



MEETING MINUTES

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 21

Date: June 4, 2022

Time: 10:00 am

Location: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office, 5627 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston, SC;
Microsoft Teams (Virtual)

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees:

Tina Baxley, Ferndale

Larenda Baxley, Ferndale

Earl Muhammad, Ferndale

Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale

Cynthia Anderson, Liberty Park

Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace

Michael Miller, Highland Terrace

Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way

Angela Anderson, Russelldale

Tony Grasso, Russelldale

Joy Riley, SCDOT

Chad Long, SCDOT

Syrees Oliver, SCDOT

Shane Belcher, FHWA

Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting

Mattese Lecque, Maximum Consulting

LaTonya Derrick, Stantec

Ryan White, Stantec

Horrace Tobin, Stantec

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 19

Ferndale: 4

Highland Terrace/ Joppa Way: 2

Liberty Park: 1

Russelldale: 2

Joppa Way: 1

Adjacent affected communities/ agencies: 0

SCDOT: 3

FHWA: 1

Community Liaisons: 2

Stantec: 3

Facilitator: 0

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

- Roll call (online and phone participants)

Agenda Review

- Welcome and Administrative Items
- Neighborhood Update
- Community Office Update / Report from Maximum Consulting
- Feedback: Enhanced EJ Community Mitigation Plan
- Committee Discussions
- Upcoming EJ Community Outreach
- Project Schedule/Milestone Review
- Summary and Next Steps

Neighborhood Update

Ferndale: Residents are still concerned about speed humps and traffic calming.

The mosque has moved but Brother Muhammad would like to remain with the group since there are several members that reside in the impacted neighborhoods.

Highland Terrace: On Goode Street, there has been a car parked for years and the grass has grown up around it. Advice was given to contact the City or the Police Dept.

Liberty Park: Trees were being cut down earlier in the year because they were interacting with the power lines. I think they need to still cut down some more. Some of the people in the community was worried that if they had a hurricane they would, the trees would impact their power.

Russelldale: Speed humps are needed, especially on Russelldale Ave as it is a speedway. There have been more lights replaced through the City's initiative.

Joppa Way: There have been no questions or requests for information.

Community Office Update / Report from Maximum Consulting

Community Office Stats
(May 2022)

- Visitors: 3
- Incoming Calls: 9
- Voicemails: 2
- ROW Appointments: 1
- Outgoing Calls: 17

Recruitment for Commercial Drivers License training continues.

Recruitment for the Summer Transportation Institute continues and assistance is being provided as the students develop the application materials, like their essay.

Feedback: Enhanced EJ Community Mitigation Plan

How to get people to come out on a Tuesday night – IMPOSSIBLE! (Baxley, T)

We have solicited input regarding the following topics from last month's packet:

MITIGATION OVERSIGHT

Community Mitigation Schedule Commitment
No feedback

Community Meetings
Proposing a large community event on July 9th at Life Changers Covenant Ministries anytime between 10a and 4p to include set-up and breakdown.
10a to 2p was recommended

Community Mitigation Implementation Plan
No feedback

Project Oversight Committee

QUESTION: When do you think the POC will start? (Anderson, A.)

RESPONSE: Anticipating the FEIS-ROD being signed, fall of this year would be the earliest. The EJ Project Team expressed concern about how do we recruit committed members and will remain accountable despite not having the history on the project like the existing CAC Members. The Community Advocacy Group could serve as a source of members that would report back to the impacted neighborhoods and also serve as a group from which future members could be pulled.

REQUEST: I would recommend that the POC have a liaison to help with the administrative work like LaTonya, or somebody that works for the Community Board to help send emails and flyers and schedule the meetings. An administrative person to help us with the administrative part because a lot of people don't have the time or the expertise to do, you know, send out emails, Facebook posted or whatever. (Anderson, C.)

RESPONSE: The POC Whitepaper addresses the support for that group which will be someone that facilitates the meeting logistics, materials and actual meetings.

REQUEST: Can we start a Facebook page for the community? I think we've got to find all kinds of ways to get the community involved, so I mean, that's just an idea that would help open up communication more. (Anderson, C.)

RESPONSE: I think we were just trying to keep all the messaging in one place until we made that transition to other groups. But it's definitely sounding like it's a viable option at this point to make sure we have one that's dedicated not just to the project or project messaging, but one that supports the community part. And we can provide support services for anything like that. You guys decide what the rules are. You know, like usually when you set up some sort of Facebook group like that you would set some rules, you know, of conduct or who you wanted to let in or, you know, what was acceptable and what was not acceptable. You guys could come up with that and we would do the work of paying somebody to, to do that job, right? That's someone on our team. We could get them to actually do the work. But I mean, I think, take it, I would suggest, take advantage of, you know, this opportunity. We have a project team that can do, you know, provide this administrative support. I don't want to create work for people in the community if it can be done by somebody you know on our team.

COMMUNITY MEMBER: OK, so you're going to pay someone to do the page, to be an admin for the page for the community? That mean we will still have to, if we would have to go through that person if we wanted something post on the page. (Anderson, A.)

RESPONSE: We have people on our team that can support you.

