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PROCEEDING HELD AT 115 SOUTH AVENUE, ROCHESTER, NEW
YORK ON FEBRUARY 4, 2014 COMMENCING AT APPROXIMATELY
7:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY 4, 2014

KATE GLEASON AUDITORIUM
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115 SOUTH AVENUE
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Reported by:
COMPUTER REPORTING SERVICE
Colleen Lounsbury
16 East Main Street, Suite 7
Rochester, New York 14614 (585) 325-3170

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 2

2 MR. WAY: I would like to call this public
3 hearing to order. It's now 7:30.

4 I'm Paul Way. I'm the project manager from
5 the City of Rochester and I shall preside at this
6 design public hearing for the Inner Loop East
7 transformation project.

8 Just by way of housekeeping, we do have a
9 stenographer here who will be recording the event.

10 The legal notice advertising this public
11 hearing was published on January 16th, 2014 in the
12 Rochester Democrat & Chronicle.

13 I will now enter the complete notice of the
14 public information meeting, public hearing and
15 notice of availability of the design approval
16 document as published into the record of this
17 hearing.

18 Unless I hear an objection from the floor I
19 will dispense with the reading of this notice.

20 I request that this transcript be copied
21 into the record. Copies of the notice are available
22 upon request.

23 This hearing is being conducted in
24 accordance with Title 23 US Code Section 128, Title
25 40 Code of the Federal Regulations Part 1500 to 1508

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 3
2 and the US Federal Highway Administration Federal
3 Aid Policy Guide 23 CFR 771.

4 The intent of this public hearing is to
5 afford the opportunity for public participation in
6 the consideration of highway proposals being given
7 to all interested persons an opportunity to become
8 fully acquainted with the highway proposals and to
9 express their views.

10 When you entered the hearing room you were
11 given the opportunity to register. This will allow
12 us to keep a record of those who have attended
13 today's hearing. If you haven't signed the register
14 please do so as you leave.

15 This evening individuals who wish to speak
16 at the formal hearing were given a numbered
17 registration card.

18 The purpose of these cards is to allot
19 sufficient time for each person to make a statement
20 if so desired.

21 If you did not receive a card and wish to
22 speak or if your card has not been collected please
23 raise your hand.

24 Also, upon entering the hearing you should
25 have received a printed brochure which briefly

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 4
2 describes the general features of the project which
3 are open for discussions at this hearing.

4 This brochure includes the project location
5 map and a brief description of the proposed
6 alternative under consideration for the project.

7 Also, you should have received a comment
8 sheet that can be sent back to us with your
9 comments. Please remember to include an envelope
10 and attach a stamp.

11 The brochure also provides my e-mail
12 address right at the bottom here for your comments.
13 If you did not receive a copy of the brochure or
14 comment sheet would you please raise your hand?

15 The details of the design study for this
16 project are documented in the design report dated
17 January 2014 which has been available for your
18 review or copying at the Rochester City Clerk's
19 Office and here in the public library.

20 The Rochester City Clerk's Office is in
21 City Hall, Room 300-A, 30 Church Street, Rochester,
22 New York and the Bausch & Lomb Public Library here
23 at 110 South Avenue, Rochester, New York 14614.

24 A complete copy of this report is on
25 display here tonight on the table over there. A

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 5
2 city representative has been available at that
3 display to answer your questions.

4 The complete report is also available on
5 the city's website page at the following address:
6 www.cityofrochester.gov/innerloopeast.

7 At this time I would like to note that a
8 project overview was presented tonight from 6:30 to
9 7:00 and I will now enter the complete presentation
10 into the record.

11 The proceedings for this hearing are being
12 recorded. When completed the transcript will be
13 available for public inspection at the City of
14 Rochester, 30 Church Street, Rochester, New York.

15 Statements may be presented at this hearing
16 either orally or in writing and written statements
17 may also be submitted for the record at the address
18 shown on the comment sheet until February 14th,
19 2014. That is a week from this Friday.

