

ROUTE 18 SECTION 2F, 7E & 11H
COMMUNITY PARTNERING TEAM
BOYD PARK TASK FORCE
MEETING NO. 2 REPORT

DATE: February 2, 2001
TIME: 1:30 PM
LOCATION: Council Chambers, 2ND Floor City Hall
New Brunswick, NJ

1. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

To review the project model (middle segment-Carpender Road to New Street) and continue discussions regarding the scope of Boyd Park improvements for inclusion in the Route 18 Section 2F, 7E and 11H project. (Agenda Attached)

2. MEETING SUMMARY

Mike Morgan opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. The minutes from Meeting No. 1 were distributed, and a summary of the progress made at that meeting and the subsequent activities were discussed. Attendees reviewed the model prior to the start of the meeting and it was decided to formally discuss the model in a group setting later in the meeting.

The first item discussed was the Boyd Park expansion/City Docks improvement plan. A concept plan showing a continuous riverside walkway linking existing Boyd Park with the planned park area in the City Docks property, across the river frontage of the Rutgers' Boathouse, was presented and discussed. Rutgers' Frank Wong indicated that initial University issues regarding the walkway were: 1) security of the Boathouse; 2) loss of storage space; and 3) maintenance of the Boathouse operations during day-to-day activities and special events (particularly conflicts between pedestrians and athletes moving watercraft and equipment across the walk between the water and the Boathouse). The City shared the safety concerns. Mike Morgan indicated that gate design options could be developed in consultation with Rutgers University facility staff during design development to address security issues. Rutgers was to be provided with a copy of the plan for review by Boathouse personnel.

Mayor Cahill requested that Rutgers University consider the future plans for the Boathouse relocation. The New Brunswick Police Station site has been discussed as a potential site for relocation of the Boathouse. It was noted that the current City Docks improvement option was being planned around the existing Boathouse (and would continue to be under the Route 18 project), but various Boyd Park replacement parking and River walk design options would be possible if the Boathouse property could be used. It was agreed that a separate meeting between the City, the University and DEVCO to discuss this issue in further detail would be held.

The topic of Boyd Park entrance gateway concepts was then discussed. Paul Nowicki presented a summary of the general recommendations for architectural features and treatments suggested by the Aesthetics Task Force members. In general, treatments for the Boyd Park gateway area were recommended to enhance the "river theme" and the City's Raritan River heritage. Earth tones and stone-type characteristics and features for walls, and ornamental light standards with banner/flagging mounting brackets, were recommended. The Boyd Park Task Force members were in general agreement that these treatment concepts would be preferred and should be detailed during design development.

The meeting then focused on a review and discussion of the model. Mike Morgan presented an overview of the Preferred Alternative features depicted on the model. The City favored the reduced wall heights and lower proposed Boathouse Drive elevation achieved by modifying the Northbound C-D Road profile, as requested by the City during their review of the project's impacts to Boyd Park. It was requested that where possible and feasible, final design detail should maintain existing or implement new earth berms to minimize the visual impacts and reduce the exposed height of the northbound C-D Road walls along Boyd Park. The Task Force agreed that the Tabernacle Way pedestrian overpass could be eliminated, and instead a pedestrian connection to the New Street bridge should be provided. This would eliminate the impacts to the New Brunswick Apartments parking lot and would minimize conflict with site improvements to the New Brunswick Homes property proposed under the Hope VI project.

The City also inquired about the option of eliminating noise walls on top of the C-D Road walls along Boyd Park and along the New Brunswick Homes site to avoid a "tunnel effect" and to maintain an open character in this area. NJDOT and Gannett Fleming reiterated that the Preferred Alternative plans and the model show noise walls where noise analysis studies have indicated that mitigation is warranted. Ultimately, formal City resolution and community support is required for all noise walls. Thus, if the City decided that noise walls at certain portions of the corridor where undesirable, they could be eliminated.

After reviewing the model, City Officials felt they now had sufficient information to respond to NJDOT's request for the Section 4(f) concurrence letter required for the environmental document. On another procedural matter, it has been determined that both Green Acres and National Park Service (NPS) funds were used on past projects within Boyd Park; therefore, both agencies would have to be involved with the review and approval of the Park impacts and mitigation. Mike Heenehan of NJDEP Green Acres was going to approach the Park Service regarding NPS interest in the project and recommend that Green Acres assume the responsibility handling both agencies' interests in the Green Acres permit. Mike would report the result of his NPS inquiry to the City and to NJDOT.

To summarize, it was determined that the model was a valuable tool fostering better visualization and understanding of the Preferred Alternative concepts. The results of the Task Force recommendations discussed at the two meetings should be presented at the next CPT meeting. It was felt that at the present time, additional Boyd Park Task Force meetings would not be necessary on a regular basis, but it was recognized that if the need arose, the Task Force could be reconvened.

3. LIST OF ATTENDEES

Attendees

Frank Wong
William S. Richardson
Jay Pandya
Pamela Garrett
Jim Campbell
Glenn Patterson
David Byers
Thomas Loughlin
James Cahill
Sarah Clarke
Mike Heenehan
William Birch
Paul Nowicki
Michael Morgan

Representing

Rutgers University
Rutgers University
NJDOT-Environmental Team
NJDOT-Environmental Team
City of New Brunswick-Parks Department
City of New Brunswick-Planning and Development
NJDOT-Landscape and Urban Design
Administrator, City of New Brunswick
Mayor, City of New Brunswick
DEVCO
NJDEP-Green Acres
NJDOT-Project Manager
Gannett Fleming, Inc.
Gannett Fleming, Inc.

BOYD PARK TASK FORCE MEETING NO. 2

AGENDA

February 2, 2001

Objective: To review the project model and continue discussions regarding the scope of Boyd Park improvements for inclusion in the Route 18 Section 2F, 7E & 11H project.

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Distribute Task Force Minutes
- III. Review of Project Model
- IV. Discussion of City Docks Area Improvements, including River Walk continuity concept
- V. Integration of Rutgers University Boathouse Facility and Review of Boathouse Operational Requirements
- VI. Boyd Park Gateway Concept, Coordination with Aesthetics Task Force
- VII. Existing Berm Options under Preferred Alternative
- VIII. Section 4(f) Concurrence Letter