ENHANCED RIGHT OF WAY SERVICES

Enhanced Advisory Services

Acquisition Fairness Program

Enhanced Rental Assistance Program

** No additional feedback was presented by the CAC.

FOCUSED COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Community Advisory Council
- Organizational Training
- Community Office
- Community Resource Guide & Community Workshops

** No additional feedback was presented by the CAC.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Single-Family Affordable Housing
- Multi-Family Affordable Housing
- Financial Literacy and First Time Home Buyer Counseling
- First Time Home Buyer Grant Program

QUESTION: Where are the properties located?

RESPONSE: We have bought some lots that were zoned multifamily, some single family in the Ferndale community and we still have those lots. We have a commitment for a 100-unit apartment complex and then 45 single family lots, that's a lot. And the 100-unit apartment complex has to have green space with it and it would be accessible to transit, all those things. We heard from you guys and all the other community members that you didn't want any high-rise type apartments. You'd rather have single family homes and duplexes, townhomes, those sorts of things within the actual communities. They didn't want to see those dense apartments developed. So with the 100 units of apartments, those we have strict criteria over where they need to be located, but those will likely not be within the core of the four communities but on Rivers Ave.

My main focus is Liberty Park, Highland Terrace and Russelldale now and so we will probably sometime next year we'll do sort of a mail out and start trying to contact property owners that have vacant lots according to the city's records, the owners of those houses and trying to see if anyone would be interested in selling. So we'll do a campaign next year and then once we feel like we've exhausted the four communities and no one's interested in selling, then we'll start to look at Charleston Farms and Park Circle. We'll start to branch out in some of those communities that are close by, but still kind of in that general area, trying to keep people in the same school districts and access to transit and things of that nature. So until we get 45 lots, we'll continue to do that effort.

COMMUNITY RECREATION

- Community Center Facilities and Amenities
- Community Center Programs and Activities

Please note that the POC will have insight into the plan that involves the design, programs, and amenities when we partner with the City to deliver the replacement Community Center. We have it in our agreement and our agreement for them to allow that.

EDUCATIONAL & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- College Aid Initiative
- Pre-Employment Training
- Summer Transportation Institute Program
- School-to-Work Program
- Careers in Transportation Education Program

We really need the community members to help us with on the education employment opportunities is identifying barriers that would keep people from participating in the program and helping us try to eliminate those barriers. Um, so just for an example, like the college age initiative, depending on which college you're going to, tuition can be \$3,000 to \$10,000 a semester. So, you know, offering \$1,000 scholarship may not be enough to get people in the door, right? It may need to be more than that because you know, if you don't have the money, you don't have the money, you can't even start. So they're trying to think about things like that Summer Transportation Institute, School to Work Program, like, what are the things that make people from even wanting to be part of the program and let's adjust the program so that it removes those barriers that keep people from participating and is more attractive to get people into the program.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVES

- Small Business Development Program
- Community History Preservation Study
- Mitigation Barriers
- Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan (CIEP)
- Community Air Quality Monitoring Program
- Larger Community Office?

One of the things that's part of the commitments is delivering the components of the Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan first. Infrastructure improvements that are part of the project, you'll start seeing, or the improvements in your community that are included as part of the the Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan before highway construction. The Project Oversight Committee will be vital to ensuring the delivery of these elements.

QUESTION: Where is weatherization in the mitigation plan? I can find a point of contact at DoE that you could call. (Anderson, C.)

RESPONSE: Right now the weatherization program is not included in the mitigation plan, but I think that we can still introduce some kind of program through the Community office that informs the public about options, like through the DoE.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Structuring the College Aid Initiative (scholarship)

RESPONSE: We want to make sure the funding is accessible to individuals that are not necessarily candidates for the 4-year or 2-year college experience but may be interested in a trade or skills enhancement course. (Anderson, A.)

RESPONSE: Trades and a GPA might not go together so we need to make sure we don't prevent access to the funding with rigid criteria. Older residents might not have a transcript for the committee to review. (Reeves, G.)

RESPONSE: Do we know what our students are interested in doing after school or what their GPAs are? Can we get more data from the school district? We are making considerations but don't know what our kids are interested in. (Muhammad, E.)

SUMMARY:

I'll just note that from what I've heard so far in my notes, I recognize partnerships are important both with Trident Tech and with the Office of Family and Community Engagement out of the Charleston County School District and the parent advocates that are situated at all of the schools. They have been an excellent resource to connect us directly with the community. So those partnerships are important. I hear that and we I know the focus is to figure out how to distribute fairly, equitably, reasonably and responsibly \$500,000 over this period of time. However you all choose to organize, which is the next thing on the top of the agenda, which we might not get to delve into too much, but we'll certainly come back to it. But there's interest through the communities support to connect with the school district, start screening students, see what their interests are, and then figure out how we can structure the program so that it meets the needs of the Community and not just the interests of the people that are framing this whole.

SUGGESTION: Education Subcommittee to develop a mission and vision statement and then criteria that addresses the educational needs of multiple categories of student.

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY GROUP COMMITTEE

Moving forward and organizing

Time ran out before this topic could be covered in depth.

Upcoming EJ Community Outreach

Potential Location: Life Changers Covenant Ministries

Potential Date: July 9, 2022

Goals:

- Update the potentially impacted communities on what is in the final EJ community mitigation plan, highlighting changes since the public hearing outreach
- Answer previous community questions related to the timing and potential phasing of mitigation items
- Continue to establish the Community Office, and its staff, as the source of information related to the project and build stronger ties to the community

Summary and Next Steps

CAC Meeting #22 – July 2, 2022 canceled due to the July 9th Community Event.