

Ben Fulmer

From: Lyuba Zuyeva <lyuba@landofsky.org> on behalf of Lyuba Zuyeva
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 9:56 AM
To: Tristan Winkler; Zia Rifkin
Subject: FBRMPO Board Agenda Packet for next Thursday, October 29th
Attachments: 20151029 FBRMPO Board Agenda Packet.pdf

To FBRMPO Board members and interested parties—

Please find attached the Board Agenda packet for our meeting next Thursday, October 29th at 12:30 PM. There will not be a meeting this Thursday, October 22nd.

In case you have missed an earlier note about the I-26 Connector (TIP ID I-2513) Public Hearing, it has been set for Monday, November 16th, with an open house from 4-6:30 PM and a Public Hearing taking place at 7 PM at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Asheville. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been posted online at <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/>. We have copies of the project maps available for review at Land of Sky Regional Council Offices.

Thank you,
Lyuba

Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP

FBRMPO Director

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140 • Asheville, NC 28806

o: 828.251.7454 • f: 828.251.6353



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

All email correspondence to and from this address is subject to public review under the NC Public Records Law.

Ben Fulmer

From: Lyuba Zuyeva <lyuba@landofsky.org> on behalf of Lyuba Zuyeva
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 2:29 PM
To: Tristan Winkler;Zia Rifkin
Subject: FBRMPO Board Agenda packet for next Thursday, September 24th
Attachments: 2015_09_24_MPO_Board_AgendaPacket.pdf

To FBRMPO Board Members and interested parties-

Please find attached our agenda packet for the FBRMPO Board meeting scheduled for next Thursday, September 24th at 12:30 PM at Land of Sky Regional Council Offices.

Sincerely,

Lyuba Zuyeva
FBRMPO Director
Land of Sky Regional Council
828.251.7454

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Ben Fulmer

From: Lyuba Zuyeva <lyuba@landofsky.org> on behalf of Lyuba Zuyeva
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2015 10:14 AM
To: Tristan Winkler; Zia Rifkin
Subject: Small Update: FBRMPO Board Agenda for August 27th meeting
Attachments: 20150827 MPOBoard Full Agenda Packet_08-21-15.pdf

To FBRMPO Board Members, TCC Members and interested parties-

There have been a couple small changes to the MPO Board minutes from Thursday, May 28th. Please find updated Board agenda packet for our meeting on August 27th with updated minutes attached.

Sincerely,

Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP

FBRMPO Director

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140 • Asheville, NC 28806

o: 828.251.7454 • f: 828.251.6353



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From: Lyuba Zuyeva
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 9:05 PM
To: Lyuba Zuyeva; Tristan Winkler; Zia Rifkin
Subject: FBRMPO Board Agenda for August 27th meeting

To FBRMPO Board Members, TCC Members and interested parties-

Please find attached the agenda packet for the next FBRMPO Board meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 27th. The meeting will take place at 12:30 PM at Land of Sky Regional Council offices, 339 New Leicester Hwy, Ste 140, Asheville, NC 28806.

Apologies for late posting of the agenda. We had some technical difficulties this afternoon due to power outage.

Sincerely,

Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP

FBRMPO Director

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140 • Asheville, NC 28806

o: 828.251.7437 • f: 828.251.6353



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Ben Fulmer

From: Lyuba Zuyeva <lyuba@landofsky.org> on behalf of Lyuba Zuyeva
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 9:05 PM
To: Lyuba Zuyeva;Tristan Winkler;Zia Rifkin
Subject: FBRMPO Board Agenda for August 27th meeting
Attachments: 20150827 MPOBoard Full Agenda Packet.pdf

To FBRMPO Board Members, TCC Members and interested parties-

Please find attached the agenda packet for the next FBRMPO Board meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 27th. The meeting will take place at 12:30 PM at Land of Sky Regional Council offices, 339 New Leicester Hwy, Ste 140, Asheville, NC 28806.

Apologies for late posting of the agenda. We had some technical difficulties this afternoon due to power outage.

Sincerely,

Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP

FBRMPO Director

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140 • Asheville, NC 28806

o: 828.251.7437 • f: 828.251.6353



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Ben Fulmer

From: Joey Robison <JRobison@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Joey Robison
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2015 4:44 PM
To: Marc Hunt; Jan Davis; Gwen Wisler
Cc: Dan Baechtold; Stephanie Monson; Brenda Mills; Alex Carmichael; All Department Directors; Anne Marie Doherty; Caroline Long; Cathy Ball; Christy Edwards; councilgroup; Dan Phairas; Gary Jackson; gracecurry1@charter.net; Jaime Matthews; Jeff Staudinger; Joey Robison; John Sanchez; maxlalexander@gmail.com; Nikki Reid; Sam Powers; sarah.urbannest@gmail.com; Shannon Tuch; Tom Downing; Tony McDowell
Subject: Materials for the July 21 PED Committee meeting (TOMORROW)
Attachments: July 2015 Riverfront Projects.pdf; PED_07-21-2015_Agenda.pdf; PED_DraftMinutes_06-16-2015.pdf; Staff Report - CDM Smith Contract Modifications.pdf; Staff Report - NEA.pdf; Staff Report - Riverfront.pdf

Good afternoon Councilors,

Please find the agenda for the July PED meeting attached and below. The staff reports and draft June minutes are also attached. We look forward to seeing you tomorrow at 3:30 in the 1st floor conference room of City Hall.

Thank you,

Joey Robison

Communication Specialist, Planning & Multimodal Transportation
City of Asheville | 828.232.4517 | www.ashevillenc.gov



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
July 21, 2015 | 3:30 PM
CITY HALL, 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES | 3:30 |
| 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS | |
| a. Riverfront Update; Stephanie Monson Dahl | 3:35 |
| b. Consideration of Modification to Engineering Contract with CDM Smith for Design of the RADTIP and Five Points Roundabout; Dan Baechtold | 3:45 |

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Consideration of the Asheville Area Arts Council's Application to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grant; Brenda Mills** 4:05

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

4:25

NEXT MEETING: August 18, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

4:40

For more information on the Planning & Economic Development Committee, please contact Cathy Ball at 828-259-5939.

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2013 1:00 PM
To: Cecil Bothwell - Email;Chris Pelly;Esther Manheimer - Email;Gordon Smith;Jan Davis;Marc Hunt;Mayor Terry Bellamy
Subject: Various Bd/Com Minutes
Attachments: Bd & Com Minutes of 8-13-13.docx; SACEE Min of 8-21-13.doc; PED Min of 8-20-13.doc; HRC Min 8-14-13.doc

Thanks,
Maggie

Maggie Burleson, MMC, NCCMC
City Clerk
City of Asheville
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802
828-259-5601 (phone)
828-259-5499 (fax)

Ben Fulmer

From: Holly Bullman <holly@cra-recycle.org> on behalf of Holly Bullman
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2012 10:59 AM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Cc: 'Will Sagar'; 'Tom Downing'
Subject: RE: Welcoming Remarks at CRA
Attachments: 2012 Final Program.pdf; Talking points for CRA.docx

Marc,

Wonderful news! Thank you very much for joining us. We are pleased to have you welcome our group. Will Sagar, the CRA President, will be opening the session and then introducing you. Tom Downing has provided us with your bio for your introduction.

Our opening session is at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 21. We are at the Grove Park Inn's Heritage Ballroom, which is on the Sammons (left) wing of the Inn. In the past, dignitaries have spent a few moments welcoming us to the community, perhaps giving a flavor of the city with a brief description of the City's sustainability strategies and how our efforts play into that. With this and the content you choose to highlight from the attachments, overall the welcoming remarks take about 5 minutes thereabouts. Whatever you feel comfortable with.

I've attached a couple of items that may be useful for you as you prepare. Our program details the session topics we'll be covering in the week. The second attachment is a document with possible talking points for your opening remarks. The second half is a 2011 press release regarding the economic impact of recycling – so the most up to date information is included in the press release, but there are important bits of data in the first half of the document, including the overall economic impact of recycling.

Feel free to call me if you have any questions. I can be reached anytime, including Wed morning at the number below.

Best regards,
Holly

Holly Bullman
Program Manager
Carolina Recycling Association
828-215-8548

CRA Main Office:
PO Box 1296
Greenville, SC 29602
877-972-0007

www.cra-recycle.org

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2012 7:50 AM
To: holly@cra-recycle.org
Subject: Welcoming Remarks at CRA

Holly

I have made myself available to provide remarks next Wednesday, and would look forward to it! So glad this conference is coming here!!

Any quick advice you can offer would be appreciated. Which room? How long to go; 1-2 minutes?

Thanks
Marc



Marc Hunt
City Council Member
55 Cambridge Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804
Cell 828.273.2172
marchunt@avlcouncil.com

From: Tom Downing [<mailto:TDowning@ashevillenc.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2012 4:10 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject:

Marc,

Mayor Bellamy can't provide the brief welcome remarks for the following event. The sponsor has asked me to see if you would be available and can provide the welcome remarks.

Weds March 21
9:00 am

Carolina Recycling Association annual conference.
Location: Grove Park Inn
Holly Bullman
215.8548

Please let me know if you are able to welcome the group.

Thanks,

Tom Downing
Administrative Assistant
City Manager's Office
828-259-5604

70 Court Plaza
PO Box 7148
Asheville, North Carolina 28802

TDowning@ashevillenc.gov



Think Green! Please do not print this e-mail unless necessary

The Asheville Way: Continuous Improvement, Integrity, Diversity, Safety and Welfare, and Excellent Service

Ben Fulmer

From: Judy Daniel <JDaniel@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Judy Daniel
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2014 2:11 PM
To: Alex Carmichael;All Department Directors;councilgroup;'Grace Curry';Jaime Matthews;John Sanchez;'Max Alexander';Nikki Reid;Stephanie Monson;Tom Downing;Tony McDowell;Jon Fillman
Cc: Christy Edwards;Joey Robison
Subject: RE: PED Agenda for January 21, 2014
Attachments: memo_to_PED_Riverside Drive Development Plan (2).doc; Staff reportPED Ind Rezone Sweeten Ck 1 14.doc; PZ Report 1-6-14_Revised.docx; PZ Report PD Strategic Plan Recommendations.docx

The agenda for the Tuesday PED meeting is below, with available staff reports attached. The meeting will begin at 3:30 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room of City Hall.

**Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee
January 21, 2014
1st Floor City Hall, North Conference Room
3:30 PM**

1. Approval of the December 17, 2013 Meeting Minutes
2. Updates
 - Riverside Drive Development Plan Update: highlights and proposed review schedule – Stephanie Monson
 - Update on MoogFest – Jon Fillman
 - Update on Industrial Zoning for Avalon site on Sweeten Creek Road – Sam Powers
3. New Business
 - Municipal Service Districts – Cathy Ball
4. Unfinished Business
5. Presentations and Public Comment (3 minutes for up to 5 individuals)
 - Report from Planning & Zoning Commission on 2025 Plan Land Use Recommendations – Judy Daniel, Joe Minicozzi, and Kristi Carter
 - 2025 Plan Update and Recommendations – Judy Daniel
6. Closed Session
7. Adjourn – Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, 2014.

PENDING ITEMS

Updates

- Proposed Investment Districts
- Draft of Infrastructure Improvement Grant Incentive Policy

New Business

- Short Term Rentals in Residential Zones (February) – Judy Daniel
- Outline Process for 68-76 Haywood Street Property (February)
- Historic Preservation Plan (August 2014)

Judy Daniel, AICP

Director, Planning and Development Department
828-259-5831

Christy Edwards
City of Asheville
Planning & Development Department
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802
Phone: 828-232-4504
Fax: 828-250-8868

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2012 9:32 AM
To: Cecil Bothwell;Chris Pelly;Esther Manheimer;Gordon Smith;Jan Davis;Marc Hunt;Mayor Bellamy
Subject: Bi-Weekly Bd/Com Minutes
Attachments: HRC Minutes of 1-11-12.doc; Civic Center Com Minutes 2-7-12.doc; Transit Com Minutes 1-3-12.pdf; Bd & Com Minutes of 1-10-12.doc; Greenway Commission Min of 1-12-12.doc; Tree Com Minutes 1-17-12.doc; PED Minutes of 1-17-12.pdf

Maggie Burleson, MMC
City Clerk
City of Asheville
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802
(828) 259-5601 (phone)
(828) 259-5499 (fax)

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2014 8:16 AM
To: Cecil Bothwell - Email;Chris Pelly;Esther Manheimer;Gordon Smith;Gwen Wisler;Jan Davis;Marc Hunt
Subject: Various Bd/Com Meetings
Attachments: HRC Min 11-13-13.doc; TDA Min of 11-20-13.pdf; 11-8-13 Downtown Com Minutes.docx; PED Min of 11-19-13.doc; Civic Center Min 12-3-13.docx; ABC Law Enforcement Report Dec 2013.xls

Thanks,
Maggie

Maggie Burleson, MMC, NCCMC
City Clerk
City of Asheville
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802
828-259-5601 (phone)
828-259-5499 (fax)

Ben Fulmer

From: Janet Dack <JDack@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Janet Dack
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2012 3:31 PM
To: councilgroup;All Department Directors
Cc: Phil Kleisler;Natalie Bailey;Tom Downing;Shannon Tuch;Sasha Vrtunski;Nikki Reid
Subject: PED Tues, March 20, 3:30p, First Floor Conf Room
Attachments: PED Agenda 3.20.pdf; Charlotte Street Memo 022712.pdf; PED draft min Feb 21.pdf; PED COVER MEMO.Tunnel Rd.pdf; PROPOSAL FOR PED.Tunnel Rd.pdf; PED_SustAmdt.pdf

Attached please find the agenda and supporting document for the March 20th PED meeting, 3:30p, First Floor Conference Room of City Hall. Also attached are draft minutes from the February 21st meeting and supporting documents.

