

**Minutes**  
**Saugatuck Steering Committee**  
**Transit Oriented Development (SSCTOD)**  
**Master Plan**  
**Special Meeting**

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Town Hall Room 201/201A – 8:00 AM

*Note: The audio of the entire meeting was recorded and can be made available by request.*

Subcommittee members in attendance: Co-Chair Craig Schiavone, Co-Chair Mary Young, Matt Mandell, Ian Warburg, Peter Gold, Bob Iannacone, Rick Giunta, Ward French, Cathy Walsh, Marty Fox, Sam Levenson, Mike Mahoney, Eileen Berenyi.

Ex-Officio Committee Members in attendance: Carol Leahy, Sam Arciola, Alicia Mozian, Katherine Daniel, and Steve Edwards.

Members of the Consulting Team Seth Shapiro and Mark Evans.

Members of the public were also present.

Meeting Opened 8:00 a.m. Mary Young gave an introduction reviewing the objectives of the grant, summarizing the purpose of today's meeting and turned the floor over to Seth Shapiro.

Seth Shapiro reviewed the purpose of the project and project time line. Prior discussion emphasized proposed public realm improvements and foreshadowed the private realm improvements to be discussed today. The plan could be characterized as a visioning plan that will be accompanied by a regulatory framework to allow the vision to be realized.

Seth began by reviewing and asking for reaffirmation of the design principles, as these principles are the basis of Barton's design. The memo regarding the Public Realm Improvement Plan was revised to reflect a clearer understanding of the public realm improvements that can be accomplished. Among the changes was the removal of a proposed traffic circle at Riverside Avenue, Treadwell Avenue and Saugatuck Avenue due to lack of surety that it would work for pedestrians. Other "rules" Barton is using to develop suggested designs are that no buildings should be taller than 2 & 1/2 stories, no parking garages were desirable, but maybe a parking deck (1 story/2 levels) could serve the perceived purpose of providing sufficient parking for all users. In addition other "rules" were that no building footprint should be larger than 20,000 square feet (a footprint double what is currently allowed in Westport).

The remainder of the presentation focused on near-term, mid-term and long-term improvements in the public realm and in the private realm. The near term realm is a 1-3 year period. Public

realm improvements proposed include angled parking and sidewalks on Franklin Street as it passes under I-95. This is a project that is already among the projects being managed through the Police Department. Franklin Street from the train station to Charles Street would become two-way traffic where it is currently one-way traffic. A suggestion to prohibit left turns from westbound Charles Street onto Franklin Street was well received. Near-term improvements to Strofolino Park include realignment of the Charles Street and Park Street intersection. Near term improvements in the station area include the addition of angled parking spaces along Riverside Avenue, angled parking along Ferry Ln and a drop-off round about at the intersection of Riverside, Ferry Ln and Railroad Place. There was discussion about when parking along Riverside Avenue and Ferry Ln should be permitted in order not to exacerbate the traffic of homebound commuters in the evening.

Near-term public realm improvements are envisioned to occur along the northern portion of Riverside Avenue to include a planting strip and sidewalk along with parallel parking on one side. Other mid-term public realm improvements include creation of a gateway near the Cribari Bridge to consist of a small park, cross walks and sidewalk for better pedestrian access. By realigning Charles Street and Park Street, some area is gained that could allow a small market near the western gateway.

This small market is among the near-term private realm improvements presented. Near-term private realm improvements in the Railroad Place block could include redevelopment of the portions of that block that do not directly front on Railroad Place. The historic structures along Railroad Place would remain unchanged. This redevelopment might include two levels of subsurface or hidden parking without sacrificing commercial vitality at the street. This parking area might be topped with a plaza at the center of the block. The design included a small plaza at Charles Street and Riverside Avenue. Environmental issues in this block might affect the time frame for this redevelopment.

The near-term private realm improvements also include redevelopment of the former button factory/Post Office site on Riverside Avenue and Ferry Lane for residential uses and subsurface parking. The Parker House site north of the Cribari Bridge might provide pedestrian walkway from a small park by the Cribari Bridge to the existing Rowing Club water front access way.

Mid-term public realm projects presented include what was termed "Ferry Lane Landing" allowing a way to connect people to the river and to provide pedestrian access to south side of the train station and the Ferry Lane parking lot (Lot 3). Ferry Lane itself would be re-established as a street with landscaping and pedestrian access. A portion of the street might include back-in angled parking. At the north end of Lot 3 a parking deck with two levels created in a single story structure would provide additional commuter parking adjacent to the station. The concept plan includes improved access to the train station providing a safer method of reaching the station than walking under the railroad overpass along Saugatuck Ave. Saugatuck Avenue itself does not have the right of way width to provide many pedestrian or bicycle amenities. The concept plan shows enhancements with street trees and lighting. Other public realm improvements include sidewalks, street trees and parallel parking on one side of Franklin Street.

Mid-term private realm improvements might include relocating what is now Rizzuto's, a signature restaurant closer to the street and relocating the Victorian house closer to the street. The existing approval for a mixed-use development on Ketchum Street was imported to the concept plan as proposed.

A public private partnership is envisioned for long-term improvement to the gateway from I-95. The consultants presented a concept for an additional parking deck that takes advantage of the grade change of a portion of the existing Lot 1. The deck might be wrapped with buildings to remove the appearance of parking at the entrance to Saugatuck.

The total amount of housing shown for all phases includes 150-190 dwellings (100-130 dwellings for the short and mid-term) and 20,000 – 24,000 square feet of non-residential space. This represents about 20% of the predicted market absorption. 4ward Planning's Todd Poole had estimated that the market might allow absorption of 300-360 residential units in Saugatuck.

The elements of a proposed Early Action Plan would include the improvements around the Railroad Place/Franklin/Charles St/Riverside Ave block particularly in connection with the private realm improvements envisioned there.

The Parking Strategy folded into this plan allows the consolidation of permit parking closer to the station, re-designation of daily and hourly spaces. The plan would add about 42 daily use spaces, 38 permit spaces and 50 hourly spaces..

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM

Next SSC meeting: October 4, 2017 at 8:00 am