

**SOUTH BROADWAY NEPA PROCESS
CONSENSUS COMMITTEE MEETING #5
NOVEMBER 17, 2005
CAMERON COMMUNITY CHURCH,
1600 S. PEARL, DENVER, CO**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Announcement: The Bicycle Pedestrian Workshop will be November 29th at Lincoln Elementary School, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

Agreement: The Consensus Committee agrees to continue to meet at Cameron Community Church. Meetings will be in the basement.

Agreement: Caelan agreed to work to distribute materials earlier to interested parties. **Post-meeting clarification: project materials will still go to the Consensus Committee before others.

Agreement: The Consensus Committee agreed to the groups focus is discussion of transportation improvements in the area of Broadway and I-25.

Agreement: Members of the Consensus Committee will review the Level 2 screening criteria and Caelan and Jody will be in contact by phone to collect questions and concerns.

Discussion Highlights:

- **Process:** To build trust and transparency into the process the CC requested information early and often, transparency in analysis and screening decisions, and clear answers in CC meetings.
- **Zoning:** The group discussed zoning and Jason answered that zoning may be part of the discussion of mitigation, but not as a part of alternatives development.
- **Modeling:** Chris Primus introduced the preliminary traffic models and projections. The project team agreed to look into CC requests for additional information and projected traffic figures for local streets in 2030.
- **Project Termini:** Project termini bound the alternatives and evaluation process. The termini evolve from initial traffic model runs. The project team agreed to clarify whether or not transportation alternatives that help the study area need to be contained within the termini
- **Level 2 Criteria:** We ran out of time and did not discuss Level 2 criteria. The group agreed to start these discussions on the phone with Caelan and Jody before the next meeting if they could get the latest screening criteria, level 1 results and a compact disc with graphics of the transportation improvement suggestions shown at the project public meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Meeting #6, December 15th, 2005
Cameron Community Church, Basement

MEETING NOTES
(Agenda attached on last page)

GENERAL PROCESS

Agreement: The Consensus Committee agrees to continue to meet at Cameron Community Church. Meetings will be in the basement.

Announcement: The Bicycle Pedestrian Workshop will be November 29th at Lincoln Elementary School, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

- The goal of the workshop is to refine information about origins, destinations, routes and amenities.
- The project team will provide examples of transit stations across the country that are examples of Transit Oriented Development that have successfully integrated bicycle and pedestrian accessibility.
- Members of the CC stressed the importance of the details in bicycle and pedestrian design. Space, layout, amenities, architecture, “expensive bike” parking, safety...are all a part of successful bicycle and pedestrian facility design.
 - o Question: Will there be a transit specific workshop?
 - It is not known at present whether a transit workshop will be needed.

DISCUSSION ON TRANSPARENCY AND DECISION MAKING

As a result of discussions with Consensus Committee members between meetings, the following comments and concerns were noted:

- There is excitement for this project and coming changes to the project area; there will be many costs and many benefits to be shared by the stakeholders
- There is some concern about the transparency and the legitimacy of the project. Specifically, concern that the decision as to the transportation solution is already made and that the NEPA process is merely a ‘jump through regulatory hoops’ effort
- There is concern that analysis and screening cannot take place without traffic data and counts
- It was clearly expressed that stakeholders are looking for transportation improvements and alternatives that are greater than just Broadway improvements.
- There remains a desire for neighborhood plans to be incorporated in some capacity into the decision making process

These concerns were relayed to the project team. Project Manager Jason Longsdorf responded:

- Jason acknowledged that some may feel misled by previous processes regarding redevelopment and land use in the study area. Assurances were likely made regarding when and how decisions would be made that were not realized. While regrettable, the City made zoning decisions deliberately and is pleased with the decisions, and the NEPA process was selected specifically for the opportunity to shape transportation decisions in accordance with land use decisions made.
- To specifically respond to Consensus Committee concerns, Jason reviewed tapes of the December 13, 2004 and December 20, 2004 City Council discussions and spoke with Councilwoman Mackenzie regarding the Gates East Rezoning. In addition, Jason spoke with Bill Vidal and Peter Park for additional clarification of the City’s intent for this project.
- During Gates East rezoning, council members asked specifically about whether zoning changes could be considered in a NEPA transportation study. Bill Vida’s response was that

they would not be part of the alternative discussion but could be part of the discussion of any mitigation.

