow model.

Medpace representatives inquired if the traffic from its campus is being considered in the planning work. URS responded that it does have the 2007/2009 traffic impact studies for Medpace and that they are being considered in the traffic forecasts. URS noted that if there are significant changes in the numbers of employees, etc., from the impact studies Medpace should forward this information. But as of now, the traffic counts and impact studies appear to be consistent.

Madison Road

There is significant congestion at this intersection especially northbound between Madison and Erie.

The City is beginning work on additional westbound right turn lane on Madison from Medpace to Red Bank Expressway. The City, Cincinnati Public Schools and Madisonville representatives are coordinating to widen the sidewalk in this area if possible.

Pedestrian safety is a major concern for school children. Most school age pedestrians are students at the Schroeder High School on Duck Creek Road and students at John P. Parker School on Madison. Mr. Wormald of URS stated that it would be beneficial to know additional information about the distribution of students among the schools, where and how they are coming from school each day and how likely they would be to walk or bike. He also noted that current pedestrian counts are low. CAC representatives felt that pedestrian usage would increase if there were better accommodations at the intersection. Ms. Schultz-McDaniel also stated that public accessibility and public transportation are key to the community, so plans for the Madison/Red Bank intersection needs to accommodate those. There was some follow up discussion about the potential positives and negatives of a roundabout at this location relating to pedestrian safety.

Michael Moore suggested that, at this stage in project development, it would be productive for the group focused on what it likes or dislikes about a particular concept rather than on specific solutions. Knowing what it likes and why can help advance the planning and development process more quickly.

Madison to Erie

Left turns into driveways at Medpace Way and other local access points can be problematic. The Red Bank CAC would like accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians on both sides of the roadway in this area. URS noted that prior planning work assumed a 10 ft wide shared use path on the west side of Red Bank, from Murray to Madison Road. There was follow-up discussion on the relative benefits and feasibility of a shared use path on the east, west or both sides of the roadway. The eastern side of the roadway has more intensive use and residential development but would likely have greater property impacts.

CAC representatives suggested a shared use path on the west side to more closely follow the SORTA Oasis Line right of way or along Duck Creek. While this may minimize property impacts along Red Bank there are concerns with safety, maintenance and security.

There was also discussion regarding potential improvements to old Red Bank Road and interconnectivity of Hetzel Ave. Old Red Bank could be used for local circulation but is currently in poor condition. Old Red Bank Road Bridge over Rail America should be replaced and reconnected if possible. Sidewalks on Old Red Bank would also be desirable to serve adjacent commercial and residential uses. ODOT and City staff noted that improvements to Old Red Bank were consistent with prior planning work done in 2004-2005.

Madisonville CAC representatives noted that drivers cut through private parking lots between Old Red Bank and Hetzel. There was follow up discussion on potential improvements to Hetzel, Old Red Bank Road, the railroad bridge and other nearby roads to improve connectivity in this area.

Medpace representatives requested that the City vacate existing right of way for Old Red Bank Road between Medpace Way and the UDF south east of Madison Road since it has no access to Red Bank Expressway. The existing right of way is a constraint on development alternatives at the site.

Gorilla Glue would like to keeps its traffic light on Red Bank.

CAC representatives requested that a landscaped median be constructed between Madison Road and Erie if possible. Mr. Collins mentioned that if the group can find a creative way to not crowd the right of way, then the CAC can realize its vision to open up the corridor and an establish an attractive landscape for Red Bank Road. He stated that it's important to include park-like segments to help the community compete with its neighbors for jobs and families.

Establishing connectivity to existing and planned bicycle paths was a large part of the discussion of this portion of the roadway.

Erie/Brotherton Area

The current intersection generally functions acceptably but is very confusing for outsiders. It would be desirable to have a pedestrian bridge connecting Brotherton east of the SORTA Oasis Line directly to Red Bank. ODOT will come up with several possible alternatives for this intersection. Since this touches on Hyde Park and Oakley, the CAC will ensure that representatives of these communities will be at the table when the concepts are discussed. Pedestrian connectivity between the residential areas north and west of Erie to Fairfax, Madisonville and Mariemont are poor.

South of Erie

The CAC suggested that connectivity to the Murray Ave shared use path be provided. Also some landscaping and a means to slow down traffic was also requested. There were no major congestion issues observed in this area. Mike Judy of Hyde Park Lumber asked about how his property might be affected as he had plans to build condos across the street from this business. The answer is not available as desgins for the new intersection with US-50 and SR-32 are not yet developed.

There were questions regarding the southern limits of Segment I and the proposed interchange with US-50. ODOT and URS representatives noted that the Red Bank Corridor project (Segment I) ends in the vicinity of Fair Lane and that the US-50 interchange is considered part of SR-32 Relocation project (Segment II/III) and that its configuration and location remain to be determined. Access to the former Swallen's development site from Red Bank should be maintained.

Next Steps

ODOT announced that the next Eastern Corridor Development Team meeting will be held on Feb. 23, 2012 at the Anderson Center in Anderson Township. All are invited to attend.

A date for the next Red Bank Community Partners Committee will be determined and announced at a later time. At that meeting, ODOT will be able to share traffic data and detailed discussions about what will project alternatives need to accomplish can be held.