20 After fully evaluating all of the oral and
21 written comments that we receive as well as views of
22 the agencies who have been contacted in this process
23 the City of Rochester will recommend a design and
24 request an approval from the New York State
25 Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 6
2 Administration.

3 Following this approval - which we
4 anticipate receiving some time in early March 2014 -
5 we'll begin the preparation of the detailed plans
6 and the acquisition of the necessary right of way
7 for the project.

8 It is anticipated that construction will
9 begin in October of 2014 and conclude by the fall of
10 2017.

11 I would like to emphasize that the format
12 of this hearing does not lend itself to responding
13 to your statements and questions from the podium.

14 I recommend therefore that you avail
15 yourself of the opportunity to ask questions after
16 this hearing.

17 All statements received as part of this
18 record of this hearing either tonight or within ten
19 days will be considered in preparation of the design
20 recommendation.

21 Several persons have indicated a desire to
22 express their views. If there is anyone in the
23 audience who wishes to make a statement that has not
24 yet filled out a registration card please do so now.

25 Statements will be received in the order

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 7
2 represented by the number on the registration card.
3 As your name is called you may come to the speaker
4 area before beginning your statement.

5 I will also announce the next speaker so
6 you may come to the front of the room in
7 anticipation of your turn to speak.

8 Kindly state your name and address and your
9 position within any organization you may be
10 representing.

11 Please speak clearly so that the
12 stenographer may make an accurate record of your
13 statement.

14 I would like to reemphasize that the format
15 of this hearing does not lend itself to responding
16 to your statements and questions from the podium.

17 However, all statements received as part of
18 the record of this hearing will be given
19 consideration in preparation of the designed
20 recommendation.

21 I now call for statements from the floor on
22 this project. The first speaker is Michael Knight
23 and he will be followed by Stephen Venturino.

24 MR. KNIGHT: My name is Mike Knight and I
25 live on Buena Place -- on 30 Buena Place for the

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 8
2 last forty years. Right. You still can't hear me?

3 My name is Mike Knight. I live on Buena
4 Place. I've been a resident there for the last
5 forty years.

6 This problem with parking should have been
7 taken care of years and years and years ago. There
8 is some people here that -- I don't think they quite
9 understand the nature of the problem.

10 It creates a lot of animosity. It creates
11 a lot of inconvenience. It creates family and
12 friends coming over to visit people who live in the
13 area.

14 They don't even like going down there
15 because of the fact. "Where am I going to park,
16 Dad?" What do I say to them?

17 I saw a lot of people shaking their heads -
18 that young lady over there that brought up the
19 subject of parking.

20 This lady here was going "Yup." That guy
21 over there was going "Yup."

22 Well, we've been doing it for a long time
23 and I think that there should be some sort of
24 special committee set up to where the city can start
25 taking this problem a little bit more seriously for

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 9
2 the benefit of the people who pay taxes in that
3 neighborhood.

4 I thank you for your time and basically
5 that's all I have to say.

6 MR. WAY: Thank you, sir. I now call
7 Stephen Venturino and he will be followed by the
8 representative from the Ambassadors Union Street,
9 LLC.

10 MR. VENTURINO: My name is Stephen
11 Venturino. I live at 96 South Union and 3 and 5
12 Lafayette Place. I represent those properties.

13 For the record I'd like -- there is two
14 problems that were new to the neighborhood - street
15 cleaning and snow removal.

16 Snow removal impacts the parking. I think
17 in the final design we need to consider something
18 similar to what we see on Park Avenue which is a one
19 hour period in which cars are forbidden to park.

20 There is street cleaning and I would expect
21 snow removal as well, an opportunity for that.

22 I've seen them jut out into the street.
23 Right now we have a very wide street, two lanes.
24 There is plenty of room to get around those cars
25 that are cocked out from parking oddly because of

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 10
2 the snow that has not been removed by the plow. So
3 those are two things.

4 Also, handicapped parking. I think there
5 has been some meetings, but it would be nice to know
6 if there is going to be improvements in the
7 handicapped parking in those areas.