- Councilwoman Kathleen Mackenzie expressed her opinion that the NEPA process is the best way to develop transportation improvements in the area. She highlighted how rare it is for the City to undertake a NEPA process and how it is likely best for the neighborhoods, though not necessarily for the timing concerns of the major redevelopers. She discussed the tension between developing comprehensive transportation improvements and allowing major redevelopments to move forward in a timeframe that takes advantage of the completion of the Southeast corridor and current markets.
- In response to the question as to whether the preferred alternative can be “more than just Broadway”? Jason answered “Yes”, .Initial traffic models show that some trips on Broadway cannot be diverted. Others may have some opportunity for diversion. Any improvements that extend outside the termini will have to be analyzed for environmental and social impacts and for mitigation as per NEPA.
- In regards to the question, “Is there a predetermined outcome or favorite existing option,” Jason answered “No.”

Additional comments regarding transparency and process

- Answering questions directly and as asked will help develop trust
- If any decision is made, in mitigation or otherwise, to reduce zoning or density on the major redevelopment sites, there are likely to be large opportunity costs of doing so. Perhaps these resources costs are better spent on better or more ambitious transportation solutions.
- There remains some confusion regarding the purpose and need language that refers to satisfactory solutions. Does this mean satisfactory to neighborhoods or to the city? What happens if there is no satisfactory solution?
- Councilwoman Mackenzie reiterated that the build out of allotted density will take place over time, just as transportation solutions are likely to be phased.
- Paraphrasing Bill Vidal, Jason said that the City sees this transportation question as one that must also address bike, pedestrian and transit modes with a high priority in alternatives development and analysis.

Agreement: The Consensus Committee is to discuss transportation improvements in the area of Broadway and I-25.

- Doug McKinnon explained his surprise and concern that zoning may possibly be influenced by NEPA decisions. Only as a potential mitigation measure, not as an alternative to be evaluated. Perhaps this needs a response as well?

PUBLIC COMMENT

There is a request by Charlie Busch of WWPNA: to distribute meeting materials far enough in advance to facilitate their timely distribution to interested parties and meeting attendants that are not actually members of the Consensus Committee.

- Caelan agreed to work to distribute materials earlier to interested parties. **Post-meeting clarification: project materials will still go to the Consensus Committee before others.

2030 TRAFFIC MODEL PROJECTIONS

Caelan introduced project team member Chris Primus who presented the 2030 traffic model projections. Chris is a transportation planner. His first years as a planner were at DRCOG. He has spent 6 years with Carter & Burgess. Most of his work focuses on multi model system traffic projections. His role on this project is long term traffic forecasting. More detailed modeling work will be performed by other team members based on Chris' foundation data.

This initial traffic model run (handout) is based on DRCOG models and data. The DRCOG model was recently updated (less than a year ago). The software of the model is TransCAD. The model reflects the 2030 regional plan which includes FasTracks and a variety of highway improvement projects. The model includes a 2030 land use dataset that DRCOG has adopted. This model allocates households and employment to Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs). NEPA requires that travel demand models are developed using Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) (in this case, DRCOG) models and figures

The first step in using this model is to zoom in on the project area and examine the model for accuracy in the coding of roadway networks and the traffic counts. One of the early corrections made by the project team was to split a TAZ on the Cherokee site into two TAZs, where one zone (west of the Consolidated Mainline) will connect car traffic to Santa Fe, the other (east of the CML) will connect car traffic to Broadway.

The team also looked at the 2030 land use projections and compared them to the developer's projections. They didn't exactly match. DRCOG will not allow the total number of households or employees in the metro area to change, but demographic projections can be reallocated among TAZs with approval. The team did just this through negotiations with DRCOG. Some household and employment numbers were moved back and forth between four area TAZs to better balance the expected land use

Once these adjustments were made, the model was run. The results shown to the Consensus Committee are the first results of the model run, just as the project team received them. Numbers on the graphic (handout) represent total daily trips in units of one thousand.

