

Hub of Hartford Steering Committee Meeting
City Council Conference Room
City Hall
January 8, 2008
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Attendees: Joe Barber, Jennifer Cassidy, Larry Deutsch, Toni Gold, Kim Holden, Mike Marshall, Jackie McKinney, Tom Maziarz, Tomas Nenortas, Bob Painter, Mike Zaleski

I. Steering Committee membership

Toni distributed the latest steering committee list and asked if anyone else should be added. The group agreed on the following:

- ◆ Adding Jim Boucher to the copy list
- ◆ Approaching The Hartford to get a representative who is intimately involved with the MassMutual project (the Hartford currently assigned Marnie Goodman, a community relations representative). Bob volunteered to do this
- ◆ Requesting a representative from *The Hartford Courant*. Mike Marshall recommended Tom Anischik. Bob will contact him as well.

II. Vision/goals statement

There was some discussion about whether or not to include air quality in our vision/goals statement. Tom Maziarz suggested that the main thing we want to emphasize is integrating transportation and land use. Air quality is something that will have to be addressed regardless. However, if we do say something about air quality we should really emphasize the neighborhood impacts; otherwise emissions will merely be examined from a regional perspective. There was general agreement on this.

There was a little more discussion and then everyone agreed that we were ready to finalize the Vision/goals.

The project limits were also discussed, and those in attendance seemed to agree that the project area include the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as the Hartford I-84 Viaduct. The transportation portion of the study would necessarily be regional, however.

III. Structure of the planning process

The planning process we want to do is separate from ConnDOT's study because we do not want to narrow it to just transportation. We want this to be a community planning process that includes ConnDOT's participation, but we do not want ConnDOT to own it.

Tom Maziarz suggested that if we want to integrate what we are doing with what ConnDOT is doing, we should probably talk to them so that perhaps a sequential process can be put in place. We could do ours first and then ConnDOT could follow. ConnDOT may be amenable to this. Toni added that we should probably go back to them now and see if indeed we could take such an approach and if they would participate.

Bob stated that the City and ConnDOT were supposed to draft and agree upon an MOU about the role of each in this process, which he will follow up on. Bob wants to make sure the Mayor is really on board, that the MOU is in a good state, and that the specifics on the City's financial commitment are defined before we go much further.

Bob also reported that he checked in with Jim Boice after Ralph Carpenter's resignation, and Boice stated that ConnDOT is still committed to a two-phase approach on the Aetna Viaduct. There was some talk as to whether Carpenter sent or could send a letter to the Governor informing her of this two-phase approach. Boice did not know if such a letter had been sent, but, if not, he agreed that it should be done now.

The steering committee also agreed that although we would like to have someone from ConnDOT at the steering committee table, we wanted to make sure we had our act together first. Therefore, it was further agreed that the conversations right now should remain between Bob and ConnDOT.

Toni reported that she had some conversations with Gary Toth who knows Emil Frankel, and Gary stated that it is important that we brief Frankel, and then ask for a financial commitment, and suggested a couple hundred thousand dollars. Norman Garrick knows Frankel even better and therefore it would probably be a good idea to get Frankel to sit down with Norman and possibly John Norquist when he comes to town (see below).

IV. Collaboration with CTUP

We need to sit with Norman Garrick because he has agreed to be the client for this project, fund aggregator, and put some money into this. He will also be an important part of determining the scope of services. One of the projects Norman is working on now is a State Department of Public Works parking study mandated by the state legislature. This study will include an important piece of the Hub area.

Toni will look into setting up a meeting with Norman, Tom Maziarz, Bob Painter, and herself. Presumably after this meeting, we will have tied up any of our loose ends and be able to move forward.

V. John Norquist visit

Norman is also paying for John Norquist to come to town during the first week of March. Norman has some very expansive ideas on how to use the Norquist visit to its fullest advantage. It would be great to get him in front of the Mayor, Emil Frankel, and the Governor. The Committee agreed that the two-day visit should be limited to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week. Jennifer will check the Mayor's schedule to be sure there is a time he can meet with Norquist.

Mike Zaleski raised the issue that there is a significant public relations/education effort that we also need to pursue in order to position this effort more firmly in the public consciousness. Therefore, at some point we should try to connect with *The Hartford Courant*, Rising Star breakfasts, Key Issues Forum, etc. The Norquist visit may be a great way to do this, and Mike

has already forwarded the information he has about Norquist to Oz Griebel at the MetroHartford Alliance.

VI. Orlando Conference/Alternative Idea

Toni attempted to get some funds for our steering committee to attend an STPP workshop in Orlando at the end of January on integrated transportation and land-use planning, but it did not work out. However, Mike Marshall suggested that perhaps we could get several of the same and/or similar quality speakers up here to meet with us and others, and it would probably be far less expensive for us and would reach more people. Mike said he would be willing to sponsor one event, and perhaps some other corporations could step up and sponsor another one. Kim added that as part of this we could have someone come who could talk about lessons learned from the Big Dig. Everyone liked the idea, and Toni will try to identify a speaker.

VII. Miscellaneous

- ◆ Housekeeping: As of right now Toni will continue doing the agendas and Joe will continue doing the minutes.
- ◆ ConnDOT listening session: This will be held on January 17th and it is about its long-range plan. It was agreed that we probably do not need to be there but we should submit something in writing to get the Hub project on its radar. ***Correction since the meeting:*** the listening session on the 17th is not for ConnDOT's long-range plan, but for DECD's statewide economic development strategy. Toni will put together a letter suggesting that the economic plan use transportation and transit-oriented development as the organizing principle of the strategy.
- ◆ Report on yesterday's tour of the MassMutual property: The Hartford is interested in the property for parking only. The price is \$15 million and they will probably get it for less. The old 1926 building they would consider preserving if they could keep the parking—The Hartford claims it is short 600 parking spaces. The neighbors do not want not to have a big parking lot. Stay tuned for more.
- ◆ News coverage: Do we keep a low profile now or do we begin trying to set up a meetings with editorial boards? No conclusion reached.
- ◆ Other: Larry asked if there is a role for the Lieutenant Governor or other key state officials—something to explore further. Toni mentioned that Congressman Larson has mentioned that he would love to get rid of I-91 on the riverfront. We love this idea, but we would rather have him direct his attention to I-84. Bob said he will contact Larson's chief of staff, John Rossi, to inform him about the Hub project. Tom Nenortas will be meeting with Rossi tomorrow and will mention the project to him.
- ◆ Next meeting: Tuesday, January 29, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. Location per Jennifer will be in City Hall, in Conference Room 2 on the 3rd floor at the front of the building.