

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
December 6, 2007**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

John O'Leary
Tom High
David Deming, Vice-Chair
Katie Schwing
Daniel Amoni
Charlie Hileman

STAFF PRESENT

Adena Messinger
Marty Roupe (for some of the time)

GUESTS

Steve Addy (project engineer)
David Ripperton (project architect)
David Jesse (citizen)

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT

Heidi Perry, Chair

I. The TAB meeting was preceded by a Joint Review Meeting, which began at 7:30 pm.

II. Call to Order

Dave Deming called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 pm. There was a vote to extend the meeting by 30 minutes past the scheduled meeting end time (9:30 pm).

III. Discussion of the Roberson Square mixed use development presented at the Joint Review Meeting.

Concerns regarding the supply and demand for parking in the downtown in general and specifically as related to the Roberson Square project were raised at the joint review meeting. TAB members supported the project as the type of development that should occur in the downtown; however, they recognized parking as a serious concern.

Several issues/observations about parking emerged:

One member commented that: While this project will have an effect on parking demand in the downtown, there isn't anything that this project can do to increase parking supply; therefore two options would be to either decrease square footage or deny the project.

There was discomfort with the concept of separating the residential parking spaces from the residences. The concern was that the parking spaces would be purchased by an investor who would in turn lease the spaces or have a daily parking arrangement and that there is potential for the price of the spaces to be out of reach of the building tenants (commercial or residential).

There was concern about charging for parking (non-residential spaces?) because that will deter anyone from parking in those spaces and further stress the existing supply of parking. People will not choose to park in spaces that they have to pay for.

One member commented that better use of alternatives should be part of the solution (like better transit).

One member shared a comment that the Town is not yet at a point where it becomes economical to invest in a structured parking facility. There are still surface opportunities. There will be growing pains with going from a surface lot system to a deck system but those growing pains should not preclude projects like this one.

Need for a coordinated (i.e., parking, transit, non-motor vehicles) solution to the downtown parking issue. No one piece is going to have all the answers. There needs to be an integrated study that will take that approach. Considering these projects in isolation does not help get to an overall solution.

The civil engineer for the project, Steve Addy, was present to respond to any questions. The first question was about the radii at the corners: is there a way to tighten up the radius of the northwest corner?

There was a question about the crosswalk at the northwest corner. Steve Addy: There is no sidewalk to receive it on the other side [near Open Eye Café] but they are showing it because staff asked for it.

There was a question about the SW corner near dumpsters: Steve Addy: The dumpsters will be pushed out into the street to facilitate pick up.

Discussion about traffic circulation:

It was suggested by TAB members as well as David Jesse [a resident who joined the meeting] to implement a one-way street pattern such that Roberson Street is one way going west, Carr Street is one-way going east. Maple Street remains two-way. This would provide an opportunity for diagonal parking along Roberson Street and perhaps gain some spaces. While most TAB members were in favor of looking into an alternative circulation pattern, several related questions/issues were raised: What is the impact on the emergency rescue vehicles? What is the impact on bicyclists? Recognition about the need for continuation of Carr Street on the Alberta property to be used as a through connection with a one-way pattern. What does the Downtown Circulation Study recommend for Roberson Street?

Clarification of what was agreed to in the Alberta project for the extension of Carr Street: Access would not be restricted; what they strongly opposed was that it be public, they want to maintain control.

The TAB requested that developers be presented with some options to pursue and provide a response at the January TAB meeting.

The parking for the Century Center was also brought up something to consider in the mix.

TAB wants an answer about the decoupling of residential parking (is that the applicant's intention); and that the Town discuss the circulation pattern on Carr and Roberson. It was suggested that they would recommend approval only after a comprehensive study of parking and traffic circulation. The TAB is interested in an integrated traffic impact study that takes into consideration all of the approved and proposed projects for the downtown. Staff clarified that the TIA for Roberson Square included 300 E Main and The Alberta.

The applicant was invited back in to answer what their plan is regarding residential parking. Applicant indicated that they did not have a definitive plan yet and were interested in hearing what the TAB would like to see them do. TAB provided following comments:

- Don't want to see any paid parking because it would likely make the parking situation worse.
- Don't want Carrboro to get into the parking space business. Don't want to see them sold separate from the residences. If this is part of the final plan, TAB expressed that they would find it difficult to approve the project. [Marty added that staff needs to check with Mike Brough if decoupling is allowed by the LUO.]
- Expressed interest in the one-way pattern that could allow additional on-street parking (diagonal). Acknowledging that the Town really needs to be the entity that takes this on.
- Expressed challenge of approving this project without looking at a comprehensive solution for parking, even though it is acknowledged that it is not this project alone that is creating the stress on parking.
- [Clarification of the parking allocation: 1 space for 1-bedroom, 2 spaces for 2-, and 3-bedrooms.]
- What is the deficit – minus the residential? [answer unclear at meeting]

Staff brought up Roberson Street right of way plan as being out there for consideration as well. TAB recognizes that the plan is a factor but that the nature of the street and the uses along the street are changing and that looking to the future, making a significant departure from that plan and from the current circulation pattern is needed.

There was a request for Town staff to informally approach Board/Mayor and developers to discuss the circulation of traffic in the Roberson-Carr-Sweet Bay area; for TAB to defer recommendation until January meeting with the idea that staff would have more information/feedback. There is a case to be made that a one-way circulation pattern is in the best interest of the public's safety (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle).

Might be time for a downtown charrette.

Decision to defer recommendation and rest of agenda to next meeting.

III. Follow up to NCDOT walk-about.

Staff requested feedback on NCDOT's plans to improve the Main/Weaver/Laurel intersection. TAB in favor of the improvements. Request for stamped texture for

crosswalks – but recognition that budget is an issue and that this may be what we can get.
Question about curb of monolithic island being an issue for vehicles.

IV. Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 pm.