

MINUTES

MIDLAND EXPRESSWAY/FOUNTAIN CREEK CORRIDOR

JANUARY 31, 1986

Present: Ronald E. Richards, Colorado Department of Highways
Albert Robino, Colorado Department of Highways
Steve Carlson, Colorado Department of Highways
Gene Fuhlroat, Colorado Springs Park and Recreation Department
Mike Ament, Southridge Corporation
Lewis Lambert, Concerned Westside Neighbors
Connie Schmitz, Concerned Westside Neighbors
Gilbert DiVelez, Concerned Westside Neighbors

Mr. Richards, Maintenance Superintendent, started the meeting by discussing the Colorado Department of Highways funding standpoint and where our dollars are directed. Mr. John Herzog, State Representative, had contacted Mr. Richards for Colorado Department of Highways assistance and we will participate as we can.

The following problem areas were addressed by the Concerned Westside Neighbors:

Mr. Lewis Lambert asked for right-of-way boundaries.
Ms. Connie Schmitz asked if we owned the interchanges.
Mr. Gilbert DiVelez discussed his knowledge of funding from the City Park and Recreation Department which could possibly come from lottery funds.

Mr. DiVelez shared an aerial photo of the corridor and discussed City planning thoughts on landscaping:

- A. Bike paths
- B. Widening of the medians
- C. Adding a westbound lane to the north to incorporate median widening
- D. Rest areas (2 each)
- E. Adjoining existing parks between 21st and 31st

Mr. Richards discussed the 2001 plan and stated that no work has been planned in this time span for the interchange of I-25 and SH 24, or widening.

Mr. Gilbert DiVelez requested assistance in finding persons who they can lobby with to get action or help in this proposal.

Mr. Richards explained that monies are budgeted and directed in different ways and maintenance monies are not adequate or budgeted for construction. He also explained the safety requirements which would eliminate any proposal for landscaping in median areas, and addressed the control access using Academy Boulevard with no control as an example.

Mr. Richards closed the meeting by explaining that we need to involve other people in this project to include City, County and the group that is present. He advised everyone that we are interested in participating, but to what extent is yet to be determined.

Mr. Richards will send copies of the following to Mr. DiVelez:

- 2001 Plan
- Roadside Advertising Rules and Regulations
- President Johnson's wife came through Colorado Springs in 1964 to the best of our recollection.

Mr. Bill Vidal and Mr. Ray Brown will be requested to attend the next meeting.



CONCERNED WESTSIDE NEIGHBORS

January 24, 1986

RE: Meeting of January 6, 1986, Midland Expressway/Fountain Creek Corridor Clean Up and Improvement Campaign

Enclosed please find Mr. DiVelez' opening statement from the above meeting, a summary of the significant discussion, as well as the list of those attending.

We are working on the formation of numerous committees and will be in touch. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call. A transcript of the meeting is available from Inge Barth, West Side Transcription Service, 633-TYPE, for \$15.00.

Sincerely,

CONCERNED WESTSIDE NEIGHBORS

Lewis R. Lambert
1115 West Kiowa Street, 471-1904

Gilbert DiVelez
117 South 10th, 630-1738

Connie Schmitz
1224 West Pikes Peak, 632-2316

ijb

Enclosures

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have all gathered here tonight to support "The Midland Expressway/Fountain Creek Corridor Clean-up and Improvement Campaign." We have invited representatives from neighborhood organizations, and governing bodies from state, county, and local levels. Everyone here I am sure is interested in both environmental and economic impacts on the Westside. While we may come from various sources representing individual objectives and interests we are here as a coalition with a common goal: To clean-up and improve the Midland Expressway/Fountain Creek Corridor by implementing a study and comprehensive plan that was conducted and approved by Community Development via a planning process that involved a high level of participation by various organizations and city representatives at a substantial cost to the taxpayers (\$100,000).