Let me know if you have any questions,
Janet

*Janet Dack
Administrative Assistant
Office of Economic Development
City of Asheville
PO Box 7148
Asheville NC 28802
(828) 232-4505*

Ben Fulmer

From: Cheryl Heywood <CHeywood@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Cheryl Heywood
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 1:27 PM
To: Gordon Smith;Gwen Wisler;Marc Hunt
Cc: Gary Jackson;Paul Fetherston;Barbara Whitehorn;Cathy Ball;Esther Manheimer;Chris Pelly;Jan Davis;Cecil Bothwell - Email;McCray Coates;Roderick Simmons;Frank McGowan;Tony McDowell
Subject: Materials for 3/24 Finance Committee
Attachments: Agenda 3242015.pdf; Staff Report Stormwater 3242015.pdf; Stormwater Annual Report 3242015.pdf; Minutes 2242015.pdf

Good Afternoon,

Attached please find the agenda, draft of the 2/24 minutes, and materials pertaining to the Stormwater agenda item for the 3/24 finance committee meeting. Please note that this meeting will begin at 1:00p.m. instead of our normal start time. Additional materials to follow.

Thank you,

Cheryl

Cheryl Heywood
Finance and Management Services
City of Asheville
828-259-5598 (phone)
cheywood@ashevillenc.gov (e-mail)

The City of Asheville is committed to delivering an excellent quality of service, to enhance your quality of life.

Ben Fulmer

From: Joey Robison <JRobison@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Joey Robison
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2015 3:36 PM
To: Marc Hunt; Jan Davis; Gwen Wisler
Subject: Materials for the March 17 PED meeting
Attachments: PED_Minutes_February24_2015.pdf; PED_March17_2015_Agenda.pdf; Staff Report AIM plan update 3-17-15.pdf; Staff Report Mar2015_PED_Riverfront.pdf

Good afternoon Councilors,

Please find the agenda for the March 17 PED meeting attached and below. The staff reports and draft February minutes are also attached. Vice Mayor Hunt will not be able to attend on Tuesday, but would like the meeting to go on without him as scheduled. We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday at 3:30 in the 1st floor conference room of City Hall.

Thank you,

Joey Robison

Executive Assistant, Planning & Multimodal Transportation
City of Asheville | 828.232.4517 | www.ashevillenc.gov



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
March 17, 2015 | 3:30 PM
CITY HALL, 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES | 3:30 |
| 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS | |
| a. Riverfront Office Update; Stephanie Monson Dahl | 3:35 |
| 3. NEW BUSINESS | |
| b. Multimodal Transportation Plan; Mariate Echeverry | 3:50 |
| 4. PUBLIC COMMENT (5 CITIZENS, 3 MINUTES EACH) | 4:30 |

NEXT MEETING: April 21, 2015

ADJOURNMENT **4:45**

For more information on the Planning & Economic Development Committee, please contact Cathy Ball at 828-232-4517.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2015 10:35 AM
To: Chris Pelly
Subject: ww park
Attachments: S2O Conceptual Design Study - Final.pdf; WW Park Press Release Final.docx

Chris

I'd like to walk you through the ww park concept. Got a few minutes the next few days? I'd be glad to come meet wherever.

Attached is the press release the group did along with the feasibility report.

marc

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2015 10:32 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: catch up on ww park
Attachments: S2O Conceptual Design Study - Final.pdf; WW Park Press Release Final.docx

Gordon

Got a few minutes in the next few days so I can walk you thru some of the details of the ww park?

Here is the full press release that went out; it has a broader take than the AC-T article did.

Report is attached as well.

marc

Ben Fulmer

From: Joey Robison <JRobison@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Joey Robison
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2015 4:42 PM
To: Marc Hunt;Jan Davis;Gwen Wisler
Cc: Jaime Matthews;Alex Carmichael;All Department Directors;Anne Marie Doherty;Brenda Mills;Caroline Long;Cathy Ball;Christy Edwards;councilgroup;Dan Phairas;Gary Jackson;gracecurry1@charter.net;Joey Robison;John Sanchez;Judy Daniel;maxlalexander@gmail.com;Nikki Reid;Sam Powers;sarah.urbannest@gmail.com;Shannon Tuch;Stephanie Monson;Tom Downing;Tony McDowell
Subject: PED meeting materials for Feb 24
Attachments: PED_February24_2015_Agenda.pdf; SACEE PAYT Memo for PED.pdf; Staff Report - MayorsDevTaskForce.pdf; Staff Report - PAYT Consultant.pdf; Staff Report - Riverfront.pdf; PED_January20_2015_Minutes.pdf; Staff Report - Small Bus Incentive Study 2 15.pdf

Good evening Councilors,

Please find the materials attached for Tuesday's meeting. They will be added to the PED web page momentarily. Please note that this month's meeting is at its regular time : **January 20 from 3:30-5pm**. Our February meeting has been moved to February 24 at 2 pm. I apologize for any confusion.

The agenda is also pasted into the body of this email below for your convenience. Please note that we have begun using the new recommended boards and commissions agenda template.

Thank you,

Joey Robison

Executive Assistant, Planning & Multimodal Transportation

City of Asheville | 828.232.4517 | www.ashevillenc.gov



**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 24, 2015 | 2:00 PM
CITY HALL, 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES | 2:00 |
| 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS | |
| a. Riverfront Office Update; Stephanie Monson Dahl | 2:05 |

3. NEW BUSINESS

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| b. Small Business Incentive Study Update; Sam Powers | 2:10 |
| c. Mayor's Development Taskforce Update; Shannon Tuch | 2:25 |
| d. Pay As You Throw Update; SACEE Member & Barbara Whitehorn | 2:40 |

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (5 CITIZENS, 3 MINUTES EACH) 3:05

NEXT MEETING: March 17, 2015

ADJOURNMENT 3:30

For more information on the Planning & Economic Development Committee, please contact Cathy Ball at 828-232-4517.

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2015 9:07 AM
To: Cecil Bothwell - Email;Chris Pelly;Esther Manheimer;Gordon Smith;Gwen Wisler;Jan Davis;Marc Hunt
Subject: Various Bds/Com Minutes
Attachments: Recreation Bd Min 1-12-15.pdf; 1-14-15 HRC Minutes.docx; 1-16-15 Downtown Com Minutes.docx; SACEE Min 1-21-15.docx

Thanks,
Maggie

Maggie Burleson, MMC, NCCMC
City Clerk
City of Asheville
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802
828-259-5601 (phone)
828-259-5499 (fax)

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, April 02, 2014 7:06 AM
To: 'Katherine Ann Reed Wheeler'
Subject: RE: City Greenway Budget
Attachments: 2013-14_Adopted Budget Book.pdf

Kate

Attached is our current budget. Pls look at pages numbered in the book 129 - 131. Note that the current year budget is the first column, the other columns are target plans. WE can only pass a firm budget for one year at a time. There are several lines from which greenway development can be funded, sometimes geographically constrained:

Greenways
Multimodal improvements
RADTIP
I-26 connector
Bicycle

As you can see, we are making a pretty large commitment. The one in the river district is likely in this timeframe. The one on Swannanoa is probably unlikely in the next 5 years given all the ROW acquisition and other complicating factors.

Good luck
marc

-----Original Message-----

From: Katherine Ann Reed Wheeler [mailto:kwheeler@warren-wilson.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 1:33 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: City Greenway Budget

Hi Marc,

I am writing to inquire about the current and future budget for greenway development. I am curious how much the city spent in 2013 on projects related to the greenway, as well as where in the budget this money comes from. I wasn't sure if this is information that you have, or where else I could inquire about such information. Thank you for your help, I hope you are enjoying Spring (finally!),

-Kate Wheeler

Ben Fulmer

From: Paul Black <paul@landofsky.org> on behalf of Paul Black
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Julie Mayfield
Cc: Marc Hunt (marchunt@avlcouncil.com)
Subject: RE: leicester highway and next meeting
Attachments: 20130228_TAC_Agenda_long.pdf

Julie,

When we first posed the question about how we wanted to reconcile the TIP and the LRTP, the staff had a list of potential candidate projects to come out. We also were looking to add the I-40/Blue Ridge Road interchange back in, so we were looking for around \$50 million to push to the "out years" to make room for these 2 projects. Our recommendation is on page 16 of the February 2013 Board packet (attached).

The staff considers the new environmental document PDEA is doing for both projects as fulfilling the I-26 study. I have been pushing them to take transit more seriously, which they have done. The preliminary result is this:

1. Any transit that would be at a scale to make a dent in the capacity demand on those parts of I-26 would not be online by the horizon year (we looked at some kind of fixed guideway).
2. No other transit technology can move the needle enough to make a difference in the number of lanes needed for the LOS FHWA wants to see (there is ***that*** chestnut again).
3. Even fixed guideway would be marginal, because that kind of transit creates additional capacity and induces its own demand, though the more compact land use patterns are a better outcome by most planning measures.

-----Original Message-----

From: Julie Mayfield [mailto:Julie@wnca.org]
Sent: Sunday, November 03, 2013 6:32 PM
To: Paul Black
Cc: Marc Hunt (marchunt@avlcouncil.com)
Subject: leicester highway and next meeting

Hi paul - when leicester highway comes up next month, will you and the staff have already done some work on possible projects in the LRTP that could come out if the TAC chooses to endorse the larger project? seems like the TAC would need to fully understand the tradeoff they would be making if they vote for the larger project.

speaking of that, whatever happened to the study of I-26 south of Asheville that is theoretically supposed to happen prior to any proposals for improving that section? I think that's a tier one project but are there any plans for it to actually happen?

Julie

Julie V. Mayfield, Co-Director
Western North Carolina Alliance
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
Asheville, NC 28801
828-258-8737

Ben Fulmer

From: Julie Mayfield <Julie@wnca.org> on behalf of Julie Mayfield
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2013 10:56 AM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: I-26: Possible lesson from Baltimore

I bring the connectus POV, but I strongly encourage us to get ADC involved in some way. Perhaps at an upcoming meeting for them to lay out their primary design concerns so we can take those into account in our discussions.

Will have FHWA lane info for our next meeting. I suggest we also discuss alignment next week.

On Mar 13, 2013, at 2:50 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

> Just re-read all this more thoroughly. Seems like there needs to be some meaningful engagement between ADC and The ConnectUs group with our Working Group before the May 9 C of C event. What do you think?

>

> Marc

>

> Begin forwarded message:

>

> From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>>

> Subject: I-26: Possible lesson from Baltimore

> Date: March 7, 2013 9:14:30 AM EST

> To: Julie@wnca.org<mailto:Julie@wnca.org>,

> a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>

> Cc: emory22@charter.net<mailto:emory22@charter.net>,

> terry@etok.net<mailto:terry@etok.net>,

> jobruder@earthlink.de<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de>,

> michael@mcdonougharchitect.com<mailto:michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>,

> chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org<mailto:chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org>

> >,

> Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com<mailto:Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com>

> >, Bettjac@indylink.org<mailto:Bettjac@indylink.org>,

> EB@Fisher-PA.com<mailto:EB@Fisher-PA.com>

>

> The Baltimore Expressway Wars, and more importantly their process, heavily involving architects and planners as well as politicians (Barbara Mikulski's rise to United State Senator had its roots here) and its outcome in the form of boulevards, expressway spurs and tunneling I-95 beneath Fort McHenry, may be of interest in thinking about the I-26 Connector Project, the promise of a Bowen Bridge Boulevard and the difficulty of some many (3, 4?) bridges over our fragile river. It requires interpretation over time and circumstances.

