

MEETING MINUTES

PROJ. #: 210206.000

ISSUE DATE: 2021-10-07

PROJECT: Bellbrook Downtown District
Streetscape

ATTENDEES:
General Public, Kleingers Staff, City Representatives

MTG TYPE: Public Meeting

DATE/TIME: Wednesday, September 29, 2021

PREP. BY: The Kleingers Group

DISTR. TO: City of Bellbrook

The following is considered to be a true and accurate record of the topics discussed and decisions reached at the referenced meeting for your review and file. At any time within 5 business days of issuance of these minutes, attendees may submit written request for modifications to this record. If no written request for modification is received within this time frame, these minutes automatically become a final record of the meeting discussion and decisions.

The following notes are derived from written and verbal comments received during the public open house meeting.

TOPIC: Transportation / Roadway

- Concerns with the median in front of gas station. Will it be difficult for large vehicles to enter/exit?
- Will bump-outs at Franklin and Main make turning difficult for large vehicles (already tight)?
- Not a fan of curb bump-outs.
- Less curb cuts to add parking.
- Snow would cover median in the winter
- Curb bump-outs a problem with snow removal—Lofino Plaza.

TOPIC: Connectivity

- Love most of this, but the blinking signs at the crosswalk do not fit the historical motif.
- Agree with a crosswalk on Main to Bellbrook Park.
- Push button integrated at crosswalks.
- Crosswalk from Library to Dairy Shed is a great idea.

TOPIC: Utilities

- Would like all utilities to run underground.

TOPIC: Site Furnishings & Gateway Sign

- Love the Bellbrook arched gate signs.
- Keep existing benches that are donated by organizations within plan.
- Keep signs—lions, garden club, optimist club, and scouts.
- Business signs with historic look—hanging sign on storefronts.
- Business signs should be uniform in size.
- Gateways should have more historic feel.
- Outdoor speakers throughout walking district—good quality, low volume music to be on during community events.
- In median, maybe only one banner pole.
- Victorian lamp post with electrical outlets for holiday or other lighted fixtures—town clock/post-like lamp posts.
- Flowers—pots or lamp post fixtures.
- New old village district signs on all four streets heading into town.

- Hand sanitizer dispensers placed throughout business district.
- Redo or new legible and aesthetically pleasing historical plaques.
- Bridge flower boxes.
- Community billboard.
- How about a big “city clock” in front of the city building?

TOPIC: Design of the Downtown District

- Love the red brick pavers.
- Use stamped concrete on sidewalk.
- Cobblestone, brick, or stone sidewalks throughout village district—start with town center depending on money.
- Small ornamental trees.
- Green space with trees and plants.

TOPIC: Out-of-scope Comments

- Limited parking—purchase lot and make parking lot(s).
- Bring back the Christmas snowflake decorations.
- Who cleans the flowers and area of Bellbrook Park?
- Murals would be nice on McIntosh’s Pub, or on old fire station downtown like it was before.
- Green spaces—demolish garage-like building where old fire station was. Make green space/garden with benches, fountain, flowers, etc. Murals on both walls.
- Clean up hardware store.
- Easily accessible public restrooms.
- DORA in area.
- New eatery in town.
- Finish walking path to Magee Park from village—725 bridge project.
- Splash pad for kids in the area.
- No tax increase—federal or city.
- Connect ball fields to main streetscape network for walking.

TKG SUMMARY:

- Providing other amenities to complement the streetscape could potentially draw people to Bellbrook’s downtown district.
- The public agrees with adding upgraded crosswalks and mid-block crossings as safety measures. Some did not prefer the rapid flashing beacons due to their visual obtrusiveness.
- Bump-outs and medians are a concern in terms of maintenance and for turning radius’ for large vehicles. Review turning radii for bump outs and entrance into the gas station.
- Underground utilities would be a beneficial improvement to the aesthetics of the streetscape.
- The public likes the idea of improving site furnishings. Existing locations of benches and bike racks should be studied for better usage. Improved pedestrian scale lighting, signage, banner poles, etc. were well received.
- Gateway signage options received mixed reviews. Most preferred the gateway arch and/or pylon sign options.
- Responses to the proposed landscaping improvements were mainly positive. Consistent street tree placement and species was preferred. Increasing use of flowering perennials was also well received.
- Outdoor dining was preferred at the intersection of Franklin and Main.
- Most attendees preferred the stamped asphalt crosswalks and brick pavers within the streetscape design.
- Attendees generally agree with the proposed beautification of the downtown district streetscape, but prefer that a historic feel is maintained.

