

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

Community: University Heights

Minutes by Trees Forever Field Coordinator: Hannah Howard

Date and Time: Monday, September 19th, 6 PM

Meeting Length: 2 Hours

Location: University Heights City Hall

Meeting Number and Title: #11 Presentation of Feasibility Report

Number of committee members in attendance: 9

Names of committee members in attendance: Karen Drake, Virginia Miller, Sara O'Sullivan, Michael Gay, Martha Terry, Dotti Maher, Silvia Quezeda, Jim Lane, Wally Heitman,

Others: Meg Flenker (Flenker Land Architecture Consultants), Hannah Howard (Trees Forever)

Meeting Summary:

The meeting began with a reminder from Hannah about the Iowa's Living Roadways Community Celebration on Thursday, November 10th in Ames. The event will take place at the Gateway Conference Center from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm and provide an opportunity to celebrate the end of the visioning process. Current visioning communities and past visioning participants will come together to learn from each other and from the day's speakers and panelists. Speakers will cover topics from small town Iowa, successful visioning stories from communities around the state, to what does and doesn't work during implementation and more. The event is free and includes lunch. To register go to the Trees Forever website: <http://www.treesforever.org/ILRCelebration>

Meg handed out the *University Heights Community Visioning Final Report and Feasibility Study* and explained that the report encompasses information gathered during the beginning of the visioning process, to the completed design concepts as well as implementation information. Maps from the bioregional mapping exercise, the Transportation Assets and Barriers Workshop and the mailed out survey results make up the first 70 pages. On page 72, the Community Concept Plan begins which describes each of the design concepts and provides a summary of preliminary opinion of probable costs for each design.

The community entryway enhancements show the three different signage designs concepts and associated estimated costs. Meg noted that coordination with the City of Iowa City, the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will be needed to make this project happen. On the wayfinding signage, Meg has used break-a-way wooden posts in the cost estimates. Since University Heights is not right along the state highway, this is not necessary and metal could be substituted. Committee members liked the idea of using more durable and permanent metal posts instead.

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

On Melrose Avenue, the 5 foot sidewalk shown in the concept could be turned into an 8 foot sidewalk if desired. Besides the additional benefit of increased area of the sidewalk, that sidewalk would then be eligible for recreation trail grant dollars. The bike lanes on Melrose are designed with special anti-slip surface in order to provide clear visual separation from vehicles. Unfortunately, those bike lane materials are not currently available in Iowa. However, this project could potentially be used a showcase project for the company and University Heights may be able to get a discount for this.

Silvia has not yet heard back from the school regarding the Horn Elementary design concept. She will follow up with them and relay their response back to the group. There may be some funds available next year for this project; other Iowa City schools have been able to do similar projects. After some discussion, the committee was unsure whether Horn will be able to have prairie by the school due to site line policies, we will need to revisit this. A shorter prairie mix with short grasses and wildflowers could be used to address this issue. It was also pointed out that this would be a great opportunity to get the science teacher on board and use the proposed prairie area for educational purposes, too.

As for the lighting project, Benton and Emerald Street would not be included because they are in the Iowa City right of way. This would take off almost half of the primary corridor's lighting cost, making the total cost of the lighting plan significantly less. When implementing lighting, committee will need to work with MidAmerican Energy. Unfortunately, there aren't any grant funds available for lighting. Another issue with the lighting is that the current, dense tree canopy will interfere. Meg recommended that two lighting routes are picked and that a cleanup of the canopy is done to ensure that the new lights will be effective.

Committee members asked the best way to address stormwater management on private property as shown in the report. This could be addressed by creating a storm water utility fee to help fund stormwater management projects, put information on the city website to encourage these practices and offer free workshops for homeowners. Silvia mentioned that in the community of Fairfax the city gave away free rain barrels to citizens who would set them up. Group discussed contacting Amy Bouska the Urban Conservationist for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and learn about the urban programs available.

The committee would like to invite the MPO to a meeting to discuss funding. Wally mentioned that he will be going to an upcoming meeting with the MPO and will ask about funding available for bikability. As some of these projects are close to the hospital, perhaps there will also be an opportunity to involve the hospital and secure funding support on implementing a project or two.

Dottie suggested the possibility of forming a nonprofit to continue the visioning work. As a nonprofit, community members could receive tax benefits from donating to support visioning projects. Dottie has experience and would like to spearhead this. Silvia,

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

Virginia and Sara were also interested in taking part. The committee will discuss this further during the implementation meeting.

October 24th was chosen as our next meeting date. At this meeting we will discuss how to take these designs from concept to reality. We will use Triangle Park as an example to discuss in depth. Hannah will also bring scanned design presentation comments for committee members to revisit.

Next Meeting: Implementation Meeting on Monday, October 24th 6 PM.