



Meeting Summary

Public Meeting #1 | October 3, 2014 | Charles Settlement House

Meeting Attendees

See attached sign-in sheet.

Materials Provided

- Meeting Agenda
- Photo Sheet of the Rail Corridor

Welcome and Introductions

Anne DaSilva-Tella, Senior Community Housing Planner in the City's Neighborhood & Business Development Office, welcomed the group to the meeting and provided a brief overview of the project. Anne then introduced the project team from Bergmann Associates including Kimberly Baptiste, Mark Johns, Ted Liddell, and Laura Fox. Kimberly outlined the agenda for the meeting. The meeting agenda included a presentation to provide an overview of the project process, related planning projects, and existing conditions of the surrounding neighborhood context, followed by small group working sessions.

Project Overview

Mark Johns of Bergmann Associates began the presentation by outlining the project objectives and the three phases of the project including 1) inventory and analysis, 2) alternative development, and 3) final preliminary design and report. Mark emphasized the role that the community will have in guiding this design process.

Understanding the Proposed "Rail to Trail" Corridor

The proposed rail to trail feasibility project has been explored in several previous planning studies, as explained by Kimberly. Both the LYLAKS BOA and the JOSANA Neighborhood Plan specifically identify this project as a means of connecting the area's various park and trail amenities and providing residents with improved access to other trail systems. The Brown's Square CAP Study, the Rochester Bicycle Master Plan, the Bike Boulevard Master Plan, and the High Falls Pedestrian Access Study all have recommendations that emphasize the need to connect the surrounding neighborhoods to the various nearby entertainment and open space amenities.

Kimberly provided context on the area surrounding the proposed trail that would be impacted by the project. She emphasized how the creation of this trail would serve to create stronger links amongst the neighborhood's existing open space amenities and better connect the JOSANA neighborhood to the region's trail system. Several maps of the area were presented to provide further context about the area's current land use, zoning, and ownership.

Discussion & Break-Out Groups

To provide feedback and ideas to the project team, meeting attendees assembled into small groups to discuss the opportunities and challenges for the proposed trail. At the end of the session, the three groups presented their findings, which included the following themes:

Connections

- Use Brown Street to connect JOSANA to the 19th Ward for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Wayfinding signage for the trail should be present at each street crossing, including dead ends.
- There needs to be a strong, safe connection between the Oak Street trailhead and the Genesee Riverway Trail. Suggestions included running the trail through School #5 and Brown Square Park to connect to the Riverway Trail through either Jay or Brown Street.
- The proximity of the Erie Canalway Trail, just one and a half miles west of the Hague Street trailhead, should be emphasized through signage.
- The Campbell Street Community Center and Edgerton Community Center are major recreational assets that should be safely connected to the trail.
- Incorporate the Bike Boulevard Master Plan's vision for Child Street into the trail design.

Safety

- Because of the lack of activity on the properties adjacent to the proposed trail, safety is a major concern.
- Lighting is essential.
- Cameras along the trail could be monitored by community members to increase the number of eyes on the trail and increase resident participation.
- The trail needs to be very open and visible from off the trail to deter drug activity.

Community Amenities

- For special events along the trail parking would be useful, especially at the Oak Street trailhead, but not critical.
- With three elementary schools within walking distance, learning kiosks should be utilized to incorporate school curriculum into the trail. Potential educational topics included the history of the Erie Canal and Rochester's industrial heritage, the cultural backgrounds of area residents, and the history of the surrounding neighborhoods.
- A playground should be along the trail to make it more of a destination and community asset. An exercise station should be installed for those using the trail for exercise.
- The trail needs to be designed to be welcoming.
- Establish a market next to the trail to encourage healthy living amongst trail users and residents.
- Highlight the bridges through lighting, painting and branding.
- Accommodate trail users with bathrooms and water fountains.
- Indicate mile markers along the trail.
- The Broad Street Bridge should be the focal point of the trail and could act as an event space with a ramp and stairs to access both levels of the space.
- The Oak Street trailhead should be the main entrance to the trail and should be treated as a gateway.
- A grocery store should be built on the Orchard-Whitney Site.
- Benches should be placed along the trail.



Next Steps

After the groups presented their ideas, Kimberly explained to the meeting attendees that these will be considered and incorporated into the inventory, analysis, and recommendations for the project. The next public meeting will be held in early 2015 where members of the public will be able to offer feedback on alternative trail designs.

Immediate next steps to complete Phase 1 of the project include the preparation of a summary of issues and opportunities, an inventory of existing conditions, stakeholder meetings, the development of trail design standards, and the submittal of an inventory and analysis report.

Walk the Trail

After the official end of the meeting, the project team led meeting attendees on an optional walking tour of the proposed trail to get a sense of the current condition of the rail corridor and identify targeted design opportunities.