8 Also, on a lighter note I think the city
9 has done a great job at branding different areas,
10 college town, neighborhood of the arts.

11 I'm wondering if there is going to be any
12 thought -- I know you guys are rushing to get the
13 final plans in and not lose the money, but was any
14 thought in the final design given to branding that
15 area to make it unique?

16 I think it's the first time in a long time
17 the city had a blank slate, a blank piece of paper.

18 It would be nice to see some kind of
19 branding or lighting of the trees or something
20 that's different about the area that makes it
21 unique.

22 Then the other thing is - I'm sure it's
23 been thought about - the signage. Disposing of the
24 Inner Loop -- there is a lot of signage.

25 For example, to get onto Broadway off of

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 11
2 Goodman -- I think that is the backed up Inner Loop
3 so I expect that's going to be thought about.

4 Then the only other thing I'm sure --
5 again, I think the engineers did a great job. I
6 think we are on the emergency snow route.

7 I don't know what that means, the
8 parking -- or during a snow emergency is Union still
9 going to be an emergency snow route? That's all I
10 have.

11 MR. WAY: Thank you, Steve.

12 I now call to the podium the representative
13 from Ambassador Union Street and Joey Lanzone will
14 be next.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Dawn Williams for Ambassador
16 Union Street, LLC. I'm one of the directors and I
17 would like to reiterate the need for residential
18 parking.

19 So parking that is not metered -- we
20 understand it's being regulated like in any other
21 area in Park Avenue, but not metered especially
22 south of Broad Street. It's heavily residential.

23 We do not want meters in there for our
24 residents or people who live in the neighborhood.
25 It's really not friendly. It doesn't make for a

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 12
2 livable -- in the upper area where it's commercial
3 we absolutely understand metering gets some money,
4 but where people live, I don't think it's fair to
5 put in meters. Okay?

6 The gentleman before me mentioned about the
7 cleaning of the streets and the cleaning away of the
8 snow.

9 That absolutely is an issue. The cars are
10 literally out there because there is nowhere else.
11 The cars can't switch over to the other side of the
12 street, so we are hoping with a two sided street
13 that will be taken care of.

14 Branding is a great idea too, something
15 like Union Place would be very nice to make it into
16 a neighborhood. Thank you.

17 MR. WAY: Joey Lanzone followed by Jack
18 Darcy.

19 MR. LANZONE: Hello. My name is Joey
20 Lanzone. I'm a staff writer for the Rochester
21 Insomniac which is a local magazine blog and pod
22 cast.

23 Personally, I believe that we should fix
24 what we have before you move on to other things such
25 as the offices.

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 13
2 The magazine is right behind the Hotel
3 Cadillac on Atlas Street. That's how far of an
4 area -- it's not a very -- clean up areas like that
5 and then moving on to stuff like that.

6 With businesses moving to this area, of
7 course, other people will move in and it will be a
8 continued problem of what happens.

9 MR. WAY: Thank you, sir. Jack Darcy
10 followed by Chris McCamic.

11 MR. DARCY: My name is Jack Darcy and I own
12 six properties in the immediate area of this
13 project, one on Monroe Avenue and one on Marshall
14 Street.

15 I believe that this marks a momentous time
16 in Rochester's history in that we have an
17 opportunity to set the tone for the whole east side
18 for years to come.

19 Although traffic and traffic flow are
20 important the following are of critical importance
21 also:

22 One is beautification. I think this could
23 be done through superior landscaping and artistic
24 features which could be benches, sculptures,
25 whatever else.

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 14

2 This project will have a significant impact
3 not only on the east side, but for the image of the
4 entire city.

5 For example, shrubbery, trees, floral
6 settings help make Niagara on the Lake a go to
7 destination as well as generate inflow of business
8 and tax dollars.

9 A cooperative effort between the city and
10 property owners like myself can make this vision a
11 reality.

12 These types of improvements are wise
13 investments and draw both local people downtown and
14 tourists to the downtown area increasing residential
15 and commercial property values.