Questions and comments regarding the 2030 traffic model projections

Question: What is a "Centroid Connector?"

- The regional model does not model local streets. This would be too data and calculation intensive. Instead, local streets are aggregated into a parallel alignment for modeling purposes. This aggregate is called a "centroid connector".

Question: Is "cut-through" traffic modeled or identifiable within this model?

- Not at this phase. That will be modeled in a subsequent phase using a more detailed local street system model called VISUM. Will evaluate the alternatives when they are defined. Have Brian look at this response.

Question: Is air quality conformity analysis included in these models?

- Yes, this is included in the DRCOG/MPO(?) modeling process

Question: There appear to be inaccuracies. Logan, for example, shows lower future traffic projections than current traffic counts. There appears to be an error on both Washington and Emerson. Traffic counts appear to be based on one way, 2 lanes, and extends all the way down

to Evans This needs to be clarified There appears to be an error on Broadway north and south of Mississippi, showing fewer trips in 2030 than exist today.

As expected certain local anomalies appear in a regional model of this scope and extent. The project team agreed to examine these and discuss opportunities for adjustments.

Question: There appear to be inconsistencies between Lionstone and Cherokee traffic projections, and those figures in the first model run results

- The project team will examine for accuracy and report back to the Committee.

Question: Are buses and HOV lanes included in these projections?

- Broadway and Lincoln are configured as they operate now: HOV lanes that allow cars except during peak hours

Question: Are multiple levels of income implicit in DRCOG model assumptions?

- Yes, household incomes are included and are a part of the mode choice calculus (is there a non-jargon term that can be used?).
- It would be valuable if the models could illuminate “tipping points” or mode-shift tradeoffs. In other words, it would be valuable when examining alternatives to be able to identify where small changes to alignments or alternatives can result in significant mode shift choices. It is a form of cost-benefit analysis. Likewise, it would be valuable to be able to examine percentage growth in transit use versus other modes by alternative.

Summary of Consensus Committee data requests:

- Roadway configurations for the travel demand model, including assumptions and parameters for roadways such as how many lanes, one way or two, etc.
- Traffic projections from the DRCOG model for 2005 and 2030.
- A measure of accuracy or confidence in model data, and/or an explanation of calibration methods and results
- DRCOG model projections for transit use/trips in the study area
- Broadway traffic projections if the northbound Broadway to northbound I-25 ramp remains closed.

PROJECT TERMINI

Project Termini are the end points between which transportation improvements that address the Purpose and Need for the project are identified and evaluated. Termini are useful in:

- Limiting the definition of transportation improvements to the problem area.
- Ensuring that potential transportation improvements do not create new or additional impacts outside the study area. The goal is to identify stand-alone or self-contained improvements (described in NEPA language as “independent utility”).

Project Termini are defined by:

- Physical elements that cause or result in significant change in travel character (volume, capacity, safety, continuity) , for example
- Significant barriers such as railroad tracks or a river.

- Functional class or capacity changes in roadways: for example if a road narrows from 4 lanes to 2 lanes
- **These changes may represent mobility constraints to be addressed.

Review of Project Termini (graphic handout), some key points:

- Along Broadway, there is a major “break point” in projected volumes just north of Ohio where the one-way couplet begins. The projected daily volume of car traffic of 56,000 trips on Broadway (in 2030) becomes a 50/50 split with 26,000 on Broadway and 26,000 on Lincoln north of Ohio. To the north there is capacity in the couplet that doesn’t exist in the consolidated facility on Broadway south of Ohio.
- Points such as these represent termini because there is a major travel change location here. South of Ohio begins the area where Broadway has significantly increased volume, capacity concerns, safety (particularly for pedestrian crossing) and is no place for a bicyclist. It is very difficult to access the Broadway LRT station on foot or bike. It is a major bus corridor, but not a very inviting place to be, to wait, and to board or deboard.

Question: Will the termini change if the current model numbers need to be adjusted?

- It is possible that they may change. It is also possible that even with changes in model numbers the termini will remain the same as it is the implications of model changes, rather than specific figures that will be used to identify termini.

