



MEETING NOTES

Historic Dublin Task Force

Tuesday, September 15, 2020 | 4:30 - 6:30 pm

Historic Dublin Task Force Members Present: Kim Way (Chair), Kathy Lannan (Vice Chair), Garrick Daft, Carol Matune, Alan and Marylou Szuter, Lynn Long and Sally Van Horn.

HDTF Members Absent: Jay Nordenbrock, Paula Yonnotti-Ansel, Becky Brightman, Rick Weber, Clay Rose, Craig Price, Enas Lanham, Ed Ostrowski, Burt Dowden, Olivia Wirth, and Rohan Madan.

City Council and Dublin Staff: Council Member Jane Fox; Jennifer Rauch, Planning Director; Tammy Noble, Senior Planner; Cyndy Barney, IT Project Lead; and Laurie Wright, Administrative Support II.

Ms. Rauch welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation. She stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to review draft recommendations that once completed, will be presented to City Council. She stated that the recommendations were based on a compilation of comments that have been gathered over the course of Task Force meetings.

Mr. Way suggested adding graphics to the report before being presented to City Council and the public.

Ms. Rauch presented a copy of the recommendations and shared her screen with the members for this virtual meeting. Ms. Noble introduced the first recommendation "Creating unique features in the Historic District that differentiate the District from other parts of the City". She said that this discussion topic has been mentioned in several different meetings and asked the Task Force to provide any feedback they may have.

I. UPDATE THE HISTORIC DISTRICT AREA PLAN

- 1. GATEWAYS:** CONSIDER GATEWAY FEATURES AT THE TRANSITION POINTS INTO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT THAT DIFFERENTIATE THE DISTRICT FROM THE OTHER PARTS OF THE CITY.

Ms. Szuter started the conversation by stating that the current entry features to the District are forgettable and under pronounced. She discussed this as an area of improvement. Mr. Way said he thought this was especially true when one enters the District from the east as there is a lack of visual impact from this entranceway to the District. Ms. Lannan suggested that the District be made notable through a number of improvements including lighting, sidewalks, and streetscapes. Mr. Garrick said that he remembered a gateway feature/plan that was presented in a wayfinding presentation from Terry Foegler but did not recall the details. He wondered why those ideas/plans



have not come forward. Ms. Szuter emphasized a natural look (i.e. stone) and complimentary to the rest of the District. Ms. Long did not want the City of Dublin to replicate what other communities have done but believes Dublin has plenty of creative resources to use. Ms. Matune added gateways need markers to easily distinguish the different areas, especially for someone that has never been to the area before. Mr. Way said approaching from the east, the edge along Donotoes is not that attractive. The following are the recommendations settled upon:

- a. Incorporate features that signify entry into the Historic District (i.e. columns, archways, monumental signage, walls, and landscape, etc.)
- b. Focus improvements to the east gateway, across the SR 161 vehicular bridge to High Street to minimize or eliminate curb cuts and screen parking areas (i.e. low screen walls, landscape screening, and street trees, etc.).

2. STREETSCAPE: FOCUS ON A STREETSCAPE DESIGN THAT IS PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY AND FITS THE CHARACTER OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

Ms. Szuter said that Dublin is known as a “Tree City” so natural landscapes and a green environment should be encouraged. She suggested a canopy of trees on High Street. Mr. Way stated that if the District is going to be pedestrian friendly, sidewalks are important over other features or elements that may block pedestrian movement.

Ms. Fox said the Architectural Review Board and City Council are currently discussing high quality streetscapes with wide sidewalks after viewing the presentation from Parks and Recreation, which proposed a stone wall up and down High Street. She reported they were not in favor of the wall as they believed it did not belong in the Historic District and would change the character, therefore it is not going to be built. She asked the Task Force to give clear direction about what qualifies for high quality streetscapes.

Mr. Way said the presentation the Task Force was given from Parks and Recreation was well received, he thought. Pedestrian friendly to him sounds like a surface that is more flat and wide so he thought the presentation accomplished that with the wall. Ms. Lannan said as part of that stone wall presentation, she liked that Parks and Recreation were proposing a healthier environment for the trees to flourish. She asked if there are other solutions as wider sidewalks are needed for social distancing during the pandemic but the ones Parks and Recreation proposed on the interior of the walls seemed like liability due to the uneven grading. Ms. Long saw the walls as unfriendly barriers.

