

**WORK SESSION
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
5555 PERIMETER DRIVE
MAY 13, 2024**

Minutes

Mayor Amorose Groomes called the Monday, May 13, 2024 work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council members present: Vice Mayor Alutto, Mayor Amorose Groomes, Ms. De Rosa, Ms. Fox, Mr. Keeler, Ms. Kramb and Mr. Reiner.

Staff present: Ms. O'Callaghan, Ms. Rauch, Ms. Willis, Chief Paez, Mr. Hammersmith, Mr. Gracia, Chief Paez, Ms. Blake, Mr. Ament, Ms. Babbitt, Mr. Ashrawi, Mr. Will, Ms. Wawszkiewicz, Ms. Goliver, Mr. Bitar.

Others present: Martin Zogran, Letitia Tormay, and Anthony Polidoro, Sasaki Associates; Michael Ryzhov, SB Friedman Development Advisors; and Miles Hebert and Mike Brehm, EMH&T

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Amorose Groomes invited Mr. Keeler to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Metro Center Revitalization Implementation

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that the team has made a lot of progress on this goal since the last work session in January. She stated that this is a comprehensive effort that touches many divisions within the City.

Ms. Rauch stated that the consultant team has done a lot of work with our staff groups over the last several months to get to this point. She introduced Martin Zogran, Letitia Tormay, and Anthony Polidoro, Sasaki Associates; Michael Ryzhov, SB Friedman Development Advisors; and Miles Hebert and Mike Brehm, EMH&T. She reviewed the agenda for the evening. She stated that staff would be looking for feedback regarding the three scenarios that will be brought forward. The goal is to come out of this meeting with the scenario that Council would like staff to implement.

Mr. Zogran provided a presentation (attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit A) and stated that they will introduce and review three alternative urban design frameworks and identify a scenario that is preferred. He provided a schedule showing where we are in the process. He stated that this meeting will help to refine an urban design framework that illustrates preferred development patterns that will guide the future development of Metro Center. He shared that from identifying the framework, transportation studies will be advanced and catalytic projects will be identified and implemented. He referenced some of the visioning work that has already been done and highlighted the desired concepts that came out of the visioning. He summarized what he has heard out of conversations with City Council, stakeholders and the public visual survey.

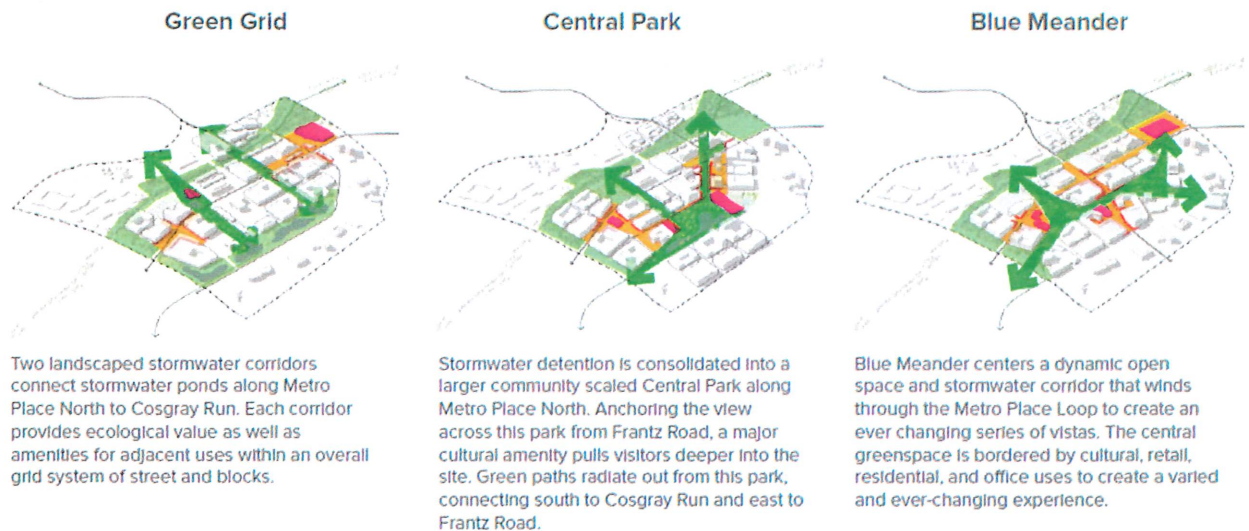
There are four pillars that have been identified that describe the vision for Metro Center, they are:

- Redefine the identity and shape a unique sense of place,
- Rebalance the District,

- Reprioritize mobility and strengthen connectivity, and
- Reimagine water systems and create purposeful open spaces.

