

MINUTES FOR THE NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD WORKING GROUP
Thursday, August 21, 2014
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

Chair Pam Marsh called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way.

Mayor Stromberg, Michael Morris, Michael Dawkins, Rich Kaplan, Bill Molnar, Brandon Goldman, Mike Faught, and Scott Fluery were present.

Marsh gave overview of the previous meeting topics and what is on today's agenda.

Stromberg explained that Dave Chapman had been invited to tell the group about the Transportation Systems Plan but was unable to attend due to family obligations.

1. Discussion items

Goldman introduced the traffic plan as originally proposed. Explained that the streets were established based on the densities in the plan, 300-400 foot blocks, and modifications around the wetland areas. Molnar noted that the "concept" plan in the packet reflects density changes previously discussed by the group and that with any additional density discussions the plan would need to be altered.

Marsh stated that the discussions today would surround three topics:

- Improvements on East Main Street
- Internal circulation, including the possible extension of Normal Avenue to East Main Street
- Railroad crossing

Railroad Crossing and East Main Street Improvements

Group discussed the railroad crossing and the Planning Commission's intention that annexation only be approved when/if the State give approval to change the crossing from private to public and the City has a financing plan in place to make the required improvements. Dawkins did note that this was a conflict with the Transportation Commission recommendation.

Group discussed financing strategies for both the railroad crossing and East Main Street improvements. Fifty percent of the cost for the railroad crossing could be covered by SDC funds, while only fifteen percent could be covered by SDCs for the East Main Street improvements. The rest of the costs could be borne by the developer with the new Advanced Financing option the Council recently approved.

Faught explained some of the discussions he's had with ODOT Rail regarding the change from a private crossing to a public one. He will try to get the requirements for that change in writing.

Faught also discussed Advanced Financing and how it has a time limit (with Council projects it's 10 years plus a 10-year extension). Because of this time limit, the City should time the project so that we have the best chance of seeing those reimbursements. He also reminded the group that the location of the crossing cannot change.

Group discussed challenge of deciding what the City should take on for the public good versus what a developer could/should take on. The group expressed concern that requiring a developer to take

on both the railroad crossing and East Main Street as that would likely eliminate small developers from developing in this area.

Internal Circulation

The current plan, which does not have Normal Avenue connect up to East Main Street was approved by the Planning Commission because it wanted as much traffic calming as possible. A straight Normal Avenue would lack calming influences and would change the current character of nearby neighborhoods.

Group discussed how older neighborhoods in town are frequently the most desirable and they are all built on a grid system. This is probably something to emulate.

Group discussed preferring four connections into the neighborhood from East Main Street, as well as the additional East-West connections shown in the concept plan. Group discussed possible traffic calming measures (traffic circles, no left turn, a wider collector street nearby, etc.) which could be used on Normal Avenue. Faught explained that the traffic engineer was highly concerned that, no matter what traffic calming measures are put in place, if Normal Avenue connects to East Main Street it will become a main collector street taking on lots of extra traffic beyond just those who live in the neighborhood. The group requested time to review the engineer's opinion.

2. Public Input

Debbie Miller: is concerned with how the traffic on Normal is calmed. Also concerned that there are no Clay Street improvements required. Wondered if anyone had talked to the Later Day Saints church to see how they felt about a road running through their ball fields. Was concerned about changes caused by the new streets effecting the safety of school bus travel and turnarounds.

Howdy Miller: Was concerned that the exits onto E. Main Street from the neighborhood are all on a curve and a hill, and therefore difficult and dangerous.

Barry Vitcov: Believes the density discussion needed to take place before this traffic discussion.

Randy Jones: Is in favor of the 20 year plan for financing, as it would help them develop and be reimbursed. Recognizes that there has to be enough logical, developable land to make this work financially.

Nancy Boyer: Like she stated in her e-mail, only talking to the Normal Avenue neighbors is too limiting. Why aren't we calling it the "Urban Growth Boundary" group to interest residents from around town to participate? Also wants all documents submitted available for everyone to read.

Bryce Anderson: With new changes, extra density, etc. we need public transportation in this area. Wondered if East Main Street at its present size would be able to accommodate the changes planned on Clay Street. With the current plan of only having sidewalk and bike lane on one side of East Main Street, entrances will need to have lights for the safety of bike riders going the wrong direction in the bike lane.

Julie Matthews: Wants the street shown as currently cutting through the Latter Day Saints church lot to be removed from the plan as it will never exist, so you can see the real lack of connection. Is concerned with whether stop signs will be located in certain areas of the plan. Wondered why the railroad isn't in use, would like to see light rail in operation.

Dale Swire: Traffic circles and curvilinear streets have been used effectively for traffic calming in other places, wants them considered here.

3. Next Meeting

September 4, 4:30 – 6:00. Topic for discussion will be density

September 18, 4:30 – 6:30. Marsh would like to have a “panel of experts” share their views and interact with the Group to help mold the plan. This is a balance between keeping the discussions only within the Group, and allowing everyone from the public to have longer discussions.

Reminded everyone they always read whatever is submitted in writing. On the panel she would like to have:

- 1 Neighborhood representative from within the Normal Neighborhood
- 1 Neighborhood representative from the nearby neighborhoods
- 1 developer
- 2 “good observers” from the community

The group agreed to this plan and to allow Marsh to work with staff to determine the participants.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Secretary