

## **Group 1 Comments from Walkabout. December 1, 2007**

Edgewater/Princeton/Smith/Vassar Intersection: Light at Edgewater and Princeton/Smith/Vassar has become an increasing problem for traffic congestion since the Road Diet. Some suggestions – better synchronize the lights, think about taking out the light at Vassar, put in a median at Vassar offset. Be creative in coming up with solutions for this problem. Lots of people speeding passing in the center lane – medians could increase the landscaping and reduce the illegal passing in the center lane.

CWA Building, with its windowless façade, is a sort of an eyesore. Perhaps get in contact with CWA to see if there is a possibility of putting displays in their windows or other opportunities to liven up the building.

Signs. There could be a possibility that the sign code for Edgewater Drive is not producing the results that we may want. For example, the Orange Cycle signs are good, since they enliven the parapet of the building. However, several other businesses are difficult to see, even to the pedestrian, since there are not complementary signs in the arcades, or on the parapet of the building.

Façade Improvement Program. Suggest a façade improvement program to create improvements to the facades of existing buildings along Edgewater as part of the Main Street program. Some building has applied fake stones in a bulk fashion, such that it appears dated. Should have a base. Don't make the buildings consistent – have unique architecture expressed by every store if possible.

Street Trees. Trees tend to come and go on the Drive – they seem to be pulled out every 10 years or so. The most recent changes happened in the year 2000 range and the trees are puny; there used to be Bradford pear trees. Wish oaks were the street tree on the street, or something with more of a canopy than the palms, “bushes” and dwarf magnolia trees in front of the Wellesley. Downtown Winter Park has seemed to create a decent tree-scape in a similar environment. The City should look into what they installed and see if we can utilize something similar. Also, think about the location of the trees themselves – they might be able to be relocated in bulb-outs on the Drive either near corners or in between parking spaces, creating a more sidewalk space that could be ADA compliant. Whatever happens, do not include a tree that has “berries”.

Vassar Street. With the talk of possibly closing Vassar Street, or limiting the movements from Vassar onto Edgewater (like right-out only at westbound Vassar from the east side of Edgewater nearest the Wellesley), we must also consider the queuing and exiting impacts to Lake Silver Elementary.

Walls Facing the Street. Restrict walls facing the street, require some transparency for new buildings, and encourage older buildings with blank walls to incorporate opening in the walls to open them to inside courtyards. Require transparency and windows to “turn the corners”. Consider having a mural contest for existing blank walls facing the street.

Undergrounding of Utilities. The existing concrete poles are placed in a strange location in the middle of the sidewalk. City should continue to explore undergrounding of utilities, as they have in the center of College Park.

Newspaper Racks. City and/or business district should contemplate a standard rack to clean the appearance of news racks.

Architecture and Design: Region's Bank has a nice Pergola treatment along the Drive where there isn't the building extending for part of the frontage of the property. Utilize Corners for Plaza treatments. Figure out Heights of buildings to when the City should grant a design/density bonus on Edgewater. Love the Lady-bug building; it's pleasant to have a variety of architectural styles on Edgewater (Art-Deco at Top drawer adds to the mix). Remember to require shielding of existing parking lots from the street with both landscaping and street walls. Chain Link fences should be prohibited to appear from the street. Lack of shade is problematic – support architectural design guidelines that requires overhangs/arcades. Keep an "old-Florida" feeling of the buildings – brick is nice – but it doesn't have to be all brick.

Access and Vehicular Circulation: Drive-Thrus – Need to restrict new drive-throughs on the Drive, and reduce the amount of curb cuts on the street. Work with businesses to eliminate driveway s and improve circulation on Edgewater. Important to develop a system of back alleys for site circulation that is parallel to Edgewater Drive and creates needed cross access easements between properties.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Circulation: Coordinate pedestrian crossing across Edgewater near the School and properties across the street. For sidewalk dimensions, 10.5 at Moe's is getting close to the ideal sidewalk width. 13-feet in front of Regions Bank is ideal – but may be too generous. Streetscape landscaping is deficient near the laundry. May be able to punch out the curb and increase the sidewalk between Vassar and Smith on Edgewater. Encourage display windows - Perhaps have a competition for vacant display windows, murals, and street art.