Mr. Zogran used Bridge Park as an example of urban space with open spaces that are not really integrated with each other. He stated that they want to do something different with Metro Center and integrate the spaces. He showed the three design alternatives (below), which are referred to as:

- Green Grid,
- Central Park, and
- Blue Meander.



Mr. Zogran stated that as part of the engagement process, they spoke with the property owners in Metro Center. He stated that there were three main takeaways from those conversations, the first of which is parking. A big part of the current appeal of Metro Center is the accessibility and parking. The second is the MOA, the Metro Owners Association which is a group that comes together to manage the snow removal, streetscape and the stormwater system. The existing detention ponds need improvement and maintenance. Finally, he stated that the Metro Center property owners are willing to participate in the future of Metro Center and what that should be. They are excited about a vision for the area.

Market Analysis

Mr. Ryzhov provided an overview of the market analysis including metrics around jobs, occupancy, and product types. He stated that today, office space accounts for three-quarters of total Metro Center rentable building area. There are no residential areas within Metro Center, which limits activity outside of working hours. He shared a graphic of the office space that is available according to the percentage of availability (Exhibit A). He stated that the Metro Center office availability rate as a whole is about 25%, and by comparison, Franklin County overall is at about 13.5%. Metro Center job counts have been stable over the last decade. He shared additional graphics regarding employee visits to the Metro Center (Exhibit A). Mr. Ryzhov shared projected housing unit demand. He stated it is estimated that Metro Center would be able to capture 890 –

1,210 housing units. Regarding office, most new office buildings in Dublin's submarket are smaller, multi-tenant spaces. He stated that Metro Center can support approximately 90,000 square feet of new retail space by 2040. This statistic is based on Dublin's projected retail growth. Mr. Ryzhov concluded with strategic considerations for redeveloping Metro Center, which are:

- Lead with high quality retail;
- Create a sense of place;
- Increase the residential base with multi-family;
- Follow rental with for-sale housing; and
- Explore missing middle/creative office typologies.

Transportation and Stormwater Analysis

Mr. Brehm stated that Metro Center is very isolated today. It is appropriate to consider more regional connectivity as redevelopment is considered. He added that this look at connectivity is in conjunction with other studies that the City is already involved in, such as BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) and LinkUS. Mr. Brehm showed a map illustrating four potential alignments between Shier Rings Road and Metro Place (Exhibit A). He reviewed each of the four options crossing I-270 and the impacts of each option. Option 4 is emerging as the preferred option (Shier Rings Road to Metro Place South, avoiding 655 Metro Place). Mr. Brehm stated that a Blazer Parkway connection in the short-term would provide an alternate route to Frantz Road. He shared that the Blazer Parkway connection can be a complete street with generous bike/pedestrian accommodations that goes all the way to Tuttle. Mr. Brehm stated that they are also planning for the Signature Trail to go through Metro Center even though the exact route of the Signature Trail is not yet known.

Systems Approach

Mr. Hebert stated that there are a few different philosophies relating to stormwater management. Mr. Hebert reviewed the three systems approaches that can help to inform redevelopment. The first approach is most like what is there today, consolidated regional retention basins with some disbursement on individual sites. The second is each individual lot manages its own stormwater. This approach takes away from the goal of using stormwater retention water as an amenity or feature. The third is a hybrid solution, which is a combination of the first two and integrated into the Site Landscape Strategy. This option would allow some green infrastructure to be included as well.

Mr. Zogran reiterated the four pillars for transforming Metro Center:

- Redefine the identity and shape a unique sense of place,
- Rebalance the District,
- Reprioritize mobility and strengthen connectivity, and
- Reimagine water systems and create purposeful open spaces.

Mr. Polidoro reviewed a map of the existing condition of Metro Place before introducing the three design alternatives: Green Grid, Central Park and Blue Meander. Ms. Tormay reviewed the landscape themes associated with each of the design alternatives. Mr. Zogran explained what were identified as catalytic sites for each of the three alternatives.

- The Green Grid is a design that bolsters and improves the assets as they are today. He stated that creating the sense of place early within the redevelopment is important. This alternative shows the crossing over I-270 and an extension of Blazer Parkway to allow

additional access points into the Metro Center area. In terms of development, it is clear that there is a need to introduce new uses to the area.