>

> This is the reason I see some parallel.

>

> In the Baltimore case the outcome of the war was that all through-downtown interstate segments were abandoned.

The urban design case made by SOM through the Urban Design Team, and the need to preserve the Inner Harbor resulted in the boulevard redesign of Fremont Avenue, now MLK Boulevard, and a refashioning of the local streets, Pratt and Light, moving through the land areas of the Inner Harbor project. I-95, in order to save Fells Point as well as the Inner Harbor, was dramatically relocated into a tunnel beneath Fort McHenry. An expressway spur was added to connect I-95 to the southern edge of downtown. It was a painful process.

>
> I could go on about all the differences but won't.
> Best,
>
> Dave
>
>
>
>
> David G. Nutter, AICP, Principal, Retired Nutter Associates, Community
> Planners & Development Professionals
> 169 Flint Street,
> Asheville, North Carolina 28801 USA
> Tel 828-505-8242 Cell: 828-279-1820
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Julie Mayfield <Julie@wnca.org<mailto:Julie@wnca.org>>
> To: Andrew Euston
> <a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>>
> Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory
> <emory22@charter.net<mailto:emory22@charter.net>>; dnutter
> <dnutter@aol.com<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>>; Terry O'Keefe
> <terry@etok.net<mailto:terry@etok.net>>; jobruder
> <jobruder@earthlink.de<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de>>; Mike McDonough
> <michael@mcdonougharchitect.com<mailto:michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>
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> <chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org<mailto:chris@ashevilledesigncenter.or
> g>>; Robert Griffith
> <Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com<mailto:Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.co
> m>>; Bette Jackson
> <Bettjac@indylink.org<mailto:Bettjac@indylink.org>>; Eugene Britton
> <EB@Fisher-PA.com<mailto:EB@Fisher-PA.com>>
> Sent: Tue, Mar 5, 2013 10:07 pm
> Subject: RE: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again
>
>
> Hello all - I have a couple of thoughts about how ADC can be involved
> going forward. First, let me tell you that Marc Hunt has convened
> what he's calling the I-26 Working Group, which consists of himself
> and Jan Davis as city MPO reps, Brownie and Holly as county MPO reps,
> Lou Bisette, and me. The hope is that if we can all agree on a solution, that our constituencies will also agree.
> I will be in regular communication about these meetings with the I-26
> ConnectUs Project members, which include Michael McDonough, Bruce, and
> Chris. I am happy to provide updates to this group as well.
>
> This group has its first meeting this thursday morning where we will
> figure out how often we want to meet, who else it makes sense to have
> in the room, whether the meetings will be open, etc. I will suggest
> to the larger group that some design expertise be present and push for
> ADC's involvement in some manner. I do not want the only technical expertise in the room to be engineering from
DOT.
>
> if that is not successful, I have two other ideas. First, I can keep

> you updated on what we are discussing and you can provide feedback on
 > the ideas, make suggestions, etc. Second, I am also going to suggest
 > that this group avail itself of the expertise of Jim Fox, who runs the
 > mapping work at NEMAC. Jim has a huge amount of data and is able to
 > run a variety of scenarios that could be helpful. Having ADC work
 > with Jim on different scenarios would be an incredibly powerful thing.
 >
 > Also, here is the list of issues that I will propose as the group's
 > agenda. I'm sure others will have other issues to add, but I came up
 > with these after conversations with the ConnectUs Project generally, Micheal M., and Marc Hunt.
 > If you have other things to add, please let me know.
 >
 > 1. Selecting the alignment of I-26 and where it crosses the river
 > with an eye to minimizing impacts to homes, businesses, and the river
 > 2. Improving safety on the bridge (taking i-26 traffic off will help
 > but it may not be all) and Patton Ave, including exploring turning
 > that portion of I240 into a boulevard or something less than an
 > interstate 3. Creating safe new bike/pedestrian connections between
 > West Asheville and downtown, ideally in the area of the bridge 4.
 > Looking at the travel demand model and the tradeoffs we're being asked
 > to make to have 8-10 lanes in West Asheville. Look for a solution
 > that better matches the scale of Asheville, including maximizing the use of local roads.
 > 5. Ensuring the intersection on the east side of the river does not
 > negatively interfere with the RADTIP (and ideally advances it) and
 > look for ways to reconnect Hillcrest with the larger community.
 > 6. Explore whether we can reduce the size, scale, and cost of Section
 > C (the
 > I26/I40 interchange) and still accomplish the full connectivity goals.
 > Or discuss how important that full level of connectivity is today in
 > light of limited funds.
 > 7. Explore whether we can fix the bridge first and only later address
 > sections A (west asheville) and C, as funding become available.
 >
 > Thanks
 > Julie
 >
 >
 > Julie V. Mayfield, Executive Director
 > Western North Carolina Alliance
 > 29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
 > Asheville, NC 28801
 > 828-258-8737
 > 828-258-9241 fax
 > _____
 > From: Andrew Euston
 > [a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>]
 > Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:09 PM
 > To: Andrew Euston
 > Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory; dnutter@aol.com<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>;
 > Terry O'Keefe; jobruder@earthlink.de<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de>;
 > Julie Mayfield; Mike McDonough; Chris Joyell; Robert Griffith; Bette
 > Jackson; Eugene Britton

> Subject: Re: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again

>

> David et al -- I do like some of your clever 'worst case' additional

> alternatives just identified below here. I'm serious, however, that

> we (meaning ADC and its cohorts) recognize the curious need to amply

> widen I-26 now when road funds must be scarce -- and especially when

> the one lane to the north works without significant congestion -- and

> more especially if the State intends to keep Patton Ave. as an unsafe

> mixed local and Interstate traffic facility, in violation of settled

> U.S. standards. It's a long way to 'go' for such a short drink, just

> to widen the thing! It makes me tend to believe those people are

> correct who see the Interstate connector as a corporate-socialism

> special interest gift to the private electric power industry here --

> for its projected newly designated nuclear waste-depot down at the

> Savannah River nuclear installation. There, incidentally, it could be

> handily swamped by any sizable sunami. An overly widened I-26 from

> I-40 to I-81 gives Oak Ridge and other nuclear waste sources a safer

> portage alignment toward Savannah River than, say,

> I-40 with its sharp curves and rock slides, or the stalled proposal

> for an I-3 nearer the NC-TN border. What other cause for this new

> NCDOT allocation now given its list of a dozen or so competing state Interstate priorities?

> Clearcutting the Appalachians and getting that timber to market?

> Shifting coal transfer to trucking?

>

> If the line of A-B-WNC eco-civics issues I raise in yesterday's

> message below matter they should be discussed publicly. I call for an

> ADC discussion of them in any case. If the "T-intersection" concept

> you have introduced is what most serves public interest here then that

> deserves to be given wider ADC discussion. If the new school design

> needs study regarding Interstate air rights feasibility that also

> needs discussion, and quite soon. The Leggerton plan is convention

> lower rise construction plus grounds -- there's nothing tricky about

> air rights for that. Such would be an entirely legitimate local

> highway-joint-development expenditure demand, if locally required.

> These and your concern for the current proposal's many acres of CBD

> disruption over the

> 2-3 years of construction are all legitimate local agenda planning concerns.

>

> Add them to the issues in West Asheville (i.e.: not taking

> neighborhood fabric unnecessarily along the west edge of I-26/240 and

> the matter of air rights joint development along the overpass there)

> and there is ample cause, if needed, for testing our local interests

> in court. If the State wants its nuclear connector or whatever else

> this surprising shift in NCDOT priorities represents (besides helping

> the WNC regional economy) we may never know. With West Asheville

> segment lane-number overkill and the questionable urgency for greater

> capacity northward, it does seem likely that there are hidden

> priorities at play. Reasonable WNC future economics agenda planning

> issues are a legitimate matter for making demands for some redesign

> before a go ahead that locks out the region's best interest options.

> If the projected State plan does not truly serve this region, county

> and city well as designed, its being built now will undoubtedly hamper requests here for transit investments in the uncertain future.

>

> Andy 687-2969

>

>

>

> From David Johnson 3/3/13 -- Colleagues:

>

> Thanks for all your thoughtful comments regarding I-26. They have

> been most stimulating.

>

> Timing may not be everything, but it certainly is important in life,

> warfare, and planning. It may be that planning for the Dickson school

> is now too far along to consider using the site as a right of way to

> connect I-240 to I-26/ (It might still be possible if tunneling and

> air-rights can be shown to be feasible. But this needs further

> exploration and analysis.) If we can't get a connection across the

> river to I-26 in a reasonable way, I would concur with Mike McDonough that I-240 should be downgraded to a boulevard/arterial level.

> It is critical that whatever is done in redesigning the highway

> systems at the east end of downtown be done with great care and minimal intrusion.

>

> Thinking about feasible options, here is another idea. Why not just

> let the

> I-26 connector segment be completed through Asheville as a through

> route. But don't try to shoe-horn interchanges with all local

> arterials such as Patton Avenue. Every highway doesn't need to be

> connected to every other inter-secting highway. Drivers will adjust

> to limitations of access points. (This is frequently done in Europe.)

>

> We should concentrate on getting the Smokey Park Bridge redesigned as

> a multi-modal connector linking the divided halves of Asheville. And

> we should concentrate on eliminating the malfunction junction at the

> east end of the Smokey Park Bridge. None of this depends on the use

> of the Isaac Newton site for ROW.

>

> Finally, we should find ways to connect the downtown to the French

> Broad River at Patton avenue.

>

> Isn't city planning exciting??!!

>

> Dave Johnson

>

>

> On Mar 3, 2013, at 1:16 PM, Andrew Euston

> <a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net><mailto:a_euston

> @bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net?>>>

> wrote:

>

> Friends -- some considered reminders of the Connector's relevant

> eco-civics history and an urging for ADC focus on its crucially

> profound current/future
 > potential:
 >
 > Historic Year 2000 Truth:
 > In 2000 at the so-termed NCDOT "Design Forum" (a mere single 6-
 > to 7-hour participatory review of the Connector, and hardly a
 > participatory charrette-format service to the community) I thought
 > that planning here could never be so inferior. C. Mgr. Westbrook and
 > Shufford fresh from St. Petersburg were intent on railroading, with the C of C, through the State's "planning"
 > agenda. They retained a Cinn. consultant as a facilitator who had
 > been successful in threading an Interstate through an a below-grade
 > highway alignment reasonably similar to I-240's. He was sincere, but
 > found that the City's strong City Manager/weak-Mayor system here
 > allowed the incumbent mayor to be outplayed; Sufford had four tables
 > in four partitioned off areas in the Renaissance ballroom overseen by
 > four staff; staff, it developed, were instructed to keep markers from
 > paper, at least for the onconnector planning. Despite this the NCDOT had
 > furnished (as dressing or in good conscience?) at the right-of-way
 > table a conscientious, its just-retired R-O-W professional plus its current R-O-W staff position holder.
 > A most alert local Robert Griffin, AIA was put at the street furniture
 > table. He had had lots of advanced experience working on his successful
 > Biltmore Village railroad overpass bridge revisions. The AM session
 > was almost complete and not line had been proposed as to
 > alternatives. Other assigned AIA chapter resource people (one at a
 > table) were not very aware, but Bob was livid. Meanwhile from Florida
 > the I-26 Connector Awareness Group's paid consultant (ultimately at
 > \$40K !!! - a debt not paid off until 2010 through 'bake sales', Grey
 > Eagle fundraisers, etc., etc.). That fellow, a traffic engineer, was
 > kept away, idle, although he had identified essentially the footprint
 > of the eventual ADC scheme already. I was able to free range the
 > whole scene, engage the key parties mentioned above, determine the fix
 > was on in City Planning and that NCDOT seemed to be playing this straight. Seeing the City's basic criminality, I say, of
 this set up, I conferred with the Cinn.
 > professional "coordinator" who acknowledged my assessments.
 >
 > At the break therefore I took responsibility for ushering the two
 > State ROW professionals, the community's Fla. consultant, and AIA's
 > stalwart Robt. Griffin out to the side lobby. We commandeered drawings; I also saw to it that the
 > City' ROW table manager-'planner' understood that we saw the utter lack
 > of integrity he was assigned to enforce. He saw his choices. The
 > NCDOT professional said during the process he'd probably be fired for
 > the new concept coming to light there. He was heroic. That is the
 > basis for the City and State forever after making claims that the
 > community had its say, etc. Today just be looking for the same
 > tactics. Count on everybody wanting to spend money whatever the cost.
 >
 > About Current Local Governance History:
 > Nationally, my three HUD urban design decades, I'd seen worse, but
 > arguably not until we discover the A-B-WNC current management of land
 > use planning decision-making here -- whatever most people here may
 > like to think. The Connector topic has never enjoyed serious
 > anticipatory study, despite its absolute centrality to the social,

