



CHARLES STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
25th Street to University Parkway
Baltimore City Department of Transportation

RK&K/WRT

NOTES: STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING
WEDNESDAY MAY 19, 2004
4:00 PM to 6:30 PM

- ◆ **ATTENDANCE** ⇒ See Attachment 1
- ◆ **Purpose** ⇒ Review comments received following the May 5, 2004 Public Workshop No. 1, including comments received during the meeting as well as follow-up written or e-mailed comments received prior to May 15, 2004.
- ◆ **Goal** ⇒ Finalize a concept for a "Selected Alternative" to be presented by the City at a public meeting to be held June 24, 2004 at the BMA (much thanks to the BMA for their kind offer to again host this meeting).

1. Welcome to New Stakeholders

- Ms. Tamara Woods reported that she has been in contact with representatives of Saints Philip & James Catholic Church, the Afro-American Newspaper, Poverty Solutions, and several other stakeholders along Charles Street between 25th Street and 29th Street. To date, she has not yet heard from any of these stakeholders. She will be inviting them to join our group.

2. Report to Stakeholders Regarding Public comments Received During and Following May 5, 2004 Public Workshop No. 1

- Copies of the "**Report to Stakeholders**" dated May 19, 2004 were distributed to the Stakeholders present; copies were mailed to those not present. In addition, this report has been added to the Charles Street website: (www.CharlesStreet.mdprojects.com)
- Via e-mail distribution on May 25, 2004, an additional letter dated May 12, 2004 which had been omitted from the **Report** was distributed to all Stakeholders and added to the project's website.
- Attachments A through F were presented and discussed:
 - A. Public Comments Received May 5, 2004 – 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
 - B. Public Comments Received May 5, 2004 During Q&A
 - C. Written Comments Received May 5, 2004
 - D. Newspaper Clippings, Post May 5th Meeting
 - E. Written Comments Received Following May 5, 2004 Public Meeting and Prior to May 15, 2004 Cut-Off Date
 - F. Comments Received From Maryland Transit Administration

3. Reports from Stakeholders on Constituent Comments Regarding City's Preferred Plan

Beth Bullamore (CVCA/NCVPUD) ⇒

- Concerned about Charles Street between 25th and 29th Street, especially the lack of coordination with the City's two-way Charles Street initiative and the modifications necessary at 29th Street (temporary and permanent) to accommodate 2-way traffic on Charles Street.
- Continues to receive strong support for 2-3-2 NB lane compromise and Median with East Service Drive option.
- Emphasis must be on calming traffic.

Joe Rexing (CVCA/NCCPUD) ⇒

- Reported on the PUD meeting held May 18; the majority of those present expressed support for the City's Preferred Alternative, i.e., Median with East Service Drive option.

Mark Demshak (JHU) ⇒

- Presented a revised concept plan for the City's Preferred Alternative (Median with East Service Drive option) prepared for JHU by Michael Vergeson Associates (MVA). Their design goals were as follows:
 - Create a distinctive streetscape precinct for Charles Street, 'A Passage'
 - Develop a holistic approach to design of the precinct
 - Create a hierarchy of streetscape open-space
 - Create a streetscape that knits both sides of the street as 'A Campus Street'
 - Design the street as a weaving of systems, 'City', 'Community' and 'Pedestrian' scales.
- The focus of MVA's analysis was to create three distinct zones along Charles Street:
 - 29th Street to Art Museum Drive with East Service Drive
 - Art Museum Drive to 34th Street without Service Drive
 - 34th Street to University Parkway with Service Drive
- Other items in JHU/MVA's plan included removal of any traffic sweep for southbound traffic at 29th Street, closing the median at 30th Street, provision of one eastbound lane along Art Museum Drive at Charles Street, reinstallation of the Johns Hopkins statue (facing east) located in an ellipse within the median at 34th Street, and a double row of trees without a fence in the median. In addition, the Hopkins typical section proposed a wide central median with an additional 6-foot wide tree buffer along both the east and west curb lines and generally holding the existing west edge of the East Service Drive separator.