During 1978, citizens and the Planning Department prepared data on existing conditions and citizens' concerns. As a part of the planning process for the Westside Plan, the city staff and consultants consequently developed the most significant concerns of the socio-economic and physical aspects, one of which is the Midland Expressway/Fountain Creek Corridor, which is our key issue. This support document provides a framework for the implementation of this plan with general and specific recommendations which could arouse renewed interests in urban revitalization. We have facts and options due to the extensive time that was devoted to the preparation of this plan. The consulting team which was composed of businessmen, planners, residents, and city staff introduced this plan which has the potential of serving the Westside residents, the greater Colorado Springs area, conventions and meetings visitors, and tourists. The objectives are to upgrade commercial activity on the Westside and to improve the appearance of this corridor while preserving natural and historical features and allowing modern convenience and encouraging new growth. This plan provides a combination of open space and bike trails linked with tourist service areas and/or carefully planned commercial/industrial areas with special attention given to the visual impact along the Midland Expressway, such as avoiding the need for a cement drainage ditch. It also calls for developing a usable linear park along Fountain Creek and where possible, to provide access to adjacent neighborhoods, parks, and trail systems. This would eliminate blighting and unsightly uses of the land such as are now in evidence along the Midland Expressway and to instead provide economic incentives with long-term stability, without destroying the old historical heritage. The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments predicts the population of El Paso County at 550,000 by the year 2000. This corridor is the most under-served in all these terms while remaining the main access into this area. The tourist market potential would induce a variety of service and retail interests, such as motels, restaurants and service stations, as well as the many Pikes Peak attractions. This corridor is the primary route to Manitou Springs and the mountains

and it also has the potential to generate increasing demands for Historic Old Colorado City. We need to improve the visual appearance of this corridor in order to become compatible to the location based on adopted criteria. The study includes concerns for compatible development relative to surrounding uses and will contribute to the character of the Westside. The visual integrity of the Midland Expressway as a major access to the mountains and its cities causes its appearance to be a very strong consideration while capitalizing on existing public investment. This issue contains three topics: Fountain Creek, Highway 24 which is a major access to the city and to the mountains, and a linear park and open space concept. The combination of these factors makes land use a requirement and would be a highly potential asset to the Westside. It would provide economical and social advantages and would accommodate traffic diversion. Commercial development will have a significant impact. If handled correctly, it will play a key role to Westside flexibility in its part of serving Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs, and points west via Ute Pass. It is also a destination route for a large number of people who reside in the area. There are major crossings within this corridor such as the interchange at I-25 and it is the **ONLY** route in the area to the mountains to the west. The state highway department has spent considerable time investigating alterations and solutions, and both the city and state recognize the problems of this high traffic area. We, the residents, feel that it has been a long enough time with a great deal of consideration taken into account and that the time has come to recommend that efforts be made to get this project under way and that it be instated on the highway department's program for execution.

Thank you very much.

Concerned Westside Neighbors

SUMMARY OF CONCERNED WESTSIDE NEIGHBORS MEETING OF MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1986
FOR THE MIDLAND EXPRESSWAY/FOUNTAIN CREEK CORRIDOR
CLEAN UP AND IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN

This meeting was organized by Concerned Westside Neighbors to generate input, support, and enthusiasm for this large project. Mr. John Herzog, State Representative; Ms. Marcy Morrison, County Commissioner; Mr. Leon Young, Vice-Mayor and Councilman for District #3; and Mr. Dan Stuart, Mayor of Manitou Springs were invited to help with their specialized knowledge of city, county, and state procedures. See the attached list for others who were present at this meeting.

