

**BUFFALO NIAGARA MEDICAL CAMPUS PHASE III (ALLEN ST. EXTENSION)
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING #3
OLMSTED CENTER FOR SIGHT, 1170 MAIN STREET, BUFFALO, NY
OCTOBER 15, 2014 @ 6:00 PM**

ATTENDEES FROM THE DESIGN TEAM:

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The following outline summarizes discussion during the October 15, 2014 meeting – 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM at the Olmsted Center for Sight.

PROCEEDINGS:

- Kelly Thompson began the PowerPoint presentation with an update of the progress on Phase B portion of the project (Allen Street from Main Street to Wadsworth Street):
 - The project objectives from the beginning of the project have focused on:
 - Improving the corridor aesthetics
 - Improving safety and mobility for pedestrians/bicyclists
 - Improving vehicular operations and safety
 - Improving pavement deficiencies and rideability
 - Based on the project objectives, public feedback, and engineering studies, the design team evaluated the alternatives to determine a preferred alternative. The preferred



alternative chosen was Alternative B Modified. The presentation explained the process of evaluating each alternative and ultimately determining Alternative B Modified would be presented as the preferred alternative. The advantages and disadvantages of each alternative are available from the PowerPoint presentation on the project website, allenstreetextension.com.

- Joe Ficociello, Halvorson Design Partnership, presented urban design features that could be considered along the Allen Street corridor including:
 - Various sidewalk configurations were presented to showcase the many possibilities that an increased sidewalk zone would allow, including trees, seating, cafes, etc.
 - There are a range of possibilities for materials in the pedestrian, furnishing and parking zones that are available for the public to weigh in on during detailed design.
 - An emphasis is placed on balancing the City of Buffalo standard features and special features in the street furnishing design (benches, bike racks, planters, trash receptacles, art, street lighting, bollards, signage, etc.).
 - A major goal is creating well designed nodes at Main Street and Wadsworth Street that enhance the experience for all modes of travel.
- Kelly Thompson and Peter Merlo fielded questions from the entire group before breaking out into smaller discussion groups.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

Meeting attendees provided their comments in a group forum after the presentation, as well as, in breakout groups to separate comments between the alternatives and design elements. The main comments for each topic are gathered below:

Overall Comments:

Keep Allen St. the way it is.

Alternative A could someday become Alternative B. Alternative B could not become Alternative because of the sewers, gutters, etc.

Alternative A is best.

Be careful not to make the same mistake Main St. did.

The BNMC will bring thousands of their new employees to Allentown.

Parking (Opposing Modified Alternative B):

There isn't consensus about what to do about the parking situation.

The preferred alternative should attempt to gain parking.

There is room in the design to keep more parking.

Allen St. should be updated without losing parking.

There needs to be more parking in Allentown, not less.

Can't afford to lose parking.



Don't get rid of parking.

There already is a parking problem (80% usage).

Removing on-street parking will increase speed causing unsafe conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Parking on both sides acts as traffic calming. If parking is removed on one side speeds will increase.

Parking spaces create a buffer for pedestrians. The loss of parking will create an issue with safety. Alternative B won't make pedestrians more comfortable; it will make cars be in opposition with the neighborhood.

Don't reduce parking. It will impact the residential streets.

The density for housing and demand for housing is increasing in Allentown. What about residential parking?

Parking is an issue for residents and businesses alike.

The loss of parking from Irving to Franklin will impact the small shops.

Vacant store fronts have just been filled. The loss of parking will have a negative impact on the commercial district.

There are 590+ people coming to Allen St. everyday. The loss of parking will hurt the commercial district which in turn hurts residents.

There is great demand to maintain parking on both sides. There is also demand for bicycle racks, new trash receptacles, and green space.

Lets make it walkable without losing 80 parking spaces. Thirteen feet sidewalks are wide enough.

Other than parking, you're doing a good job.

Alternative B is excluding the Theatre of Youth from the community. It needs parking to do business.

Today theatre attendees spend an hour at times driving/circling looking for a parking space.

Alternative B if pursued, could have a detrimental economic impact on the theater. Parking is their current number one issue.

Bar patrons park in resident spaces.

Would like to see striping/markings for resident spaces.

