



Mayor David E. Weiss:

I am not Mr. Roeder, we will have to track those down.

Chair Roeder:

She told me apparently she had submitted the changes to Mary Murphy. So I'm not sure procedurally here. I don't know if it's right to vote on the minutes if we don't have the final version of the minutes.

Committee Member Strang:

What I have is the email she sent, which I could read if that is helpful. It is dated 8/13/20. She said, I was asked by committee member Carter during last night. How many lots were not available as side lots. There were nine single lots that are not available as side lots currently, and 29 multiple parcel lots. You can see the available lot list anytime on the city website. Let me know if you have any questions.

Chair Roeder:

Thank you, Carter. That's one of the changes. I do not know if there are other changes, Mayor, did you have a recommendation on how to handle this?

Mayor David E. Weiss:

No, if we didn't have the comment, we can just defer approving the minutes. If that's the only comment, that's a clarification that the committee can then go ahead and approve with that change.

Chair Roeder:

If that's the only comment I do not know, it sounds like she had some corrections, she said, so there may be some other things. So why don't we defer the minutes to our next meeting and that way we can make sure that we're all operating off the same, before I do that though, does anyone in this committee have any corrections or adjustments? And that way we can look at them all together.

We'll move that item to next month's meeting and we'll see what Director Lewis put in and you'll have a final clean version to approve. Before we go to Lee Road, I do want to comment as well. In the last several months, there have been some questions on the vacant lot program. We discussed it as a committee in our most recent meeting, and there remained some questions. So the Mayor and the administration have been working on clarification and they will have for our next meeting further clarification on that policy and also some comments from several residents. We will be addressing that in our next meeting, Mayor Weiss, is there anything you'd like to add on this topic?

Mayor David E. Weiss:

You've covered it. We decided that bringing all of the relevant provisions that may be in and different pieces parts, we'll bring all into one policy and consolidate that all into one. We had hoped to maybe have that ready for this meeting, but I'm not quite there yet. We would bring that back to

the committee next month taking into consideration some of the comments and the discussion that we had last month.

Chair Roeder:

Our item of business for this meeting is Lee Road. And I will hand off to Director Braverman who will walk us through the plans for Lee Road.

Director Joyce Braverman:

I am here today to present a request for a grant application. Although I would like to also introduce Kara O'Donnell from the Planning Department and Laura Englehart from Economic Development. This is an inter-departmental effort. We asked to authorize a grant for a Lee Road corridor connections plan, which is a visionary plan for reinvestment in the Lee Road corridor. The plan will look at Lee Road from border to border from a Northern border to the Southern border mostly in terms of transportation and traffic, and then focus on the commercial corridor South of Chagrin, with an emphasis on redevelopment, access and neighborhood connections. The plan will look at four major areas. One is urban design and streetscape to improve the overall physical design and appearance of the corridor. The other is economic development and facility strategy, which will be a place based economic development strategy to optimize the development opportunities along Lee, and to look at redevelopment of public facilities also along the corridor. A transportation plan will use information we collected from a previous traffic study and look at traffic calming access management. What I mean by access management is driveways and hopefully finding a way to consolidate or organize driveways, looking at pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and enhancing the connectivity to the business just between the business district and the neighborhoods, and the fourth emphasis of the plan will be a robust community engagement and stakeholder strategy, together input from residents from neighborhood associations and from businesses and property owners. Why do we want to do this plan now? There are several reasons, three that I will highlight. This plan will look at reinvestment in a part of the community that has not seen large scale developments since Shaker Town Center redevelopment in 2005, due to resident driven efforts, mostly through Moreland Rising this predominantly black neighborhood, which is adjacent to Lee Road has become stronger, more vibrant.

This plan will be intentional in creating equitable and inclusive approaches to development and neighborhood in this neighborhood commercial district. Secondly, we'd like to do advanced planning now to pave the way for implementation funding in the future. We have already requested funding from NOACA for 2025. That would be for road paving road reconstruction, as well as streetscape and multipurpose paths. The state capital budget has requests both in 2022 and 2024 that we would apply for, hoping to be successful in one of those rounds. And there could be additional stimulus packages that are announced in the next few years. In addition to those sources, we have about five or six other sources that we'd be looking at also applying for. And then finally this plan will build upon past plans.

The last plan was done in 2011 and the focus of that plan was a traffic study. So this plan will not redo the traffic study, very little has changed in terms of traffic, but it will use that information and go the next step in realizing a redevelopment of Lee Road. So tonight we're requesting an

application to NOACA for their TLCI grant program. We would like to apply for a hundred thousand dollars grant with a \$25,000 match. This will support the targeted plan to create a community vision for Lee Road. This application is due on October 16th. I will open it to questions.

Chair Roeder:

Director Braverman, thank you, Director Englehart, is there anything that you'd like to add?

