



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

**Report of Public Information Exchange No. 2
November 10, 2009, 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Town Council Chambers
Town of Cary, Walker Street Extension ST-1158**

The 2nd Public Information Exchange for the subject project was held on November 10, 2009 in the Town Council Chambers, beginning at 4:00 PM and ending at 8:00 PM. The workshop was set up as follows:

1. A greeting table was set up at the entrance to the Chambers where attendees signed in and received copies of project handouts.
2. Throughout the Chamber room, the displays for the Walker Street project were shown including;
 - a. project history station,
 - b. recommended alternative station,
 - c. NEPA process / schedule station,
 - d. artist concept station, and
 - e. a kid's corner.

There were approximately 40 attendees (see attached sign in sheets).

Listed below are the comments heard during the workshop:

- Like stepped walls with integrated art and plantings in the median.
- Consider drainage features that are both friendly and appealing (give the project a natural feel).
- Coordinate with downtown streetscape project.
- Like the open grid pattern.
- Was not sure use of Town money was best spent on this proposed project.
- Like the use of patterns (chimney / brick) from the Page Walker in concrete.
- Prefer upright railroad form at the roundabout designs.
- Like the stepped walls on walkways toward Campus / Page Walker.
- Include some of the plant material in the approach to the campus as used at Page Walker, i.e. herb & southern plants.
- Opposed to the cul-de-sac on Cedar Street.
- Property owners on Cedar Street were concerned about access, parking and overall impacts to their parcels.
- Railroad representative did not like presence of Cedar Street next to rail line.
- Citizens expressed positive opinions for Option 2.
- Black Creek Watershed Association (BCWA) expressed opposition to Option 2 – preferred Option 4.
- BCWA requested the installation of BMPs for the project.

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In addition to comments heard directly at the Public Information Exchange, comments sheets were left with project staff. Those sheets are attached as well as summarized below:

1. Do you have any questions that did not get answered tonight? If so, leave your question and staff member will contact you:

- Why place a grade separated crossing at Walker Street (with 2 dead ends) versus more heavily used at-grade crossings that are already well used? Will this create pressure to close at-grade crossings at Academy Street or Harrison Avenue? What are the traffic counts at the at-grade crossing in Cary?
- Will the street over the Extension be accessible?
- How can the public art aspect be incorporated with natural resources?
- I am concerned about increased traffic on Walker Street when project is complete and access from Dark Street.

2. Did you attend Public Information Exchange No. 1 in March 2008?

6 "No" and 4 "Yes"

3. If you attended the previous meeting, do you feel like questions and concerns raised at that meeting were considered during the planning process phase? Please circle one.

0 "No" and 3 "Yes" and 1 "No Answer"

4. As you think about the overall success of this project, tell us things that are important to you.

- The impact of removing trees and adding impervious surface should not add to storm water runoff downstream – need BMPs.
- Would rather place grade separated crossing at Harrison Avenue crossing or Academy Street or Maynard Loop near Dorcas Thrift Shop.
- Concerned that piping storm water from underpass to Hwy 54 (Chapel Hill Road) will further impair the Black Creek which is already listed as a 303(d) impaired stream.
- I don't think a new street connection should be made to Chapel Hill Road. Would prefer to use Option 4.
- Why create a cut through when folks don't use the other grade-separated route – Durham Road?
- Project is not taking into account the effect of businesses on Cedar Street
- Considering the roundabout, the linear with railroad forms vessels seemed more appropriate for the theme of the Extension.
- I really think this project is essential to Cary and it needs to be beautiful and welcoming. Like the vessels and lighting but think more "green stuff" is needed to add softness and comfort and serenity to the area.
- At one time we considered stepped back walls to enable more planting.
- Liked more curved elements to off-set hard surfaces.
- Very happy about the choice of Option 2 – pulling it away from the Page-Walker/.
- Use materials and design elements that will pass the test of time i.e. look / function in 100 years as the Page Walker looks today.
- 1. Lighting 2. Access 3. Aesthetics 4. Infrastructure design
- This project has impacts to storm water runoff to Black Creek watershed. A USEPA funded study (2009) with cost sharing from the Town of Cary and NCSU resulted in

a plan developed by the BCWA recommending retrofit BMPS to reduce storm water volume to Black Creek. This creek is 3030(d) listed as impaired. NCDWQ and the Town are obligated to make efforts to remove it from the 303(d) list. A new EPA grant has been acquired to begin this restoration attempt.

- Ease of access from surrounding neighborhoods.
- Proper drainage of rainwater at underpass site; overall appearance.
- Pedestrian friendly / safety issues are most important as I'm a daily walker through the downtown area. What's currently having to be dealt with on Academy & Chatham Streets is steeply banked sidewalk along Chatham and uneven, incompatible materials for sidewalk on Academy St. Aesthetics seem to over take what's practical and actually user-friendly.

5. Please leave any general comments / concerns on future design and project construction for the Walker Street Extension.

- Project takes away complete use of property located at 212 East Cedar Street. Access to 202 East Cedar Street will be limited and make that building not useful for deliveries or trash. Why is Cedar Street ending?
- I liked the overall design and projected landscaping. I am concerned about increased traffic and especially if more hotels and restaurants move into Town Campus area as anticipated.
- Like the motif from the Page Walker and the "chimneys" used in the design; like the meandering pedestrian all from the project to the Town Campus.
- Like the cut iron motif on the rail crossing.
- Prefer the vertical "train track: sculpture rather than the pottery feel.
- I am excited about the potential for this project to demonstrate the ability of our comments to shape our future in a very positive way.
- Extent / length of construction inconvenience to traffic.
- Do not like vessel lighting (lantern).
- With all of the checks and balances in place for each project of any magnitude – this, like those completed & those to come will not please everyone for many reasons. However, those checks and balances need too trickle down to the last detail. This did not happen when sidewalk materials were chosen last time Academy St was work on. It's impossible for wheel chairs, baby buggies, women in high heel shoes, etc. to easily travel over this cobble stone like material. The deterioration began early after project completion and continues to today where it has become a safety issue for pedestrians.
- Other issues for pedestrians that pertain to every street crossing in our community: Where we do have sidewalks, there's not enough attention paid to keeping the pedestrian path – painted sidewalk connection on the road actually visible.... Another negative component here is landscaping blocking the motorist's view in attempting to pull out into the intersection. This is a problem on streets as well as in parking lots and I wish I had a solution as I've nearly been struck as a pedestrian or creamed as a motorist in these situations!!! Where there are actual pedestrian-crossing signals, none of them are truly pedestrian friendly – i.e. the lighted figure is only on for a fraction of the time it takes for a "walker" to cross before it goes to the "flashing hand". You and I know what the light sequence means but the motorist only sees the red hand and thinks that is telling the pedestrian he no longer has right-of-way. This is an education issue but as a walker it is a safety issue. I've been horn-blasted, yelled at, sworn at, and had cars attempt to intimidate by seeing how close

they can get without making contact. I've contacted Town of Cary staff as well as DOT to try and get the simple change of keeping the lighted walking figure on for a couple more seconds. The response is usually "our safety experts have checked the timing of the lights and they meet all of the standards." My response is, you can't measure pedestrian safety with a stop watch or some desk-bound engineer's idea of how long each step of the light sequence should be. It takes actual walking through the intersections or if that is too much to ask, then sit in your car / truck for a while and observe! Maynard & Kildaire are a classic case here.... Granted a lot of pedestrians do not bother using their signal buttons to cross, but, again some tweaking of the system as well as public education could help.