

PENN AVENUE CORRIDOR PHASING PLAN NEWSLETTER NO. 2 JULY 2008

PENN AVENUE PUBLIC MEETING #1



The Penn Avenue Corridor Phasing Plan Committee (PACPPC), in conjunction with the City of Pittsburgh, PA Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and L. Robert Kimball & Associates (Kimball) hosted the first of two Penn Avenue Corridor Phasing Plan public meetings on March 11, 2008. The PACPPC is an ad hoc group consisting of community representatives from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, Friendship Development Associates, Garfield-Jubilee Association, Friendship Preservation Group, Lawrenceville United, and Lawrenceville Corporation as well as local and state public official representatives.

The public meeting was conducted in an effort to present the scope of the Penn Avenue revitalization project and gather feedback from the community. A total of 132 people signed in at the public meeting consisting of residents, property owners, business owners, commuters, and workers. A majority of the attendees either enjoy shopping, dining, and entertainment on Penn Avenue or use the corridor for commuting purposes. A broad cross section of neighborhoods and communities were represented with the majority of people using automobiles, walking, or cycling along the Penn Avenue corridor.

Based on completed survey information at the Public Meeting, the top three Priorities for investment in Penn Avenue's infrastructure include:

- Street Paving
- Lighting
- Sidewalks/Crosswalks

In addition, these three items were also scored the highest by the attendees and are considered to be in the poorest condition. Major concerns about infrastructure along the Penn Avenue corridor between 34th Street and Negley Avenue included aesthetics, traffic issues, and safety.



Patrick Hassett, assistant director of public works, Bureau of Transportation and Engineering, City of Pittsburgh gave a presentation on the Penn Avenue Project. The presentation included a brief history of the Penn Avenue Project, limits of work, the investment envelope, vision, project scope, schedule, and meeting purpose and format.

The remainder of the meeting consisted of four separate breakout groups with the purpose to engage the public in more focused dialogue on their area of interest along Penn Avenue and their related issues and priorities. A summary of key points and issues of the group breakout discussions are include:

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- **Group 1 – 34th Street to 40th Street – Arsenal District (Residential/Historic)**



Of the 62 recorded points of discussion concerning infrastructure, the highest number of comments focused on streetscaping (12) followed by transit / bicycle accommodations (10). Group discussions included comments on the Doughboy Square intersection and pedestrian safety, congestion due to bus traffic, dangerous intersection at Penn Avenue and 35th Street, substandard lighting, the need for street trees and furniture, accidents at Penn Avenue and 36th Street, the need for more parking, and better signing and way finding.

- **Group 2 – Fisk Street to Mathilda Street – Hospital District (Hospital/Business)**



The points of discussion for this group were spread across a number of infrastructure topics including transit / bicycle accommodations (5), street signing (4), business access/parking (4), traffic signals

(4), lighting (3) and sidewalks/crosswalks (3). Group discussions included comments on congestion and traffic signals, blind intersection at Penn Avenue and Friendship Avenue, the need for improved signing, the lack of parking, improvements to pedestrian crossings, and the need for bike racks.

- **Group 3 – Mathilda Street to Negley Avenue – Arts District (Arts/Retail)**



The points of discussion for this group were also spread across various infrastructure topics including streetscaping / trees (4), traffic signals (4), utilities (3), lighting (3), and business access / parking (3). Group discussions included comments on parking issues, improvements to transit service, speeding, lighting deficiencies, traffic signal operation, unsightly utilities and the desire to bury them, and substandard sidewalk conditions.

- **Group 4 – 34th Street to Negley Avenue – Penn Avenue Corridor Limits**

Of the 40 recorded points of discussion in this group concerning infrastructure, the highest number of comments focused on transit / bicycling accommodations (14) followed by streetscaping / trees (7). Group discussions included comments on the need to relocate or otherwise improve bus stops, cycling hazards, cars parking on sidewalks, and pedestrian safety.

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Overall group discussions focused not only on the traffic conditions but also on the multimodal and place making attributes of Penn Avenue. 41 recorded points of discussions from the break out groups focused on the movement of traffic. Transit, cycling and pedestrian accommodations accounted for 43 points of discussion. The largest amount of discussion, however, focused on lighting, streetscape, business access, utilities, and parking, all of which are place making elements. Together, place making discussions accounted for 65 of the 149 total recorded topics.

PUBLIC MEETING CONCLUSION

The meeting was attended by a broad cross section of Penn Avenue stakeholders and users. Based on this feedback, the Penn Avenue corridor functions as more than a conduit for automotive traffic; it is a multimodal corridor as well as a place for living, working, shopping, and socializing. Street lighting and the corridor's sidewalks and crosswalks were listed along with pavement as infrastructure elements in need of the most attention. In addition, concerns about traffic conditions were equal to those of aesthetics and safety.