The following notes are derived from written comments on a Facebook Community Page and Direct Messages received by City Staff.

TOPIC: Transportation / Roadway

- Not completely sold on the curb bump-outs to slow down traffic. Would like to see better examples of where this has been successfully implemented.
- Accessible curb cuts at the intersection are great—yes, we are prejudiced about this one.
- A crosswalk at the Dairy Shed is truly needed, but I am afraid there could be casualties before distracted drivers realize it's there!
- No median or bump-outs are needed. Main St and Franklin St are not wide enough to accommodate them.
- Curb bump-outs were attempted years ago. With Tom's Mulch and Ernst going through town, it's not a viable option unless you like bump-outs with tire marks on them.
- Won't a curb bump-out take up more parking spots?
- Curb bump-outs did not work the first time. The cost of installing the bump-outs and later removing them was pretty high. It made it very difficult for tractor trailers and school buses to make the turn in the center of town.
- No curb bump-outs!
- Cutting trees and eliminating residents parking? No!
- Speed bumps on S Main!
- Bump outs at the corners - the idea that they protect parking is iffy at best. I don't ever recall a parked car being hit. It's already difficult to turn onto the narrow streets and the bump outs make it even harder. I have witnessed so many larger vehicles run over the bump outs trying to turn - primarily because a lot of them try to cut the corner too short, but also because the turns are so tight. Also, it makes parking more difficult.
- No median planters or installations. Definitely no plantings there. They are a maintenance nightmare! The painted lines on the pavement are sufficient and much easier to maintain. I would be very surprised if having them there would slow anyone down if they are intent of speeding. The only mechanisms I think that slows traffic is a reputation for ticketing speeding or roundabouts and we certainly do not have the space for those. They would have to be so tight that the school buses would never be able to negotiate them!

TOPIC: Connectivity

- Need a sidewalk that goes from the high school all the way into downtown be made safer. I am always terrified to walk it. The traffic moves so fast, and there is nothing separating the pedestrians from those cars. I think a lower speed limit, plus a guard rail has been needed for years. Especially since so many children walk that route.
- Additional walkways connecting the downtown to adjacent parks would be great.

TOPIC: Utilities

- Loved the idea of burying the power lines, but the costs are probably (most likely) prohibitive.

TOPIC: Site Furnishings & Gateway Sign

- The gateways at each end of town would be great. I would like to see them with a more historical context to match the community feel.
- No more planters are needed.
- Love the more traditional ideas, historical marker, improved trash receptacles, street lighting, seasonal flags, improved landscaping.
- Love the gateway/arch idea.
- Has anyone suggested standardizing the signage? When you drive down the street all you see is a bunch of business signs. All sizes and shapes everywhere. It looks trashy.
- All ideas sound great and downtown could definitely use a facelift.
- I do hope that when we do upgrade our lighting that we adhere to the Dark Sky guidelines to avoid lighting up the night so it looks like daytime. So many negatives attached to that model. I have information on that program and had hoped to introduce it before COVID distracted us. Maybe it's time to look at it now?
- And finally, the planters - it was hard to tell if they were recommending replacing what we have or just showing examples of city planters - what they showed was very sleek, modern looking ones, not in keeping with our historic look. The city paid for the current planters, but the garden club selected them and maintains them, except for watering, which the service guys do.

TOPIC: Out of Scope Items

- I was disappointed that we limited their design scope from building frontage to building frontage.
- Would like to have seen some mural concepts at McIntosh's and maybe Dart.
- I am definitely in favor of enhanced enforcement of the speeding laws. I know Doug doesn't want to issue speeding tickets, but it works in Oakwood. EVERYONE know not to speed thru Oakwood because they don't tolerate it. The electronic signs indicating your speed work for while when they are in place, but the mentality of today's drivers is self-centered and rude in so many cases. I believe the only thing that will stop it is being cited and Bellbrook having a reputation for not tolerating speeding.

TKG SUMMARY:

- While some individuals are for implementing curb bump-outs, other feel they are not effective and reduce parking spaces for residents living downtown.
- Availability of on-street parking is a concern.
- Reducing vehicular speed along Franklin & Main is desired.
- The gateway sign and improved site furnishings ideas were well received.