

MINUTES OF ALLINGTOWN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
Notre Dame High School  
March 2, 2020

Members Present: Ron Quagliani, Chris Suggs, Robbin Watt Hamilton, Lou Annino, Kevin Vine, and Kathy Weilk. Staff Present: Dave Killeen and Fred Messore. Also in attendance: Robin Parsons, Lead of City's Sustainable Team.

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

1. Call to Order, Welcome

2. Approval of Minutes of December 4, 2019 and February 6, 2020 Meetings

- December 4, 2019 Minutes

-The following changes were made:

- i. On first page, Mr. Quagliani was misspelled – his name had only one “l”.
- ii. On page 3, under 3. Discussion of Community Workshop, Mr. Annino asked that the first item at the top of that page be changed to:
  - Under “Overall Plan Elements/Land Use Plan”, the strategy should be to “develop” an ~~UNH Impact Area~~ Educational Zone/Impact Area, rather than “incorporate” the UNH Impact Area designated on the POCD Land Use Plan.

February 6, 2020 – No Changes

- After further discussion, motion was made by Mr. Suggs, seconded by Ms. Wielk to endorse both sets of minutes as amended. Motion was passed.

3. Discussion of Community Workshop

- Review of Results of Small Group Ranking Forms
- Suggested Priorities for Allingtown Plan

After some discussion, the Committee ranked the general priorities for each strategy area as follows:

**A. Overall Plan Elements/Land Use Plan**

- 1) Add Marginal Drive Greenway
- 2) Identify key gateways to Allingtown

- 3) Use traffic calming and encourage better pedestrian connections, neighborhood pathways
- 4) Define a walkable "~~Campus~~" District within ½ mile of University. (The Committee will continue to work on a new name for this district, such as "Neighborhood Center", "Community Center", etc.)

## **B. Economic Development**

- 1) Market Allingtown to attract new businesses that support the Plan's vision (book store, coffee shop, ice cream shop, bakery, restaurant, grocery store, etc.)
  - 2) Utilize available incentives to promote economic development and redevelopment (e.g. Opportunity Zones, CDBG Storefront Improvement Loan Program, etc.)
  - 3) Promote and encourage the targeted redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties within the central ~~Campus~~ area.
- Another high priority strategy would be to Create a distinct "Walkable" Allingtown ~~Campus~~ Center.
  - The Committee felt the following strategies should be lower priority at this time but could be considered as longer-term goals:
    - i. Develop a Technology Corridor along Derby Ave. (Route 34) to promote biomedical and research uses. The Committee pointed out that there are not many deep lots along this Corridor and, while the corridor could help connect with other medical and biotech uses in New Haven (e.g. Yale), this should be a longer-term goal.
    - ii. Consider creative methods/events/activities – "Placemaking" – to draw attention to Allingtown. The Committee felt that this was also a longer-term goal and that there needed to be accomplishments in the other areas first.

## **C. Transportation**

The Committee felt that the following items all needed to be considered to make the Allingtown Center Area more walkable:

- 1) Calm traffic and create a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians, especially at important crossings near Rte. 1/Campbell/Forest Road and within Allingtown ~~Campus~~ Center.
- 2) Improve Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety (Encourage City to adopt Complete Streets Policy).
- 3) Participate in SCRCOG's Citywide Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan (identify high accident locations). (NOTE: The Committee felt that there would be

opportunities for drawing on the expertise of SCRCOG's consultant in deciding how to approach traffic calming along State roads in particular.)

- 4) Encourage use of alternative transportation (e.g. CT Transit, University/Yale-VA Hospital shuttles; bike sharing, scooters, etc.)
- 5) Create better connections with Train Station, West Haven Center, and beach/boardwalk.

As a longer-term goal, the Committee felt that the City's efforts to study Parking Zone Management Programs should be supported, which would likely mean the establishment of a Parking Authority for West Haven.

#### **D. Neighborhood Improvements**

- 1) Increase Home Ownership in the neighborhood, using available programs such as City CDBG and CHFA.
- 2) Support Citywide efforts to strengthen Building and Property Maintenance Codes, such as Rental Inspection Programs, Blight Codes, etc. to improve conditions of rental properties in the City and in Allingtown.
- 3) Support planting of street trees along major corridors and improved landscaping of public areas (considered simple to do without a major expense)
- 4) Encourage formation of neighborhood organization(s) to organize clean-up campaigns beautification programs, social events, crime watches, etc.

The Committee felt that gateway entrances to the City/the neighborhood should be enhanced, but it was suggested that this be handled on a Citywide basis to help with "branding" of the community's image.

#### **E. Changes to Zoning**

- 1) Revise the RCPD Zoning District (~~"Campus Community District"~~?) to promote walkable, ~~campus~~-(community)- friendly development (higher residential density, buildings close to street, reduce parking requirements, pedestrian connections, etc.)
- 2) Consider changes to Zoning Map to expand RCPD District to align with the ~~Campus~~-(Neighborhood) Center concept.
- 3) Consider Design Guidelines for Allingtown, such as the expansion of the recently-adopted Village District Overlay Zone. This was seen as a goal for the Route 1 corridor as well (Regional Business District).

The Committee felt the changes to zoning along Rte. 34 to allow biomedical, technology and research uses could be summarized in the Plan but identified as a long-term goal.

#### **F. Community Facilities**

The Committee noted that there was a need for public gathering space in Allingtown. It was noted that there was community space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the

Library. There is not much space available outside of schools, which are limited by hours of access and custodian contracts. City Hall has space, but it is not central to Allingtown. Some churches offer community space, but a lot of churches are closing now.

Following are the recommended priorities for community facility goals in the upcoming Plan:

- 1) Seek ways to maximize public use and enjoyment of key facilities located in Allingtown.
- 2) Support improvements to library services for Allingtown.
- 3) Pursue development of Marginal Drive Greenway (e.g. support efforts of West River Watershed Coalition, City of New Haven, etc.)
- 4) Seek improvements of and add new recreational facilities to meet neighborhood needs.

#### **G. Related Discussions**

- The University had pursued the concept of a pedestrian “fly-over” bridge extending over Campbell Avenue approximately at the location of the Charger Plaza. It was learned that it would be necessary to incorporate handicapped accessibility for the structure.
  - Wayfinding signage could be a nice addition, but it needs to be coordinate with a Citywide system to avoid clutter or “sign pollution”.
  - The Plan may be able to support a variety of citywide initiatives (e.g. improvements to better control conditions of multi-family/rental housing such as Rental Inspection Programs; Gateway signage/branding of community image; Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan; efforts to attract Biomedical uses; “placemaking” initiatives.
4. Next Steps – Next Meeting Date(s)
    - It was felt that the Committee should refine its priority rankings for these strategies as discussed tonight and then, present them to the Planning and Zoning Commission for endorsement.
    - Based on the agreed-upon priority rankings (Steering Committee and Planning and Zoning Commission), staff would start drafting sections of the Plan for review by the Committee and presentation to the P&Z Commission. A formal public hearing would be held on the draft plan.
  5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.