

ROUTE 18
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

**COMMUNITY
PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**CORRIDOR AESTHETICS GROUP
MEETING NO. 3 REPORT**

DATE: April 26, 2002
TIME: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
LOCATION: 3 Carpender Road, New Brunswick, NJ

PURPOSE OF MEETING

To identify the community coordinator and secretary for the Group, to identify the issues from CPT Meeting No. 14 to be addressed by this Group, to review the recommendations from the previous Task Force effort, and to present concepts for discussion on the theme and elements for the corridor. (Agenda attached)

ATTENDEES:

Cindy Bloom-Cronin
Helen Erdey
Jeff Grob
Steven Hardegen
Linda Hunter
Brenda Hammer
Noriko Maeda
Paul Morrisett
Paul Nowicki
Jeanine Schlesinger
Todd Smircina
Cathie Springer
Ed Tomaszewski
Martine Culbertson

MEETING SUMMARY

1. After introductions of new members and guests, the first item discussed was to identify the "issues" from the CPT Meeting No. 14 that applied most appropriately to the Corridor Aesthetics Group that will be addressed by the group in the upcoming weeks. A revised list of those items this group will address should be distributed in a future meeting. Also reviewed were recommendations from the previous Task Force effort.



2. The next item discussed was to identify a community coordinator for the group: Linda Hunter and secretary for the group, Todd Smircina.
3. The heart of the meeting was the introduction of Jeffrey Grob and his associate, Noriko Maeda of Vollmer Associates, landscape architects contracted with Gannett Fleming to develop the corridor's design concepts.
4. This meeting was earmarked to discuss and present initial noise and retaining wall design options for corridor. First, Jeff identified the location and heights of the proposed along the corridor and the design challenges of each (ie. height, reducing "tunnel effect" of wall sections, appropriate materials for the surrounding landscape, etc).
5. Second, Jeff offered several different design options, utilizing differing combinations of materials (brick facade with stone; stone with clear sections and wrought iron railings; and combinations of natural landscaping and sloping hills, etc). Materials chosen for the designs were meant to mirror those found in the surrounding New Brunswick area.
6. These visuals are key to the layperson in visualizing how the corridor's walls might be developed. It was requested that the neighborhood coordinators share these design options with their neighbors in the next week and return comments back to Jeff in order for his team to refine for the next meeting. (Comments on the wall concepts is attached.)
7. Future group meetings will discuss the remainder design considerations including: bridges, lighting, signage, etc. The wall designs are key in developing the corridor's "theme".
8. The next group meeting is tentatively scheduled for the week of May 20th, at the same location.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERING TEAM
ISSUES SUMMARY**

(FROM CPT MEETING NO. 14, 3/13/02)

- Replacement of trees - analysis of amount in order to determine impacts
- Aesthetic lighting - will it require subtle lighting or have more lights at night
- Safety and security considerations for the design features
- Structures should be as graffiti-proof as possible (flyers and bulletins can be considered graffiti as well)
- Signs - need to be designed to minimize graffiti and maintenance
- Sidewalks and bikes - how close to traffic/aesthetics
- Gateway concepts encourage community feeling
- Lighting & streetscape elements
- Access to old Police site for development
- Boyd Park impacts acceptable w/ enhancements at city docks
- Exxon at Commercial Avenue and George Street is unrelated (City's acquisition, not NJDOT)
- Carpenter Rd. concern for possible construction impacts of noise, debris, pollution
- Regional switching station for public utilities - New St. overpass
- Neighborhood traffic circulation flow discussions w/city
- Next step: Route 1/Route 18 problem statement status

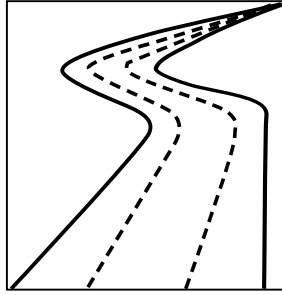
- Maintenance issue with existing landscaping: City maintains now, but future plans for area along Newell/Phelps
- Crest Rd. closure - residential concern - gate to rear of
- Clifton for alternate exit
- Richmond St. - pedestrian access city side to Boyd Park and development of park site area
- Demolish police station site: accelerate right-of-way acquisition process if possible
- Commercial Ave, Neilsen & George intersection improvements for traffic flow of buses and pedestrian safety
- Identify architectural features
- Traffic operations before, during and after construction
- Newell/Phelps Avenues closure coordinating with Tov Manor and a petition was signed by Phelps residents, however City would like input and discussions from Newell neighborhood (City issue to report back to CPT)
- Signage on Route 1 and Route 18 needs to be carefully considered
- Pedestrian access at bus stops
- Enhanced signage on Rt. 18 corridor - aesthetics