16 By creating - this could be a logo - a
17 Gardenscape along the new boulevard -- we have Art
18 Walk, et cetera and we have Gardenscape.

19 Since we are doing a lot of trees and
20 hopefully a lot of quality landscaping we can
21 transform a struggling area into a vibrant area to
22 live in and shop in and thus an area of increasing
23 property values and an increasing tax base. Every
24 dollar spent on beautification is an investment in
25 Rochester's future.

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 15

2 Another point I'd like to make is - as
3 other people have mentioned - parking for both
4 businesses and residents.

5 Creation of parking places in the final
6 plan is very important. Existing businesses are
7 struggling for parking and need relief.

8 As new parcels are created for the project
9 they too will have parking needs.

10 I would also like to address staging of
11 this project. When the project area is torn up it
12 will have a very negative impact on the traffic
13 flow, parking and a public perception that this is
14 an area to avoid.

15 That is going to hurt business and it's
16 going to hurt people who live in the area.

17 I would suggest staging construction by
18 creating sections that you start and complete before
19 you move on to another section so the whole area
20 isn't ripped up and unfinished for an extended
21 period of time.

22 Lastly, I want to address the new buildable
23 parcels that are being created by this project. I
24 believe there should be an application process so
25 it's not first come first serve or he who is willing

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 16
2 to pay the most money.

3 The application process should require an
4 applicant show, A, how the project he is going to do
5 will benefit the area, B, that the architecture and
6 landscaping will enhance the area and C, that the
7 proposed use is needed and it's not just a
8 redundancy so we get more vacant space and
9 compatible with residential and commercial vision
10 that the city has for this area.

11 These properties should not be just sold to
12 the highest bidder. The right development and its
13 impact could dwarf any price game by a less
14 desirable project.

15 As I said, I'm a major stakeholder in the
16 Inner Loop project area and I'm willing to be
17 involved financially if necessary.

18 Now, this could involve -- and I know this
19 could be a hot potato. This could involve an
20 assessment district like they've done by the Mount
21 Hope area to help fund and maintain landscaping and
22 so forth.

23 My understanding is that the money that is
24 coming from the federal grant may provide some money
25 for landscaping, but once the stuff is put in they

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 17
2 are done and that sits there.

3 Unless there is some kind of way to
4 perpetually maintain this we could end up with a
5 field of weeds and we could end up with some very
6 undesirable parcels.

7 By the same token these developable
8 parcels -- I think something should be in place so
9 that these are maintained until they are sold and
10 whoever takes them takes the responsibility for them
11 because this could all be redeveloped.

12 These parcels could sit there empty growing
13 up the weeds while everybody waits for years ahead
14 when someone is actually going to buy them and do
15 something.

16 I'm willing to serve on a planning and
17 implementation committee to help guide and bring
18 about this reality.

19 This Gardenscape idea can help make this
20 area a vibrant contribution to the future of
21 downtown and, in fact, the whole city.

22 MR. WAY: Thank you, Mr. Darcy. I'll now
23 call Chris McCamic and on deck will be Ed Steinberg.

24 MR. McCAMIC: Thank you, Mr. Darcy. You
25 just stole a lot of my points actually so let me

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 18
2 just try to restate most of that in the way that I
3 was mentally planning on restating it -- which is I
4 think this has a lot of potential, but there's
5 something a little dishonest about looking at the
6 schematics because they've got lots of nice little
7 green circles which we know are trees and we love
8 trees.

9 They've got lots of big green spaces that
10 say "future development area." Big green spaces
11 look nice, but what I understand from talking to
12 staff and what I'm hearing about this is that those
13 aren't planned to be green spaces.

14 Those are planned to be mixed commercial
15 and residential use -- developable parcels is the
16 term.

17 I understand you have an economic study
18 which I think my expectation is that -- to think
19 it's a creative writing project is about the
20 gentlest way I could put it.

21 It's really hard for me to imagine - given
22 the level of commercial and residential vacancies
23 that we have in Rochester - that it makes any kind
24 of sense to turn this into more boxes.