During the meeting the following problems were identified as necessary for the clean up and improvement of the Midland corridor (Highway 24) and Fountain Creek areas:

1. Improvement of the overall shoddy and disappointing appearance of this major avenue to the mountains.
2. Improving the blighted look of junkyards that have no visual screening from the highway (trees or fences).
3. Concern for the preservation of historic Fountain Creek with the establishment of a linear park and the promotion of the public's use of the creek in some areas with bike and pedestrian paths or views from commercial establishments open to the public.
4. The distraction of billboards on this gateway to Pikes Peak.
5. The unkempt appearance of state highway right of ways and the creek-bed because of much trash and junk; some from vehicles going to the dump on 26th street.
6. The erosion of foothill sites , arsenic from Gold Hill Mesa.
7. The danger of flooding in developments in the flood plain along Fountain Creek.
8. The need to upgrade agress and egress at 8th, 21st, and 26th streets.
9. Need for attention to grade separations at major interchanges of Highway 24 within the Westside.
10. The need to enforce zoning regulations along Highway 24.

The following suggestions were made:

Since this project involves city, county, and state land, jurisdictions must be clarified. Committees must be assigned to deal with each jurisdiction and then report to the full committee.

Mr. Lewis Lambert stated that Concerned Westside Neighbors would be forming these committees and is committed to pursuing solutions.

Mr. Herzog explained how the state Highway Department operates and funds projects. The county, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and the Highway Advisory Commission need to have our project explained to find out if it qualifies for federal funds. Then, the project has to get on the priority list (this can take up to 15 years!!). Also, the county and city may have funds for clean up along Highway 24. He also explained that all maintenance of state highways comes from the 5-cent gas tax increase of 1985.

A discussion of the possibility of having sound barrier fencing along highway 24 similar to that going up along Interstate 25 from Bijou to Fillmore revealed that it would not be appropriate since the Highway 24 area is commercial and not residential. Sound barrier fencing is a federal requirement for highways put through residential areas. The cost is approximately \$1,000,000 per mile. What is wanted is visual screening for unsightly commercial operations.

Mr. Dan Stuart, Mayor of Manitou Springs and past Chairman of the Urban Area Policy Committee stated that the "real problem is funding and the challenge here is to identify what kind of funding we're talking about, and what needs funding and what can be done through cooperative effort." Mr. Stuart also stated that one way to deal with Highway 24 funding is through the annual update process. He suggested that Concerned Westside Neighbors try to get a favorable reception to the project and it might then become part of the five-year plan of the Urban Area Policy Committee.

Mr. Herzog suggested contacting Mr. Joe Shoemaker through the Mayor's office in Denver. He was past Chairman of the Joint Budget Committee, who got approval from the City of Denver to work on improving the junky appearance of Cherry Creek. he used private organizations and had some grant money. This is now a beautiful waterway. it is landscaped almost the entire length of the city. The local and private sectors were the initiative here.

Vice-Mayor Leon Young stated that if any businesses along Highway 24 were operating illegally, the city, through Code Enforcement and Zoning, could take the proper steps to enforce zoning ordinances.

Mr. Herzog suggested a meeting of property owners to try to get cooperation to beautify the area after the costs have been explored. This might lead to the formation of an improvement district.

Ms. Marcy Morrison suggested that the Highway Department might be able to clean up trash along the expressway. Mr. Herzog is carrying a Bill this year to increase fines for trash along highways. The fine has been

\$5 since 1963. These low fines possibly are a reason police have not cited offenders in the past.

Mr. Herzog also suggested looking into the use of public work requirements, for DIUs, to have some clean up work done. The courts can put people to work for any agencies that request them. It could be done by Concerned Westside Neighbors getting agency status or possibly through the Park and Recreation Department.

Mr. Jim Bates, Community Development of Colorado Springs, suggested that the 501(c)(3) (non-profit corporation status) will give Concerned Westside Neighbors agency status.

Mr. Terry Allen of Neighborhood Housing Services offered his help with finding grant money and help with the 501(c)(3). He suggested that the Colorado Springs Community Trust and the Springs Beautiful Committee might have money. Foundations, such as El Pomar, could also be approached; however, grant funds would not be sufficient for capital improvements.

