

KACE Community Meeting

CENTRAL GATEWAY TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Special Purpose Meeting Report

Date: May 15, 2007
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Sword of the Spirit Christian Center
1237 Kaighns Avenue
Camden, NJ 08103

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Phone / E-mail</u>
Melinda Sanchez	Cooper's Ferry Development Corporation	856-757-9154 / sanchez@camdenwaterfront.com
Rev. Kevin A. Washington	Bethel Deliverance Church	856-966-9200 / Camden@Betheldeliverance.org
Dr. Bernadette Anderson	KACE / Oasis Development Corp.	856-342-7729 / sosce@cfaith.com
Roy Hibbert	Champ International Shipping Inc.	856-966-1689 / 856-342-6869
Gerard Marabk	751 Kaighn Ave. Camden, NJ 08103	Stbarts7@comcast.net
Ronald B. Evans	327 Pfeiffer St., Camden, NJ	856-365-8294 / stbarts3@comcast.net
Rev. Willie L. Anderson	Sword of the Spirit Church / Oasis Development / KACE	856-342-7729 soscc@cfaith.com
Leroy H. Gould	NJDOT - DPPD	609-530-3864 Leroygould@dot.state.nj.us
John Mullen	McCormick Taylor, Inc.	(215) 592-4200
Jonathan Wetstein	McCormick Taylor, Inc.	(215) 592-4200

Purpose of Meeting

By invitation, the NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) participated in the Kaighn Avenue Collaborative Enterprise (KACE) monthly Community Meeting at the Sword of the Spirit Christian Center in Camden, NJ. The purpose of the meeting was to present an overview of the Central Gateway Traffic Improvement Project and corresponding community outreach program to various community leaders and local stakeholders.

Meeting Displays

- Central Gateway Traffic Circulation Improvement Project plan
- Project Area Aerial map (Community Facilities)
- Stakeholder Comments maps, including:
 - Comprehensive Comments
 - Transportation – Circulation & Access
 - Transportation – Traffic & Geometry
 - Economic Development
 - Schools, Parks & Recreation

Meeting Handouts

- Comment Form
- Study Fact Sheet

Summary of Meeting

John Mullen opened the discussion by thanking the group for allowing NJDOT to participate in the meeting. He indicated that the NJDOT is in the process of designing transportation improvements in the Central Gateway area of Camden. Construction for these improvements is slated to begin in spring 2008 with completion of work expected by the end of 2008.

John presented a engineering plans display of the proposed project for the meeting attendees. He stated that the study area is bound by I-676 on the west, Federal Street on the north, Cooper River on the east and Pine Street on the south. The improvements are designed to enhance traffic circulation and safety within the Central Gateway area for both vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

The proposed project is designed to convert one-way streets to two-way streets, eliminate confusing loop ramps and install or upgrade traffic signals. In addition to improving vehicular circulation, the project is also designed to: provide enhanced access to and from major arterials such as I-676 and Route 30; employ traffic calming measures to enhance safety; provide improvements to pedestrian safety and related facilities; and encourage local economic development and redevelopment.

John stated that in addition to coordination with local business and residences in the Central Gateway area, the NJDOT is including adjacent neighborhoods in its community outreach program to address and mitigate potential Environmental Justice impacts. Neighborhoods included in the outreach study area include Gateway, Parkside, Lanning Square, Bergen Square and Central Business District (CBD).

These local neighborhoods are being examined to catalog the location of existing community facilities such as schools, parks, major businesses. John sated the project team is also soliciting input from residents, businesses and other local stakeholders to determine potential impacts to local neighborhoods as a result of changes to the transportation network in the Central Gateway area.

John stated that today's meeting follows a Local Officials Briefing at Camden City Hall, informational interviews and meetings with local stakeholders, and a Public Information Center for all residents. He indicated that the informational interviews were held at the Camden County Council for Lanning Square, Bergen Square and Central Business District residents, as well as the Parkside United Methodist Church for stakeholders from the Parkside and Gateway neighborhoods in order to encourage as much public participation as possible.

Jonathan Wetstein provided an overview of the study to the meeting attendees and summarized the interview discussions on the illustrative maps. These stakeholder comments maps, which presented the breadth of comments received in geographical context to the study area, were on display during the meeting.

Many members expressed concern regarding access from the Gateway neighborhood to major arterials. The meeting attendees stated that proposed roadway closures in the Central Gateway area would isolate the redevelopment area in Central Gateway from other parts of the city, and would impose significant impacts to resident's quality of life. They stated that the proposed transportation changes in the Central Gateway area would hinder economic development for other parts of the city.