- Given the criticality of the buffer between the east side residences and northbound Charles Street traffic, the following chart compares the existing condition, the City's Preferred Alternative, and the JHU/MVA alternative. To provide a frame of reference, Mark noted that the Roland Avenue median is 18-feet wide and the 33rd Street median is 38-feet wide.

CHARLES STREET FEATURE	EXISTING	CITY'S PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE 5.5.2004	JHU/MVA CONCEPT 5.19.2004
Landscape buffer along east sidewalk	None	None	6-feet
East Service Drive width	14-feet	16-feet	16-feet
East Separator Median width	24-feet	26-feet	14-feet 6-inches
Total Buffer width	38-feet	42-feet	36-feet 6-inches*
* During the meeting, these three widths were incorrectly summed as 38'-6".			

- Between 26th Street and 29th Street, the JHU/MVA plan proposed adding 5½±-feet in width to the east and west side sidewalks and elimination of the median shown on the city's Preferred Alternative.

Eddy Okoro (MTA) ⇒ responded as follows to the City questions posed to the MTA on May 12, 2004 (reference Attachment F in the Report to Stakeholders):

- Between 25th and 29th, the city will be providing 2 NB lanes ⇒ OK??

MTA agreed with moving NB bus stop from south side of 26th Street to north side.

- Under the city's two-way proposal between "Penn Station" and 29th, would MTA operate buses along the single SB lane?

MTA stated "probably not".

- Between 29th & 31st, and between 33rd & University Parkway, what is the effect on bus operations of only one NB lane in the off-peak parking ... with parked cars & bicycles present along the curb lane??

MTA is willing to do their part to assist/educate their drivers on the sensitivity of bus operations near bicycles.

- Between 29th & 31st, and between 33rd & University Parkway, what is the effect on bus operations of two NB lanes in the peak period, with bicycles along the curb lane??

Same response as given to question 3A.

- What benefits to bus operations result from widening the SB service drive from 14' (existing) to 26' (same operational issues as NB).

MTA agreed that this widening would be an enhancement for their bus operations.

5. What affect, if any, does MTA's long-range rail plan for the YELLOW LINE have on the current options under consideration by the City?

MTA believes that this long-term project should probably not drive decisions on Charles Street typical sections.

6. What is MTA's reaction to the Charles Street trolley proposal made by the Charles Street Development Corporation?

MTA - too early to tell.

Frank Murphy (City DOT) ⇒ Comments on the JHU/MVA Plan

- He expressed concern about the single eastbound left-turn lane at Art Museum Drive.
Post-Meeting: Frank noted that the addition of the northbound left turn into Art Museum Drive, which will require an additional signal phase, further reinforces the need for two eastbound lanes along Art Museum Drive.
- Frank also noted that Maryland Avenue is likely to remain as the primary artery carrying southbound traffic, and that the majority of southbound traffic will utilize Maryland Avenue and not the single southbound lane under the two-way Charles Street scenario. Consequently, he also expressed significant reservations about removal of the 105-foot radius at the 29th Street intersection.
- He also expressed concern that the 44-foot sidewalk grid along the east and west sidewalks would increase the likelihood that more people will jaywalk.
- He noted that the median north of 29th Street will have to be narrowed to allow SB vehicles to continue south on Charles Street.

Frank Murphy/Ralph Wheeler/Beth Stromman (City) ⇒

- One of the keys to the JHU/MVA plan was the reduction of the travel lane width for northbound and southbound Charles Street from the 26-feet shown on the City Preferred Plan (i.e., 11-foot travel lane and a 15-foot wide curb lane accommodating a 10-foot travel lane and a 5-foot bicycle lane), with a 23-foot wide travel lane accommodating the same elements. This 3-foot reduction per roadway helped facilitate the wider central median (shown as 28-feet on the JHU/MVA plan) and the additional 6-foot planting strips along the east and west side sidewalks.

- ACTIONS ⇒**
1. RK&K to check auto turn requirements for various street widths.
 2. City Staff to review and advise RK&K/WRT and Stakeholders regarding the minimum width they can accept for the 2-lane sections of Charles Street. This dimension will be no less than 23-feet (shown on JHU/MVA plan) and no more than 26-feet (shown on City's Preferred Plan).