Winter will impact the number of parking spaces.

The City sold two lots on Allen St., this was a lack of foresight.

Consider diagonal parking.

Can BNMC parking be used at night?

There is game shifting momentum happening. The neighborhood needs more off-street parking lots.

Look for parking spaces in the surrounding area.



Alternative parking solutions for residents and businesses need to be detailed in the final plan.

Parking (In Support of Modified Alternative B):

There already is a parking problem, Alternative B will make Elmwood Village envious of Allentown.

Allentown is a destination today even with the current parking problem. People still come the parking during the day isn't an issue, the loss of 80 spaces won't impact the district at night when parking is tight.

No neighborhood worth itself doesn't have a parking problem. Parking management is needed.

Parking on Allen St. should not be free after-hours. The revenue made should go back to Allen St.

The design should not be about more or less parking but rather quality of life.

I am okay with the loss of parking, pedestrian transportation needs to be pushed.

Plan Alternative B to require more transit services.

Think about the next 50 years, create the best plan for that. Get over self-interested parochial view.

The car-centric notion is not forward thinking.

The design solution must accommodate all users.

The design should influence user behaviors. If we want the demand for transit to increase we can't design for cars.

The five to six diagonal parking spaces at Main St. and Wadsworth Sq. work well. The plaza is a large congregation area for GOBike Buffalo

What is the relation of volume of cars to bicycles on Allen St.?

Public Outreach:

The design process should include a multi-day design charrette with the public.

Charrettes are a big effort up front but they engage the community and the community will more likely support the outcomes.

Have the upcoming workshop at Theatre of Youth.

Show parking alternatives in future presentation graphics. This may ease those who are concerned by the loss of parking.

There are too many disconnects in the planning process and silos within the community. This is not a holistic planning approach. Transit advocates should be consulted.

Travel Lanes & Sidewalk Width:

A ten foot lane is preferred.

Expand the street width between Delaware and Elmwood by two feet on each side.



Travel lanes should be ten feet wide, more consistent with the current configuration.

A preferred solution would be alternative A with narrower Sharrow lanes (10'), parking (7.5') and sidewalks (12' -14').

The sidewalks will narrow in the winter and shop keepers will not maintain, therefore defeating the purpose of the wider sidewalks.

The road width should be wide enough for bicycles, but not any wider.

Sharrow can be narrower than what is shown in the design. Ten foot lanes is the maximum.

Street Design:

Can cobblestone be used as a traffic calming measure? No it is cost prohibitive.

Cobblestone does exist beneath the street. Is there an opportunity to use cobblestone gutters?

Concrete pavement doesn't work. Look into other permeable surface options.

Curb bump-outs will be beneficial at every intersection.

Sharrows do not make bicyclists more comfortable.

No turn lanes.

Eliminate parking for pedestrian improvements, not to implement turn lanes.

Bumpouts should be implemented throughout the corridor.

There needs to be some reconfigurations to allow flexibility for future cafes, water for trees and space/air for trees.

The sidewalks aren't currently congested.

People on sidewalks attract people to the neighborhood.

Explore curb and gutter versus vertical curb details.

Street Amenities:

There needs to be benches.

No benches, they attract the homeless.

There needs to be trash receptacles.

There needs to be more bicycle racks.

The biggest concern in the survey was the aesthetics.

The art needs to maintain the character of Allen St., don't want this to look like another "reclaimed art district".

No benches along Allen St., they will only get used by homeless people.

There needs to be better lighting.

Would like to see dramatic light installations.



The vehicular pendant light is too tall/not pedestrian. It doesn't work for the scale of Allen St. Consider a post top light at a lower scale and at closer intervals.

The parking at the plaza works fine the way it is. Option to improve trees, and seating with bicycle parking.

Salvage or leave the slate sidewalks.

Funding:

If the City cannot use the 3 million to fund the project to Wadsworth Sq. this conversation isn't worthwhile.

What is the situation with funding? Why get us all worked up if most of the improvements won't be covered?

NEXT STEPS:

Bergmann Associates Team

- Take the input from the public meeting and make a final design alternative decision with the City of Buffalo.
- Share information gathered from the public meeting on the project website.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE:

- The next meeting is TBD.



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