

**Canton 2010
Community and Business Action Groups (CAG/BAG)
Joint Meeting
Thursday, September 7, 2006**

Minutes

Attendees:

Sam Bear, Township Supervisor
Rob Phillips, Redevelopment Authority of Washington County
Ted Bury, Township Zoning Board
Randall Higgins, Jr., Resident
Marie Higgins, Resident
Randall Higgins, Sr., Resident
Wanda Varner, Resident
Dave Russell, Russell Brothers
Marjorie Lee Teagarden, Resident
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Scott, Residents
Michael Wasler, Resident
Lee Mueller, Mullin and Lonergan
Maureen Hogan, Planning Consultant
Karen Brean, Brean Associates

The next meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Canton Township Office, 655 Grove Avenue.

Public Participation Schedule

The first public meeting will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Trinity North School. Additionally, a design workshop will be scheduled in early October and the next meeting of the Community and Business Action Groups will be scheduled sometime during the last two weeks of October. Both of these meetings will be held at the Canton Township Office, 655 Grove Avenue. (Note: Both meetings have been scheduled. The design workshop will be held on Thursday, October 19, 2006 and the CAG/BAG meeting will be held on Thursday, October 26, 2006.)

Welcome and Introductions

The Redevelopment Authority staff and consultants were introduced. Additionally, copies of the Summer Newsletter were distributed. The address of the website was noted as www.yourcanton.com

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of July 31, 2006 were reviewed and discussed. It was asked whether zoning would be changed and the answer was that it is dependent on the recommendations of the development study. Having said this, it was noted that much of the study area can accommodate mixed use.

Land Use and Existing Conditions

Lee Mueller reviewed maps of the study area that included land use, building condition and environmental conditions. (Note: attendees noted that some of the streets were incorrectly named and Lee made note of these changes.) The purpose of this type of analysis is to help define areas for future development. It was also noted that the prior study has been reviewed and relevant information has been incorporated.

Land use was presented on a color coded map. Exterior building conditions were summarized as follows:

- 22% were in good condition
- 39% require minor rehab
- 36% require major rehab
- 3% are economically infeasible to rehab

The environmental conditions map includes the following:

- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Streams
- Railroad lines

Slopes of 25% or more will be added to the map.

Market Study Update

Initial summary comments from the market study include the following:

- There are several larger scale office and retail projects planned in the greater Washington area (Victory Center, Crown Center, Southpointe II, Starpointe, etc.). This development activity is a sign of economic expansion that generally bodes well for redevelopment of the study area. However, the study area does not appear to offer opportunity for retail development since this form of development is occurring in other parts of the region.
- There is no indication that the market would absorb new residential development. The only possible exception to this would be retirement housing development in the study area.
- Heavy industrial does not appear to be a suitable use for the study area.
- Transient lodging may be a possibility. However, there are several hotels already under construction in the area and it is unlikely that yet another hotel would be developed until the occupancy rates for newer hotel rooms becomes established.
- There appears to be a need for up to 100,000 SF of flex office/industrial space, especially if it could be broken down into 6,000 SF units.
- The study area enjoys excellent visibility from I-70.
- The site enjoys excellent transportation access due to an underutilized diamond interchange directly into the site. This and the closeness of the site to the I-70/I-79 split make the property extremely valuable.
- The portion of the study area on the northwest side of I-70 may be the most challenging to redevelop.
- The Canton Township site has a competitive advantage in that it already offers water and sewer service.

- The study area is equipped with oversized gas lines, three-phase electrical service and railroad access, all of which are competitive advantages.
- Carnegie Mellon University received a grant from the Benedum Foundation to identify the industries that should be targeted for the County's business and industrial parks. A copy of this study will be provided to the consulting team.

Outreach

General outreach for the upcoming public meeting was discussed which includes newsletters, the four street mailboxes, the website and newspaper advertising. It was suggested that door to door canvassing be undertaken and that an understandable/engaging tag line be included with Canton 2010. Many people do not seem to fully understand what Canton 2010 is about and how it impacts them.

General Discussion

The following includes summary comments made by attending CAG/BAG Committee members:

- Concerning the proposed new development, what will be the impacts and costs to existing businesses and residents?
- What will be the return on investment?
- Will residents and businesses lose their properties?
- What is happening with code enforcement?
- How do you get investors/developers interested in the property?

Supervisor Bear provided the following comments:

- The study is intended to identify ways to enhance the wage tax.
- The goal is not to raise taxes.
- The Township wants to be cautious and borrow only the funding that is needed.
- Condemnation will not be used for owner occupied structures.
- Code enforcement complaints need to be put in writing. The code officer does not have the resources to tour the neighborhood for violations.
- The study is needed to access possible funding.