The multimodal and place making attributes of Penn Avenue were also common themes in the breakout discussions. Discussions of multimodal issues and need equaled discussions of traffic concerns. Discussions of infrastructure elements that contribute to place making outnumbered both multimodal and traffic discussions.

The pending infrastructure investment proposals that will be forthcoming from this study need to focus on the physical condition and functional effectiveness of those infrastructure elements that serve not only to move traffic but also to improve the multimodal and place making attributes of the corridor.

These conclusions and the discussions that support it will be used to guide the project team in identifying and evaluating key issues and improvement projects. They will also assist in prioritizing the improvements and formulating the implementation

component of the Plan. *The next public meeting will be scheduled in the fall of 2008.* The focus of this meeting will be to review infrastructure improvements options and gather input on their prioritization.

For an electronic copy of the Public Meeting Feedback Report, please contact Patrick Hassett.

CORRIDOR PHASING PLAN UPDATE

Kimball, the selected engineering firm, has completed a multitude of engineering and planning tasks for the Penn Avenue Corridor Phasing Plan. A summary of the tasks follows:

- Traffic Tasks
 - Completed Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATRs), intersection inventories, and manual turning movements for 29 key locations (see below)

#	Location	Intersection at Penn Avenue	Control	Analysis Type
1	Lawrenceville	34th Street		Synchro
2		38th Street		HCS
3		40th Street		HCS
4	Lawrenceville / Bloomfield	Fisk Street		HCS
5		Main Street		HCS
6		42nd Street		HCS
7	Lawrenceville / Bloomfield	44th Street		HCS
8		Friendship Ave.		HCS
9		Mathilda Street		HCS
10	Bloomfield / Garfield / Friendship	Millvale Avenue		HCS
11		Gross Street		HCS
12		Winebiddle Street		HCS
13	Bloomfield / Friendship	Evalline Street		HCS
14		Pacific Avenue		HCS
15		Atlantic Avenue		HCS
16	Garfield / Friendship	Aiken Avenue		HCS
17		Graham Avenue		HCS
18		Roup Avenue		HCS
19	East Liberty	Stratford Avenue		HCS
20		Negley Avenue		HCS
#	Location	Other Critical Intersections	Control	Analysis Type
21	East Liberty	Negley Ave / Friendship Ave		HCS
22		Negley Ave / Rippey Street		HCS
23	Friendship	Aiken Ave / Friendship Ave		HCS
24	Bloomfield	Gross Street / Friendship Ave		HCS
25		Edmond Street / Friendship Ave		HCS
26		Liberty Ave / Main St / Blm Brdg		Synchro
27	Lawrenceville	Liberty Ave / 40th Street		HCS
28		Main Street / Butler Street		HCS
29		40th Street / Butler Street		HCS

8 Unsignalized intersections
 21 Signalized intersections (12 on Penn Avenue)
 29 Total Intersections for the Manual Intersection Counts

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- Submitted traffic data information to the SPC for analysis and input into their regional traffic model
- Began coordination with Bike Pgh
- Completed draft accident analysis report
- Engineering Tasks
 - Background drawings compilation
 - GPS survey of corridor features (light poles, signals, vaults, etc.)
 - Pavement condition survey
 - Right-of-way and utility investigation
 - Sidewalk condition survey
- Public / Stakeholder Tasks
 - Monthly PACPPC meetings
 - Public meeting feedback report



West. Moss Architects recently published the final version of the Penn Avenue Corridor Master Plan. The four recommendations of the Master Plan are as follows:

1. Create an overall identity for the corridor that is based on the sum of its distinct and unique districts
2. Build on existing physical and social assets found along Penn Avenue and in adjacent neighborhoods; phase out inconsistent uses and forms
3. Improve and organize the public realm; create opportunities for gathering and outdoor activity
4. Increase Penn Avenue's functionality as a multi-modal corridor

For an electronic copy of the report, see information sources below.

[INFORMATION SOURCES](#)

Penn Avenue Corridor Information can be found on the following information sources:

- <http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/> - City of Pittsburgh Web site
- <ftp://.070661ftp.clients.lrk:13579mznxvb@lrkwebfs04.lrkimball.com:21> - Kimball's FTP project site
- <http://groups.google.com/group/pennavepgh> - Penn Avenue Community online discussion group
- http://www.spcregion.org/trans_ppp_tip.shtml - SPC Draft 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

[NEXT STEPS](#)

- Traffic analysis – summer '08
- Street lighting photo metrics – summer '08
- Infrastructure improvement project & costs – fall '08
- Public meeting #2 – fall '08

[SURDNA STUDY](#)



In 2006, four community development corporations including Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, East Liberty Development Inc, Friendship Development Associates, and the Lawrenceville Corporation received a grant from the Surdna Foundation to create a Penn Avenue Master Plan from Doughboy Square to Penn Circle