4. Discussion of Selected Alternative for Presentation at Public Workshop Number 2 June 24, 2004 @ BMA

After considerable discussion, the following "decision trees" were outlined with general agreement among those Stakeholders present.

Decision hierarchy for typical section widths

1. Provide an east buffer of generally 38-feet measured between existing face of curb along east sidewalk and west curb line along landscaped separator.
2. City will review the possibility of providing 4 to 6-foot wide landscaped buffers with trees along eastern and westernmost sidewalks with the understanding that the added widths might come from the median widths. Address passenger access to parked vehicles.
3. Provide northbound/southbound bicycle lanes within the NB/SB curb lanes of Charles Street for peak period and non-peak period bicyclist use.
4. City will review the idea of the center median being "significantly – noticeably" wider than east separator and the "variable" to adjust for the difference in the roadway widths.
5. General consensus among Stakeholders present \Rightarrow decisions on rubber tired versus steel wheel trolleys should not drive typical section decisions between 25th Street and University Parkway.

Decision tree for intersection treatments

- A. 26th Street to 29th Street – City strongly preferred 11 \pm -foot wide median accommodating left turns only at 28th Street and 29th Street. Other Stakeholders expressed concern about the narrow median width and the likely number of breaks to accommodate parking garages, etc. These stakeholders preferred an addition of 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ \pm -feet in width along the east and west side sidewalks as shown on the JHU/MVA plan; (which are already rather wide at 15 \pm -feet).
City decision \Rightarrow retain accommodations for NB left turn at 29th and SB left turn at 28th, although center median need not be raised.
- B. Southbound right turn at 29th Street – Existing radius is 375-feet; City Preferred Plan proposed 105-feet. JHU/MVA plan proposed 15-feet. Most Stakeholders supported the right-turn/smaller dimension; City expressed reservations about even the 105-foot radius, although believe they could accept it.
City decision \Rightarrow provide 105-foot radius for SB right turn at 29th Street intersection.
- C. Eastbound lanes at Art Museum Drive intersection – RK&K will review traffic volumes and develop improved concepts to restrain southbound right turns. Also, agreed to shift pedestrian crossing from 31st Street to south side of Art Museum Drive. City prefers 2 eastbound lanes, especially in view of additional signal timing required for northbound left turn into Art Museum Drive.
City decision \Rightarrow provide 2 eastbound lanes on Art Museum Drive at intersection with Charles Street.

- D. Southbound left turn at 33rd Street – Although some support among Stakeholders, agreement that it is not worth a left turn lane cut into the median in order to provide. City believes that it could only be provided if a left turn lane were cut into the median.
City decision ⇒ do not provide for southbound left turn at 33rd Street.
- E. Continuity of East Service Drive – Residents along east side of Charles Street support East Service Drive for provision of parking. Removal of the East Service Drive between Art Museum Drive and 34th Street as proposed by JHU/MVA plan would remove approximately 40 of the 109 existing spaces within the East Service Drive. Furthermore, termination of East Service Drive at the intersection of Art Museum Drive was seen by City representatives as creating a serious safety problem.
City decision ⇒ willing to accept elimination of East Service Drive between 33rd and 34th Street, but believes East Service Drive must be retained between Art Museum Drive and 33rd Street.
- F. 34th Street intersection with Greenway – Retain link to Charles Street; additional link to 34th Street, while desirable, is not critical. In addition, current design interrupts pedestrian flow. Also agreed to move bus stop to north side of Greenway.
City decision ⇒ provide primary movement from Greenway to Charles Street, although show narrow 1 lane left turn to 34th Street. Decision dependent on Hopkins' and City's decision on future closure of 34th Street if a petition is submitted by Hopkins. In addition, City willing to consider two-way traffic on Greenway between St. Paul and NB Charles Street.
- G. Relocation of Johns Hopkins historic statue at 34th Street intersection –
ACTION: Al Barry to obtain and share details on statue width and overall design for a safe statue installation.
City decision ⇒ willing to accommodate Johns Hopkins statue in median as long as there is at least a 2 to 3-foot wide buffer between the curb and the statue or statue base itself.
- H. University Parkway intersection - Agreement to provide northbound left turn - length as established on City Preferred Plan.

DWW/sms

Attachments: 1. Attendees List

cc: All present

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