Attendees also stated that businesses and developers pursuing changes to the transportation network (e.g.: Campbell Soup Company) should engage in a more proactive community outreach effort to inform the public of proposed actions and offer a forum for public comment. Attendees stated that the public should be able to engage in a collaborative process with all relevant agencies and organizations, such as NJDOT, the City of Camden and Campbell Soup Company, to create a plan that would benefit as many residents in the city as possible. Attendees stated that it is important to encourage future residential and business development both throughout and adjacent to the Central Gateway area.

Specific comments received from meeting attendees included:

- The Central Gateway transportation improvement project and the Campbell Soup Company development plan should be more integrated into the fabric of the City of Camden to provide more opportunities for socioeconomic growth and betterment to the overall quality of life.
- **8th Street & Kaighn Avenue** need street lighting enhancement, as well as traffic calming measures including a traffic signal.
- **Liberty Street and 8th Street** needs traffic calming measures at westbound curve of 8th Street.
- **9th Street and Kaighn Avenue** is the location of numerous automobile accidents.
- **Louis Street and Kaighn Avenue** need a traffic signal.
- **Louis Street and 9th Street** have poor visibility at the intersection.
- **Kaighn Avenue near 8th Street** has safety concerns regarding school crossings.

Written comments received during the meeting:

1. **Name:** Rev. Willie Anderson
Address: 1237 Kaighn Ave.
Camden, NJ 08103
(Oasis Development Corp.)
(Kaighn Ave. Collaborative Enterprises)
(Camden Church Organized for People)
Phone: (856) 342-7729
E-mail: soscc@cfaith.com

I am opposed to how this project has been outlined to our organizations. It is my opinion that the project is isolating Campbell's from the community. I am particularly concerned with the Gateway Community Oasis Development Corp. is building new homes just outside of the project area. We are looking to the future to establishing a good clean residential community. Kaighn Ave. Collaborative Enterprises is working on economic issues along the Kaighn Ave. corridor. We would like to see Campbell project provide positive impact on these areas and projects as well by softening the Harp borders and to not restrict ingress & egress from the community to the complex. We would like to see some of the 1700 employees at Campbell's be able to access our businesses and homes thus helping with the overall revitalization of the whole Gateway Community. I would like a copy of the maps to share with our community.

2. **Name:** Rev. Gerald Morabre
Address: Soul of Camden KACE
751 Kaighn Ave.
Camden, NJ 08103
E-mail: stbarts7@comcast.net

1. One way to two way on Kaighn between 7th & 8th. Exit 4 off of 676 onto Kaighn Ave. West.
2. Streetscape planned study initiated for Kaighn Ave. Haddon to B Way.
3. Flooding 7th, 8th on Kaighn.
4. Concern that Campbell's will be an enclave separated from the community, not integrated in the community. Walled off. We are opposed to the way of implementation of the project Central Gateway Improvement Project.

Please send us copies of the maps shown at address below.

3. **Name:** Roy Hibbert
Address: 900 Kaighn Ave.
Camden, NJ 08103
Phone: (856) 342-6869

1. Flooding
2. Conrail structure on Kaighn Avenue falling apart.
3. Light (traffic) on 9th & Kaighn need to be a over hanging light. Too much accident.
4. Better lighting at night.

4. **Name:** Ronald Evans
Address: 327 Pfeiffer Street
Camden, NJ 08105
Phone: (856) 365-8294

- Develop access to the Kaighn Avenue corridor.
- Traffic lines
- Improve traffic lighting
- Please send: Central Gateway Traffic Circulation Improvement Project maps and draft maps.

Members of KACE stated that Pennoni recently initiated a three-month study on streetscape improvement on Kaighn Avenue. NJDOT was provided with a copy of a design goals memorandum from the Pennoni kick-off meeting held on April 18, 2007. In addition to resolving traffic and drainage issues for the areas, streetscape plans include:

- mixing land uses (primarily residential and commercial);
- removal of on-street parking and establishing dedicated parking areas;
- emphasis on pedestrian circulation;
- construction of public parks; and
- landscaping, bike lanes and ornamental lighting.

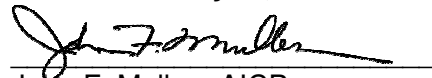
More details on the proposed streetscape improvements on Kaighn Avenue are shown on the April 18 memorandum included in the Appendix.

KACE members thanked the NJDOT for presenting this project for the meeting. The attendees indicated additional coordination between KACE and the City of Camden and Campbell Soup Company will be necessary.

John then provided his contact information and circulated copies of the study fact sheet and comment form to the meeting attendees. He then thanked the participants for providing a forum for the NJDOT to present the project.

The presentation ended at 3:30 p.m.

Report prepared by:
McCormick Taylor, Inc.



John F. Mullen, AICP