- > economic and environmental future of this entire Appalachian region.
- > In fact discussing the Connector with the incumbent director after
- > arriving, the response was, yes, Shufford left a box full of Connector
- > documents, but "that's not planning." In urban contexts such as these
- > there is no authentic professional anticipatory land use
- > transportation planning here. None by the State's persistent
- > farmland-realty-focused 5-laner suburban political policy patterns,
- > none by either the County nor by a now hapless LOS-COG, none by the State DOT-overshadowed FBR-MPO, and most
- > sadly, none by City Planning. It's not been a planning concern to study and resolve. Hence.
- > all the local king's horses and all the queen's men & women --
- > including our design school university neighbors and, frankly, we of
- > the ADC -- have meantime been looking the other way. Now it's all
- > about the usual budgetary exigencies game -- plus the question of why
- > this abrupt shift in stated Interstate project budgeting and service priorities.
- >
- > About Having an "ADC" to Come to the Rescue:
- > In the land of the land use planning blind the one-eyed non-profit
- > is king/queen. The ADC has an obligation to speak up no matter what
- > winds are blowing which way. There is a future consequence. Current
- > I-26 vehicular traffic north remains negligible; the Oak
- > Ridge-to-Savannah nuclear wastes connection has never been addressed
- > (Q. Is it or is it not why the I-26 north to Tennessee was actually
- > built?). The ADC-precursor teams' initial concepts were a solution
- > performed famously by all hands, but as a pressure cooker response
- > after several years' of approaches to design chapters here. Plus the
- > 'icon bridge' agenda was interspersed to further enrich the mix. Our
- > adroit local Southern Environmental Law Center was then instrumental
- > in mobilizing us, having stopped the State's move to lock in a widening of I-26 down to Hendersonville without a region
- > plan. However, from the start Dave Johnson's "T-intersection"
- > ideas were, in my view, preferable from the start. No blame. Once
- > the local environment design cohort finally woke up to the urgings of
- > the Connector Awareness Group and to the State's official advisory
- > group (that stemmed from that 2000 one-day official forum -- and that
- > made separation of local and interstate traffic its prime concern).
- > That legitimate local groups existence was thanks to the ad hoc coffee table planning effort that was forced upon the
- > City's planners. And the ADC is thanks to all this, remaining now all to stand
- > for the appropriate future here.
- >
- > About the Preferred Appropriate Future:
- > Nothing is more physically more central to A-B-WNC future
- > economic/cultural options than:
- > (a.) Separating I-26/240 traffic from unconscionable
- > (national-standards-taboo) local arterial congestion of delivery
- > transport, out-of-town tourism gawking, daily commuting, bikers;
- > (b.) Saving CBD's east bank (incl. public housing's stranded
- > neighborhood there) from 2-3 years of major disruption;
- > (c.) Seizing the new potential to spare the apron areas of the Patton
- > bridge for significant joint development of a true urbane pedestrian
- > activity district of bridge promenade, transit/bikes;
- > (d.) Thereby establishing Asheville as the unrivaled destination city
- > hub of the mountains -- replete with a (nominal) "Mountain Main Street
- > Boulevard" overview of the river corridor;

> (e.) Taking conventional use of federal Interstate allowances for air
> rights construction for any City improvements (school facilities,
> overpasses for people);
> (f.) Preserving the appropriate uses of I-240 intact -- truly
> separating I-26 arrival/departure traffic via safe, civilized
> threading into our sensitive urban fabric;
> (g.) Greatly enhancing the regional core's current and future E-W
> connections that will include likely residential boulevard
> retrofitting of near-in Patton as inevitable density sets in;
> (h.) Thereby reorganizing the core for its maximum two-river-bank
> urban spacial and land development future here as the nation's (East
> Coast) destination city exemplary 'eco-base camp', demonstrated
> green-values/green-enterprise 'rethinking headquarters', indigenous
> outdoors/global eco-tourism, eco-civics-edu paragon.
>
> I've no illusions; these are the values at play and they face an
> essentially design/planning valueless public sector milieu. At the
> very least I see a need for the Council and the Commissioners to be
> advised of the concerns that have not been raised. So far, let's say, there is no blame, but then again there is
> not the meaningful dialog these concerns should be raising --- Andy
>
> Andrew Euston, FAIA 828/687-2969
<a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>><mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellso
uth.net?>>
>
> On 3/2/2013 5:13 PM, Bruce & Day Ann Emory wrote:
> Dave:
>
> I also agree with most of your points. The Isaac Dickson alignment
> has a lot of potential, but I wonder if it is too late to be
> politically feasible, given the status of plans for the new school.
> The recent Mountain Express article said construction could begin in July if the County approves funding:
> <http://www.mountainx.com/article/48680/Building-knowledge-Asheville-pu>
> shes-for-new-schools This video shows the new school's schematic
> design:
> <http://www.mountainx.com/article/48693/VIDEO-Tour-Isaac-Dickson-and-ta>
> ke-a-look-at-the-new-building-design
> There doesn't appear to be enough room for a new highway, even if
> designed to boulevard-type standards, without major revisions to the
> school plan. I see that John Legerton is the school architect. Do
> you think it would be worthwhile to have an informal meeting with him to explore possibilities?
>
> Bruce
>
>
>
>
> From: Michael
> McDonough<mailto:michael@mcdonougharchitect.com<mailto:michael@mcdonou
gharchitect.com?>>
> Sent: Saturday, March 02, 2013 2:24 PM
> To: David Johnson<mailto:djohnson12@me.com<mailto:djohnson12@me.com?>>

> Cc: Bruce & Day Ann
 > Emory<mailto:emory22@charter.net<mailto:emory22@charter.net?>> ;
 > dnutter@aol.com<mailto:dnutter@aol.com><mailto:dnutter@aol.com<mailto:
 > dnutter@aol.com?>> ; Terry
 > O'Keefe<mailto:terry@etok.net<mailto:terry@etok.net?>> ;
 > jobruder@earthlink.de<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de><mailto:jobruder@ea
 > rthlink.de<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de?>>
 > ; mailto:Julie@wnca.org<mailto:Julie@wnca.org?> ; Andy
 > Euston<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net?>>
 > Subject: Re: I-26 all over again
 >
 > I agree with most of David's points.
 >
 > I would suggest more emphasis on consideration of I-240 as a
 > boulevard, like Wendover in Greensboro, rather than as a interstate.
 > This which would allow DOT to use scaled-down road design tools;
 > shorter ramps, tighter radii, etc, which would certainly reduce the footprint and interchange at I-26.
 > Another benefit would be to discourage trucking and traveler
 > "short-cutting", encouraging instead that through-traffic stay on I-40 and I-26.
 > Michael
 >
 >
 > On Fri, Mar 1, 2013 at 10:03 PM, David Johnson
 > <djohnson12@me.com<mailto:djohnson12@me.com><mailto:djohnson12@me.com<
 > mailto:djohnson12@me.com?>>>
 > wrote:
 > To: Transportation Study Group
 >
 > Attached are some thoughts about the renewal of interest in the I-26 issue.
 > This is the text of a memo I recently shared with several colleagues
 > at the Design Center. Since our little group has spent a good deal of
 > time discussing local transportation issues, I thought you might also
 > find this of interest. As always, your reactions and comments are welcome.
 >
 > Dave Johnson
 >
 >
 >
 > Colleagues:
 >
 > I hope you have by now seen the recent AC-T lead editorial regarding
 > the completion of the I-26 connector. This was a follow-up to the
 > announcement last week that the powers that be are going to push to finally get this project done.
 > The AC-T article in effect reminded the community of the process by
 > which Alternative 4-B became, thanks to ADC, an official alternative
 > to be considered in the Environmental Review Process.
 >
 > It seems to me that the return of the I-26 issue in effect mandates a
 > renewal of participation by the Asheville Design Center in next steps.
 > While the ADC has a lot on its plate these days (Haywood/Page, HFS,
 > etc.) I submit that it is incumbent on ADC and its resources to reopen
 > the discussion, emphasizing the important urban design aspects of the

- > project, aspects which highway engineers tend to minimize, but which
- > are critical to the success or failure of this very sensitive
- > intrusion into Asheville's urban fabric. My concern is that with the
- > heavy-handed regime now installed in Raleigh, a steamroller movement
- > will be unleashed to "get it done, finally," following the original, unsatisfactory NCDOT proposals.
- >
- > The AC-T editorial is commendable as it lays out the benefits of the
- > ADC 4-B proposal as an alternative to the NCDOT original overkill
- > design. Julie Mayfield is quoted as supporting the basic approach
- > espoused by ADC, and the newspaper seems to have added its support.
- >
- > Since the time ADC began its existence with the I-26 project, some
- > things have changed that suggest it is time to reopen the exploration of new possibilities.
- > These include the following:
- >
- > 1. Highway construction funds are scarce, and the highway trust fund
- > is virtually depleted. Ways to reduce acquisition and construction
- > costs are essential if the project is to be completed.
- >
- > 2. Cities across the country have been tearing down dysfunctional
- > intrusive interstate level highways in their downtowns. Asheville
- > should not be building a new one. (The latest is the approved
- > demolition of the Robert Moses freeway in Niagara Falls, New York.
- > There are quote a few other recent examples elsewhere in the country--
- > Seattle, Tacoma, San Francisco.)
- >
- > 3. Urbanists increasingly realize that the movement of vehicles at
- > high speeds through city centers is neither desirable from the point
- > of view of livability nor even for high volume access. Boulevards can
- > carry more vehicles at lower speeds than freeways. This suggests a
- > reduction in scale and design speeds for any future I-26 connector.
- > As the AC-T editorial notes, six lanes should be adequate and eight lanes are probably not needed.
- >
- > 4. The AC-T editorial also rightly notes that the Smokey Park Bridge
- > (Patton
- > Avenue) should not be used to carry interstate traffic over the river,
- > but should be returned to a configuration as it was originally
- > intended-- a multi-modal connector between downtown and West Asheville.
- >
- > 5. This week Mayor Bellamy called for a new Isaac-Dickson School to be built
- > near downtown. This may raise the opportunity for a different configuration
- > for the I-240 connection to a new leg of the I-26 on the west side of
- > the river, utilizing ROW on or under the School site.
- >
- > 6. While the ADC alternative preference has up to this point been for
- > the 4B variant, I feel the new conditions, constraints, and
- > opportunities suggest that we take another look at other possibilities.
- >
- > 7. I would submit that the solution to connecting I-240 to a new leg
- > of I-26 lies on the West side of the River, not the east side. This
- > could take the form of a branch-off leg of I 240 in the vicinity of
- > the present Isaac Dickson School, crossing the river to join a

> T-interchange at Emma Road. The advantages of this arrangement are several-fold:

>

> a) The I-26 leg on the west side of the River is more or less where

> the original NCDOT alignment placed it. This would require a simple

> bridge(s) to bring I-26 across the river north of Montford.

>

> b) A second bridge or pair of bridge structures would be required to

> connect

> I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road. This structure and necessary approaches

> could be constructed with minimum interference with existing traffic

> flows. Current traffic flows could continue during

> construction. By contrast the long drawn-out construction period closing down

> and retrofitting existing roads required by both Alternatives 2 and 4B

> could have a devastating effect on the downtown economy for a period of several years.

> This negative economic impact could significantly be reduced by the

> less intrusive scheme advocated here.

>

> c) Another benefit of a reduced-scale project compared to the

> ADC-endorsed 4-B is the lessening of impacts both at the river edge

> near the Montford neighborhood, and the far simpler configuration of

> access ramps in the river valley. Aesthetically, it would result in a

> much more benign visual feature in the French Broad River Valley,

> which, of course, we want to protect as much as possible. And by

> reducing expensive fly-overs and ramps, construction costs can also be reduced.

>

> d) Valuable land on the downtown side of the river at Patton as well

> as at the school site, and eventually perhaps, the Hillcrest public

> housing project might become available for new, carefully planned,

> mixed unit development, connecting the river to the downtown. Also,

> the sale of land now occupied by the dangerous, and poorly designed

> interchange on the east side of the river could be returned to the

> private development sector the sale of which could help to offset the

> costs of what will be, whatever the design, an expensive project. An

> integrated gateway development is highly desirable at this point, as called for in the Downtown Master Plan.

