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Meeting Notes

Working Group Meeting #1

December 18, 2017, 5:00 pm
Lewes Senior Center
32083 Janice Rd, Lewes, DE 19958

Members present:

Linda Best
I.G. Burton
George Cole
Robert Fischer
Scott Green
Christian Hudson
DJ Hughes
Todd Lawson
Sen. Ernesto B. Lopez
Lloyd Schmitz
Rep. Peter Schwartzkopf
Josh Thomas
Ann Marie Townshend

Members absent:

Dennis Forney
Gail Van Gilder
R. Keller Hopkins
Rep. Steve Smyk
Pat Woods

109 members of the public attended. Names of those who signed in are listed at the end of these notes.

Andrew Bing of Kramer & Associates, Inc. introduced himself as meeting facilitator. His role is to keep the agenda on schedule, conduct an orderly, professional and constructive meeting, and provide the opportunity for questions, comments and discussion by the Working Group. The working group meeting is open to the public, but is designed for working group members. Therefore, only the working group members will have the opportunity to participate during the meeting. However, the public will have an opportunity to comment at the end during a public comment period.

Andrew introduced Jennifer Cohan, Secretary of DeIDOT and Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator for introductory remarks.



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Secretary Cohan welcomed everyone. She commented that traffic is something we all deal with. The working group assembles a lot of people with great insights into local transportation conditions to develop solutions. Recommendations for Five Points that were made in 2007 were opposed by the public. Now, a working group has been assembled before proposing solutions and there will be open, honest dialog with the public. All of the working group members are committed. DelDOT and Sussex County have a great working relationship. The Secretary is thankful that both the working group and the public are participating.

Todd Lawson said that Five Points is a significant issue in the County, and the County has significant presence on the working group on purpose. The status quo cannot remain, it must be improved. The County is also engaged in the comprehensive plan update which includes planning for mobility. He looks forward to working with the state.

Andrew reviewed the meeting agenda. He noted that:

- This meeting is a kickoff. Substantive issues will be covered in subsequent meetings.
- Working group meetings are governed by the state's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- At least ten working group members need to be present to hold a meeting. Thirteen members were present.
- For public comments at the end, he asked the public to focus their comments on the same question that was posed to the working group members: "What transportation goals would you like to see the working group accomplish?"

The working group members introduced themselves and stated what transportation goals they would like to see the working group accomplish.

- Josh Thomas, DelDOT: Eager to hear from the working group and the public. Would like this project to set the standard for how Sussex County plans for long term solutions.
- Bob Fischer, Resident: the focus on Five Points needs to consider how improvements can foster economic development, both in and outside the study area, now and in the future.
- Scott Green, Resident: Approach this in a new way, using new technology. Accomplish growth in a sensible way.



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- Lloyd Schmitz, Resident and visually impaired pedestrian: Make travel safe for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as cars.
- Christian Hudson, Business owner: take a fresh, bottom-up approach to solve problems.
- DJ Hughes, Technical advisor, traffic engineer with DBF Engineering: Find ways to divert traffic away from Five Points. Need to complete other Capital Transportation Program projects before removing the signal at Route 1 and Route 16. Consider the effects on intersections further south on Route 1 if Five Points is grade separated, don't shift problem to the next intersection. Focus on data.
- Ann Marie Townshend, Manager, City of Lewes: Five Points is the gateway to Lewes. Address quality of life by relieving traffic but keep the character of the gateway and Lewes City intact.
- Linda Best, Business owner: Just listening to everyone at this first meeting.
- Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator: Wants a bold plan that looks at areas well beyond Five Points. Wants to see designs with timelines for implementation.
- George Cole, Sussex County Council: Can't solve everything, but ease the problems as much as possible. Let's get beyond studies. Make commitments so things can be implemented.
- I.G. Burton, Sussex County Council: Five Points is in his district: Put all of our minds together collectively to develop solutions, not just for Five Points but also for the surrounding area.
- Sen. Ernesto Lopez, 6th District: Create a safe and passable intersection that works for the long term.
- Rep. Peter Schwartzkopf, 14th District: Build on the success of past short-term improvements, widening, sidewalks, etc. Consider solutions regardless of cost at this stage, but also look at small changes.

Andrew commented that there is a time and place to consider budget, but not now. This study is to generate ideas and figure out whether and how they can be implemented.



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Andrew reiterated his early comments on the meeting agenda for those who arrived late. He noted that all meeting materials will be posted to the project website, including a detailed meeting summary. He introduced the DeIDOT and consultant staff team. DeIDOT's commitment to this study is demonstrated by the many staff present tonight.

Josh Thomas presented the study area, scope, and schedule. The study area boundary is a guide to keep the group focused, but things outside the boundary can be considered.

Big-picture ideas from the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan will be brought to the local level.

This Five Points study can be considered Phase 1. Phase 1 has two primary objectives: 1) to identify problems and needs and 2) to come up with concepts to address those needs. Future phases will depend on what comes out of Phase 1. The Transportation Improvement District (TID) study that is underway now is a separate effort, but Five Points and the TID will feed information to each other. The schedule is the staff team's thoughts for how things will proceed. The first three months will concentrate on identifying problem areas and needs, and the following three months on coming up with ways to address these problem areas and needs.

Christian Hudson asked why three months are needed before the public workshop on needs. Andrew and Josh explained that it is important to get input from both the working group and from the public. Needs must be quantifiable. There must be a common understanding of what a "fix" means, and how we will measure success. Andrew added that the working group is one part of the larger public process. It is important to seek input from the public at certain times so the working group process does not get too far out in front of the overall public process.

