

Edgewater Drive Vision Task Force
Meeting Minutes, May 8, 2008

A meeting of the Edgewater Drive Vision Task Force was held on Thursday, May 8, 2008 at approximately 3:30 p.m. in Conference Room "R" of City Hall.

Task Force Members Present

Claramargaret Groover

Eric Apen

Tom Cook

Karen Shimpf

Jim Pruett

Mary Dees

Bob Carr

Task Force Members Absent

Bob Ward

Eric Houston

Greg Bryla

Phyllis Tuell

Staff Present

Jason Burton, Chief Planner, City of Orlando

Michaëlle Pierrette, Planner, City of Orlando

Natalie Barnes, Resource Analyst, City of Orlando

Pauline Eaton, Main Street Coordinator

Lakisha Hull, Planner, City of Orlando

Holly Stenger, Project Manager, City of Orlando

Malisa McCreedy, Transportation Planner, City of Orlando

Commission Robert Stuart

Introductions/Preamble

Introduction of College Park's/Edgewater Drive's new Main Street Manager, Diane DeWalt, by Pauline Eaton of Economic Development Staff. Ms. DeWalt is starting next week as the MainStreet Manager. She can be reached at 407-398-6864 or diane@downtowncollegepark.com.

Downtown College Park Partnership - Presentation by M. Jim Kersey.

The Partnership has been in some form of existence since the 1950's, and the current iteration has been going since the 1970's. Approximately three years ago, the Partnership focused on recruiting professionals in the area to broaden membership in the organization. Last calendar year, the Partnership applied to be part of the City of Orlando's Main Street program, and was accepted as one of three initial programs. The Partnership has been revising its bylaws to comply with Main Street.

One of the most visible activities that the neighborhood is familiar with is the Partnership's production of Holiday on the Drive, typically on the first Saturday in December, as well as the College Park Jazz Fest. The Partnership is looking into adding a Movie Night, similar to the Winter Park Farmer's Market.

Mr. Kersey gave a brief overview of vision for Edgewater Dr developed by the Partnership, which was developed by their board approximately 18 months ago. The area encompassed by the vision includes the 1.5-mile strip of Edgewater Drive from Lake Adair to Maury Road, but also includes the TapRoom at Dubsdread. To a degree, Edgewater Drive grew up just as the automobile became "king", the corridor reflects that. Destinations are destination in and of themselves. One would never park at one location today and shop at Publix, CVS and Ace Hardware. The new vision is a definitive desire to create a sustainable environment by focusing on three elements:

- Physical environment – configuration of buildings and public spaces. The voids are just as important as the solids.
- Mixed Use environment- creates a sense of place, increases connectivity and reduced vehicular trips
- Functional environment- All movement through and around Downtown College Park by all means of transportation must be safe, comfortable and efficient.

The overall scheme is to figure out how to improve the pedestrian environment to encourage flow throughout the corridor.

Old Business- Parking time restrictions

The Task Force discussed finalizing the concept for parking restrictions that have been discussed for the corridor over the past two meetings. Staff presented a map of the locations where parking restriction are currently in place, and several options for placing restrictions on the corridor. The parking restrictions could be instituted north of Harvard, Yale, Stetson or Dartmouth Street (Dartmouth and Yale are locations with a traffic signal, which might make it easier to enforce north of a signal). There are additional locations for parking restrictions generally at the Lake Adair shops near the southern end of the Drive.

The Task Force discussed various solutions, including the need for a parking wayfinding system to publicize locations of parking garage, as well as outreach to employees along the drive to encourage weekday parking at the Methodist Church. Mary Dees expressed her concerns with times parking restrictions – perhaps 2-hours may not be enough time if the corridor was to develop into a shopping destination – 3 hours or no restrictions could be better. Chair Groover discussed the need to channel customers and employees to appropriate parking locations. Bob Carr focused on creating a uniform restriction along the length of the corridor (generally north of Oak and to Preston Street on the northern end of the Drive).

