

ROUTE 18
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

**COMMUNITY
PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**COMMUNITY PARTNERING TEAM
MEETING NO. 11 REPORT**

June 16, 2000

DATE: May 3, 2000
TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Conference Room, Middlesex County Planning Dept.,
Elks Building, City of New Brunswick, NJ

ATTENDEES:

Members
Linda Hunter
Roberta Karpinecz
Tom Kelso
Thomas Loughlin
Paul Morrissett
Glenn Patterson
Awilda Perez
Todd Smircina
Bob Spear
George Ververides
Frank Wong
Alternates
Monteza Ansari
Helen Erdey
Ed Kozack
Joe Lenahan
Invited Guests
Jim Baisley
Ken Koschek
Linda LaSut
Carl Nittinger
Steering Committee
Bill Birch
Bill Cochran
Paul Nowicki

REPRESENTING:

University Mews Homeowners Assoc.
Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc.
Dewey Heights Area Neighborhood
City of New Brunswick, Administration
Newell Avenue Area Neighborhood
City of New Brunswick, Planning
New Brunswick Apartments
Carpender Road Area Neighborhood
Rutgers, The State Univ. of NJ
Middlesex County Planning Dept.
Rutgers, The State Univ. of NJ

Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc.
Carpender Road Area Neighborhood
Rutgers, The State Univ. of NJ
Middlesex County Engineering

New Brunswick Development Corporation
NJDEP, Office of Program Coordination
NJTPA
NJDEP, State Historic Preservation Office

NJDOT, Division of Project Management
NJDOT, Community Relations
Gannett Fleming



Mike Morgan	Gannett Fleming
Martine Culbertson	M. A. Culbertson
Visitors	
Douglas Fadool	NJDOT, Value Engineering
Jay Pandya	NJDOT, Environmental Services
Mike Sheehan	Gannett Fleming
Al Tavares	NJDOT, Bureau of Mobility Strategies

1. PURPOSE OF MEETING

To present the results of the Public Information Center; to discuss the remaining issues of the Preferred Alternative; and to review the project schedule and next steps. (Agenda attached)

2. MEETING SUMMARY

Martine Culbertson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked participants to introduce themselves and if they attended the Public Information Center to share any comments about the meeting. In summary, the comments were complimentary and many noted that the information center went very well. Martine then reviewed the agenda and distributed a handout on the comments received from the General Public for the meeting.

Paul Nowicki then reviewed the comments as listed on the handout. He then presented the outstanding issues and responded to questions. (The notes scribed on newsprint are listed as a report attachment.) Regarding the bikeway, the City favors improvements to reactivate the bike routes to connect the Rutgers campuses. The tunnel at Albany Street was acknowledged as an area which would require improvement. The County commented that there is funding to upgrade the path. Gannett will examine tunnel improvements and connection to the north side of the Albany Street bridge.

The comments for Newell Avenue and Phelps Avenue were presented. There was a mix of both support and opposition for closure. The design option currently shows the alternative with the avenues open since the design does show an improvement to the current situation, however it could be closed in the future if the City and the residents of the area are in support. Presently, additional discussions are needed and the Tov Manor apartments must be contacted to determine their concerns.

A handout on the George Street interchange was then distributed with a map. Paul discussed the advantages and disadvantages to the Tee Interchange Alternative. Profiles were presented to show the operational function. In order to straighten the roadway, impacts to Boyd Park would need to be mitigated. This will require acquisition of the City Docks parcels for the mitigation. There would be more parking spaces, an improved waterfront viewing and recreation area, a potential boat area, better truck access to the park, and an extended multi use path. A number of questions were then raised as follows:

Q - What is the timing of the traffic signal lights?

A – The timing would be consistent with and similar to the proposed Commercial Avenue signal.

Q - What is the elevation of the Boathouse Drive?

A – Fifteen feet at the maximum height above today's condition.

Q – What happens to area of parking now?

A – Much of the area would be filled in to raise Boathouse Drive. The area would be landscaped with green space, high visibility signing, and the slope would extend into much of the existing parking lot.

Q – Was this discussed with DEVCO about the City Docks property?

A – Gannett Fleming has not discussed this with DEVCO, but has had conversations with Rutgers and they noted that DEVCO had requested an appraisal to determine the property value.

Q – Would the Preferred Alternative require mitigation to Boyd Park?

A – Yes, there would still be mitigation to Boyd Park, however there would be less impacts and Boathouse Drive would not be raised.

Q – What would the green space be like between Route 18 and the Boathouse Drive?

A – There would be wing walls and a grassed/landscaped open space area descending down to the drive.

Q – What is the City Dock's acreage?

A – That is the available acreage to mitigate the area.

Q – If the “roller coaster” was controlling the design of the CD roadway for speed and site distance, what is the difference in design speed?

A – 35 miles per hour verses 40 miles per hour for posted speed.

Q – Would the new design be safer for the Boathouse Drive?

A – The existing driveway is at a 12% grade which is not standard. By raising the driveway the grade would improve to 8% which is a better design.

Q – What is the distance of the new parking lot to the existing?

A – It would be an estimated 400 feet.

The City commented that this new modification to the George Street Tee Interchange needs to be examined further. It is the first time it has been introduced. The additional expense of a \$4 million increase for the interchange and the potential Boyd Park impacts warrants re-examining the 4-way movement to this interchange in order to maximize benefits given potential impacts.

