

## Midtown Plaza Area Plan – South Brush Creek Sub Area Chart Notes

Monday April 29, 2013, St. Paul's Church

After a brief presentation on project status, and the Vision, Guiding Principles, and public input summary and analysis, the attendees discussing issues and application of the Guiding Principles to the specific geographic area: Brush Creek to 55<sup>th</sup> Street, State Line Road to Paseo Boulevard. The discussion is generally grouped into 3 topics – Land Use and Urban Design and Transportation.

### **Land Use and Urban Design:**

*What Land Use and Development issues are most critical to the future of the South Brush Creek sub-area? What Urban Design issues are most important to define the future of the South Brush Creek sub-area?*

- Political will / special interest / etc. is an issue – City needs to stick to the plan recommendations and policies – this plan need to be specific beyond broad policy.
- What is “no strip development” or “nodal” - we need to be more specific that this is not just use but an urban aesthetic.
- We do not have a market for as much retail that is in most plans, so what else goes in?
- Housing may be okay, but transition and scale to surroundings is critical.
- Need to go into specific areas where development / density are okay (same concept as Plaza Plan).
- Core of South Brush Creek area is single family residential.
- Biggest threat to quality of the area is the car – we must concentrate on developing a multi-modal transportation system.
- Don't need density that brings more traffic – new development needs to have broader positive impact on neighborhoods (i.e. contribute money to traffic calming)
- This plan needs:
  - Specific value statements (not vague) – not “now”, but “how”
  - Goals and principles that are specific, based on numbers that are expert-based (i.e. “what is too much traffic”)
  - To be a specific plan of action for city council to follow
  - On the web for the public to evaluate the plan which is necessary for accountability.
  - The plan cannot be too generic...it should have a subset of goals for the different areas
  - Improved vision statement – current vision statement could be anywhere.
- Walkability = Accessibility (i.e. lots of people along Troost use street for motorized chairs)
  - City / justice department consent decree means multi-year improvement program
- Design can make the difference in what is appropriate for the area...ideas – building up to the street line and parking in the rear.
- Focusing the development of new residential onto commercial corridors makes sense, but it must be done while thinking about appropriate density and transitions.
- We need to focus on “high quality” urban development.

## Transportation:

*What specific transportation issues are impacting the South Brush Creek sub-area and where are they occurring?*

- Concern about the Brush Creek reach from the Stateline to the Plaza – this project is always “going to get done” – but nothing has happened for years....It was suggested by the staff of the Brush Creek Community Partners that participants visit: [www.brushcreekwatershed.com](http://www.brushcreekwatershed.com) for an update.
- Brookside Boulevard is a problem due to people speeding and the huge volume of traffic. The following ideas were offered as solutions:
  - Lower speed limit
  - Rebuild curbs
  - Establish traffic calming measures
  - Traffic speed enforcement
- The discussion of transportation and infrastructure must be coordinated with land use and density. We must look at how each affect each other on a macro level, rather than by a one by basis.
  - A suggestion that a complete traffic analysis of the area is needed to help with this issue.
- We must focus on the protection of existing single family neighborhoods – too much through traffic will kill this special environment. Anytime there is a new development, the developer should contribute money to improvements that positively influences existing traffic patterns in the area for existing neighborhoods.
- The City has put up bicycle signs in areas that seem to be ineffective....just putting up signs doesn't make a route safe for bicycles.
- We have to restrict or even not allow additional curb cuts across the Trolley Track Trail by future development/redevelopment projects.
- The school drop offs/pick-ups at 51<sup>st</sup> and Wornall cause traffic problems in the area.
- There is concern of how an increase in commercial activity will affect the safety of students at UMKC. There should be a traffic study that measures the impact on traffic and safety in this area before more commercial comes to this area.
- Adding a huge commercial business on a historic boulevard and on a college campus is a mistake (51<sup>st</sup> and Oak).
- We should change parking requirements – no minimums and maybe consider a maximum of parking spots –this must be done to encourage urban development.
- Brookside Boulevard is too wide/too fast – no more room for traffic.
  - Too few traffic control mechanisms for crossings.
  - Crossings difficult for students – near 51st and near 55th – need to be looked at.
  - Re-establish curbs on Brookside to protect pedestrians on sidewalks.
- Make sure any density increase has the transportation capacity to handle it.

- Analysis of overall traffic patterns needed. Lots of changes have occurred that have cumulative effects :
  - UMKC and Rockhurst less commuter campus + new density + Main / Brookside intersection re-configuration.
  - Individual projects are not asked to do a traffic analysis in light of all of these changes.
  - This needs to be what guides land use recommendations and decisions.
- 52nd and Brookside with bus stop in the middle of block creates difficult crossings.
- 51st – 52nd & Oak – How is it performing from pedestrian safety?
  - North / South traffic flows with parking garage access seems problematic.
  - More study needed because this is “part of the campus” now (not perceived as public street...)
  - Future development will make it more so – (UMKC parking area across from Admin...)
  - All campus circulation has this issue – Rockhill & Troost are similar – this is “part of the campus” so pedestrians should have the Right of Way
  - Can signs / urban design features deal better with this and send visual cues to drivers?
- We need to re-constitute a “pedestrian first” attitude in all of the pedestrian oriented districts (campus and mixed use areas).
  - Eg. The plaza used to be much more pedestrian friendly prior to the traffic signals
  - It was an understood culture – this has change
  - The installation of traffic signals only give the cars the priority...
- Physical improvements for pedestrians are OK, but enforcement may also be an issue
- Speed on Summit (west side of Loose Park) is an issue near school (Pembroke Hill), it is a BIG concern – part design / part enforcement issue.
- Neighborhood requests vs. streets/traffic department pedestrian guidelines – plan needs to be clear, and traffic dept. need to use more flexibility to deal with real solutions rather than traffic standards.
- 55th and Paseo has a crossing / pedestrian issue with the blinking lights, could blinking stop signs a-la 51st and Oak be a compromise?
- Pedestrian education needs to be part of the solution.
- Need to know more about Universities growth plans before City policy for this area is formed.

**Other:**

- The political will to follow plans is a major issue that is a key to the future of the area. The plan can be great, but without the support of the elected officials – it is a waste of time.
- These plans should have value statements and goals for moving things forward of how to develop things. These plans should include expert based numbers, should specify a process by which city council has to move forward to change the plan...should be on a website.