>

> e) As noted in the AC-T editorial, the existing malfunction junction

> at the east end of the Smokey Mountain Bridge must be eliminated and

> brought up to national safety standards. It is one of the most

> dangerous and confusing interchanges in the State of North Carolina.

> It cannot be fixed with more jury-rigged, make-do measures. The

> scheme proposed here would permit elimination of this dysfunctional, obsolete design.

>

>

> Conclusion and recommendation:

>

> That ADC consider convening a study group to look into how the

> situation with regard to I-26 has changed, politically, economically,

> and technically to bring the community up to date, and to follow

> through on the original mandate the Center undertook to bring the

> community to where it is today with regard to this number one critical

> issue and opportunity. Nobody is better positioned to do this than ADC.

>

> What do you think?

>

> Dave Johnson

>

>

>

>

> APPENDIX

>

> How to Complete i-26 in Three Phases:

>

> Phase 1

>

> Complete I-26 connector per NCDOT preferred route but make provision

> for a T-interchange at Emma Road with a new low-level I-240 Interstate

> bridge leg, crossing the river to I-26 connector segment.

>

> Phase 2

>

> Connect I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road, utilizing ROW north of Isaac

> Dickson School and with a new low bridge across the French Broad

> River. This leg could be constructed with minimum disruption of

> traffic flows to downtown and West Asheville, thus reducing negative

> economic impacts on downtown during the construction period.

>

> Phase 3.

>

> Completely redesign and bring up to standards the dangerous Patton

> Avenue interchange east of the River and redevelop the land now in

> highway ROW to create a gateway to Downtown Asheville as proposed by

> the Asheville Design Center and incorporated in the Downtown Master Plan.

>

>

>

>

> --

> Michael

> 828 252 2153

> 171 Montford ave Asheville NC 28801

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> [ww.ashevillencrentals.com](http://www.ashevillencrentals.com/)<<http://www.ashevillencrentals.com/>>>

>

>

>

> <Baltimore_Road_War_Sidney_Wong.pdf>

>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2013 12:55 PM
To: Julie Mayfield
Subject: Fwd: I-26: Possible lesson from Baltimore
Attachments: Baltimore_Road_War_Sidney_Wong.pdf

Just re-read all this more thoroughly. Seems like there needs to be some meaningful engagement between ADC and The ConnectUs group with our Working Group before the May 9 C of C event. What do you think?

Marc

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com>
Subject: I-26: Possible lesson from Baltimore
Date: March 7, 2013 9:14:30 AM EST
To: Julie@wnca.org, a_euston@bellsouth.net
Cc: emory22@charter.net, terry@etok.net, jobruder@earthlink.de,
michael@mcdonougharchitect.com, chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org,
Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com, Bettjac@indylink.org, EB@Fisher-PA.com

The Baltimore Expressway Wars, and more importantly their process, heavily involving architects and planners as well as politicians (Barbara Mikulski's rise to United State Senator had its roots here) and its outcome in the form of boulevards, expressway spurs and tunneling I-95 beneath Fort McHenry, may be of interest in thinking about the I-26 Connector Project, the promise of a Bowen Bridge Boulevard and the difficulty of some many (3, 4?) bridges over our fragile river. It requires interpretation over time and circumstances.

This is the reason I see some parallel.

In the Baltimore case the outcome of the war was that all through-downtown interstate segments were abandoned. The urban design case made by SOM through the Urban Design Team, and the need to preserve the Inner Harbor resulted in the boulevard redesign of Fremont Avenue, now MLK Boulevard, and a refashioning of the local streets, Pratt and Light, moving through the land areas of the Inner Harbor project. I-95, in order to save Fells Point as well as the Inner Harbor, was dramatically relocated into a tunnel beneath Fort McHenry. An expressway spur was added to connect I-95 to the southern edge of downtown. It was a painful process.

I could go on about all the differences but won't.
Best,

Dave

David G. Nutter, AICP, Principal, Retired
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street,

Asheville, North Carolina 28801 USA
Tel 828-505-8242 Cell: 828-279-1820

-----Original Message-----

From: Julie Mayfield <Julie@wnca.org>

To: Andrew Euston <a_euston@bellsouth.net>

Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory <emory22@charter.net>; dnutter <dnutter@aol.com>; Terry O'Keefe <terry@etok.net>; jobruder <jobruder@earthlink.de>; Mike McDonough <michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>; Chris Joyell <chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org>; Robert Griffith <Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com>; Bette Jackson <Bettjac@indylink.org>; Eugene Britton <EB@Fisher-PA.com>

Sent: Tue, Mar 5, 2013 10:07 pm

Subject: RE: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again

Hello all - I have a couple of thoughts about how ADC can be involved going forward. First, let me tell you that Marc Hunt has convened what he's calling

the I-26 Working Group, which consists of himself and Jan Davis as city MPO reps, Brownie and Holly as county MPO reps, Lou Bisette, and me. The hope is that if we can all agree on a solution, that our constituencies will also agree.

I will be in regular communication about these meetings with the I-26 ConnectUs

Project members, which include Michael McDonough, Bruce, and Chris. I am happy to provide updates to this group as well.

This group has its first meeting this thursday morning where we will figure out

how often we want to meet, who else it makes sense to have in the room, whether

the meetings will be open, etc. I will suggest to the larger group that some design expertise be present and push for ADC's involvement in some manner. I do

not want the only technical expertise in the room to be engineering from DOT.

if that is not successful, I have two other ideas. First, I can keep you updated on what we are discussing and you can provide feedback on the ideas, make suggestions, etc. Second, I am also going to suggest that this group avail

itself of the expertise of Jim Fox, who runs the mapping work at NEMAC. Jim has

a huge amount of data and is able to run a variety of scenarios that could be helpful. Having ADC work with Jim on different scenarios would be an incredibly powerful thing.

Also, here is the list of issues that I will propose as the group's agenda. I'm

sure others will have other issues to add, but I came up with these after conversations with the ConnectUs Project generally, Micheal M., and Marc Hunt.

If you have other things to add, please let me know.

1. Selecting the alignment of I-26 and where it crosses the river with an eye

to minimizing impacts to homes, businesses, and the river

2. Improving safety on the bridge (taking i-26 traffic off will help but it may

not be all) and Patton Ave, including exploring turning that portion of I240 into a boulevard or something less than an interstate

3. Creating safe new bike/pedestrian connections between West Asheville and

downtown, ideally in the area of the bridge

4. Looking at the travel demand model and the tradeoffs we're being asked to make to have 8-10 lanes in West Asheville. Look for a solution that better matches the scale of Asheville, including maximizing the use of local roads.

5. Ensuring the intersection on the east side of the river does not negatively

interfere with the RADTIP (and ideally advances it) and look for ways to reconnect Hillcrest with the larger community.

6. Explore whether we can reduce the size, scale, and cost of Section C (the I26/I40 interchange) and still accomplish the full connectivity goals. Or discuss how important that full level of connectivity is today in light of limited funds.

7. Explore whether we can fix the bridge first and only later address sections

A (west asheville) and C, as funding become available.

Thanks

Julie

Julie V. Mayfield, Executive Director
Western North Carolina Alliance
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
Asheville, NC 28801
828-258-8737
828-258-9241 fax

From: Andrew Euston [a_euston@bellsouth.net]

Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:09 PM

To: Andrew Euston

Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory; dnutter@aol.com; Terry O'Keefe;
jobruder@earthlink.de;

Julie Mayfield; Mike McDonough; Chris Joyell; Robert Griffith; Bette Jackson;
Eugene Britton

Subject: Re: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again

David et al -- I do like some of your clever 'worst case' additional alternatives just identified below here. I'm serious, however, that we (meaning

ADC and its cohorts) recognize the curious need to amply widen I-26 now when road funds must be scarce -- and especially when the one lane to the north works

without significant congestion -- and more especially if the State intends to keep Patton Ave. as an unsafe mixed local and Interstate traffic facility, in violation of settled U.S. standards. It's a long way to 'go' for such a short

drink, just to widen the thing! It makes me tend to believe those people are correct who see the Interstate connector as a corporate-socialism special interest gift to the private electric power industry here -- for its projected

newly designated nuclear waste-depot down at the Savannah River nuclear installation. There, incidentally, it could be handily swamped by any sizable

sunami. An overly widened I-26 from I-40 to I-81 gives Oak Ridge and other nuclear waste sources a safer portage alignment toward Savannah River than, say,

I-40 with its sharp curves and rock slides, or the stalled proposal for an I-3

nearer the NC-TN border. What other cause for this new NCDOT allocation now given its list of a dozen or so competing state Interstate priorities?

Clearcutting the Appalachians and getting that timber to market? Shifting coal

transfer to trucking?

If the line of A-B-WNC eco-civics issues I raise in yesterday's message below matter they should be discussed publicly. I call for an ADC discussion of them in any case. If the "T-intersection" concept you have introduced is what most serves public interest here then that deserves to be given wider ADC discussion. If the new school design needs study regarding Interstate air rights feasibility that also needs discussion, and quite soon. The Leggerton plan is convention lower rise construction plus grounds -- there's nothing tricky about air rights for that. Such would be an entirely legitimate local highway-joint-development expenditure demand, if locally required. These and your concern for the current proposal's many acres of CBD disruption over the 2-3 years of construction are all legitimate local agenda planning concerns.

Add them to the issues in West Asheville (i.e.: not taking neighborhood fabric unnecessarily along the west edge of I-26/240 and the matter of air rights joint development along the overpass there) and there is ample cause, if needed, for testing our local interests in court. If the State wants its nuclear connector or whatever else this surprising shift in NCDOT priorities represents (besides helping the WNC regional economy) we may never know. With West Asheville segment lane-number overkill and the questionable urgency for greater capacity northward, it does seem likely that there are hidden priorities at play. Reasonable WNC future economics agenda planning issues are a legitimate matter for making demands for some redesign before a go ahead that locks out the region's best interest options. If the projected State plan does not truly serve this region, county and city well as designed, its being built now will undoubtedly hamper requests here for transit investments in the uncertain future.

Andy 687-2969

From David Johnson 3/3/13 -- Colleagues:

Thanks for all your thoughtful comments regarding I-26. They have been most stimulating.

Timing may not be everything, but it certainly is important in life, warfare, and planning. It may be that planning for the Dickson school is now too far along to consider using the site as a right of way to connect I-240 to I'-26/ (It might still be possible if tunneling and air-rights can be shown to be feasible. But this needs further exploration and analysis.) If we can't get a connection across the river to I-26 in a reasonable way, I would concur with Mike McDonough that I-240 should be downgraded to a boulevard/arterial level. It is critical that whatever is done in redesigning the highway systems at the east end of downtown be done with great care and minimal intrusion.

Thinking about feasible options, here is another idea. Why not just let the I-26 connector segment be completed through Asheville as a through route. But don't try to shoe-horn interchanges with all local arterials such as Patton Avenue. Every highway doesn't need to be connected to every other intersecting

highway. Drivers will adjust to limitations of access points. (This is frequently done in Europe.)

We should concentrate on getting the Smokey Park Bridge redesigned as a multi-modal connector linking the divided halves of Asheville. And we should concentrate on eliminating the malfunction junction at the east end of the Smokey Park Bridge. None of this depends on the use of the Isaac Newton site for ROW.

Finally, we should find ways to connect the downtown to the French Broad River at Patton avenue.

Isn't city planning exciting??!!

Dave Johnson

On Mar 3, 2013, at 1:16 PM, Andrew Euston
<a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>>
wrote:

Friends -- some considered reminders of the Connector's relevant eco-civics history and an urging for ADC focus on its crucially profound current/future potential:

Historic Year 2000 Truth:

In 2000 at the so-termed NCDOT "Design Forum" (a mere single 6- to 7-hour participatory review of the Connector, and hardly a participatory charrette-format service to the community) I thought that planning here could never be so inferior. C. Mgr. Westbrook and Shufford fresh from St. Petersburg were intent on railroading, with the C of C, through the State's "planning" agenda. They retained a Cinn. consultant as a facilitator who had been successful in threading an Interstate through an a below-grade highway alignment reasonably similar to I-240's. He was sincere, but found that the City's strong City Manager/weak-Mayor system here allowed the incumbent mayor to be outplayed; Sufford had four tables in four partitioned off areas in the Renaissance ballroom overseen by four staff; staff, it developed, were instructed to keep markers from paper, at least for the onnector planning. Despite this the NCDOT had furnished (as dressing or in good conscience?) at the right-of-way table a conscientious, its just-retired R-O-W professional plus its current R-O-W staff position holder.