Comment: Please consider fundamental assumptions behind this modeling exercise. Specifically, the assumption that Lincoln-Broadway is a major couplet results in the high traffic projections encountered. If this assumption were changed, so then might the possible traffic solutions.

Question: There appears to be available space for widening Broadway at I-25 near Hurricane Drain. Is that space being saved for a particular alternative?

- It is not being saved for an alternative, and the future of the Hurricane Drain building is unknown. A great deal depends on CDOT decisions regarding the Valley Highway EIS. In the construction of the bridge, the city requested of CDOT that 200 feet be preserved to

Question: Can improvements occur outside project termini?

It is possible that an improvement could extend outside the termini, as long as it addresses the problem located within the termini and as defined in the purpose and need. An alternative that extends outside the termini or study area will require additional environmental impact and traffic analysis to determine any mitigation required.

- Question: Why not extend study area to include Santa Fe?
- The assumption is that Santa Fe will be a significant access point for that portion of the Cherokee redevelopment west of the CML. All traffic that comes from or goes to Santa Fe from the project area will be captured in termini just east of Santa Fe.

Question: What is the disposition of screening based on “outside the study area?”

- Currently, nothing has been eliminated as a result of being outside the study area.

LEVEL 2 SCREENING CRITERIA

Agreement: Members of the Consensus Committee will review the Level 2 screening criteria and Caelan and Jody will be in contact by phone to collect questions and concerns.

IN ATTENDANCE

Doug McKinnon	Lionstone Group
Jean Wallace	Federal Highway Administration
Jim Jones	West Washington Park Neighborhood Association
Karen Cuthbertson	Athmar Park Neighborhood Association
Rick Wells	Cherokee Redevelopment
Kirk Webb	Colorado Department of Transportation
Lee Cryer	RTD FasTracks
Steve Harley	Baker Neighborhood Association
Doug Farquhar	Platt Park Peoples Association
Jason Longsdorf	Denver Public Works
Kathleen MacKenzie	Denver City Council
Mark Graham	City of Englewood
Jim Lindberg	Platt Park Peoples Association
Jack Unruh	Overland Neighborhood Association
Joan Loughridge	Broadway Area Revitalization District
Katie Fisher	West University Community Association
Catherine Cox Blair	Denver City Planning
Donna Krentz	Platt Park Residents Coalition
Ray Krieger	Godsmen Neighborhood Association
Larry Gibson	Carter & Burgess
Craig Gaskill	Carter & Burgess
Chris Primus	Carter & Burgess

In Audience

Rick Pilgrim	URS/Lionstone
Tim Lopez	Baker Neighborhood Association
Paul Ryan	The Kennney Group/Lionstone
Steve Kaplan	Kaplan, Kirsch and Rockwell/Lionstone
Max Cohen	Denver Design District
Charlie Busch	West Washington Park Neighborhood Association
Mark Sharp	Broadway Area Revitalization District
Genevieve Hutchinson	Regional Transportation District
Robert Rynerson	Regional Transportation District
Jim Carlson	West University Community Association

Facilitation

Caelan McGee	The Keystone Center
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South Broadway NEPA Process
Consensus Committee Meeting #5
November 17, 2005
Cameron Community Church
1600 S. Pearl St.
6:00-9:00 pm

AGENDA

- 6:00 Welcome and Introductions
- Agenda Review
 - Consider Change of Location for CC Meetings
 - Announcement of Bicycle/Pedestrian Workshop
- 6:10 Discussion: Comments, Concerns and Questions from Public Meeting and CC Members
- Is there a predetermined or favorite solution?
 - Can the preferred solution be larger than “just Broadway”?
 - Reevaluating previous zoning decisions
- 6:30 Project Team Member Introduction
- Chris Primus, Carter & Burgess Forecasting
- 6:40 2030 Traffic Volume Projections
- DRCOG Model Adjustments/Approval
 - Travel Projections
 - Logical Termini and Study Area
- 7:30 Public Comment
- 7:40 Break
- 7:50 Discussion of Draft Level 2 Screening Criteria
- 8:30 Process Updates
- Purpose and Need
 - Review of Process
 - Level 1 Screening handout
 - What’s Next?
- 9:00 Next Meeting/Adjourn