Director Laura Englehart:

No. Joyce and I coordinated ahead of time and she's outlined the major points. So thank you for doing it so concisely. I am here to answer any questions as the conversation proceeds.

Chair Roeder:

The city has a program that you may be familiar with called Forward Together. In the Forward Together initiative the City and the Shaker Heights school district and the leadership of the library, the library Board of Trustees and the Executive Director have been collaborating on a number of issues. I would like highlight as well that this particular discussion, this proposal for Lee Road, has been discussed with leadership of the Shaker school district and the library, they are supportive. We do see this as an opportunity for all three of those organizations to collaborate around what the solutions look like for Lee Road. Questions Mr. Strang?

Committee Member Strang:

Assuming the grant is received, what changes can be made after the grant is received to the plan, if any?

Director Joyce Braverman:

What changes in the post scope in the proposal? Many can be made, this is the general scope that we're looking at. After the grant we would then actually write a request for proposals and in there the scope would be further refined.

Committee Member Strang:

I appreciate the comment in regard to the school being involved which was a concern that I had. I'm specifically concerned about Aldersyde and Lee Road. As I view the plan I live on Chalfont, it's rather a mess for us because of the changes at Van Aken, we can't exit Chalfont to get anywhere South on Lee or Southeast service center because that's always blocked now, which means that we have find another route, which for many of the residents in Fernway neighborhood would be going to Fernway and trying to get there by crossing, turning left on Lee Road, where there's no longer a light which causes some congestion. I understand that we haven't done a traffic study since the study this request is based on and I don't know whether that has caused any change of the traffic at that location, but having been in this neighborhood when school was in session pre COVID, there are some problems that Aldersyde and Lee that I'm concerned are going to be made worse by this change. That is cars heading North on Lee Road turn at the high school before school starts get backed up waiting to turn left and at times have been backed up almost all the way to Fernway. This plan is going to now change that instead of having two lanes where cars not waiting to turn left can

actually pass and still continuing North, we'll now have a situation where cars waiting to turn left will be blocking the cars behind them. I was interested in whether the schools had any commentary about that? That's the first question I have and concerns that it's actually going to make what is an existing problem once we're out of COVID because right now no one's going to the high school. Once that gets back to normal, that it's going to actually be worse than it was, once we go to one lane each way.

Director Joyce Braverman:

I do want to clarify the proposal to go to one lane each way would have a center turn lane. So in that case, anyone turning left would be going into that turn lane and not blocking through traffic. That is the proposal from the 2011 plan. We will look at that again in this plan.

Committee Member Strang:

I looked carefully at that plan and I didn't see that so I appreciate that it will be looked at again if that is needed, and this, as Councilman Moore knows, the light was removed from the Lee and Fernway intersection at the same time it was at Linfield and there was a lot of concern expressed at that time. Obviously we're seeing the change at Linfield now to try to correct that problem. Does this grant preclude future consideration by the city of putting a light back at that location?

Director Joyce Braverman:

The grant for the study would not preclude that depending on our funding sources for the implementation that May. We are looking for some NOACA ODOT funds that may preclude it. However, in 2005, when the light was taken out, it was based on warrant and a warrant analysis to see if the light is warranted and that analysis would have to be done again, to see if that is still the case or if a light would be allowed.

Committee Member Strang:

I have one more question. In the study, it talks about a problem caused by encroaching vegetation at various locations. There is a picture of it that makes it difficult for cars and others at intersections. It's not specific as to where this would be and what exactly would be done, but I do know again at Lee and Fernway, if you are traveling West on Fernway and you stop at the sign and stop at the white line before the sign and you look left for oncoming traffic, you cannot see oncoming traffic until it's almost there because of the property owner on the South East corner. Large hedges and trees that block your view. What motorists do is they violate the law by moving up across the line, through the crosswalk so that they can see, and when kids are coming to school, that's a real problem because they don't pay proper regard to the right of way that the students are supposed to have. It's not a problem in the opposite corner because that homeowner actually removed the trees that were blocking the intersection. So I think that needs to be addressed. It certainly isn't part of this study, but I don't know if that's what the vegetation was meant to reference or not.

Director Joyce Braverman:

That's from the 2011 study. And that is exactly what it's talking about, North of city hall at some of the intersecting streets with Lee Road, some of the homeowners have overgrown shrubs.

Chair Roeder:

Thank you Mr. Strang, Mrs. Moore, I believe I saw your hand.

Council Member Moore:

I just wanted to comment from a historical perspective. Going back to when we were assembling the grants and the money for the Warrensville, Chagrin, Northfield intersection changes, I was absolutely floored by how the whole project came together in terms of the Planning Department's assembling a totality of grants. I just wanted to say again to everyone that while we set a strategic goal, we, the City, to redevelop the Lee Road corridor, we've done bits and pieces sort of, as things have basically broken. For instance there was a resurfacing, a road resurfacing grant at one point, and then there was some planning being done. And so what excites me so much about this beginning initiative is that we're really approaching it in the same way that we did Warrensville, Chagrin and Northfield.

