

**WORK SESSION
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
5555 PERIMETER DRIVE
SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

Minutes

Mayor Amorose Groomes called the Monday, September 30, 2024 work session to order at 6:04 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, Ms. Babbitt, Mr. Hartmann, Mr. Will, Ms. Goliver and Mr. Bitar.

Others present: Kim Way, Planning and Zoning Commission; Martin Zogran and Anthony Polidoro, Sasaki Associates; and Miles Hebert and Mike Brehm, EMH&T.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Amorose Groomes invited Ms. Willis to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Metro Center Revitalization Implementation

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that the last time the Metro Center Revitalization goal was discussed was at a work session in May of this year. At that meeting, the consultant team with staff identified three design concepts for consideration. Council consensus was on the "blue meander" design concept. Over the summer months, work has been done to further define the details of that design concept. She stated that the presentation this evening will be iterative in that they will present a concept and then pause for Council feedback. She welcomed the Sasaki Associates team members present.

Mr. Zogran began by reviewing the process of this project thus far. He stated that they are currently working on the Development and Implementation Plan to ensure that this moves forward and is not just a vision. There are three components that go with this Development and Implementation Plan, which are the:

- Urban Design Framework Plan,
- Catalytic Project and Implementation Plan, and
- Transportation and Stormwater Studies.

He added that the Urban Design Framework Plan and the Catalytic Project and Implementation Plan will both ultimately be rolled into the Metro Center Revitalization and Urban Design Framework Plan Report. The Transportation and Stormwater Studies will move along on a parallel track.

Mr. Zogran reviewed the existing conditions in Metro Center. He stated it is a product of its era as a single use office park with a defining characteristic of surface parking lots. There is inadequate stormwater infrastructure in place and an underutilized natural amenity – Cosgray Run. He stated that it is also essentially a cul-de-sac with limited access.

Mr. Zogran reviewed the design alternatives with focus on the blue meander design that Council chose as the design concept. This concept uses water as a central defining feature of the plan to

show what it means to transform from surface parking lots into an ecosystem that is enjoyable for families, kids and elders.

There are four guiding principles as this work on the design concept continued. They are:

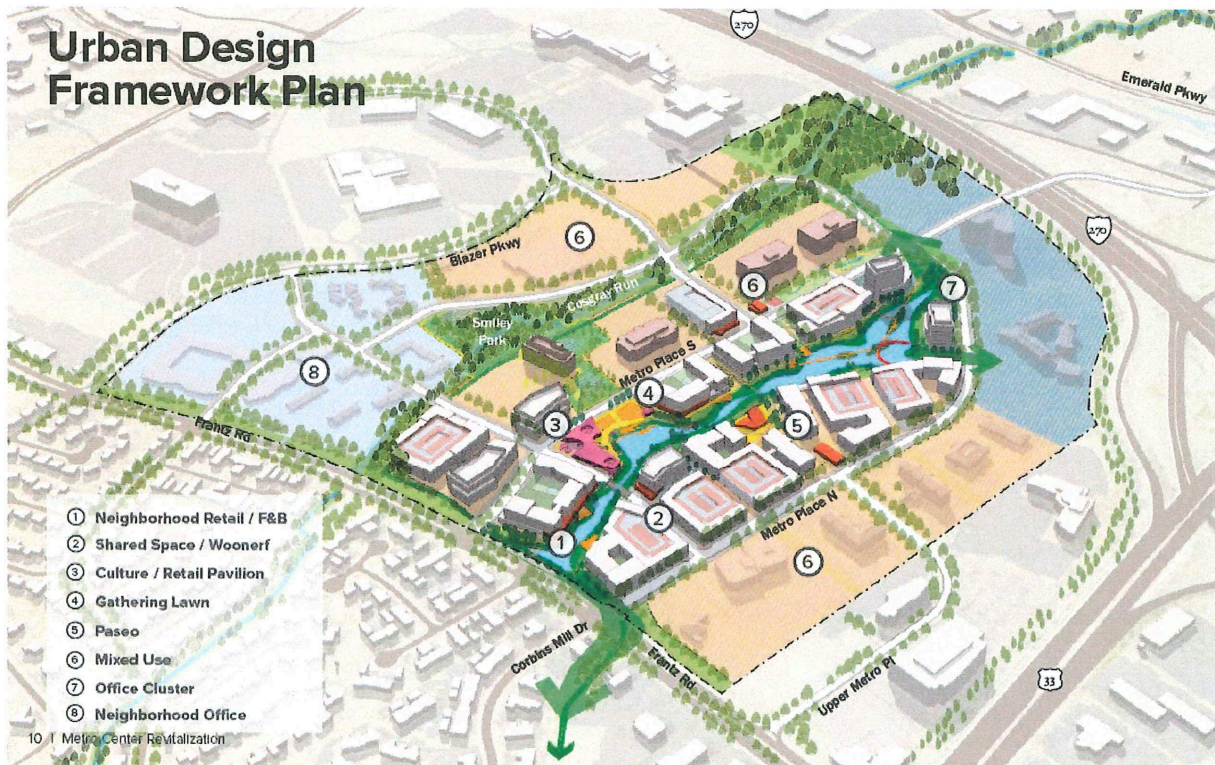
- Redefining the identity and shaping a unique sense of place;
- Rebalancing the district;
- Reimagining water systems and creating purposeful open spaces; and
- Reprioritizing mobility and strengthening connectivity.