The working group agreed to the schedule, with meetings on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:00 pm.

Andrew explained the expectations of working group members.

- The work is important, and it would be great to see all members attend every meeting.
- Talk with your community or constituency and bring their ideas as well as your own.
- Be patient. Developing long-term solutions takes time.



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Andrew gave a “homework assignment” to the working group. This will be a key part of the initial working group meetings.

The meeting was then opened to public comment.

- Steve Cahill, retiree from Boston: Walks and bikes. It’s difficult to cross Route 1. Pedestrians don’t want to go a mile to cross at a signal. Suggested pedestrian bridges like they have in Las Vegas.
- Randy Zawislak, Lewes Crossing resident: The area at the north end of Plantation Road is booming with development and properties for sale. What open lands need to be preserved in order to keep options open for fixes?
- Joe Hopkins, Lewes Crossing resident: Driver, pedestrian and bicyclist. Now that the railroad is abandoned, provide a trail and road connection in the underpass of Route 1.
- Diana O’Hagan, Henlopen landing resident: Salt Marsh Boulevard is used as a shortcut. Don’t add traffic to Salt Marsh Boulevard, Church Street, Shady Road.
- Donna West: Think outside the box. Look at how other places have solved similar issues with seasonal crowds. Provide connections for locals, not just through traffic. Think about pedestrians and bikes.
- Michael Tyler, Delaware Bicycle Council: Consider cross access easements to allow people to get around. Property rights advocates oppose, but we need to look at this.
- Jerry Elliott, Henlopen Landing resident: an overpass has been considered since 1979 and not done. Don’t just focus there, but throughout the area. Get traffic off Route 1.
- William O’Neill: Build on information from past studies, don’t reinvent the wheel.
- David Ennis, transplant from New Castle County, former State representative, Lewes Historic Byways committee member: Consider input from the School District and from DRBA. Add Lewes Historic Byways representative to the working group. (Andrew informed everyone that Gail Van Gilder has already been appointed to the working group as a Lewes Historic Byways representative.)

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At the end of the meeting, David M. Young, a Lewes area resident, gave DeIDOT a written document with his ideas on the sources of problems and suggestions for improvements.

The next meeting is January 22, 2018 at 6:00 pm. The location is still to be determined and will be posted to the project website. Working group members will be contacted. ***[After the meeting, it was confirmed that the next working group meeting will be held at the University of Delaware Virden Retreat Center at 700 Pilottown Road in Lewes.]***

Public sign-in list

Babnis, Mariann	Eteiman, Rich, Henlopen Landing
Baker, Daniel	Everitt, Sue
Bartholomew, Kim	Everitt, Tom
Bartholomew, Ken	Fischer, Margaret
Bateman, John W.	Fishman, Mike
Becker, Ted	Freeman, Brooke
Beil, Merlin	Friedland, Ian
Best, Alfred Jr.	Fuhs, Barbara
Best, Barbara	Futcher
Best, Randall S., Best Ace Hardware	Gilbert, John, Villages of Five Points
Billmure, Robert	Goebel, Taylor, Delmarva Now
Bouresso, Rich	Gabiak, Claire
Box, Bob	Gabiak, Ray
Brittingham, Walter	Hoechner, Joe
Cahill, Steve	Holtkamp, Rich
Catana, Lorraine	Hutson, Larry
Chura, Mark	Jackson, B.
Class, Steve	Johnson, Jim
Conlon, Camilla	Kalil, Chris, Stafford Street Capital
Cottingham, Phoebe	Kehoe, Joe
Daneri, Charles	Kenton, Dave, PGA-Realtor
Davis, Chip	Kruglak, Ross
Di Antonio, Patty	LaBella, Jim
Di Antonio, Paul	LaBella, Karla
Donofrio, Joan	Landon, Bill
Donofrio, Tony	Leahy, Hugh
Duffie, Braven O.	Leahy, Kathleen
Eckenrode, John, Sussex Cyclists	Leclerc, Maureen
Elliott, Jerry, Henlopen Landing	Leclerc, Paul
Ellis, George, Henlopen Landing	Lodge, John
Ellis, Kathy	Lodge, Mrs. John
Ennis, David, Lewes Byways	Mangler, David



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Marra, Ernie
Moore, Jan
Moore, Kenneth
Morgan, Rob, City of Lewes
Mumford, Mabel
Mumford, Steven
Negran, Thomas
O'Hagan, Diana
O'Neill, Brian
O'Neill, William
Pires, Alex
Quillen, Ray
Quinn, Ann
Quinn, Joan
Rolfe, Judy
Ross, Keith, Lewes Crossing HOA
Ross, Mrs. Keith
Roth, Nick, Cape Gazette
Schmitz, Kat
Servais, Ken, Henlopen Landing
Sheran, Carl
Smith, Carol
Smith, Don
Smith, Robert
Snow, John
Spelman, Douglas, New Road
Preservation
Steinbock, Robert
Strobel, Fred, Henlopen Landing
Tantillo, Tom
Tennant, William E. Jr.
Thompson, Blake, The Edge Group
Timmons, Caroly, Best Ace Hardware
Torelli, Pat
Tyler, Michael, Sussex Cyclists
Vanderwerker, Robert
Veith, Louise
Veith, Mike
Wallace, Barbara
Warren, Mike
West, Donna
Williams, Emily
Worosilo, Marc
Young, David
Zawislak, Randy