It's obviously going to be a multi-year project at least five years in the making and multiple areas of possible grant funding are being investigated. So this is the first time I really feel that we have a track record of success and we demonstrated the ability, through the VAD development specifically, beginning with the intersection. And now we're doing the same thing with the Lee Road corridor. And I just have such respect for the Planning Department's process here that I just want to say having a goal to create a visionary transportation and reinvestment plan for this area is so important for not just the Moreland Rising initiative and the neighborhood revitalization that that involves, but being a member of the Sussex community and seeing what VAD has done for the revitalization of our housing.

I think that what we used to call the S.W.I.T.A. portion of Lomond is going to be impacted in the same positive way. Anchoring our southern border is so important and that we go at this in a step-by-step fashion is very encouraging. So again, kudos to Planning for beginning this process, and for those that weren't there at every step of Warrensville, Chagrin, Northfield and Van Aken, we're doing a very similar process here. I think it's going to be just as successful in a different way.

Director Joyce Braverman:

Thank you Mrs. Moore and we are going to use a similar planning process, that the County has already agreed to pay for, which is another piece of getting state safety funds, another requirement. And we will try to amass the funds that we need to be just as successful and also to do the economic development needs because Van Aken was both a physical road and streetscape piece, but also an economic development project. That's why we're all two departments are working on this very closely,

Mayor David E. Weiss:

Two comments to build on some of the others. Thank you Council Member Moore for the compliments to Planning, we feel the same way. The two comments were really that these projects, for those who have not been involved in sort of major projects like, this take years. We're looking at funding sources and possible grant applications looking two, three, four years down the road, because frankly it's the only way to get these projects done. We start in small pieces and try to set ourselves up and put ourselves in the best position to be successful years from now. You look back and you wonder, how did we get this great point in a project?

It came with years of advanced planning and we're now seeing that front end, even though we've done a lot of work already to date, we're doing more. And then secondly, we've have lots of conversations with the community with Council about the importance of the work and the investment that we've made in the two adjoining neighborhoods, Moreland and Lomond, and the importance of having a commercial district that is complimentary and enhances those neighborhoods. A lot of what we're doing on the economic development front is also laying the groundwork for having vibrant commercial district, which is one of our goals, citywide goals, but in a way that enhances the neighborhood, both the connection as well as the economic impact of it. A big component of it is the neighborhood engagement, and that will be a key part to build on the work that's being done by all kinds of people, Colin Compton, Campbell Lewis, and many others.

Committee Member Whyte:

When will the funding be available? When will they actually inform you whether the grant is funded?

Director Joyce Braverman:

We'll probably know in January, NOACA has a committee process and subcommittee process. It takes about four months for a decision to be announced. So hopefully by January

Committee Member Whyte:

And my other compliment, I think everybody has already said, what I was thinking when I read the information I had a hard time containing myself. I live in Moreland and we can't even envision how it can be, the whole community engagement aspect and five years, six years down the line doesn't feel that long to me because we know that it takes time, but it is heartening again to see the investment in the community. It brings together many of the conversations that we've had in the Moreland area and the relationship that we have with the city.

But even without saying that we need something like this, it's coming together in a way that's just very exciting. I want to thank you all I want to thank you.

Committee Member Strang:

I would like to add that I do think it's a great plan overall, and one of the really exciting aspects of it is you're making Lee road bike accessible, it isn't now. There is no room for a bike on that street, the bike swallows and then bike lanes at other locations will really make that a quarter that bikes and people can use in Shaker connect to other areas. The more we're a bike friendly city, the better,

again, thank you. And I've talked to Director Braverman in the past about it and compliments everybody involved in that.

Council Member Zimmerman:

I think everyone's doing a great job. So there's a compliment. And I guess the question is, what else do we need in addition to this grant if we're successful?

Director Joyce Braverman:

I think getting the plan done and making sure that we have robust neighborhood outreach in a time of COVID is going to be challenging. So we will need everybody helping to round up the forces. And Dr. Whyte, has been involved for a long time and she knows sometimes it takes neighbors to neighbors, making phone calls, knocking on doors, because we will be having to use probably a virtual type of input, which we have done. So once the plan is done, then we are going to need to amass the funds, which will take perhaps all our elected officials to help lobby for money.

Chair Roeder:

I believe Director Braverman is looking for some sort of a vote from this Committee to show its feelings on this matter before it gets forwarded to the Council. I would entertain a motion to approve this if that's the mind of the Committee; Moved by Mr. Strang, seconded by Ms. Williams. All those in favor. Aye. Thank you. Any abstentions? Motion carries and with that, that also closes out our business on this meeting. So thank you all for your time tonight. We'll give you the next half an hour back. Have a wonderful evening.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Council Member Tres Roeder, Chair  
Neighborhood Revitalization and Development Committee