A most alert local Robert Griffin, AIA was put at the street furniture table. He had had lots of advanced experience working on his successful Biltmore Village railroad overpass bridge revisions. The AM session was almost complete and not line had been proposed as to alternatives. Other assigned AIA chapter resource people (one at a table) were not very aware, but Bob was livid. Meanwhile from Florida the I-26 Connector Awareness Group's paid

consultant (ultimately at \$40K !!! - a debt not paid off until 2010 through 'bake sales', Grey Eagle fundraisers, etc., etc.). That fellow, a traffic engineer, was kept away, idle, although he had identified essentially the footprint of the eventual ADC scheme already. I was able to free range the whole scene, engage the key parties mentioned above, determine the fix was on in City Planning and that NCDOT seemed to be playing this straight. Seeing the City's basic criminality, I say, of this set up, I conferred with the Cinn. professional "coordinator" who acknowledged my assessments.

At the break therefore I took responsibility for ushering the two State ROW professionals, the community's Fla. consultant, and AIA's stalwart Robt. Griffin out to the side lobby. We commandeered drawings; I also saw to it that the City's ROW table manager-'planner' understood that we saw the utter lack of integrity he was assigned to enforce. He saw his choices. The NCDOT professional said during the process he'd probably be fired for the new concept coming to light there. He was heroic. That is the basis for the City and State forever after making claims that the community had its say, etc. Today just be looking for the same tactics. Count on everybody wanting to spend money whatever the cost.

About Current Local Governance History:

Nationally, my three HUD urban design decades, I'd seen worse, but arguably not until we discover the A-B-WNC current management of land use planning decision-making here -- whatever most people here may like to think. The Connector topic has never enjoyed serious anticipatory study, despite its absolute centrality to the social, economic and environmental future of this entire Appalachian region. In fact discussing the Connector with the incumbent director after arriving, the response was, yes, Shufford left a box full of Connector documents, but "that's not planning." In urban contexts such as these there is no authentic professional anticipatory land use transportation planning here. None by the State's persistent farmland-realty-focused 5-laner suburban political policy patterns, none by either the County nor by a now hapless LOS-COG, none by the State DOT-overshadowed FBR-MPO, and most sadly, none by City Planning. It's not been a planning concern to study and resolve. Hence, all the local king's horses and all the queen's men & women -- including our design school university neighbors and, frankly, we of the ADC -- have meantime been looking the other way. Now it's all about the usual budgetary exigencies game -- plus the question of why this abrupt shift in stated Interstate project budgeting and service priorities.

About Having an "ADC" to Come to the Rescue:

In the land of the land use planning blind the one-eyed non-profit is king/queen. The ADC has an obligation to speak up no matter what winds are blowing which way. There is a future consequence. Current I-26 vehicular traffic north remains negligible; the Oak Ridge-to-Savannah nuclear wastes connection has never been addressed (Q. Is it or is it not why the I-26 north to

Tennessee was actually built?). The ADC-precursor teams' initial concepts were a solution performed famously by all hands, but as a pressure cooker response after several years' of approaches to design chapters here. Plus the 'icon bridge' agenda was interspersed to further enrich the mix. Our adroit local Southern Environmental Law Center was then instrumental in mobilizing us, having stopped the State's move to lock in a widening of I-26 down to Hendersonville without a region plan. However, from the start Dave Johnson's "T-intersection" ideas were, in my view, preferable from the start. No blame. Once the local environment design cohort finally woke up to the urgings of the Connector Awareness Group and to the State's official advisory group (that stemmed from that 2000 one-day official forum -- and that made separation of local and interstate traffic its prime concern). That legitimate local groups existence was thanks to the ad hoc coffee table planning effort that was forced upon the City's planners. And the ADC is thanks to all this, remaining now all to stand for the appropriate future here.

About the Preferred Appropriate Future:

Nothing is more physically more central to A-B-WNC future economic/cultural options than:

- (a.) Separating I-26/240 traffic from unconscionable (national-standards-taboo) local arterial congestion of delivery transport, out-of-town tourism gawking, daily commuting, bikers;
- (b.) Saving CBD's east bank (incl. public housing's stranded neighborhood there) from 2-3 years of major disruption;
- (c.) Seizing the new potential to spare the apron areas of the Patton bridge for significant joint development of a true urbane pedestrian activity district of bridge promenade, transit/bikes;
- (d.) Thereby establishing Asheville as the unrivaled destination city hub of the mountains -- replete with a (nominal) "Mountain Main Street Boulevard" overview of the river corridor;
- (e.) Taking conventional use of federal Interstate allowances for air rights construction for any City improvements (school facilities, overpasses for people);
- (f.) Preserving the appropriate uses of I-240 intact -- truly separating I-26 arrival/departure traffic via safe, civilized threading into our sensitive urban fabric;
- (g.) Greatly enhancing the regional core's current and future E-W connections that will include likely residential boulevard retrofitting of near-in Patton as inevitable density sets in;
- (h.) Thereby reorganizing the core for its maximum two-river-bank urban spacial and land development future here as the nation's (East Coast) destination city exemplary 'eco-base camp', demonstrated green-values/green-enterprise 'rethinking headquarters', indigenous outdoors/global eco-tourism, eco-civics-edu paragon.

I've no illusions; these are the values at play and they face an essentially design/planning valueless public sector milieu. At the very least I see a need for the Council and the Commissioners to be advised of the concerns that have not been raised. So far, let' say, there is no blame, but then again there is not the meaningful dialog these concerns should be raising --- Andy

Andrew Euston, FAIA 828/687-2969
<a_euston@bellsouth.net><mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>

On 3/2/2013 5:13 PM, Bruce & Day Ann Emory wrote:
Dave:

I also agree with most of your points. The Isaac Dickson alignment has a lot of potential, but I wonder if it is too late to be politically feasible, given the status of plans for the new school. The recent Mountain Express article said construction could begin in July if the County approves funding:
<http://www.mountainx.com/article/48680/Building-knowledge-Asheville-pushes-for-new-schools>

This video shows the new school's schematic design:

<http://www.mountainx.com/article/48693/VIDEO-Tour-Isaac-Dickson-and-take-a-look-at-the-new-building-design>

There doesn't appear to be enough room for a new highway, even if designed to boulevard-type standards, without major revisions to the school plan. I see that John Legerton is the school architect. Do you think it would be worthwhile to have an informal meeting with him to explore possibilities?

Bruce

From: Michael McDonough<<mailto:michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>>
Sent: Saturday, March 02, 2013 2:24 PM
To: David Johnson<<mailto:djohnson12@me.com>>
Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory<<mailto:emory22@charter.net>> ;
dnutter@aol.com<<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>>
; Terry O'Keefe<<mailto:terry@etok.net>> ;
jobruder@earthlink.de<<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de>>
; <mailto:Julie@wnca.org> ; Andy Euston<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>
Subject: Re: I-26 all over again

I agree with most of David's points.

I would suggest more emphasis on consideration of I-240 as a boulevard, like Wendover in Greensboro, rather than as a interstate. This which would allow DOT to use scaled-down road design tools; shorter ramps, tighter radii, etc, which would certainly reduce the footprint and interchange at I-26. Another benefit would be to discourage trucking and traveler "short-cutting", encouraging instead that through-traffic stay on I-40 and I-26.
Michael

On Fri, Mar 1, 2013 at 10:03 PM, David Johnson
<djohnson12@me.com<<mailto:djohnson12@me.com>>>
wrote:
To: Transportation Study Group

Attached are some thoughts about the renewal of interest in the I-26 issue. This is the text of a memo I recently shared with several colleagues at the Design Center. Since our little group has spent a good deal of time discussing local transportation issues, I thought you might also find this of interest. As always, your reactions and comments are welcome.

Dave Johnson

Colleagues:

I hope you have by now seen the recent AC-T lead editorial regarding the completion of the I-26 connector. This was a follow-up to the announcement last week that the powers that be are going to push to finally get this project done. The AC-T article in effect reminded the community of the process by which Alternative 4-B became, thanks to ADC, an official alternative to be considered in the Environmental Review Process.

It seems to me that the return of the I-26 issue in effect mandates a renewal of participation by the Asheville Design Center in next steps. While the ADC has a lot on its plate these days (Haywood/Page, HFS, etc.) I submit that it is incumbent on ADC and its resources to reopen the discussion, emphasizing the important urban design aspects of the project, aspects which highway engineers tend to minimize, but which are critical to the success or failure of this very sensitive intrusion into Asheville's urban fabric. My concern is that with the heavy-handed regime now installed in Raleigh, a steamroller movement will be unleashed to "get it done, finally," following the original, unsatisfactory NCDOT proposals.

The AC-T editorial is commendable as it lays out the benefits of the ADC 4-B proposal as an alternative to the NCDOT original overkill design. Julie Mayfield is quoted as supporting the basic approach espoused by ADC, and the newspaper seems to have added its support.

Since the time ADC began its existence with the I-26 project, some things have changed that suggest it is time to reopen the exploration of new possibilities. These include the following:

1. Highway construction funds are scarce, and the highway trust fund is virtually depleted. Ways to reduce acquisition and construction costs are essential if the project is to be completed.
2. Cities across the country have been tearing down dysfunctional intrusive

interstate level highways in their downtowns. Asheville should not be building a new one. (The latest is the approved demolition of the Robert Moses freeway in Niagara Falls, New York. There are quote a few other recent examples elsewhere in the country-- Seattle, Tacoma, San Francisco.)

3. Urbanists increasingly realize that the movement of vehicles at high speeds through city centers is neither desirable from the point of view of livability nor even for high volume access. Boulevards can carry more vehicles at lower speeds than freeways. This suggests a reduction in scale and design speeds for any future I-26 connector. As the AC-T editorial notes, six lanes should be adequate and eight lanes are probably not needed.

4. The AC-T editorial also rightly notes that the Smokey Park Bridge (Patton Avenue) should not be used to carry interstate traffic over the river, but should be returned to a configuration as it was originally intended-- a multi-modal connector between downtown and West Asheville.

5. This week Mayor Bellamy called for a new Isaac-Dickson School to be built near downtown. This may raise the opportunity for a different configuration for the I-240 connection to a new leg of the I-26 on the west side of the river, utilizing ROW on or under the School site.

6. While the ADC alternative preference has up to this point been for the 4B variant, I feel the new conditions, constraints, and opportunities suggest that we take another look at other possibilities.

7. I would submit that the solution to connecting I-240 to a new leg of I-26 lies on the West side of the River, not the east side. This could take the form of a branch-off leg of I 240 in the vicinity of the present Isaac Dickson School, crossing the river to join a T-interchange at Emma Road. The advantages of this arrangement are several-fold:

a) The I-26 leg on the west side of the River is more or less where the original NCDOT alignment placed it. This would require a simple bridge(s) to bring I-26 across the river north of Montford.

b) A second bridge or pair of bridge structures would be required to connect I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road. This structure and necessary approaches could be constructed with minimum interference with existing traffic flows. Current traffic flows could continue during construction. By contrast the long drawn-out construction period closing down and retrofitting existing roads required by both Alternatives 2 and 4B could have a devastating effect on the downtown economy for a period of several years. This negative economic impact could significantly be reduced by the less intrusive scheme advocated here.

c) Another benefit of a reduced-scale project compared to the ADC-endorsed 4-B is the lessening of impacts both at the river edge near the Montford neighborhood, and the far simpler configuration of access ramps in the river

valley. Aesthetically, it would result in a much more benign visual feature in the French Broad River Valley, which, of course, we want to protect as much as possible. And by reducing expensive fly-overs and ramps, construction costs can also be reduced.

d) Valuable land on the downtown side of the river at Patton as well as at the school site, and eventually perhaps, the Hillcrest public housing project might become available for new, carefully planned, mixed unit development, connecting the river to the downtown. Also, the sale of land now occupied by the dangerous, and poorly designed interchange on the east side of the river could be returned to the private development sector the sale of which could help to offset the costs of what will be, whatever the design, an expensive project. An integrated gateway development is highly desirable at this point, as called for in the Downtown Master Plan.

e) As noted in the AC-T editorial, the existing malfunction junction at the east end of the Smokey Mountain Bridge must be eliminated and brought up to national safety standards. It is one of the most dangerous and confusing interchanges in the State of North Carolina. It cannot be fixed with more jury-rigged, make-do measures. The scheme proposed here would permit elimination of this dysfunctional, obsolete design.