We also added the following:

- Signal Aesthetics
- Noise barriers/structural aesthetics

Meeting Minutes prepared by :

Todd Smircina, Community Secretary
Linda Hunter, Community Coordinator



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**COMMUNITY
PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**CORRIDOR AESTHETICS GROUP
MEETING NO. 3**

AGENDA

April 26, 2002

Smircina Residence, 3 Carpender Road, New Brunswick, NJ

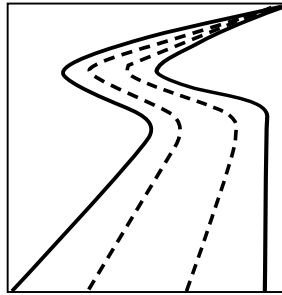
Objective: To identify the community coordinator and secretary for the Group, to identify the issues from CPT Meeting No. 14 to be addressed by this Group, to review the recommendations from the previous Task Force effort, and to present concepts for discussion on the theme and elements for the corridor.

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - Agenda and Goals
 - CPT Group Responsibilities

- II. Corridor Aesthetics Discussion
 - Identify Issues from CPT Meeting No. 14
 - Review Task Force Recommendations
 - Wall Location Review
 - Present Treatment Concepts
 - Review Context Influences

- III. Summary and Close
 - Action Items / Next Meeting
 - Feedback / Closing Comments





ROUTE 18
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PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

May 9, 2002

Subject: Route 18 Transportation Improvements – Conceptual Treatments for Noise and Retaining Walls

Source of Comments Below: Cindy Bloom-Cronin, Landscape and Urban Design – NJDOT

We have reviewed the information that was sent to us and have the following comments:

- We prefer Sheet 1, top and bottom typicals and Sheet 3, top typical. Arches mimicking the Rt. 18 Railroad Bridge with the use of keystones, thicker columns, and stone should be incorporated into the Boyd Park retaining wall. Arches should be a single row rather than a double row. The other retaining walls should be similar to Sheet 1 top typical. A horizontal accent line as shown on Sheet 1 top typical should be included without the use of the elevated planter. Noise barriers should be similar to Sheet 1 bottom typical or Sheet 3 top typical.
- Elevated planters do not work without a high maintenance program that includes the use of an irrigation system. Although the idea of planting pockets being incorporated into the wall design looks great graphically, it would not receive the maintenance required and should be removed from the design. These areas would be difficult to get to physically and the plant material would receive little water in these areas.
- Walls must be buildable at a reasonable cost per square foot. However, we feel that in order to get a quality product, the retaining walls would have to be cast in place with stone veneer.

Source of Comments Below: Linda Hunter, representing University Mews Homeowners – Phelps Avenue

In general, the feedback from the University Mews Homeowners was very positive. On paper, the compatible architectures and incorporation of varied textures are aesthetically appealing, though some lend themselves to maintenance problems more than others. Following are more specific comments:



- Page 1, Section D-D
- Plantings shown on residential side of northbound Rt. 18 will not likely receive any sun because they face in a northerly direction (similar feedback for the Antilles Field section) and will become pockets for weeds.
- The scalloped design on the iron fencing is more appealing than the straight edged fencing.
- Page 2
- Serpentine-berm combination is favored by Phelps Ave. residents. This design intuitively seems to be more effective at mitigating noise and also between Newell and Dewey there is enough open space to accommodate this design with substantive plantings on both the residential side and the roadway side.
- Boyd Park Section is appealing because it repeats the pattern in the RR bridge but will it be accessible to vandals? Perhaps the height of the fence can deter vandalism.
- How will these designs blend with the pedestrian overpass?
- Page 3
- Entry to Boyd Park at Commercial Ave. is very attractive, particularly the curvature in the pedestrian stairway.
- Noise wall-berm combination at Dewey section looks more residential with the stone rather than the brickface, but it would be helpful to see an actual wall using both materials before making final decision. Phelps Ave. residents find this design appealing. If the wall is stone, will it interface effectively with a serpentine design or does the entire southbound side need to be of similar design?
- The C1, C2, C3 illustration is confusing. Are these meant to be alternatives or is the wall constructed with three sections?
- Page 4
- Retaining wall – Rt. 18 southbound section near Antilles Field – plantings in this section are not practical for two reasons. First, they will not receive sun because of the direction they face and without an aggressive maintenance program, debris will collect in the pockets.