Mr. Zogran provided the following images of Metro Center today and what Metro Center could look like tomorrow.





The three-dimensional depiction of this in the Urban Design Framework Plan has several components.



The Urban Design Framework incorporates active outdoor areas that will be amenities for those who live and work in the area but will also attract visitors as well. Waterway Park will be a unique landscape of nature in the City. There is also a plaza planned as a community venue for performance, celebration and people-watching. This plan creates a network of uses and value for all those in and around the space. Having deliberate areas of activation is a large part of the plan. Mr. Zogran pointed out the areas of focus that will pull people in from Frantz Road. He provided a view that illustrates the range of uses that are a part of the plan.



Land Use

Mr. Zogran welcomed questions or comments from Council. He offered the following as questions for discussion.

- One of the project's goals is to diversify the mix of land uses; does the proposed land use mix achieve that goal, and what would you like to see more of?
- The development framework uses the Envision Dublin Community Plan future land use recommendations as the underlying land uses. Key site visibility, locations where activity nodes and corridors are desired, and other urban design recommendations are used to guide where office, commercial, and residential is appropriate in mixed-use areas. Does this approach align with your expectations on how to address mixed use?

Mr. Reiner asked if there was enough mass here to draw a grocery store type retail experience. Mr. Zogran stated that this is a robust mix of residential and office so there could be a limited offering quasi-grocery store that may not be the full store, but a junior version. Mr. Reiner asked if a use such as this would be best placed toward the outer portion of the area. Mr. Zogran agreed

and added that the one issue they tend to struggle with is parking. It could be a great combination of walkability and parking options.

Mr. Reiner asked if the beach concept was being incorporated into this plan to activate the water. Mr. Zogran responded affirmatively but stated that we need to define "beach" and what it would look like in this space. It is stormwater, not freshwater but there are examples of a beach concept without people in the water.

Ms. De Rosa commented on her observations in recent travels regarding grocery shopping. She stated that grocery store shopping has changed through delivery options now that groceries can be delivered within two hours. She noticed that, in her travels to Europe, they do not go to the grocery store, it comes to them.

Mr. Keeler stated that he noticed there is no retail facing Frantz Road. He expressed a desire to see what people would see from Frantz Road. Mr. Zogran stated that Frantz Road does not get a great deal of pedestrian activity. He stated that the plan would be for two-sided retail and explained what would be seen from Frantz could be common spaces in the residential buildings. The retail would have a better chance of survival if it were brought into the area a little bit. Mr. Keeler stated that he would want to spark interest in the area and draw people in to visit the area. In response to Mr. Keeler's question regarding where parking will be located, Mr. Zogran referred to the Urban Design Framework slide (above) and stated that within the loop is structured parking. Mr. Zogran pointed out the buildings that are marked in the plan to be structured parking. Mr. Reiner commented on the cost of the wrap-style structure being more expensive to build.

Ms. Fox stated that she liked the mixture of uses and the way the plan is balanced, but she expressed concern that the cultural area is not unique enough. The central area needs to be extremely vibrant, and buildings should activate the water in some way with dining experiences and be around-the-clock interesting. She asked about nighttime lighting and how the space is activated at night. She encouraged the consultants to think of ways to promote a performance space that is multi-functional that can be used all year long. She encouraged the consultants to think about what it is that no one else has that makes this a unique area.

Ms. Fox asked in what ways the remaining water going to the west side will be activated. She asked how the waterways will be activated in unexpected ways. Mr. Zogran stated that their focus is to continue work that promotes the interaction with the water such as dining experiences that are close to or on the water. Activating these areas is a constant goal and the plan consists of breaking it up into both hardscape and softscape areas for many different types of events. Mr. Zogran also pointed out that there is a deliberate spectrum going from busy, active areas to calm, quieter, nature-based areas. Mr. Zogran offered to provide Council with a nighttime view and also a wintertime view.