Ms. Debra Little of the City Planning Department of Colorado Springs explained much of the procedure for zoning complaints. Usually citizens must make complaints or nothing will happen. The city will not look for violations; however at the direction of the City Council, Planning can go to an area with a team from Code Enforcement. She also suggested that Concerned Westside Neighbors could get maps and note violations. She offered to help the members of this committee educate themselves as to what to look for. This work could be submitted as a package to help speed things through the system. This is similar to the way the Organization of Westside Neighbors Land Use Committee is working with their revision of the Midland Area Plan, south of Highway 24.

Mr. Leon Young stated, "Your office just got busy!!"

Mr. Gene Fuhlroat, landscape architect with the City of Colorado Springs Park and Recreation Department, advised that Concerned Westside Neighbors come up with a physical plan and map it, identifying the problems and come up with solutions and cost estimates (this could be in the millions). Then, if the City departments that have responsibilities in planning these things want to get something going, then certainly the Park Department could contribute in three different ways. One would be the multi-use trails, bikeways, and off-street trails that are planned for the fountain Creek corridor. Another way would be enlarging or expanding both Vermijo and Blunt Parks which would then link them together and from then on, you've already got two parks of this linear park established. Another thing that his department worked on last summer was a review of all of the medians within the streets. This expanded into a study which has not been reviewed yet. It is called street scapes. Park and Rec is now looking at a whole network of streets through the city figuring out what is needed, what we can afford, where should new medians go. In the process, we identified that of the corridors leading into the city, the four major ones, three are pretty bad looking -- and one is Highway 24.

Mr. Gilbert DiVelez suggested the use of state lottery funds for this project. In discussion, it was brought out that Concerned Westside

Neighbors would have to have a detailed plan with numbers. The project would have to be identified as to scope.

Mr. Bob Patoni, the Westside Representative of Community Development, suggested looking into the recent development of 17 miles of hiking and bike trails along the South Platte River funded with state lottery money.

Ms. Morrison impressed that for the county, presentations must be ready by June since the county process starts in July. The Park Department needs to have all material to the Budget Officer by July. She also suggested Concerned Westside Neighbors find out who funds Parks -- the state, county, and (should this be 'or') city -- and establish a different committee for each.

Mr. Herzog suggested having Frank Sele, the District Engineer for this part of the state, come to talk. We could show him what is wanted, see what is feasible. Then, he can make recommendations to his bosses and the Commissioners. Regarding the mowing, that's the Highway Department. They then go to the legislature and say we need money for this. Mr. Herzog stated that his job is to make sure that our project is heard and eventually funded. "Come up with a plan, put it together and obviously I will help you set up meetings if necessary with the proper people."

Ms. Morrison said that she could be most helpful in setting up meetings. She suggested talking to Grant Johnson of PPACG, who is the head of the transportation area and knows road systems, highway systems, and how to apply for grants. He knows where the funding is coming from and the priority system.

Mr. Bates of Community Development stated some things can be done right away, such as the clean up using Code Enforcement and Zoning. Concerned Westside Neighbors has been involved in certain aspects of this on Eighth Street. Fences have come down and Code Enforcement has been trying to get them back up. Another committee could work with the professionals on the further development of the plans that Park and Rec has -- certainly the median and street scape plans. Perhaps we can get the state excited about that as being the #1 street scape and we'll concentrate on that. Then, there seems to be a need for the government officials to get together city, county, state, and Manitou Springs. We could move on three or four fronts at the same time. I'm happy to see the community get involved with this -- the implementation of the Westside Plan. We have not given much attention to this area since efforts have been focused on other areas, but we are happy that it shifts into this area where there is citizen support and support we hope from the county and state and other agencies. It is important to all of us as we drive up Ute Pass to enjoy a more scenic view -- and a lot of people think of 24 and it doesn't stack up with what we claim the city is.

ATTENDANCE LIST OF JANUARY 6, 1986 MEETING

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Ken Richards	C.D.O.H.	905 Elm Pueblo	544-6286
Albert Robino	C.D.O.H.	2025 Commercial Blvd.	576-1868
Connie Schmitz	C.W.N.	1224 W. Pikes Peak	632-2316
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MIKE AMENT		3614 W. HIGH ST.	633-4779
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