

Fort Sanders Long Range Planning
Subcommittee: Physical Land Use Planning Group
Notes from November 5, 2009 Meeting

Attendees

Chad Brown (Ft. Sanders Regional), Randall DeFord (Historic Fort Sanders Neighborhood & CDC) , Rudy McKinley (Children's Hospital), Amy Brooks (TPO), Mark Donaldson (MPC) John Craig (Property owner & Knox Heritage), John Hunter (City Engineering), Kim Trent (Knox Heritage), Anne Wallace (City Project Manager), Mike Clark (CAMA), Sarah Brown (UT Student).

Meeting Notes

The focus of this meeting was to discuss the last set of Action Items from the 2000 Ft. Sanders Forum plan that pertained to land use planning, specifically transportation access and circulation. Amy Brooks, Transportation Planner, provided a spread sheet of recommendations that are broken into three timeframes: one year, one to five years, and, five to ten years. The recommendations listed in this chart are based on the following goals: 1) Maintain existing street connectivity and work to enhance connectivity to surrounding areas; 2) Enhance pedestrian amenities and circulation; 3) Improve traffic circulation and safety. These goals were gleaned from the Ft. Sanders Long Range Planning process and previous planning documents where items may have been recommended but have yet to be implemented and are still valid.

One Year Recommendations:

- 1.1 Develop 5 year phased sidewalk improvement plan – Randall DeFord and John Craig requested that future sidewalk improvements respect the historic elements of the neighborhood. Specifically they asked if brass plaques to be incorporated into future sidewalks and that the existing brick sidewalks on James Agee from Highland to Bridge and Forest to Grand be maintained so that they would not have to be replaced. If original brass plaques are still in storage somewhere could they be donated and located in James Agee park?
- 1.2 Designate hospital district “zone” – north/south expansion, no lateral expansion; impacts emergency routes and priorities for sidewalks.
- 1.3 Improve safety & traffic flow on 17th Street (Phase I: stripping and non physical changes) – TPO staff will follow up on requested Safety Funds for Clinch Ave & White Ave intersections with 17th. Also further study of a “road diet” for 17th will need to take place.
- 1.4 Create bus loading zones & install covered shelters near the medical complexes & other key areas – this item was requested Summer 2009 through TDOT's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding,

but that funding has been rescinded with the Federal Highway rescission; funding may be available from CMAQ in the future.

- 1.5 Install distinctive paving and/or markings at major pedestrian crossings – 17th Street is a high priority, request was made for properly “painted” crosswalks and the pedestrian yield signs, stamped asphalt was also suggested for major intersections.
- 1.6 Consider 18th St. as a model neighborhood street (narrow ROW, 2-way traffic, on-street parking, sidewalks) – this format may be appropriate for other streets in the neighborhood, however, great care should be used in determining those routes so that they do not negatively impact emergency vehicles trying to access the hospitals. James Agee and 13th St. were suggested for 2-way traffic.

One to Five Year Recommendations:

- 2.1 Neighborhood streetscape plan (street trees, bulb outs, pedestrian amenities, signage, gateways, etc...)
 - a. Implement right-of-way beautification
 - b. Designate a gateway & preferred route through the neighborhood (Grand Ave. to 22nd St has been suggested) – 17th St. viaduct was discussed for its eligibility in TDOT’s bridge replacement program (which is an 80% Federal/State and 20% local match); could Grand Ave. be relocated under the viaduct for safer east/west route?
 - c. I.D. pedestrian & vehicular gateways from Cumberland Ave. to the Hospital District and UT
 - d. Sign pedestrian & bicycle right-of-way – establish bike routes
 - e. Improve and coordinate facades and signs
- 2.2 Establish benefit/special assessment districts to fund capital improvement projects.
- 2.3 Develop a “road diet” plan for 17th Street – understand phasing and impacts to system
- 2.4 Implement a parking management program – could be funded from special assessment district until it was able to turn profit and then provide funds back.
- 2.5 Install traffic signal at 20th St. & Cumberland – this should be assessed for need through the Cumberland Ave. Streetscape Project.

Five to Ten Year Recommendations:

- 3.1 Rebuild railroad overpass on Cumberland Ave. – a request has been made to fund this project through High Priority Project requests to Congress.
 - a. Link Tyson Park and Ft. Sanders neighborhood – provide pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- 3.2 Enhance the pedestrian & bicycle access to the Sorority Village and Robert Shaw site.

- 3.3 Improve pedestrian access & flow from Ft. Sanders neighborhood to the KMA and World's Fair Park
- 3.4 Establish street connection from James Agee to Dale St.
- 3.5 Establish a street connection from Grand Ave. to Concord St. and onto Sutherland Ave.

As part of the discussion regarding a special assessment district, a request was made to look at the existing tax rate and find what the numbers would be for 5, 10, 15 year budgets and what that could pay for within the district.

Additionally, architect, Randall DeFord, provided the following sketches as concept ideas for ways to improve the traffic problems at W. Volunteer Boulevard, Metron Center Way, the entry to Tyson Park and the entry to the Robert Shaw property. These intersections have been discussed at previous meetings and these images were used for the purpose of discussion within the meeting. Thanks to Mr. DeFord for providing them.



