

Hub of Hartford Steering Committee
January 29, 2008
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
City Hall, Large Conference Room Number 2

Attendees: Joe Barber, Kevin Burnham, Jennifer Cassidy, Toni Gold, Tom Kurtz, Mike Marshall, Tom Maziarz, Tomas Nenortas, Bob Painter, Adam Prescott, Mike Zaleski

I. Steering Committee

- ◆ Toni passed around updated list of Steering Committee.
- ◆ Mike Marshall reported that Courant's contact, Tom Anischik, might not work out. He delegated someone to do this and that person is now leaving the company. More work to do here.
- ◆ We all agreed to put Jon Coleman from the Rideshare Company and chair of the CRCOG Policy Committee on our steering committee copy list.
- ◆ No further comments on the notes from the January 8th steering committee meeting.

II. John Norquist visit

Bob Painter, Toni Gold, and Tom Maziarz met with Norman Garrick on Thursday, January 24, 2008, about the John Norquist visit.

The John Norquist visit is scheduled for March 4th and 5th Norman is helping us figure out how best to use Norquist. Toni will brief Norquist on our situation, including providing an electronic copy of our map. He will talk about Milwaukee and other cities that have done dealt with similar issues.

We started to flesh out a schedule, but it needs more work.

March 4th

- ◆ "Rising Star" type breakfast (if we are able to get Norquist in on the 3rd). Oz Griebel at the MetroHartford Alliance does not want to call it a Rising Star breakfast because the Alliance is hosting one the next week. However, he has agreed to give us access to the Alliance's promotional network
- ◆ Legislative lunch
- ◆ Meeting with Mayor at 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ Presentation to Hub of Hartford stakeholder group

March 5th

- ◆ We didn't get to this, but perhaps meeting with ConnDOT

Tasks

- ◆ Accommodations: Mike Zaleski is taking care of this through the Business Improvement District.
- ◆ Costs
 - We need to find money to pay for a continental breakfast for about 100-200 people

- We need to find a way to pay for the legislative luncheon. Perhaps we can get the City to pick up the tab, which would be a nice gesture of goodwill.
- ◆ Location—“Rising Star” breakfast
 - Aetna: Aetna would probably be very difficult as a location, especially on midweek day, because of parking and security logistics. However, Mike Marshall will talk to Mike Zaleski about how the Rising Start breakfasts work in order to get a better sense of if Aetna is a realistic option. Mike Marshall will also look into whether or not the permits on the Aetna garage would be ready, which would help address some of our parking concerns.
 - Connecticut Culinary Institute—Mike Marshall will look into this option.
 - Marriott: The MetroHartford Alliance usually hosts its Rising Star breakfasts here, so if it were willing to pay for it that would be great!
 - St Francis Hospital: There is an auditorium there. No more discussion ensued about this option.
- ◆ Location—Evening stakeholder meeting
 - Asylum Hill Congregational Church: The Church would be good because of its good-sized meeting space, parking, and proximity to the Hub of Hartford project area. Jennifer will look into this option.

It was decided that a subcommittee should be assembled to work on and the Norquist visit; the following have volunteered: Jennifer, Toni, Mike Marshall, Bob, Mike Zaleski

Update: It appears that March 4th and 5th will not work, so another set of dates is being determined. More to come later. April 15-16 is looking good right now.

III. RFP/Consultant Study

◆ **“Vision” statement revision**

Norman suggested that our very detailed vision and goal statement was too much; we need a more general statement of values. We should write something more succinct about what we are trying to do, i.e., we are trying to repair the City. Toni has drafted a first pass at this, as well as specific questions to be addressed, and will email it around, and everyone has committed to look at the document and responding to the questions.

We want to start with the assumption that this part of the highway can be greatly deemphasized—“disappear the highway,” if you will. There is a huge amount of state-owned property here that is involved, and we need to define the boundaries of the land use study, so that the State knows what we want it to look at. If we are talking about land use, we need to define boundaries.

There was no unanimity on the point of defining boundaries but Bob did state that Al Martin is thinking the same way we are, and that this project needs to be done in the context of all the other things going on.

Bob also reported that he is in the process of contacting Professor Daniel Davis of the University of Hartford, who had a piece about I-84 in the “Place” section of the January 27,

2007, issue of *The Hartford Courant*. This may be a little off-center for us, but it might be useful to have him and his students give us a presentation. .

Tom Kurtz raised the issue of what is the substance of this initiative. If we can give a notion of what is important and put those out at the beginning and communicate them effectively, they can become the de facto planning criteria (and by extension, evaluation criteria) for our process and ConnDOT. Once we know what we want the deliverables to be, we can reverse-engineer the process towards that end. This seemed to make sense to people, and Toni agreed to integrate some of this thinking into her revised vision statement.

◆ **Budget and funding**

Bob Painter talked to Rick Porth about having the Hartford Foundation fund this study, and Rick responded that this is not really something they do. However, Rick did not seem to be closed to the idea and he recognized that although Hub of Hartford was not quite what the Foundation funded, it also was not totally out of the question either. Furthermore, he recognizes that this location is an important component of the issues many community organizations deal with. Therefore, Rick would think about it, and once we firm things up, we could go back. The chances are slim, but it is worth a shot.

Toni suggested that perhaps the Foundation would pay for some kind of publication of the study that shows the range of future possibilities for the Hub area. This piece would be used for public education purposes, which is something the Foundation might fund.

Bob followed by reporting that he had a very encouraging meeting with Al Martin at ConnDOT. Martin reasserted his commitment to a two-phase process. Bob then brought up the idea of conducting a comprehensive, broad-based study, the result of which could then be used to frame the issues for ConnDOT's eventual study. Martin was enthusiastic, and offered that if indeed this was a comprehensive broad-based study, that he might be able to find some ConnDOT money to contribute.

◆ **Relationship to "Phase I"**

ConnDOT is going to deal with hardcore engineering stuff. But we are looking at general concepts of what is available from a transportation and land use perspective, i.e., if you could remove this physical divide, what are the opportunities, and what are the general options from a transportation perspective.

We need to be careful about this not turning into a master plan for the City because a master plan would be more specific than what we want, dealing with individual parcels and recommended solutions. We probably want to hire a prime consultant who would bring on a transportation consultant (among others) as party of their study. We need to come out with something that produces perhaps three to five general concepts that ConnDOT should address more in depth for its study. This is probably a framework with which ConnDOT is more comfortable.

The challenge is how to keep it general enough without being too general.

◆ **Department of Public Works role**

Kevin Burnham reported that currently Hartford DPW does not have the staff time to put into this, although it is willing and happy to be at the table.

The City is also undertaking a study of the City street system. This week DPW is looking to speak to one of its “on-calls” this week and then talk to Roger O’Brien about the plan. The City will probably focus on some critical areas first and build out from there eventually to be a comprehensive plan. The city has applied for STP money to scope out what those critical areas will be. The City also has submitted applications for STP funds in the Farmington/Asylum area and the Albany/Main area. These applications are independent from Hartford 2010 but have taken input from that process.

IV. Next steps

- ◆ Next meeting: February 20, 2008 at 8:00 a.m. (I curse you early risers) in the 4th floor conference room at 525 Main Street.
- ◆ Toni will send out a revised vision statement along with questions to address while reviewing the statement. Everyone should review the vision statement and questions and send their comments to Toni before the next meeting. If possible, we would like to reach consensus on the vision statement at the next meeting.
- ◆ Continued planning for the John Norquist visit with a status report presented at the next meeting.
- ◆ Joe will get the notes out in a somewhat timely fashion.