Conclusion and recommendation:

That ADC consider convening a study group to look into how the situation with regard to I-26 has changed, politically, economically, and technically to bring the community up to date, and to follow through on the original mandate the Center undertook to bring the community to where it is today with regard to this number one critical issue and opportunity. Nobody is better positioned to do this than ADC.

What do you think?

Dave Johnson

APPENDIX

How to Complete i-26 in Three Phases:

Phase 1

Complete I-26 connector per NCDOT preferred route but make provision for a T-interchange at Emma Road with a new low-level I-240 Interstate bridge leg, crossing the river to I-26 connector segment.

Phase 2

Connect I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road, utilizing ROW north of Isaac Dickson School and with a new low bridge across the French Broad River. This leg could be constructed with minimum disruption of traffic flows to downtown and West Asheville, thus reducing negative economic impacts on downtown during the construction period.

Phase 3.

Completely redesign and bring up to standards the dangerous Patton Avenue interchange east of the River and redevelop the land now in highway ROW to create a gateway to Downtown Asheville as proposed by the Asheville Design Center and incorporated in the Downtown Master Plan.

--

Michael

828 252 2153

171 Montford ave Asheville NC 28801

[www.ashevilleNCrentals.com](http://www.ashevillencrentals.com)<<http://www.ashevillencrentals.com/>>

Ben Fulmer

From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> on behalf of Dave Nutter
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:15 AM
To: Julie@wnca.org;a_euston@bellsouth.net
Cc: emory22
@charter.net;terry@etok.net;jobruder@earthlink.de;michael@mcdonougharchitect.com;
chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org;Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com;Bettjac@indylink.org;E
B@Fisher-PA.com
Subject: I-26: Possible lesson from Baltimore
Attachments: Baltimore_Road_War_Sidney_Wong.pdf

The Baltimore Expressway Wars, and more importantly their process, heavily involving architects and planners as well as politicians (Barbara Mikulski's rise to United State Senator had its roots here) and its outcome in the form of boulevards, expressway spurs and tunneling I-95 beneath Fort McHenry, may be of interest in thinking about the I-26 Connector Project, the promise of a Bowen Bridge Boulevard and the difficulty of some many (3, 4?) bridges over our fragile river. It requires interpretation over time and circumstances.

This is the reason I see some parallel.

In the Baltimore case the outcome of the war was that all through-downtown interstate segments were abandoned. The urban design case made by SOM through the Urban Design Team, and the need to preserve the Inner Harbor resulted in the boulevard redesign of Fremont Avenue, now MLK Boulevard, and a refashioning of the local streets, Pratt and Light, moving through the land areas of the Inner Harbor project. I-95, in order to save Fells Point as well as the Inner Harbor, was dramatically relocated into a tunnel beneath Fort McHenry. An expressway spur was added to connect I-95 to the southern edge of downtown. It was a painful process.

I could go on about all the differences but won't.
Best,

Dave

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-----Original Message-----

From: Julie Mayfield <Julie@wnca.org>
To: Andrew Euston <a_euston@bellsouth.net>
Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory <emory22@charter.net>; dnutter <dnutter@aol.com>; Terry O'Keefe <terry@etok.net>;
jobruder <jobruder@earthlink.de>; Mike McDonough <michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>; Chris Joyell
<chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org>; Robert Griffith <Robert@Griffitharchitectspa.com>; Bette Jackson
<Bettjac@indylink.org>; Eugene Britton <EB@Fisher-PA.com>
Sent: Tue, Mar 5, 2013 10:07 pm
Subject: RE: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again

Hello all - I have a couple of thoughts about how ADC can be involved going forward. First, let me tell you that Marc Hunt has convened what he's calling the I-26 Working Group, which consists of himself and Jan Davis as city MPO reps, Brownie and Holly as county MPO reps, Lou Bisette, and me. The hope is that if we can all agree on a solution, that our constituencies will also agree. I will be in regular communication about these meetings with the I-26 ConnectUs Project members, which include Michael McDonough, Bruce, and Chris. I am happy

to provide updates to this group as well.

This group has its first meeting this thursday morning where we will figure out how often we want to meet, who else it makes sense to have in the room, whether the meetings will be open, etc. I will suggest to the larger group that some design expertise be present and push for ADC's involvement in some manner. I do not want the only technical expertise in the room to be engineering from DOT.

if that is not successful, I have two other ideas. First, I can keep you updated on what we are discussing and you can provide feedback on the ideas, make suggestions, etc. Second, I am also going to suggest that this group avail itself of the expertise of Jim Fox, who runs the mapping work at NEMAC. Jim has a huge amount of data and is able to run a variety of scenarios that could be helpful. Having ADC work with Jim on different scenarios would be an incredibly powerful thing.

Also, here is the list of issues that I will propose as the group's agenda. I'm sure others will have other issues to add, but I came up with these after conversations with the ConnectUs Project generally, Micheal M., and Marc Hunt. If you have other things to add, please let me know.

1. Selecting the alignment of I-26 and where it crosses the river with an eye to minimizing impacts to homes, businesses, and the river
2. Improving safety on the bridge (taking i-26 traffic off will help but it may not be all) and Patton Ave, including exploring turning that portion of I240 into a boulevard or something less than an interstate
3. Creating safe new bike/pedestrian connections between West Asheville and downtown, ideally in the area of the bridge
4. Looking at the travel demand model and the tradeoffs we're being asked to make to have 8-10 lanes in West Asheville. Look for a solution that better matches the scale of Asheville, including maximizing the use of local roads.
5. Ensuring the intersection on the east side of the river does not negatively interfere with the RADTIP (and ideally advances it) and look for ways to reconnect Hillcrest with the larger community.
6. Explore whether we can reduce the size, scale, and cost of Section C (the I26/I40 interchange) and still accomplish the full connectivity goals. Or discuss how important that full level of connectivity is today in light of limited funds.
7. Explore whether we can fix the bridge first and only later address sections A (west asheville) and C, as funding become available.

Thanks
Julie

Julie V. Mayfield, Executive Director
Western North Carolina Alliance
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
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828-258-8737
828-258-9241 fax

From: Andrew Euston [a_euston@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:09 PM
To: Andrew Euston
Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory; dnutter@aol.com; Terry O'Keefe; jobruder@earthlink.de; Julie Mayfield; Mike McDonough; Chris Joyell; Robert Griffith; Bette Jackson; Eugene Britton
Subject: Re: I-26 Dys-Connector all over again

David et al -- I do like some of your clever 'worst case' additional alternatives just identified below here. I'm serious, however, that we (meaning

ADC and its cohorts) recognize the curious need to amply widen I-26 now when road funds must be scarce -- and especially when the one lane to the north works without significant congestion -- and more especially if the State intends to keep Patton Ave. as an unsafe mixed local and Interstate traffic facility, in violation of settled U.S. standards. It's a long way to 'go' for such a short drink, just to widen the thing! It makes me tend to believe those people are correct who see the Interstate connector as a corporate-socialism special interest gift to the private electric power industry here -- for its projected newly designated nuclear waste-depot down at the Savannah River nuclear installation. There, incidentally, it could be handily swamped by any sizable sunami. An overly widened I-26 from I-40 to I-81 gives Oak Ridge and other nuclear waste sources a safer portage alignment toward Savannah River than, say, I-40 with its sharp curves and rock slides, or the stalled proposal for an I-3 nearer the NC-TN border. What other cause for this new NCDOT allocation now given its list of a dozen or so competing state Interstate priorities? Clearcutting the Appalachians and getting that timber to market? Shifting coal transfer to trucking?

If the line of A-B-WNC eco-civics issues I raise in yesterday's message below matter they should be discussed publicly. I call for an ADC discussion of them in any case. If the "T-intersection" concept you have introduced is what most serves public interest here then that deserves to be given wider ADC discussion. If the new school design needs study regarding Interstate air rights feasibility that also needs discussion, and quite soon. The Leggerton plan is convention lower rise construction plus grounds -- there's nothing tricky about air rights for that. Such would be an entirely legitimate local highway-joint-development expenditure demand, if locally required. These and your concern for the current proposal's many acres of CBD disruption over the 2-3 years of construction are all legitimate local agenda planning concerns.

Add them to the issues in West Asheville (i.e.: not taking neighborhood fabric unnecessarily along the west edge of I-26/240 and the matter of air rights joint development along the overpass there) and there is ample cause, if needed, for testing our local interests in court. If the State wants its nuclear connector or whatever else this surprising shift in NCDOT priorities represents (besides helping the WNC regional economy) we may never know. With West Asheville segment lane-number overkill and the questionable urgency for greater capacity northward, it does seem likely that there are hidden priorities at play. Reasonable WNC future economics agenda planning issues are a legitimate matter for making demands for some redesign before a go ahead that locks out the region's best interest options. If the projected State plan does not truly serve this region, county and city well as designed, its being built now will undoubtedly hamper requests here for transit investments in the uncertain future.

Andy 687-2969

From David Johnson 3/3/13 -- Colleagues:

Thanks for all your thoughtful comments regarding I-26. They have been most stimulating.

Timing may not be everything, but it certainly is important in life, warfare, and planning. It may be that planning for the Dickson school is now too far along to consider using the site as a right of way to connect I-240 to I'-26/ (It might still be possible if tunneling and air-rights can be shown to be feasible. But this needs further exploration and analysis.) If we can't get a connection across the river to I-26 in a reasonable way, I would concur with Mike McDonough that I-240 should be downgraded to a boulevard/arterial level. It is critical that whatever is done in redesigning the highway systems at the

east end of downtown be done with great care and minimal intrusion.

Thinking about feasible options, here is another idea. Why not just let the I-26 connector segment be completed through Asheville as a through route. But don't try to shoe-horn interchanges with all local arterials such as Patton Avenue. Every highway doesn't need to be connected to every other inter-secting highway. Drivers will adjust to limitations of access points. (This is frequently done in Europe.)

We should concentrate on getting the Smokey Park Bridge redesigned as a multi-modal connector linking the divided halves of Asheville. And we should concentrate on eliminating the malfunction junction at the east end of the Smokey Park Bridge. None of this depends on the use of the Isaac Newton site for ROW.

Finally, we should find ways to connect the downtown to the French Broad River at Patton avenue.

Isn't city planning exciting??!!

Dave Johnson

On Mar 3, 2013, at 1:16 PM, Andrew Euston
<a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>>
wrote:

Friends -- some considered reminders of the Connector's relevant eco-civics history and an urging for ADC focus on its crucially profound current/future potential:

Historic Year 2000 Truth:

In 2000 at the so-termed NCDOT "Design Forum" (a mere single 6- to 7-hour participatory review of the Connector, and hardly a participatory charrette-format service to the community) I thought that planning here could never be so inferior. C. Mgr. Westbrook and Shufford fresh from St. Petersburg were intent on railroading, with the C of C, through the State's "planning" agenda. They retained a Cinn. consultant as a facilitator who had been successful in threading an Interstate through an a below-grade highway alignment reasonably similar to I-240's. He was sincere, but found that the City's strong City Manager/weak-Mayor system here allowed the incumbent mayor to be outplayed; Sufford had four tables in four partitioned off areas in the Renaissance ballroom overseen by four staff; staff, it developed, were instructed to keep markers from paper, at least for the onnector planning. Despite this the NCDOT had furnished (as dressing or in good conscience?) at the right-of-way table a conscientious, its just-retired R-O-W professional plus its current R-O-W staff position holder.

A most alert local Robert Griffin, AIA was put at the street furniture table. He had had lots of advanced experience working on his successful Biltmore Village railroad overpass bridge revisions. The AM session was almost complete and not line had been proposed as to alternatives. Other assigned AIA chapter resource people (one at a table) were not very aware, but Bob was livid. Meanwhile from Florida the I-26 Connector Awareness Group's paid consultant (ultimately at \$40K !!! - a debt not paid off until 2010 through 'bake sales', Grey Eagle fundraisers, etc., etc.). That fellow, a traffic engineer, was kept away, idle, although he had identified essentially the footprint of the eventual ADC scheme already. I was able to free range the whole scene, engage the key parties mentioned above, determine the fix was on in City Planning and that NCDOT seemed to be playing this straight. Seeing the City's basic criminality, I say, of this set up, I conferred with the Cinn. professional "coordinator" who acknowledged my assessments.

