

Minutes for NDRA/ND MEETING
Thursday, December 3, 2009, 7 pm, Central Library, 3rd floor

In Attendance: Board: Colette Hall, Bill Sampson, Richard Berman, Jane Myers, Alex Ix, Pat Napoleon, Mark Kavit, Debra Weiss and Juanita Milby. **Residents:** Lulu Selby, Dragana Katalina, , Lynn Valentine, Bud & Rebecca Treacle, and Anne Hemenway.

The minutes of September 24, 2009 were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's report: Bill Sampson reported there is \$1,370.54 in the treasury.

Old Business:

A. Report of 250 Interchange Public Hearing and November Design Meeting: All members of the NDRA Board spoke at the PH or commented in writing to express opposition to the interchange design, criticized for its poor pedestrian access, destruction of McIntire Park and inadequate mitigation for damage to historic properties and the environment.

When Councilor Brown didn't invite representatives of neighborhood organizations to a follow-up meeting in November to amend the interchange design, Colette insisted on attending to keep NDRA in the loop about further developments in the design process.

The design for entrances/exits to Covenant School, Birdwood Neighborhood and the Rescue Squad, and historic property mitigation were not resolved. The discussion focused on pedestrian and bicycle access. Dieckmann Cogill, a professional Transportation Planner, was invited to the meeting and she recommended reducing from 3 to 2 lanes the road crossing McIntire Road and Park for the safety of crossing bicyclists and pedestrians. R.K&K Design said they needed all the lanes to prevent back-up traffic on McIntire Road and the road through the park.

The proposed pedestrian bridge in McIntire Park over the MCP was cancelled. Also, bicycle and pedestrian paths under or over the 250 Interchange would be both unappealing, prohibitively expensive and increase the length of the bridge.

When the Southern Environmental Law Center suggested closing off the ramp from Park St. to 250 West for safety reasons, there was objection because it would mean more cut-through traffic into North Downtown. There were many new possibilities discussed for the pedestrian and bicycle trails, with the understanding that the new Park Master Plan was still in the process of creation and any decisions on the trails would be subject to their adaptability to this Park Master Plan.

Since the project's dollar allotment for trees and landscape is 7 % of the budget for the Interchange, it's not enough to begin to replace the trees removed for the interchange, nor enough to begin to screen the park from the deleterious effects of the road. In fact, the budget has undercut landscaping and mitigation by more than half.

New Business:

A. Park Street Residents discussed the pros and cons of the "bump-outs" on Park Street. Dragana Katalina who live near the 250 bridge on Park Street and Lulu Selby opposed the bump-outs in that area. They explained how drivers tend to speed when exiting onto Park St from Rt. 250 and endanger residents who emerging from their driveways onto Park St. must rush - to avoid speeding cars - and, in the process, are jolted by the bump-outs. The Board agreed to ask the City to modify some bump-outs on Park St.

Bud Treakle of Park St. explained how the bump-outs make it difficult for large vehicles, such as buses and fire trucks, to pass. He reported several incidents of cars running into Park St yards while swerving to avoid colliding with the bump-outs. Also, a drunk who swerved to avoid a bump-out, totalled a car parked next to his property.

Anne Hemenway explained how the bump-outs create a traffic calming effect with their serpentine design that both slows traffic and makes crossing the street safer. Also, they create a protective barrier between street and sidewalk.

While some agreed the bump-outs have helped improve the safety of Park St., Rick Berman pointed out how dangerous they can be on rainy nights. It was suggested that putting reflective paint on the bump-outs along with decreasing the size of the bumpouts might mitigate the danger under such conditions. Also, better lighting to make the lane markers more visible would help.

Pat Napoleon pointed out the need to repair the bumpouts that are damaged from numerous hits from vehicles.

Colette will be having a meeting with the City's traffic engineer to discuss the "bumpouts" and other ND traffic issues.

B. Report on the City Manager's Meeting with Neighborhood Leaders: Among issues addressed were a budget survey included in our utility bill and a work session on the budget. The City Manager has a list of sidewalks needing repair and is proceeding with shaving and filling them where needed. The next Race Dialogue meeting will be on Dec. 6th. In January, a Neighborhood Leadership Institute to teach local citizens about participation in city government will begin. The participants will take part in a collective project.

C. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are still being accepted. All neighborhoods contribute their own plans which the city then puts together into one Master Plan. Colette reminded those present not to miss this opportunity to shape the Master Plan and she will inform us soon when the deadline for our suggestions is.

D. Discussion of the Letter to State and Federal Agencies regarding the 250 Interchange Design was tabled until the next NDRA meeting.

E. Letter to the Mayor: The Coalition to Preserve McIntire Park, of which NDRA is a member, will write a letter to the Mayor questioning City Council voting on the 250 interchange at the Dec 7 meeting, before the design has received approval of State and Federal regulatory agencies.

F. Mark Kavitt would like NDRA/ND to present some form of recognition to downtown business people who are exemplary in the maintenance of their properties. The Board gave Mark the go-ahead to write a proposal as to what form this recognition should take.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jane Myers, Secretary