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STAMFORD NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD CLOSING CHARRETTE

DATE: JUNE 5, 2008 **TIME:** 7:00 PM

LOCATION: STAMFORD GOVERNMENT CENTER, 888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

Mani Poola, City Traffic Engineer, welcomed the attendees and introduced the project. Joe Rimiller, Assistant Project Manager, discussed the charrette process. This is the closing charrette and it is the second of two charrettes. The first charrette was aimed at gathering input from the community. Following the opening charrette the project team analyzed all of the identified issues and prepared a neighborhood traffic calming plan addressing them. During this evening's charrette that plan will be presented the community will have the opportunity to critique and make additions to it before it is finalized. Residents are also encouraged to submit additional comments to the project team via phone, e-mail, or the project website (www.stamfordtrafficcalming.com). Updates including meeting minutes, the neighborhood traffic calming plans, and other information will be posted on the website.

National traffic calming expert Dan Burden gave a presentation which detailed the benefits of traffic calming and described a wide variety of specific treatments. Highlights include the following:

- Pedestrian survival following a collision is directly related to vehicular speed.
- A driver's peripheral vision decreases as speed increases.
- According to a study by Appleyard, interaction between neighbors decreases as traffic speeds and volumes increase.
- Appleyard also studied the size of the area which people consider part of their homes. On streets with low volumes and speeds residents considered both sides of the street to be part of their home, while on streets with fast speeds on high volumes residents didn't even consider the front of their houses to be part of their homes.
- Traffic calming is a way of improving quality of life, safety, and sense of community.
- Most communities initially take a reactive approach to traffic calming which involves unwarranted stop signs and speed humps. Unwarranted stop signs lead to speed spiking while the overuse of speed humps delays emergency response vehicles. The approach which Stamford is currently taking will result in a citywide traffic calming master plan. This approach is much more proactive and effective.



- The devices in the traffic calming toolbox can be grouped into three categories – visual treatments, horizontal treatments, and vertical treatments.

Visual Treatments

- Visual treatments are the first option that should be considered when addressing a traffic issue. They usually have the greatest impact, are the most aesthetically pleasing, and are the least expensive treatments.
- Road diets can be implemented by simply changing the lane markings on a street. Road diets involve either using narrower or fewer lanes. They result in slower speeds and fewer crashes because they force drivers to pay closer attention to the road.
- Trees in medians or on the sides of the roads discourage speeding.
- On street parking reduces the width of the travel lanes and thus prevent speeding.
- Parking chicanes involve alternating parking from one side of the street to another. They prevent drivers from having a straight path on which to accelerate.
- Pocket parking protects parked vehicles and limit roadway width.
- On very wide streets angle parking can be implemented. Angle parking increases the number of spaces available, is aesthetically pleasing, and reduces roadway width.

Horizontal Treatments

- Crosswalks alert the driver that they are entering an area reserved for pedestrians.
- Medians narrow roads and prevent drivers from sling-shotting around curves.
- Refuge islands cut the distance which pedestrians must cross at one time in half.
- Curb extensions shorten the distance the pedestrians must cross, make pedestrians more visible to drivers, and prevent vehicles from parking at corners and obstructing sightlines.
- Mini-roundabouts improve safety by limiting the number of conflicting movements at an intersection. They also offer opportunities for landscaping.
- Curb radii reductions are used at intersections that are excessively wide. They prevent vehicles from speeding around corners.
- Chokers narrow two lane roadways down to one lane at a midblock location.

Vertical Treatments

- Vertical treatments should be used when visual and horizontal treatments are not an option.
- Speed humps provide vertical deflection.
- Speed tables are similar to speed humps but they have a flat top. Unlike speed humps they are effective in slowing larger vehicles such as SUV's.
- Raised intersections raise the intersection up to the height of the sidewalk. They are expensive because they require more material but they are effective, particularly in school areas.

Activity #1



Following a brief overview of the neighborhood traffic calming plan, participants were asked to identify concerns and provide comments:

RESULTS

- Summer Street and Bedford Street are traffic ridden. Consider implementing angle parking or converting them to two way street in order to improve commerce.
- North Street should be placed on a road diet.
- Crosswalks are needed at the intersection of West Park Place, Summer Street, Bank Street, and Clark Street. Trucks making left turns present a dangerous intersection.
- Prospect Street at Dunkin Donuts – the intersection is dicey during all hours. Speeding is a problem, especially on Hoyt Street. Consider adding medians. Many pedestrians cross at the intersection.
- The Atlantic Street median isn't working. Consider eliminating it and replacing it with additional parking or a different treatment.
- Make sure coordination with other projects and developments takes place.
- Find locations where bike lanes can be installed. Summer Street, Bedford Street, Atlantic Street, and Broad Street should be candidates.
- Take the Transportation Center into account and make the area around it more pedestrian friendly.
- The City should include the Downtown Special Services District in the Transportation Center project.
- Remove a lane from Greyrock Place and replace it with parking.
- Hillendale Avenue has a lot of children walking on the street.
- Provide additional treatments in the core of the downtown rather than the periphery
- Certain intersections on Tresser Boulevard (including Atlantic Street, Greyrock Place, and Washington Boulevard) are nightmares due to the heavy traffic volumes.
- At the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Broad Street the crosswalks are tiny and the southbound left turn lane on Washington Boulevard is dangerous.
- Incorporate pedestrian only phases into downtown signals, possibly only during off peak hours. On Washington Boulevard and Tresser Boulevard left turns during concurrent pedestrian phases present a safety hazard.
- Improvements are needed at the intersection of Broad Street and Atlantic Street.
- The Washington Boulevard medians should be widened by eliminating unnecessary right turn lanes. This would provide pedestrians with more refuge.
- Improve the intersection of Atlantic Street, Main Street, and the mall ramp
- Wenzel Terrace needs more than a parking chicane. The road gets congested and police need to have it clear so they can use it.

Activity #2

Participants were asked to identify the locations that should be top priorities for receiving treatment.



RESULTS

Summer Street corridor
Atlantic Street corridor
Washington Street corridor
The Downtown core
West Park Place at Summer Street
Prospect Street at Grove Street, Strawberry Hill Avenue, and Hillandale Avenue
Additional bicycle lanes throughout the downtown

Activity #3

Attendees were given an opportunity to sign up to be part of a steering committee which will oversee the plan through the implementation phase. Those who were unable to commit time to being full members of the committee were able to sign up to be assistants to the committee.

Activity #4

Participants were given an opportunity to review the preliminary neighborhood traffic calming plan in detail and write down their comments. Results are as follows:

RESULTS

- Speak with Ed Gentile regarding reconstruction plans for Main Street between Washington Boulevard and Summer Street and for the building on the southwest corner of the Broad Street and Atlantic Street intersection.
- Speak to the Director of Operations, Ben Barnes, regarding plans for Bank Street
- On Wenzel Terrace too many condominium residents park on the street, which makes it difficult for residents to pull out of their driveways. Parking should only be permitted on one side of the south side of the street.
- Consider installing curb extensions on the southeast corner of the Hillandale Avenue and Wenzel Terrace intersection rather than a roundabout.
- On Hillandale Avenue, cars don't park near Underhill Street.
- On Hope Street, parking is currently not permitted between Wenzel Terraces and Howes Avenue, where inset parking is proposed

It is believed that the above represents an accurate description of the major events that transpired at this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

URBAN ENGINEERS, INC.



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Project Manager

cc: File