Q – Is the 4-way interchange still viable?

A – The 4-way must be looked at equally. It was discounted due to the potential environmental impacts to adding the southbound exit ramp. Gannett Fleming will re-examine the 4-way movement for this interchange.

Members commented on looking at the long term to what is best for traffic flow between George Street and Commercial Avenue as well as the overall corridor. They asked for a cost analysis and breakdown of impacts for the 3- way verses the 4-way interchange options.

Paul then presented the Paulus Boulevard and Dewey Drive Area issues. The school bus stop area needed will be added to the design. The transit bus location and the pedestrian overpass are positioned in the best place considering access/walk distance, overall ridership and visibility of signals. Some design enhancements may include oblique screening, landscaping, and shifting of the overpass pedestrian ramp to relieve impacts to Carpenter Road residents.

Comments regarding the “noise wall statements” made prior to the Public Information Center were discussed so future misunderstandings can be avoided. The NJDOT and the City are committed to providing barriers as part of this project. The closure of Dewey Drive and the modifications associated were described using a map, which was distributed. It was agreed that the residents of that area needed to examine it further and they would communicate any issues with Gannett Fleming prior to the next CPT meeting.

In summary, Paul Nowicki explained the project schedule in which the process now requires some environmental studies to be completed and that the design elements and potential impacts must be compiled in an environmental document for comment by government agencies and the general public. Prior to circulation of this document, the CPT will have an opportunity to review it and this will be an agenda item for the next CPT meeting.

To close, Martine asked members for comments or feedback. The comments included a request for stockade fencing when the houses along Route 18 near Newell and Phelps are demolished, good progress, productive, working well, look at weave distance and signage for treatment of traffic where Route 1 enters Route 18, keep in mind pedestrian linkage to Route 18 from beyond Raritan Gardens. The meeting was adjourned at noon after thanking everyone for their attendance at the Public Information Center and for their continued efforts on the CPT to date.

3. ACTION ITEMS

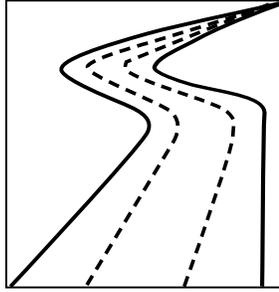
- The City of New Brunswick will discuss the Boyd Park options for the George Street Interchange and continue discussions on the Newell Avenue and Phelps Avenue options.
- Members and Guests review the outstanding design elements with your constituents.
- NJDOT and Gannett Fleming will meet with the CPT members and affected parties regarding the George Street interchange options, the Dewey Drive option and Tov Manor concerning the Newell-Phelps closure option.
- Martine Culbertson will contact Tov Manor to explain the CPT and solicit their input, will provide CPT meeting report, and confirm next meeting date.

4. NEXT MEETING

Date: To be determined (June 28, 2000 cancelled)
Time: 9:00 a.m. - Noon
Location: Middlesex County Planning Conference Room
Elks Building, City of New Brunswick

Report prepared by:

Martine Culbertson, CPT Facilitator



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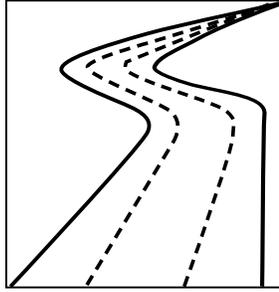
CPT MEETING No. 11
AGENDA – FINAL DRAFT

May 3, 2000

Objective: To present the results of the Public Information Center; to discuss the remaining issues of the Preferred Alternative; and to review the project schedule and next steps.

- I. Welcome and Overview
 - Agenda and Goals
 - CPT Items
- II. Public Information Center
 - Meeting Summary
 - Written Comments
- III. Preferred Alternative – Outstanding Issues
 - Bikeway Improvements and Pedestrian Access at Route 27
 - Newell Ave/Phelps Ave Proposal
 - George Street Interchange
 - Paulus Boulevard Jughandle & Dewey Drive Area
- IV. Summary and Close
 - Project Schedule
 - Action Items and Feedback





ROUTE 18
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**CPT MEETING NO. 11
REPORT ATTACHMENT NO. 1
COMMENTS FROM CPT DISCUSSIONS**

MAY 3, 2000

BIKEWAY CONNECTIVITY --

City and County in favor to upgrade/reactivate path
GF will look at design – tunnel at Albany Street
and maintain connection with PA
Connection northside
Improve tunnel at Albany Street

NEWELL/PHELPS

Can close, however not prepared to close
(ongoing dialogue)
Concerns: Police concern with fire/safety - ok -
Must turn private to public roadway
Set meeting with Tov Manor –
(revisit 4-way – may offer other options)

GEORGE STREET INTERCHANGE

To improve profile and operations requires Boathouse Drive relocation
Improves circulation
More Boyd Park impacts to mitigate - however benefits -more parking, enhance park activities,
better truck access, multiple use access to park
Devco meeting to discuss property and use
City needs to look at this mitigation of the Park
For consideration of impacts (revisit 4-way) cost/analysis



PAULUS BLVD./DEWEY DRIVE

School bus pull out -- added to the Preferred Alternative

Transit buses location - balance of:

- overall ridership

- visibility of signals (height and location)

- aesthetics and design to overcome impacts

Dewey Drive - Preferred Alternative close to jughandle

- safety and operational – need to close

- slip jughandle - better access / house impact

- Neighbors need to look at (new option)