Bob Carr made a motion to implement a uniformed 2-hr signed parking restriction from Monday-Saturday, 8:00-6:00 PM located generally from Oak to Preston St on Edgewater Drive. The motion was seconded by Eric Apen. As part of the discussion on the motion, the Task Force expressed comments about ensuring that the new signage be consolidated in the field to the largest extent

possible to avoid “sign clutter”. The motion passed with Groover, Carr, Apen, Cook, Shimpf and Pruett in favor, and member Mary Dees in opposition.

New Business- Mr. Burton’s presentation on Architectural details

Chief Planner Jason Burton gave a presentation on architectural details – it desirable to convey a variety of architectural styles, ages and functions. Thus the City does not have a policy of preferring any particular style. However, architectural elements of a building should be true to the style chosen.

Massing and articulation have been discussed widely with the Urban Form plan. The current Special Plan calls for duplication of the historic platting of lots generally dimensioned as 50-feet by 120-feet. No particular building is encouraged to create a strong statement of scale. To particularly implement this concept, staff suggests that the mass of a structure be broken up at a length of 200-240 feet (and generally following the transect lines), to create individual forms that can relate to the human “block” scale; further refinements by changing styles across transect lines breaks down the mass further. For example, Baldwin Park has a maximum 200-foot building length in the “core area”, with a maximum 150-foot building length outside the core area. Within any 200-foot building, the style is changed 2-3 times with indentations in the mass of the structure to create buildings that have a sense of solids and voids.

Mr. Burton reviewed the above concepts with the design plan, and included a discussion of encouraging colonnades in the interior areas of the core (the 6-block area). Minimum heights and dimensions are suggested, with a minimum 10-foot clear width to the colonnade, which contains a minimum 6-foot clear zone for pedestrian through traffic. A 9-foot minimum opening height and 12-foot minimum soffit height is recommended. Mr. Burton showed examples of colonnades from around the state and country.

Further discussion about signage details. Staff recommends allowing greater height of “fin signs” that project from buildings. They are currently limited in height to 1.5 times the width; staff suggests that this proportion be doubled in order to encourage these projecting signs that could add character to the district. In order to address concerns expressed earlier in the year about allowing “hanging signs” under canopies and arcades, the current Special Plan allows such signs as long as they have a 7.5-foot clear dimension over the sidewalk.

Lighting was discussed; staff recommends that further lighting in the area be single globe “acorn” lights, similar to the standard utilized in the periphery of the Downtown area (as installed in front of the Wellesley and 101 Eola projects – which can include banners).

Limitation on ground floor uses and “Transparency” (windows) were discussed. The current plan requires ground floor commercial uses, and limits financial institutions to the Princeton-Smith block (up to 30% of the ground level, maximum 20% of the Edgewater Drive frontage). Staff proposes to

extend this allocation of non-commercial frontage to the entire area, and allowing office uses in addition to financial institutions, so long as the public areas of the office front onto Edgewater Drive.

Transparency requirements would be 60% for non-residential uses and 30% for residential uses (the percentage area required to have window between 3 to 7-feet above grade). An 18-inch to 3-foot “knee wall” would be required to create the correct storefront system appropriate to a traditional activity center such as Edgewater Drive. Further refinements to buildings at street corners would allow for small plazas at the corner (the “Barcelona” corner concept).

Staff explored the issue of top story setbacks, which have been utilized in other jurisdictions (such as the Douglas Grand and Landmark buildings in Winter Park). The discussion of the group led towards not mandating a system of step-backs at the tops of buildings.

Comments /Concerns

Comments from the public focused on truck access, loading and servicing in the core area; including the closing of the Ivanhoe interchange at I-4 9 (a subject of the trans4mation project and Downtown Transportation Plan). What type of changes in traffic patterns would impact Edgewater Drive with these closures? Princeton and Smith Streets now have truck restrictions signed on these routes. Possibly have a presentation on the pros and cons and include effects of new I-4 configuration, as well as the possibility of delivery time restrictions. Comments from Bob Carr focused on how to “uninvite” through traffic going through the area.