Ms. Fox stated that the architecture looks like Bridge Park and she is looking for something different and unique. Residents are expecting to see something truly unique. The architecture should be outside-the-box thinking.

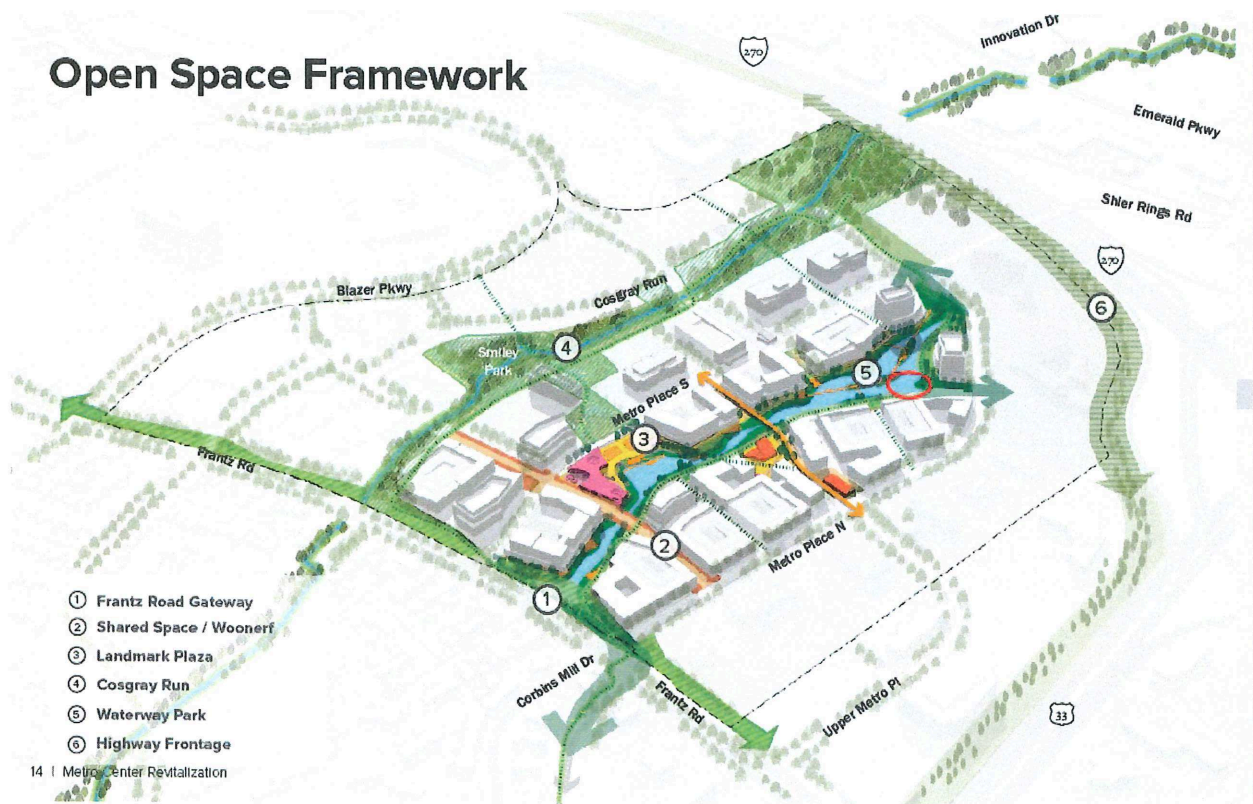
Mr. Reiner expressed support for Ms. Fox's comments regarding the water and interacting with it. He would like to maximize the interaction with the water and do things that are unique and different.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about the size comparison of green space between the Urban Design Framework and existing conditions. Mr. Zogran did not have exact acreage numbers but

would be happy to provide to Council as a follow-up. Mayor Amorose Groomes would like to be prepared to answer the question about green space. She stated that she is aware that green space is shifting, but it is important that it does not feel like less green space. Mr. Zogran stated that he is sure that there will be more open space of a higher quality than exists today. Mayor Amorose Groomes asked approximately how many residential units will be on the interior portion of Metro Place. Mr. Zogran stated that there are approximately 3000 units inside that loop. He added that it is not extraordinarily dense in any way.

Mr. Reiner asked about tree canopies in the various open and entertainment spaces. He stated that the trees provide a canopy, and still provide visual benefit. Mr. Zogran stated that the landscape architects would put more trees in the open areas, but for rendering purposes, to be able to see the areas clearly, they left some of the trees out. He added that as the plan moves into more detail, it would be possible to see more on the drawings.