- The Central Park design keeps existing stormwater ponds and expands upon them with a centralized park location. The connections are the same over I-270 with this option and Blazer Parkway is extended through the center of the location closer to the park space. The development with this option is very similar to the first option.
- The Blue Meander option dramatically changes the open space within the development. This option focuses on a relationship between the architecture and the landscape itself and looks at removing the vehicular component from the open spaces. The major connections of this option work to bring the activity to the center of the site.

Mr. Reiner stated that the relationship between buildings and water should be a major feature of the area. He added that he feels that the proximity of humans to water is important.

Mr. Keeler stated that water was high on the list of the survey results. He showed support for the Central Park concept. He liked the scale of the water and stated that having smaller disbursed sections of water may be missed. He suggested making sure there were breaks between family friendly areas and adult areas. It is very important that the development along Frantz Road allow enough room to have a visual into the area. He added that having the lake area along Metro Place North would have a visual impact.

Ms. Fox stated that she likes the Blue Meander option. She likes it because it is unique and the water stretches across the area. She likes the Central Park idea with a catalytic use. The multi-family buildings should be a variety of shapes and purposes.

Ms. Krumb likes both the Blue Meander and the Central Park and suggested a sort of hybrid of the two options. She liked the visibility from Frantz Road and the features that would draw people into the area offered by the Central Park option. She is concerned about the main entrance being across from Corbins Mill. She likes the Blue Meandering option, but feels it is more hidden and only accessible for the people who live here. She likes the water throughout the space.

Ms. De Rosa showed support for the meandering option. She likes the potential of discovery and draw for people to come and walk, bike, etc. The crossing of the road into the area and connectivity to the rest of the City will be important. She is not supportive of a big event center in the middle of this space. It could be an interesting eatery, retail, etc. space.

Vice Mayor Alutto likes the meandering option. She stated that she is a little worried it will be hidden without the proper view into the area from Frantz.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she has a desire to keep water in the center and make this a pedestrian zone. She would be supportive of pushing some of the buildings to the edge. She expressed that she does not want a bunch of little ponds. She would like the signature trail to come through this area. She advocated for a strong eco-system. She agrees there needs to be water engagement and event opportunities. There could be pedestrian crossings in the area over the body of water, but not vehicular. She is not supportive of seeing cars driving through the center of this. She agreed that keeping it open at Frantz Road is critical for visibility.

City Council participated in a board exercise from 7:14 p.m. – 7:35 p.m.

Mr. Zogran stated that Council seemed to reach consensus on an option. He shared some of the comments he received during the exercise from Council Members:

- Mr. Keeler and Mr. Reiner expressed the importance of visibility of water features;
- Ms. Krumb gave clear thoughts on the meandering being a gathering space that is visible from Frantz Road;
- Ms. Fox expressed the importance of architecture and variety;
- Ms. De Rosa shared thoughts about year-round activity with retail and restaurants; and
- Mayor Amorose Groomes mentioned the ecological standpoint of the water features is important and should be carefully planned.

He stated that the idea for transportation centers around using the loop and providing access, but that the center core would be vehicle free. Ms. Krumb stated that the Blazer Parkway extension should be along the western connection so it is routed more toward the outer loop and keeps vehicles out of the center. Ms. De Rosa agreed with that suggestion.

Mr. Keeler stated that he heard from a tenant on the inner loop of Metro and his concern was having parking available. Mr. Keeler stated he was in favor of keeping the area vehicle free, but it needs to be discussed with the property owners. Mr. Zogran stated that there is a way to have access without crossing over the green space and the consultant team will explore that.

Mr. Hebert stated that there are some challenges with moving the stormwater basins, but it is doable.

Mr. Zogran commented on the desire to have a variety of unique architecture. He welcomed Council's ideas and inspirational photos they may have. Ms. Rauch will compile any information received from Council.

Ms. Fox asked how the inspiration should be sold to developers so they understand what is desired and they express creativity with this area.

Ms. De Rosa stated that she would like to see Option 2 in the catalytic sites come back with a variety of retail to activate the area year-round.

Next Steps

Ms. Rauch stated that the consultant team will take the feedback and be prepared to bring back more specific considerations around the catalytic sites. There will be two more opportunities to discuss prior to the end of September.

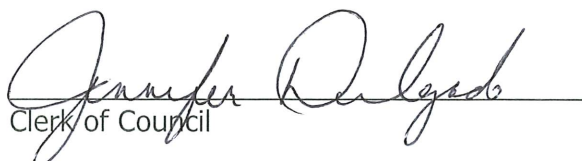
Mr. Gracia stated that there is some private property engagement that needs to happen now that there is a direction forward.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.



Mayor - Presiding Officer



Clerk of Council