

**Branchville TOD
Report of Meeting
Task Force Meeting #7
4/4/16**

Attending

Joe Ancona (Property Owner), Rudy Marconi (First Selectman), Jon Chew (WestCOG), Francisco Gomes (FHI), Dave Goldenberg (Resident), Julia Pemberton (Redding), Lolly Turner (Whistle Stop Café), Mark Nicyper, Molly Parsons and Roxanne Fromson (CTDOT via call-in).

Discussion

Francisco Gomes of FHI led the discussion and provided an overview of the agenda. Francisco began by reviewing Tighe & Bond's analysis of the community septic system feasibility. The analysis concluded that a community system using the little league field could accommodate 50,000 gallons per day (150 residential dwelling units and approximately 7,000 sf of retail space). Pretreatment of effluent would be required. This would accommodate development on the west side of Route 7, but not development to the east of the tracks. Joe Ancona shared his perc test results and preliminary plans, finding that the ball field would accommodate up to 10,000 gpd without pretreatment. Joe gave Francisco a copy of the preliminary plans to share with Tighe and Bond for their analysis. Given that the pretreatment is required to address nitrogen, Mr. Marconi asked if stormwater runoff could be used to dilute effluent. Francisco agreed to inquire with Tighe and Bond about the feasibility of this approach. Mr. Marconi also noted that the South Street sewer option is still on the table and should continue to be considered as an option.

Joe Ancona expressed concern about the cost and maintenance associated with pretreatment, Francisco noted that there are funding mechanisms that should be considered such as the creation of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. Francisco said that he had spoken with Michael Andreana of Pullman and Comley who wrote the new TIF legislation and that Michael had offered to present the TIF features to the Task Force. Francisco said that the advantage of a TIF district is that it takes tax revenues generated by new development and sets aside a portion of those revenues to offset development costs.

Sam Gardner provided an overview of architectural design options and potential guidelines. Mr. Gardner provided samples of different building types including townhouse buildings, apartment buildings, and mixed-use buildings. Sam emphasized the need to move beyond the rough concepts of the build-out analysis and start to determine the form and arrangement of buildings. Francisco informed the task force that the guidelines would be integrated into the new zoning recommendations for the area and may remain as just guidelines, but certain elements could be incorporated into the zoning as requirements. Joe Ancona liked the mixed-use building example and thought that a more urban looking building would be appropriate along Route 7 and that building form could transition to more village or suburban style moving away from Route 7. He cited the Nemo building in Ridgfield Center as a successful prototype. Mr. Marconi advised Sam to contact John Kinnear and meet with the Architecture Advisory Commission so as to get their guidance and feedback.

Molly Parsons provided an overview of the bridge conditions and potential funding sources for Depot Road and Portland Avenue. Both bridges require improvement with Portland Avenue functionally obsolete and Depot Road structurally deficient. The Portland Avenue bridge is eligible for the Federal

Local Bridge Program which provides an 80% reimbursement if the application is accepted. The application requires preliminary design and environmental assessment. Ms. Parsons was not sure if the cost associated with the preliminary design was reimbursable; she agreed to follow up on this item. The Depot Road bridge is eligible for the State Local Bridge Program which provides a 40% state match on improvements. Mr. Marconi asked if the Depot Road bridge is eligible for the Historic Bridge Preservation Program, Ms. Parsons agreed to look into this.

Francisco discussed the market analysis component of the project and provided the task force with background information on the subconsultant, AMS Consulting. AMS is starting work on the project in April and will have preliminary information to share with the Task Force at the next meeting. AMS will conduct an analysis to determine what type of development, both residential and commercial is most feasible in the study area. Ms. Pemberton asked whether they would consider future development at the Georgetown site, Francisco replied that they would consider the impact of planned and potential developments in the area. Joe Ancona said that his tenant, Ken Cavanaugh of Dover Saddlery, had conducted a market analysis for their business that they offered to share. Mr. Goldenberg asked whether AMS would consider the affordable housing in their analysis, Francisco replied that we could asked them to take a look at the feasibility of the inclusion of affordable housing, understanding that this has been an important element of the TOD plan.

The next task force meeting was scheduled for June 7th at 4:00 pm in the lower level conference room of Town Hall. Francisco will reach out to Michael Andreana regarding presenting the TIF program at that meeting.