At the break therefore I took responsibility for ushering the two State ROW professionals, the community's Fla. consultant, and AIA's stalwart Robt. Griffin out to the side lobby. We commandeered drawings; I also saw to it that the City's ROW table manager-'planner' understood that we saw the utter lack of integrity he was assigned to enforce. He saw his choices. The NCDOT professional said during the process he'd probably be fired for the new concept coming to light there. He was heroic. That is the basis for the City and State forever after making claims that the community had its say, etc. Today just be looking for the same tactics. Count on everybody wanting to spend money whatever the cost.

About Current Local Governance History:

Nationally, my three HUD urban design decades, I'd seen worse, but arguably not until we discover the A-B-WNC current management of land use planning decision-making here -- whatever most people here may like to think. The Connector topic has never enjoyed serious anticipatory study, despite its absolute centrality to the social, economic and environmental future of this entire Appalachian region. In fact discussing the Connector with the incumbent director after arriving, the response was, yes, Shufford left a box full of Connector documents, but "that's not planning." In urban contexts such as these there is no authentic professional anticipatory land use transportation planning here. None by the State's persistent farmland-realty-focused 5-laner suburban political policy patterns, none by either the County nor by a now hapless LOS-COG, none by the State DOT-overshadowed FBR-MPO, and most sadly, none by City Planning. It's not been a planning concern to study and resolve. Hence, all the local king's horses and all the queen's men & women -- including our design school university neighbors and, frankly, we of the ADC -- have meantime been looking the other way. Now it's all about the usual budgetary exigencies game -- plus the question of why this abrupt shift in stated Interstate project budgeting and service priorities.

About Having an "ADC" to Come to the Rescue:

In the land of the land use planning blind the one-eyed non-profit is king/queen. The ADC has an obligation to speak up no matter what winds are blowing which way. There is a future consequence. Current I-26 vehicular traffic north remains negligible; the Oak Ridge-to-Savannah nuclear wastes connection has never been addressed (Q. Is it or is it not why the I-26 north to Tennessee was actually built?). The ADC-precursor teams' initial concepts were a solution performed famously by all hands, but as a pressure cooker response after several years' of approaches to design chapters here. Plus the 'icon bridge' agenda was interspersed to further enrich the mix. Our adroit local Southern Environmental Law Center was then instrumental in mobilizing us, having stopped the State's move to lock in a widening of I-26 down to Hendersonville without a region plan. However, from the start Dave Johnson's "T-intersection" ideas were, in my view, preferable from the start. No blame. Once the local environment design cohort finally woke up to the urgings of the Connector Awareness Group and to the State's official advisory group (that stemmed from that 2000 one-day official forum -- and that made separation of local and interstate traffic its prime concern). That legitimate local groups existence was thanks to the ad hoc coffee table planning effort that was forced upon the City's planners. And the ADC is thanks to all this, remaining now all to stand for the appropriate future here.

About the Preferred Appropriate Future:

Nothing is more physically more central to A-B-WNC future economic/cultural options than:

- (a.) Separating I-26/240 traffic from unconscionable (national-standards-taboo) local arterial congestion of delivery transport, out-of-town tourism gawking, daily commuting, bikers;
- (b.) Saving CBD's east bank (incl. public housing's stranded neighborhood there) from 2-3 years of major disruption;
- (c.) Seizing the new potential to spare the apron areas of the Patton bridge for

significant joint development of a true urbane pedestrian activity district of bridge promenade, transit/bikes;
 (d.) Thereby establishing Asheville as the unrivaled destination city hub of the mountains -- replete with a (nominal) "Mountain Main Street Boulevard" overview of the river corridor;
 (e.) Taking conventional use of federal Interstate allowances for air rights construction for any City improvements (school facilities, overpasses for people);
 (f.) Preserving the appropriate uses of I-240 intact -- truly separating I-26 arrival/departure traffic via safe, civilized threading into our sensitive urban fabric;
 (g.) Greatly enhancing the regional core's current and future E-W connections that will include likely residential boulevard retrofitting of near-in Patton as inevitable density sets in;
 (h.) Thereby reorganizing the core for its maximum two-river-bank urban spacial and land development future here as the nation's (East Coast) destination city exemplary 'eco-base camp', demonstrated green-values/green-enterprise 'rethinking headquarters', indigenous outdoors/global eco-tourism, eco-civics-edu paragon.

I've no illusions; these are the values at play and they face an essentially design/planning valueless public sector milieu. At the very least I see a need for the Council and the Commissioners to be advised of the concerns that have not been raised. So far, let's say, there is no blame, but then again there is not the meaningful dialog these concerns should be raising --- Andy

Andrew Euston, FAIA 828/687-2969
a_euston@bellsouth.net<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>

On 3/2/2013 5:13 PM, Bruce & Day Ann Emory wrote:
 Dave:

I also agree with most of your points. The Isaac Dickson alignment has a lot of potential, but I wonder if it is too late to be politically feasible, given the status of plans for the new school. The recent Mountain Express article said construction could begin in July if the County approves funding:
<http://www.mountainx.com/article/48680/Building-knowledge-Asheville-pushes-for-new-schools>

This video shows the new school's schematic design:
<http://www.mountainx.com/article/48693/VIDEO-Tour-Isaac-Dickson-and-take-a-look-at-the-new-building-design>

There doesn't appear to be enough room for a new highway, even if designed to boulevard-type standards, without major revisions to the school plan. I see that John Legerton is the school architect. Do you think it would be worthwhile to have an informal meeting with him to explore possibilities?

Bruce

From: Michael McDonough<<mailto:michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>>
 Sent: Saturday, March 02, 2013 2:24 PM
 To: David Johnson<<mailto:djohnson12@me.com>>
 Cc: Bruce & Day Ann Emory<<mailto:emory22@charter.net>> ;
dnutter@aol.com<<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>>
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jobruder@earthlink.de<<mailto:jobruder@earthlink.de>>
 ; <mailto:Julie@wnca.org> ; Andy Euston<mailto:a_euston@bellsouth.net>
 Subject: Re: I-26 all over again

I agree with most of David's points.

I would suggest more emphasis on consideration of I-240 as a boulevard, like Wendover in Greensboro, rather than as an interstate. This which would allow DOT to use scaled-down road design tools; shorter ramps, tighter radii, etc, which would certainly reduce the footprint and interchange at I-26. Another benefit would be to discourage trucking and traveler "short-cutting", encouraging instead that through-traffic stay on I-40 and I-26.

Michael

On Fri, Mar 1, 2013 at 10:03 PM, David Johnson
<djohnson12@me.com<<mailto:djohnson12@me.com>>>
wrote:
To: Transportation Study Group

Attached are some thoughts about the renewal of interest in the I-26 issue. This is the text of a memo I recently shared with several colleagues at the Design Center. Since our little group has spent a good deal of time discussing local transportation issues, I thought you might also find this of interest. As always, your reactions and comments are welcome.

Dave Johnson

Colleagues:

I hope you have by now seen the recent AC-T lead editorial regarding the completion of the I-26 connector. This was a follow-up to the announcement last week that the powers that be are going to push to finally get this project done. The AC-T article in effect reminded the community of the process by which Alternative 4-B became, thanks to ADC, an official alternative to be considered in the Environmental Review Process.

It seems to me that the return of the I-26 issue in effect mandates a renewal of participation by the Asheville Design Center in next steps. While the ADC has a lot on its plate these days (Haywood/Page, HFS, etc.) I submit that it is incumbent on ADC and its resources to reopen the discussion, emphasizing the important urban design aspects of the project, aspects which highway engineers tend to minimize, but which are critical to the success or failure of this very sensitive intrusion into Asheville's urban fabric. My concern is that with the heavy-handed regime now installed in Raleigh, a steamroller movement will be unleashed to "get it done, finally," following the original, unsatisfactory NCDOT proposals.

The AC-T editorial is commendable as it lays out the benefits of the ADC 4-B proposal as an alternative to the NCDOT original overkill design. Julie Mayfield is quoted as supporting the basic approach espoused by ADC, and the newspaper seems to have added its support.

Since the time ADC began its existence with the I-26 project, some things have changed that suggest it is time to reopen the exploration of new possibilities. These include the following:

1. Highway construction funds are scarce, and the highway trust fund is virtually depleted. Ways to reduce acquisition and construction costs are essential if the project is to be completed.
2. Cities across the country have been tearing down dysfunctional intrusive interstate level highways in their downtowns. Asheville should not be building a new one. (The latest is the approved demolition of the Robert Moses freeway in Niagara Falls, New York. There are quote a few other recent examples

elsewhere in the country-- Seattle, Tacoma, San Francisco.)

3. Urbanists increasingly realize that the movement of vehicles at high speeds through city centers is neither desirable from the point of view of livability nor even for high volume access. Boulevards can carry more vehicles at lower speeds than freeways. This suggests a reduction in scale and design speeds for any future I-26 connector. As the AC-T editorial notes, six lanes should be adequate and eight lanes are probably not needed.

4. The AC-T editorial also rightly notes that the Smokey Park Bridge (Patton Avenue) should not be used to carry interstate traffic over the river, but should be returned to a configuration as it was originally intended-- a multi-modal connector between downtown and West Asheville.

5. This week Mayor Bellamy called for a new Isaac-Dickson School to be built near downtown. This may raise the opportunity for a different configuration for the I-240 connection to a new leg of the I-26 on the west side of the river, utilizing ROW on or under the School site.

6. While the ADC alternative preference has up to this point been for the 4B variant, I feel the new conditions, constraints, and opportunities suggest that we take another look at other possibilities.

7. I would submit that the solution to connecting I-240 to a new leg of I-26 lies on the West side of the River, not the east side. This could take the form of a branch-off leg of I 240 in the vicinity of the present Isaac Dickson School, crossing the river to join a T-interchange at Emma Road. The advantages of this arrangement are several-fold:

a) The I-26 leg on the west side of the River is more or less where the original NCDOT alignment placed it. This would require a simple bridge(s) to bring I-26 across the river north of Montford.

b) A second bridge or pair of bridge structures would be required to connect I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road. This structure and necessary approaches could be constructed with minimum interference with existing traffic flows. Current traffic flows could continue during construction. By contrast the long drawn-out construction period closing down and retrofitting existing roads required by both Alternatives 2 and 4B could have a devastating effect on the downtown economy for a period of several years. This negative economic impact could significantly be reduced by the less intrusive scheme advocated here.

c) Another benefit of a reduced-scale project compared to the ADC-endorsed 4-B is the lessening of impacts both at the river edge near the Montford neighborhood, and the far simpler configuration of access ramps in the river valley. Aesthetically, it would result in a much more benign visual feature in the French Broad River Valley, which, of course, we want to protect as much as possible. And by reducing expensive fly-overs and ramps, construction costs can also be reduced.

d) Valuable land on the downtown side of the river at Patton as well as at the school site, and eventually perhaps, the Hillcrest public housing project might become available for new, carefully planned, mixed unit development, connecting the river to the downtown. Also, the sale of land now occupied by the dangerous, and poorly designed interchange on the east side of the river could be returned to the private development sector the sale of which could help to offset the costs of what will be, whatever the design, an expensive project. An integrated gateway development is highly desirable at this point, as called for in the Downtown Master Plan.

e) As noted in the AC-T editorial, the existing malfunction junction at the

east end of the Smokey Mountain Bridge must be eliminated and brought up to national safety standards. It is one of the most dangerous and confusing interchanges in the State of North Carolina. It cannot be fixed with more jury-rigged, make-do measures. The scheme proposed here would permit elimination of this dysfunctional, obsolete design.

Conclusion and recommendation:

That ADC consider convening a study group to look into how the situation with regard to I-26 has changed, politically, economically, and technically to bring the community up to date, and to follow through on the original mandate the Center undertook to bring the community to where it is today with regard to this number one critical issue and opportunity. Nobody is better positioned to do this than ADC.

What do you think?

Dave Johnson

APPENDIX

How to Complete i-26 in Three Phases:

Phase 1

Complete I-26 connector per NCDOT preferred route but make provision for a T-interchange at Emma Road with a new low-level I-240 Interstate bridge leg, crossing the river to I-26 connector segment.

Phase 2

Connect I-240 to I-26 at Emma Road, utilizing ROW north of Isaac Dickson School and with a new low bridge across the French Broad River. This leg could be constructed with minimum disruption of traffic flows to downtown and West Asheville, thus reducing negative economic impacts on downtown during the construction period.

Phase 3.

Completely redesign and bring up to standards the dangerous Patton Avenue interchange east of the River and redevelop the land now in highway ROW to create a gateway to Downtown Asheville as proposed by the Asheville Design Center and incorporated in the Downtown Master Plan.

--

Michael

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