Barracks Road/ Emmet Street Improvements
Steering Committee # 2
Meeting Summary

October 30, 2019
5:30PM-7:15 PM
Neighborhood Development Services Conference Room

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review Survey Results
- Intersection Recommendations
- Bike/Ped Recommendations
- Other Improvements
- Next Steps

Attendance

NAME	AFFILIATION
STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Navarre Bartz	Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Brian Menard	Tree Commission
Lyle Solla-Yates	Planning Commission and Entrance Corridor Review Board
Andrew Mondschein	PLACE Design Task Force
Mary Hughes	UVA Office of the Architect
Dan Butch	Albemarle County – Transportation Planning
Tim Heaphy	Venable Neighborhood Association; Barracks Road Resident
Nancy Summers	Meadowbrook Hills/Rugby Neighborhood Association
Holly Masson	Venable Neighborhood Association/ Barracks Road Resident
Clara Belle Wheeler	Meadowbrook Shopping Center
PROJECT STAFF	
Brian Copeland	Timmons Group
Brennen Duncan	City of Charlottesville – City Traffic Engineer
Kyle Kling	City of Charlottesville – Transportation Project Manager

Overview of Survey Results and Review of Concepts

Design team presented an overview of the survey results of the conceptual design options. These included visual charts and graphs of the compiled results as well as highlights of the written comments that the design team received during the public outreach process. Prior to making recommendations, the design team reviewed the 4

conceptual bicycle/pedestrian options for Barracks Road as well as 3 geometric options at the Barracks/Emmet Intersection.

Summary of Survey Results shared with the Committee:

- 90 survey respondents (50% property owners in project area)
- Improvement Priorities (Question #3):
  - Top priority – Improve Pedestrian Safety
  - Closely grouped secondary priorities – Mitigate Traffic Congestion, Maintain Tree Canopy, Implement Traffic Calming Measures, Improve Bicycle Infrastructure and Preserve Neighborhood Character
  - Lowest priorities – Add Corridor Lighting and Improve Transit Facilities
- Bike/Ped Improvements (Question #4):
  - Reviewed all 4 bike/ped options w/ committee
  - Majority prefer a shared use path rather than in-road/separate bike facilities
  - Option 4 received 30 votes, while Option 3 received 27 votes
- Intersection Geometry Options (Questions #5, #6 & #7)
  - Option 1 preferred by majority of respondents that offered written feedback
  - Many referenced desire to change the westbound thru-right lane to a dedicated right-only lane
  - Most indicated they want to minimize or avoid any retaining walls
  - Several liked the inclusion of sidewalk on the north side of Barracks between Meadowbrook and Hessian Roads.
- Meadowbrook Road Access (Question #8):
  - Majority of respondents prefer restricting access at this intersection to right-in/right-out by extending the raised median through this intersection
- Biking on Barracks Road if made safer (Question #9):
  - Majority of respondents indicated they would bike on Barracks Road if it were made safer, however close to a 50/50 split.
- General Project Feedback (Question #10):
  - Most repeated comment: Project neighborhood feel and avoid/minimize use of retaining walls
  - Additional improvements at Hilltop/Buckingham Road should be considered due to poor sight distance.
  - Implement additional traffic calming measures
  - Change the thru-right on Barracks Road to a dedicated right only lane.

Committee Questions/Comments:

- How were rankings determined on question asking for prioritization of features?
  - Weighted Average

Intersection Recommendations

Timmons relayed to Steering Committee that City Staff will move forward with recommendations for Option 1. Option 1 includes 10' Travel Lanes with minimal roadside and tree impact. Timmons revisited the reduction is queue lengths and V/C ratio that will result from Option 1. Both metrics for Option 1 still show significant improvement when compared to existing conditions

Committee Questions/Comments:

- How was traffic growth determined for the modeling in option 1 (and other options)?

- Modeling projections were done to reflect traffic at intersection in 2030 using historic growth area. Impacts caused by CVS development were factored into modeling.

- Can a sidewalk be incorporated into Option 1?
  - Design team explored the possibility of this, and it is not feasible without building a retaining wall.

