

OCL Rethinking I-81 Study
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
University College
March 20, 2008

Present: Joseph Ash, Phil Bousquet, Emmanuel Carter, Chris Capella-Peters, Megan Costa, Nell Donaldson, Carol Dwyer, Bill Egloff, David Holder, Tony Ilaqua, Karen Kitney, Rich Landerkin, Rebecca Livengood, Kevin McAuliffe, Donna O'Mahoney Rohde, Steve Schroeder, Ben Sio, Doug Sutherland, Kim Waelder, Sandra Barrett, Rachel Pollack

Initial discussion as relates to Mission Statement:

- 1) A decision must be made (requires community education).
- 2) Other communities have faced similar decisions and have moved forward; the community *can* make a decision on this large a scale.
- 3) Key to making the decision is discovering what kind of community we want to be and what kind of transportation problem we want the decision to solve.
- 4) Because the issue is so large, and not all facets can be addressed within the study, we need to compile a list of issues that arise during the study process but will not be addressed within the finished study.

Joe Ash discussed other studies/surveys which could inform, in a limited way, the process of creating a mission statement. See Focus Syracuse Organization's "Outcome Goals" handout and "Group 4 (emerging from work of those planning the Connective Corridor): What Can be done to address Interstate 81" handout.

Examples of goals from other studies which may be relevant:

- Revitalizing downtown, stopping suburban sprawl, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment, improving public transportation links.
- Encouraging Carousel shoppers to visit other attractions; centrally locating and promoting downtown visitors center, hotel near Oncenter, events year round.
- Economic development issues
- Becoming more pedestrian and bicycle friendly, sustaining and increasing arts.
- Government consolidation

Information collected during previous studies as relates to 81

- OCL *Strategic Government Consolidation* Study Interviews with Opinion Leaders, Surveys of Voting Public, Public Officials: Transportation [other than airport authority] didn't come up. Jobs, economy were number one priorities, improving quality of life. Study recommended acting regionally, including creating land use plan to check sprawl.
- OCL's Downtown Study: 81 an impediment to growth
- "Group 4: What can be done to address Interstate 81" goals/concerns handout (examples, get rid of 81, clear signage to identify corridor area, security of area, other areas outside the corridor, how do you connect them? etc.)

Key Statistic from *Strategic Government Consolidation* study relating to Rethinking I-81 study/importance of vital Syracuse economy to surrounding communities

- 40 percent of those surveyed said a vital Syracuse economy crucial to surrounding communities.
- 40 percent of those surveyed said a vital Syracuse economy important to surrounding communities.
- So 80 percent of the community agrees that Syracuse's economy affects their lives.
- "The whole community, even the suburbs, is yearning for a central place within the community." --Steve Schroeder/ "People understand that if the center is falling apart, the

region's not doing very well....to the extent that we can reinforce the intuitive with a series of facts....we can advocate for downtown for the region's sake." --Doug Sutherland.

Comments:

- Show several scenarios visually (including absence/reinvention of 81) and what impacts might be (Fall Studio Project run by Emmanuel Carter, showing a range of scenarios, perhaps in concert with SU Architecture 1) Research study during summer looks at case studies 2) Use research for fall semester design project.)
- Marry results from Downtown Study with analysis/project Fall Studio Project. Projected space needed for institutional use, residential use could be filled in to underachieving blocks to create a vision of what could occur if I-81 were not there.
- Western states often don't have townships to contend with in their land use planning. (Subdivisions that grow outside city often get annexed into the city.) When townships outside of Syracuse, whose residents don't have to live with I-81, think about changes to 81, they have a completely different vision than city dwellers.
- What would provide support to NYSDOT study: A consolidation of land use studies to achieve a community-wide consensus of how the community views itself and what vision the community projects for itself in the next 30-40 years?
- Look at Saratoga as a good example of urban planning in New York State.
- If I-81 changes in anyway (slightly larger footprint), this will impact land use patterns along the footprint.
- Discussion of design implications (replacement of ramps, removal of ramps for instance). Will create a true and fair representation?
- Discussion of making the design process an outcome-driven approach. Start with an idea of what kind of city is wanted; look at what kind of road construction necessary for that to happen. (This is built into design process; certain goals are set before design, per Emmanuel Carter.)
- Discussion of whether making a final recommendation or recognizing various possibilities is preferable.
- Perhaps NYSDOT's need for a comprehensive analysis of existing land use plans could be accomplished through the Maxwell School's Capstone Project; a recommendation for an application to be made to the MPA program by the end of March.

Concluding discussion as addresses mission statement/Educate and Invigorate

1) **A decision is going to be made that will affect the community for decades.** People need to understand that their opinion will be heard.

2) **Community Goals/Values: long and near term**
capital plans, municipalities, existing land use plans
scenarios, visitor perception

3) **Other communities have faced this decision; look at how they correlate. What can we learn from what we did right and wrong.**

Situations: Their goals, their decisions, their outcomes.
case studies: Seattle presentation, Milwaukee, Toronto

4) **Other issues: Answered or not.** (Appendix?)

People will feel their needs/values left out if an appendix is not included.

5) **Recommendation: Must extensively qualify any recommendation.**

(If we all agree these are the factors, then....)

The study committee will continue to meet every Thursday afternoon for the next several weeks.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, March 27, 3:30 – 5 PM, 307 University College