25 The economic development benefits that --

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 19
2 the ecological benefits and the community
3 development benefits of treating a lot of this as
4 public space -- I can't see how that doesn't vastly
5 outweigh that.

6 We've also heard a lot of concerns about
7 parking. I live on 27 Buena Place so I know that.
8 I live it.

9 If these are developed parcels the
10 additional parking that you very kindly pointed out
11 that will be there is going to get outstripped by
12 the additional demand really quickly.

13 So I would urge -- and I'm willing to be on
14 a committee too. I'd love to be on a committee. I
15 would urge that we really look at what it would mean
16 to carve out a richer public sphere here with
17 something like a permaculture food forest such as
18 they are experimenting with in Seattle, urban
19 gardening and public mixed use spaces. Thank you.

20 MR. WAY: Ed Steinberg.

21 MR. STEINBERG: Edward Steinberg, 14
22 Lafayette Park. I've been a long time resident with
23 my wife and raised my kids on Lafayette Park.

24 My comments will be brief, mainly about two
25 separate subjects. One is the South Union

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 20
2 development parcels which I understand are going to
3 be zoned center city district which implies that
4 they will have to meet certain specific design
5 standards.

6 I think design standards are something -
7 and it sort of goes with the last two or three
8 speakers - that should be highly prioritized because
9 the area is opposite to residential homes.

10 We would like to see something very
11 attractive being developed if it is going to be
12 developed there.

13 That's all determined by the zoning
14 district as a nation I would add. The area itself
15 is somewhat historic in period.

16 The landmark society did an area survey
17 back in the '80s I believe it was and they gave
18 historic designations and ratings to the homes on
19 Lafayette, Canfield, Buena -- I'm not sure about
20 South Union. Some of them were rated of the highest
21 caliber, preserved and protected.

22 As some also know there were some Georgian
23 townhouses recently built on the corner of Lafayette
24 and South Union which were marketed on the premises
25 that there was a wonderful view of downtown. That

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 21
2 will be affected by the project understandably.

3 My second point is that the Howell Street
4 thoroughfare has been planned to be aligned with
5 Lafayette Park where the traffic is there.

6 I believe that several of the property
7 owners on Lafayette would disagree with that, my
8 wife and I for one.

9 What that will do is bring traffic to our
10 little dead end street which is already sometimes
11 there without a purpose because they think it's a
12 through street and it's not a through street.

13 Often times bar patrons at night are
14 sometimes driving not with the best of skill and are
15 coming quickly down the street and realize, "We have
16 to stop after the fifth house" I should say.

17 So traffic flows sometimes undesirably on
18 to Lafayette and this will increase that probability
19 I think and will also require a traffic signal
20 apparently.

21 I know that there are intentions of
22 discouraging people from coming off of Howell Street
23 and crossing South Union Street and crossing
24 Lafayette from geometric curb lines or a narrowing
25 of the street. The street has a narrow opening now.

1 In Re: Inner Loop East Transformation Project 22
2 But I think that will also present its own
3 set of problems and I think that a lot of
4 consideration should be given to Howell Street
5 entering South Union north of Lafayette Park and not
6 right at that street intersection. Thank you.

7 MR. WAY: Thank you, Mr. Steinberg.
8 Are there any more statements on the
9 project?

10 I'd like to remind everyone again that
11 additional written comments may be submitted until
12 February 14th, 2014 to the address listed in the
13 brochure or you can use the self mailer included in
14 the brochure.

15 City representatives will be available for
16 questions following adjournment of this hearing.

17 If there are no further statements
18 concerning this project, I declare this hearing
19 adjourned. Thank you.

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REPORTER CERTIFICATE

I, Colleen Lounsbury, do hereby certify
that I did report in stenotype machine shorthand the
proceedings held in the above-entitled matter;

Further, that the foregoing transcript is a
true and accurate transcription of my said
stenographic notes taken at the time and place
hereinbefore set forth.

Colleen Lounsbury