Mr. Polidoro introduced the Open Space Framework which has been worked on parallel to the Urban Design Framework. He explained the 6 marked areas.



Mr. Polidoro shared a rendering of the Waterway Park (noted on the drawing above as "5").



Open Space

Mr. Polidoro paused the presentation for Council questions or discussion. He provided the following questions:

- The intent is to create a sequence of spaces revealed as one moves through the site. Have we created this?
- Does the new stormwater feature achieve the intended purpose of placemaking and value creation, and is water appropriately integrated into the site design?
- Does the open space provide the right balance of active and passive uses?
- What other elements might be added?

Mr. Way stated that this is a beautiful plan/vision. He wants the open space to grab people and bring them in. He worries that this may be reinforcing the cul-de-sac mentality and not bringing people in. He would like to see something that welcomes people into the space and encourages them to continue to discover and explore.

Ms. Krumb stated that the plaza is really cool, but it is hidden. She agreed that more needs to be seen to draw you in. Ms. Krumb expressed that she is not thrilled about the view from Frantz Road because there is nothing intriguing to draw someone in. Mr. Zogran stated that the entryways are wide they will provide some view. She would like to see renderings of what the gateways and entryways look like.

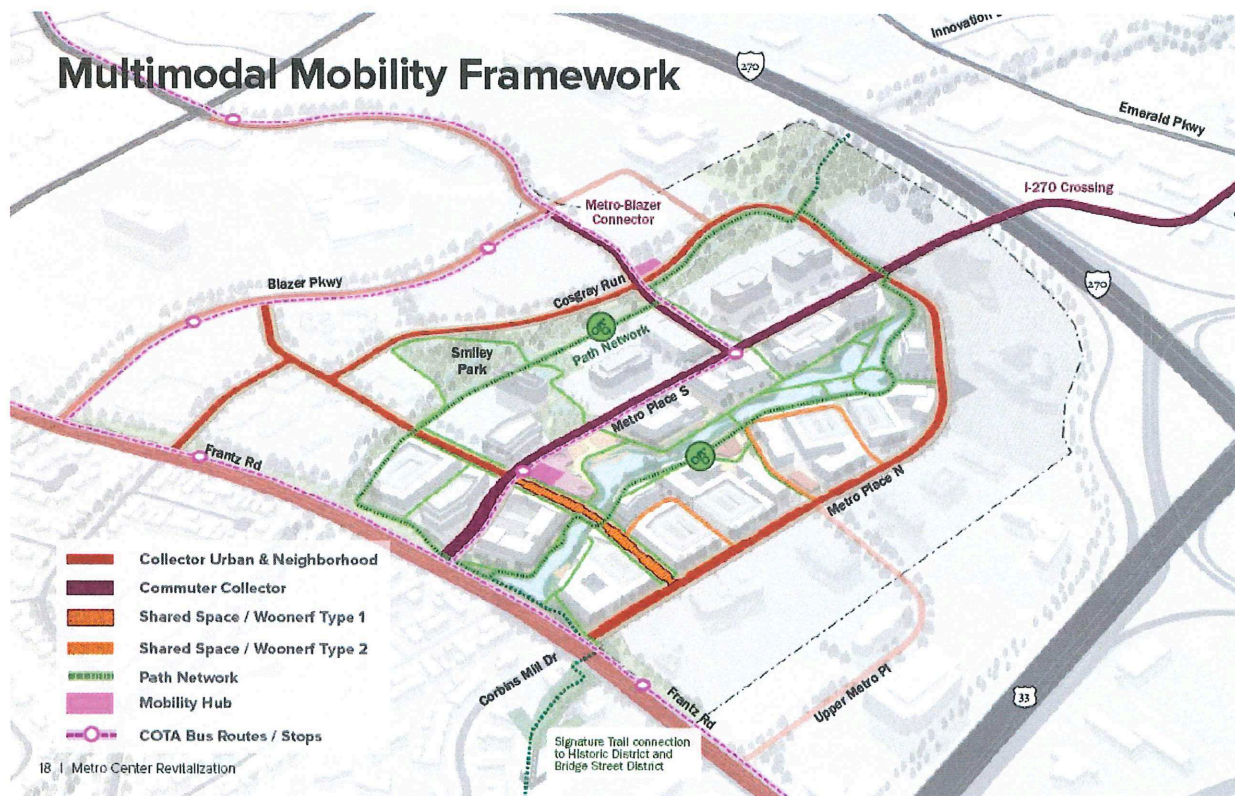
Mr. Keeler stated that the entry being large enough or having some visibility on the outer parts of the area to see what might be worth exploring is important. He suggested that adding an element of interest such as the sails between buildings like they have in Madrid that catch attention could help.