Bike/Ped Recommendations

Timmons relayed to the Steering Committee that the findings of the survey marginally supported option 4 over option 3, both of which favor a shared use path. Options 3 and 4 were analyzed in detail during the group discussion, including the anticipated height of the retaining wall associated with each option, as well as an overview of the benefits and challenges associated with each option. Timmons relayed to Steering Committee that City Staff intends to move forward with recommending Option 3. Option 3 includes 10' Shared use path and 4' behind curb. Extensive conversation continued on the matter ending in a committee vote for preference between options 3 and 4.

Committee Questions/Comments:

- Landscape buffer width of 4 feet for Option 3 was called into question.
  - 4' would allow for some trees, most likely ornamental or understory trees.
- Is a hybrid of the two options feasible?
  - It would be possible, however concerns were presented w/ continually shifting the path alignment, which could results in consistent look/aesthetic being sacrificed.
- How does a landscape buffer strip enhance a pedestrian experience?
  - Provides additional separation for users from vehicular traffic.
  - Provides separation from roadside obstructions, like street lighting and roadway signage.
  - Provides an opportunity for enhanced landscaping providing additional visual buffer.
- Option 3 will be most costly for City in terms of ROW fees and litigation fees.
- Could Trees and Signage be put behind retaining wall?
  - Potentially, however signage standards would need to be followed, which would limit the feasibility of this option.
  - Large trees could be planted behind the wall to supplement tree loss.
- Option 3 has a greater impact on Trees and it is simply not a trade-off to just plant new ones.
- Tree loss associated with both options in not clear to committee and is dependent on many variables. Committee would like to see further drawings/graphics showing potential impacts.
- Aesthetics of corridor need to be considered. Different sides of the street need to have the same feel.
- Could lighting for corridor be placed outside of the shared use path on the wall?
  - Yes, placing pedestrian scale lightning could be done on the wall.
- In comparison to existing conditions, Option 4 still provides improvements and benefits. Impacts that would result from Option 3 would outweigh benefits.
- Why are improvements even being made and considered? Any of the proposed options would destroy the "quiet" and "magical" entrance corridor.
  - City master plans and comprehensive plans point to the need for improvements along the corridor. Results and feedback received from the survey also support the need for improvements in the area.
- Since the design has started homeowners have cleaned up vegetation that encroaches onto sidewalk, making for a better pedestrian experience and reducing the need for improvements.
  - Results of the project survey indicate "improving pedestrian safety" is the top priority, which suggests the general public continue to believe the existing condition/sidewalk is unsafe.
- Has the design team considered shifting the improvements to the north side of Barracks Road?

    - Yes. Project was developed with need to support facilities for bicycle and pedestrians traveling up the hill on Barracks. This would eliminate the purpose of that need.
    - The northern tree canopy is largely made up of a single row of trees on or within the existing slope positioned in close proximity to the road. Improvements to the north would have a more significant impact on tree canopy for this reason.
- Can the design team consider shifting the alignment of the roadway to the north to minimize the impacts to front of properties of the south side?
    - Design team agreed to review this option.
    - Results of examination found that impacts to tree canopy would be sever if any widening (road or bike/ped improvements) were made on the northern side, even in spot locations.
    - Opportunities to make minor shifts (2-3' in spots) in the centerline of the road to the north do appear feasible while not requiring any physical widening to the north.
    - Design team intends to maximize these opportunities to offset impact of including the 4' planting strip recommendation in Option 3.
- Is it possible to see results of the survey when filtering out anyone that does not own their "primary residence within the project area"
    - Yes. Design team to filter results and provide upon request.
- What happens once the shared use path ends at the top of Buckingham?
    - City has plans In place to restripe Barracks Road, creating on street bike facilities in that area. Transition from shared use path to on street facility.
- Discussion occurred on aesthetics on retaining wall. Can it be a living wall?
    - Wall will be H-pile/solider pile design and can be customized to create neighborhood feel. Could be a living/green wall.

Other Improvements/Recommendations

Design team presented additional recommendations that will be carried forward through the design stage. These include the addition of a dedicate right turn lane on westbound Barracks, right in/right out restrictions at Meadowbrook load and 11' lane widths along corridor to assist with traffic calming.

Next Steps

- Public Workshop #2 – November 20, 2019
- Planning Commission Meeting – December 10, 2019
- Preliminary Design – Late 2019/Early 2020