



**Dixie Corridor Joint Workshop Meeting
Planning Commission and Township Board**

Call to Order: Supervisor Mike Trout opened the November 4, 2009 joint workshop meeting of the Springfield Township Board and Planning Commission at 7:02 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Board and Planning Commission Members Present

Dean Baker	Planning Commissioner
Jamie Dubre	Township Treasurer
Judy Hensler	Township Trustee
Ruth Ann Hines	Planning Commissioner
David Hopper	Township Trustee
Roger Lamont	Township Trustee, Planning Commissioner
Laura Moreau	Township Clerk
John Steckling	Planning Commissioner
Mike Trout	Township Supervisor
Denny Vallad	Township Trustee
Neil Willson	Planning Commissioner

Others Present

Dick Carlisle	Planning Consultant
Brian Oppmann	Planning Consultant

Public Comment: None

New Business:

1. Introduction and Background

Dick Carlisle explained that the purpose of the workshop is to solidify thoughts that the Township has for the corridor so that Carlisle Wortman Associates can modify the plan and incorporate our ideas.

Dixie Corridor Study and Update—Dick explained the process of the focus group and the preliminary discussions for the plan update. The scope of the study has



been confined to I-75 up to Davisburg Rd. This area has the most potential for growth with the proximity to I-75 but the scope can certainly be expanded. Dick noted that the Master Plan update provided a new look at this area and with it the recognition of the non-residential potential in this area. It was the desire of the Planning Commission to broaden the thinking.

Master Plan 2009—Dick Carlisle explained that the Planning Commission asked for a more detailed study of commercial property and CWA completed a broad market analysis. It was found that much commercial property existed but it was not necessarily located in areas with the greatest commercial potential. He noted very few parcels on Dixie up to Davisburg Road that are zoned commercial that are less than 1 acre. He also noted the very unique situation in the region of a commercial corridor intersecting an interstate.

2. Moving Forward / Consensus Building

Dick Carlisle led a discussion of “Lifestyle Centers” and what shoppers expect today. He noted design detail, entertainment and an attractive, well lit environment are top priorities. Overall the large scale retail market is being challenged and they are seeing a downsize. Meanwhile Walmart and Meijer are upsizing. He stated that this area along Dixie has a somewhat eclectic mix of uses and some eyesores. One way to change this atmosphere is to change the investment environment through public investment and by incentivizing private investment. Dick noted that we need to consider a strategic approach to changing the investment environment. When you start to generate the type of development activity you want to see, you will start to see the change. Success builds success.

Dick Carlisle explained that CWA took particular note of all the “green” areas and corridors on the Township Natural Areas Plan. Dick stated that these areas are a real asset to the Township and will guide quality and character. These natural areas should not be seen as limiting or restricting development but should instead be recognized as assets and incorporated into high quality developments.

The Board and Planning Commission members were directed to select from a variety of photos of developments and communities to discuss preferences. After discussing reactions to the photos and noting similarities in thinking, the members were broken into two smaller groups to discuss 5 questions.



- a. ***What roadway improvements are necessary to facilitate traffic movement into commercial sites along Dixie Highway?*** The group proposed a “limited boulevard” of not more than up to Cedar Crest Academy. The boulevard would be used primarily to direct traffic. The group also discussed the need to address the traffic concern near the Kroger development. It was suggested to explore the curb solution as proposed in the HRC safety study to limit left turns into the south entrance.
- b. ***Does the appearance of Dixie Highway support the economic viability of the corridor? If not, what needs to be done?*** The consensus was that the appearance of the corridor was very poor. The group discussed ordinance enforcement and pre-existing non-conforming businesses along the corridor.
- c. ***What types of land uses do you think offer the most potential for development along Dixie Highway?*** The group discussed a regional commercial area near I-75 with possibly a lifestyle center design. The area near the Davisburg Road intersection should continue as a local commercial district. The focus in this area should be on developing phase II of the Kroger development. It was noted that the second phase driveway could solve the traffic issue. The center of these two districts should focus on office/service uses.
- d. ***What other infrastructure improvements would enhance economic opportunities along the corridor?*** The group discussed the need for community water, a wastewater system, storm water treatment, safety paths and lighting. Questions were raised regarding tapping into the sewer through Independence Township. New technology proposed by the Water Resource Commission will also be explored. Some expressed a desire for storm sewers while others indicated a preference to explore opportunities to retain storm water onsite. The group expressed an interest in exploring a water tower and pedestrian scale lighting along pathways. Dick Carlisle explained that a utility “district” would become an area of more intense development that we want to avoid in the balance of the Township. Providing for this district on the corridor actually helps to defend the ordinance.
- e. ***What prominent features or characteristics of Dixie Highway should be preserved?*** Primarily the group noted the existing natural areas as the key features to preserve and incorporate into future developments.



The “stone house” and the old school house were noted as significant historical features.

3. Next Steps

Dick Carlisle explained that the next step of the corridor update would be to create a detailed design plan reflecting a new vision for the corridor. The plan will also concentrate on implementation. Dick Carlisle discussed possible ways to implement the plan such as brownfield redevelopment, commercial redevelopment opportunities and perhaps the creation of a utility district. Dick also discussed the need to strengthen the ordinance enforcement program and stated it must be strong, fair and consistent. CWA will forward a revised proposal to the Township based on the conclusions of this workshop meeting.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

Supervisor Trout adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Mike Trout, Township Supervisor

Laura Moreau, Township Clerk