Vice Mayor Alutto agreed with Mr. Keeler's comments and stated that she believes interest can be accomplished at the gateways from a commercial perspective. She is very supportive of a path that pulls you through the area into those natural areas. She does not want the cul-de-sac feel. She thanked the consultants for their hard work.

Ms. De Rosa stated that she likes having something hidden that you have to find. She stated that seeing everything does not necessarily draw people in and the only thing people will be looking for is a place to park. She does not worry about people finding their way into the space. The space itself will entice people to want to see more and explore. She stated that parking cannot be the frustration for visitors.

Ms. Fox stated that the impression is important as people approach the gateway so if a placemaking element along the water can hook visitors to want to see more, then they will come into the space. She commented on the diversity and interest of land use and building type to create interest instead of just large buildings everywhere.

Mr. Zogran introduced the Multimodal Mobility Framework including the streets, paths and bikeways – all the ways people move. Also included in the plan is the network and connectivity outside of this space as well.



Mr. Zogran reviewed the various modes of transportation included in this plan. He also compared what is being considered in the planning process versus existing conditions such as streetscape and landscaping along the pathways that are more inviting.



Mr. Zogran shared this image as a “peekaboo moment” that one could possibly see off Frantz Road. This image provides a sense of discovery.

Ms. Krumb stated that this image suggests that you may be able to see inside from Frantz Road. She expressed her concern that with the streetscape when all the trees are represented there will be no visual inside the space.

Mr. Zogran suggested continuing through the last segments of the presentation and then he can answer any remaining questions and take comments. Council consensus was agreement.

Mr. Way asked about the retail and whether there was adequate mobility to receive deliveries, refuse pick-up etc., or if this is a little too pedestrian friendly. Is it too cut off from vehicular access? He suggested that the street network grid be carefully considered. Mr. Zogran stated that this is not following conventional ideas, it is different in that it is largely walkable. He added that all the retail is accessible by vehicle.

Mr. Polidoro stated that, regarding implementation, this section of the plan is looking at the catalytic site. It is primarily focused along Frantz Road to kick start redevelopment and proceed from there. He noted that their current research states that the larger multi-family residential buildings are what is in demand.

Mr. Zogran stated that this concludes the presentation, and he welcomed any feedback.

Ms. Fox stated that housing is needed for seniors and workers. She stated that she would like to see a variety of housing styles. She also noted that if this will be a beautiful natural environment,

then the housing needs to speak to that. She encouraged the thinking of different housing types and ensuring that it meets the need and is affordable. Mr. Zogran stated that a good residential mix should provide diversity of housing types. Affordable new residential buildings in Dublin and how it meets the need is more of a policy question rather than a design question.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the challenge to the City is to make the public space worthy of investment.

Mr. Keeler referred to the Catalytic Site Boundary and stated that it makes sense to start there. Some of the other buildings may be there 10, 15 or 20 years from now, so he asked how to take this vision and bring it to reality with these existing buildings. Mr. Zogran stated that he agrees that the Frantz Road parcels are critical to the development, but this development along Frantz Road will add value to the existing buildings as well. Discussions continue with all owners.

Ms. Kramb stated that she likes having a plan of where to begin. The two big catalytic projects are purely residential and she wanted to be sure that these can stand alone, because there is no way to know how long the other redevelopment could take.

Ms. De Rosa stated that it may depend upon how quickly the greenway and waterway infrastructure gets in place because that will bring energy with it. Mr. Zogran stated that large development projects often struggle with where to begin. For many master plan communities, there is an initial investment in the public realm and open space that creates enough value and destination.

Next Steps

Ms. Rauch shared the following next steps in the planning:

- October 3: There is a public open house planned at The Exchange in Bridge Park where a brief presentation will be provided regarding Metro Center; and
- October/Fall: The final draft of the Framework Plan will be brought forward for adoption by Council.

Adjourn to Executive Session

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to adjourn to executive session for the purposes of considering confidential information related to a request for economic development assistance that involves public infrastructure improvements that are directly related to an economic development project, and which executive session is necessary to protect the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project

Vice Mayor Alutto seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. De Rosa, yes; Ms. Kramb, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Vice Mayor Alutto, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes.

Reconvene

The meeting was reconvened at 8:37 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.



Mayor - Presiding Officer



Clerk of Council