Mr. Way suggested not being prescriptive in the recommendations; the specific designs should be left to others.

Ms. Fox said the Architectural Review Board had a recent discussion about the stone walls that were proposed for the Historic District of which they thought did not belong in the District. That is how comments like these help guide the Boards and Commission. The following are the recommendations the Task Force settled upon:

- a. Wider sidewalks to allow adequate pedestrian movement to be well-kept, well-maintained and level surfaces to eliminate tripping hazards.
- b. Amenities for various modes of transportation including biking (i.e. bike racks, and bike service/repair stations, etc.)
- c. Streetlights that are similar in nature and appropriate designed and scaled for the District.
- d. Benches, trash receptacles, and other amenities that are in character with the District.
- e. Street tree selections that are species native to central Ohio and have a growth rate and scale that is appropriate for the District and local streets.
- f. Street trees that have underground space and soil conditions that will support healthy growth.

3. PARKING: RELY ON EXISTING PARKING LOTS AND ON-STREET PARKING INSTEAD OF CREATING NEW PARKING AREAS/LOTS, UNLESS REQUIRED.

The members have said repeatedly that more parking area/lots is not necessary. The members discussed that it is more important to manage of what is available and encourage shared parking when possible. Ms. Lannan repeated Mr. Szuter's suggestion to have application-based technology to find parking to assist visitors to find open spaces, as well as highlight which spaces require payment would be helpful. Mr. Way agreed technology could be utilized to manage parking. This came on the heels of the parking presentation the Task Force received.

Mr. Way asked if signs should be specific to public or private parking areas. Ms. Noble suggested that could be a recommendation to City Council as a way of improving general wayfinding.

Ms. Noble asked if parking lots in the Historic District should appear different from other parts of the city to which Mr. Szuter agreed. He said some of the regulations, such as border landscaping, islands, and lighting do not necessarily work well for small areas of designated parking, which is in the Historic District. They should not appear as suburban parking lots used in other parts of the City. Ms. Noble clarified that aesthetics could be different but the safety regulations need to be complied with, however. Mr. Way indicated that regulations for aesthetics and maintenance need stronger language so the parking areas are nicely paved, that there are no potholes, and the landscaping that is there at the edges should look good. Ms. Fox agreed that when islands are required in parking lots, parking spaces are lost. Ms. Noble said not only are islands desired for aesthetics to break up a parking area but a tree canopy helps the asphalt to last longer by keeping

the heat down on the surface. Mr. Way proposed the requirements could still include shading on the edges of the parking area with trees. The following are the recommendations settled upon:

- a. Encourage shared parking, when possible.
- b. Investigate alternative parking standards to allow for easier consolidation of parking lots and parking lot upgrades, and minimize or eliminate suburban design requirements.
- c. Investigate and adopt application-based technology to assist in the management of parking.
- d. Ensure private parking lots are well maintained and incorporate necessary screening and landscaping.

4. OPEN SPACE AND PARKS: STRONGLY ENCOURAGE THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAY CONNECTIONS.

Ms. Matune said she liked everything that was read from previous discussions – Preserve open space, properly identifying existing parks, create greenway connections, and create more access to the Scioto River. Mr. and Mrs. Szuter said they also loved everything that was just stated. Mr. Way said there should be more opportunities for parks along S. High Street as they seem to be lacking in that area. He asked how parks are distinguished from an open space. Ms. Noble answered a park is dedicated and has some form of usability to it - active or passive park space. Open space is usually required through the development process and can be used to conserve natural features, or provide buffering between uses. Ms. Fox asked how the members felt about quarries. Ms. Noble said she did not recall any discussions about including quarries in open spaces and parks. Mr. Way said he was not aware of any quarries. Mr. Szuter said he was aware of the one on private property that Ms. Fox was referring to but thought the owner of that property has stated they have no intention of developing that area. Mr. Szuter said if it is in the Historic District, all those same guidelines should apply. There is a gate there because it is private property. Mr. Way said the property could be used as an anchor for the south side, access use to the river, and perhaps an attraction such as a kayak launch. The Karrer Barn could also become an attraction for the area; currently, it is being used for storage. Ms. Szuter asked if it was up to the Task Force to recommend possible, future green spaces. Ms. Fox said that is exactly what the Task Force can do; make a wish list for the district. Both Ms. Szuter and Mr. Way agreed the property with the L-shaped building needs to be changed. Mr. Way said all the parks should be on a list to highlight what the residents of the District deem as precious assets and that could include the library and open spaces. The following are the recommendations settled upon:

- a. Preserve existing open spaces and parks.
- b. Properly identify, demarcate and physically connect the existing parks and open space networks throughout the Historic District including: Indian Run Falls Park; the Dublin Veterans Park/Grounds of Remembrance; West Pedestrian Bridge Plaza; Library Plaza,

- BriHi Plaza; Dublin Convention and Visitors Bureau Plaza; Karrer Barn Park; Dublin Springs Park; Kiwanis Riverway Park; and the new Riverside Crossing Park.
- c. Identify areas for greenway connections throughout the District and in particular, designate a connection from Dublin Springs Park back to High Street.
 - d. Create more designated physical access points to the Scioto River and Riverside Crossing Park.
 - e. Identify the potential for additional open space or park areas south of SR 161.
 - f. Identify opportunities for a southern anchor and river access on underutilized properties (i.e. Karrer Barn and McDowell property).
 - g. Provide an opportunity for new development and a public park or plaza at 55 S. High Street that includes the L-shaped building.
 - h. Coordinate and collaborate with the Dublin Parks and Recreation Department.

5. INDIAN RUN CORRIDOR: PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE THE PRESERVATION OF INDIAN RUN AND THE ADJACENT GREENWAY CORRIDOR.

Ms. Noble said originally the Indian Run Corridor was included in the “Parks and Open Space” section but agreed with Ms. Rauch that it should be separate, to stand out. Mr. Way added Ms. Lannan would not like to see it any other way. Ms. Lannan agreed with the above statement and confirmed the entire wide area should be protected with a healthy buffer. Mr. Way said we still do not know the constraints of that corridor but in addition, he would like to see another buffer as an added layer of protection. Ms. Noble explained there will be natural limitations. Mr. Szuter said, per the Auditor’s website, Indian Run already flows over some of those properties. Ms. Rauch said there is a flood plain that provides protection but a conservation easement could be an option. Ms. Fox reported that a road, bridge, and houses facing the ravine have all been contemplated with the development of the Bridge Street District. She asked what the group specifically wants or does not want for the best use of that space. She asked about a greenway and if it should contain biking paths. Ms. Noble said when there are two greenways that do not connect, they do not necessarily need to be connected for mobility but maybe vegetation added to encourage wildlife. As natural as this area is already, Ms. Noble thought we should keep it as natural as we could. Mr. Way said there is a pathway already there; he questioned why we would change that. Ms. Noble suggested adding to connections, not changing it. Ms. Fox said currently, you cannot ride your bike, use a stroller, or even a wheelchair on that path. She asked how far out the Indian Run Ravine should be protected, given the future development of the Bridge Street area. If condominiums are proposed along the road, there would be increased noise and light pollution as well as limiting some natural light coming in. Ms. Lannan indicated as one example in the 2007 Plan, condominiums taking advantage of ravine views is what this group is trying to prevent. She said they do not want a fence but a wide greenspace to protect the ravine. As it is now, the schools act as a buffer but if that should change in the future, we need to be prepared for it. She concluded by saying she thought their vision was clear, but the experts should decide what is

needed like certain easements, etc. Mr. Way said this area should be considered a city park so the Dublin Parks and Recreation Department could decide how to best use that space but thought a bike path would be welcomed from the Dublin Link pedestrian bridge and moving through this area. Ms. Lannan suggested adjacent park land/natural open space should be included in the verbiage. She added if a multi-use path was in the description, the open space could also eventually be handicap accessible and benches added. Ms. Matune asked that when the term is multi-use path, if it is understood that meant it was available to strollers and handicap accessible or whether that wording had to be added. Mr. Way and Ms. Noble concurred a multi-use path is accessible to everyone. The following are the recommendations settled upon:

- a. Ensure the character of future development minimizes impacts on the corridor (limiting building heights, and building setbacks, etc.).
- b. Maintain a significant natural buffer along Indian Run Falls and the adjacent corridor to ensure a natural corridor, which could become a city-owned linear park/open space.
- c. Consider a permanent easement or agreement (conservation easement).
- d. Investigate the inclusion of multi-use paths and ravine overlook areas along the southern boundary of the Indian Run corridor to provide an east-west connection.
- e. Coordinate and collaborate with Dublin Parks and Recreation Department.

6. SOUTH HIGH STREET VITALITY: ENCOURAGE VITALITY FOCUSED IN THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DISTRICT.

Ms. Noble asked if the heading above captured all the ideas presented for this area. Mr. Way reiterated there is plenty of vitality to the north but more is needed to the south. 'Promoting event venues' terminology was preferred by the group over 'gathering space' or 'entertainment'. Ms. Szuter asked if a small type movie theater (one screen) or a performing arts studio would be appropriate for this area. Mr. Daft thought it was a great idea but Mr. Way thought it would be tough to find a building large enough and to provide foot traffic. Mr. Way noted the outside screen that can be placed on the library's parking garage for an outdoor theater but it was not used much the summer 2020.

Ms. Fox said there is no diversity in the south to bring people down there. There are no retail shops; it is all office use. She suggested a small place to provide music and dancing on a Friday night that might hold perhaps 30 people and could be family oriented. Ms. Matune agreed there needs to be something fun to do like that and also suggested street entertainers. She revisited the Karrer Barn discussion. She said the City could buy the barn, rent kayaks, canoes and other floatation devices out of there, hold classes, as well as sell merchandise geared to that activity. Ms. Fox said it was a huge space and could be an arts place, or have music and there are plenty of places to park. The following are the recommendations settled upon:

- a. Promote more event venues for the core district to encourage more foot traffic (i.e. farmers/seasonal markets, holiday and ethnic festivals, outdoor or small movie theaters, or performing arts theaters, etc.).
- b. Allow promotional opportunities that announce events (i.e. banners, displays, and street/sidewalk art; etc.).
- c. Promote more family-oriented activities.
- d. Coordinate and collaborate activities with the Dublin Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Ms. Noble thought there was just enough time left to discuss the Darby Street Parking Lot, per Ms. Fox's request. Ms. Rauch said as part of City Council's CIP discussion they were asking about potential opportunities for programs for outdoor activities, which could include a structure like a pavilion to provide more public gathering spaces. The City owns the Darby Street Parking Lot so they are interested in utilizing that space for anything but a parking lot. Ms. Fox asked the Task Force what they may want to see happen in that nice area in the middle of the Historic District. The Darby Street Parking Lot is approximately 100 square feet by 150 square feet and the following suggestions were made: car show, festival, art show, a tent for local artisans to sell their wares, skating rink, pop-up retail, and a farmer's market, etc. The group determined any number of ideas can be tried on a temporary basis as a test and if something is popular to make it permanent until it is no longer desired. They also wanted to see this area be just for entertainment and development ideas be left off the table.

The Task Force decided this was a good place to stop in the process for making recommendations and start where they left off at the next meeting. Ms. Fox complimented the Task Force members on their work and said these types of comments would help groups like the Architectural Review Board and City Council. She liked the direction the Task Force was headed and agreed with Mr. Way about adding a general statement ahead of the list of recommendations and provide detail in the recommendations, themselves.

Ms. Noble concluded the discussion by talking about next steps. Ms. Noble and Ms. Rauch said they would like to review the additions and changes that were recommended this evening to be then emailed to the group for further review. The Task Force could meet again in two weeks to discuss this further at the same time using the same format, to which everyone agreed. Ms. Noble thanked everyone for their time and very useful ideas.