POND-GROVER LOOP ROAD COMMITTEE

Record of Proceedings
City Hall Community Room - 16860 Main Street
Tuesday, May 24, 2016
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

I. Welcome to Group Members and Opening Comments by Chair Baugus

Chair Baugus called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. A roll call of members was conducted, with the following members in attendance: Christy Pitney, Paul Pohlers, Ed Marshall (Council Member Ward 2), Joe Garritano (Council Member Ward 8) – arrived at 8:50 p.m., Jim Baugus (Council Member Ward 3), and Mayor Bowlin. Committee Member Sinden was absent.

Other City Officials present: Debra Smith McCutchen (Council Member Ward 5) and Dave Bertolino (Council Member Ward 5).

Staff Members present: Director of Public Works Rick Brown, Director of Planning and Parks Joe Vujnich, and Assistant Director of Planning and Parks Kathy Arnett.

II. Approval of Minutes from the May 10, 2016 Meeting

A motion was made by Council Member Marshall, seconded by Committee Member Pitney, to approve the minutes from the May 10, 2016 meeting.

A voice vote was then taken on the motion and, with a unanimous affirmative result, it was declared approved and the minutes passed.

III. Discussion of Topics and Consideration of Information by the Committee

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich noted two (2) items were included in the packet that are not for discussion on the agenda, but were requests from previous meetings. Given the importance of the traffic study, the Department wants to ensure ample time is available. These items will be on the agenda for the June meeting.

a. Discussion on Traffic Analysis by City of Wildwood/Lochmueller Group

Director of Public Works Brown introduced Dustin Riechmann of Lochmueller Group, who was retained to determine the outcomes of the Pond-Grover Loop Road (PGL) being extended. Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich noted that staff recognizes the study was delivered late, but there will be no action this evening, and both Departments thought the presentation is necessary for a basic level of understanding and a more in-depth discussion could be held at the June meeting. Both Directors noted the document is still a draft.

Dustin Riechmann, of Lochmueller Group, provided a presentation on the traffic study. He began with an overview of his experience and the purpose of the study, which is to forecast the likely use of Pond-Grover Loop Road, if its connection is provided between its current terminus at Green Pines Drive and the Villages at Bright Leaf Subdivision (VBL), as well as to assess traffic diversions and impacts. He then reviewed the data collection that was completed, as part of the study, noting the following: robust set of data, with traffic counts at seven (7) locations, daily traffic counts at six (6) locations, origin-destination study using license plate tracking at eight (8) locations, and pedestrian observations. Mr. Riechmann then reviewed the study area's roadways and intersections. He noted the study, which was completed in conjunction with the Villages at Bright Leaf rezoning process, focused on that development's impacts, and the data provided only included daily traffic counts. This study is more comprehensive and most of its traffic counts, with the exception of Westglen Farms Drive, were fairly comparable. Origin-destination pair methodology was completed using license plates to identify how drivers are using the streets now. He then outlined the expected traffic diversions, which accounted for a small amount (two (2) to five (5) cars within peak times) of use of these streets to avoid State Route 109 and State Route 100. He then noted the biggest diversion would be from Green Pines Drive. He then showed several slides illustrating the projected daily traffic diversions, if the road is extended, and where traffic is expected to lessen due to the new option. The expectation, if extended, is for an average of two (2) to four (4) vehicles per minute on the Pond-Grover Loop Road. The roadway would be an Urban Minor Collector (UMC), with low-end volume. In Lochmueller's opinion, the roadway will function more as a 'residential collector' than an urban minor collector, even though the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) classification is UMC. He then reviewed design recommendations for if the road is connected, including one (1) driving lane in each direction, with traffic calming measures, and the integratation of multi-modal options. Pedestiran activity was reviewed and a calming treatment would be necessary, with extra precautions at Green Pines Drive, with either a roundabout or a two-stage crossing.

Discussion was then held among the Committee Members and included the following: the background provided to the engineer about the road, including the VBL plans, the history of the roadway, and the platted road location; if Professional Engineers were in the field during the traffic study – yes, three (3); the standard timeframe of traffic studies and if one (1) day is typical – yes, can get an accurate assessment in that timeframe, plus had VBL counts that were at a different time; the weather during the day of the study (wind chill and cold in morning, but sunny, with 20 minutes of rain in afternoon, but nice after for several hours) – the consultant returned on another day, with better weather, for additional pedestrian study and nothing made them suspect study data was inaccurate; the question if Exhibit 6 numbers included VBL – yes, and report includes narrative without VBL; do the numbers on PGL include traffic from State Route 109 – yes, but there won't be much volume from State Route 109 to use it as a cut-through, given travel time is twice as long to cut through streets vs. staying on main roadways; Mr. Riechmann's professional opinion that PGL will not be used as a cut through from State Routes 109 to 100 and vice-versa, if design includes traffic calming measures; the top advantages for extending PGL – 1. Reduction in traffic on other neighborhood streets that are not designed as neighborhood collectors, by providing multiple points of access. 2. Only one (1) signalized access point to State Route 100, with no other options along this limited-access roadway, so making the connection to serve the larger neighborhood, not just VBL.; top negatives to extending PGL – 1. Introducing traffic to an area that currently has none. No other drawbacks from a traffic perspective.; the definition of a cut-through route - using a road outside of its intended purpose to avoid other available routes; the timing of certain routes, such as traveling Westglen Farms Drive to State Route 109, via State Route 100, takes four (4) minutes and six (6)

minutes, if Forest Leaf Parkway is used; if after consideration of the multiple studies is there anything that is missing that would be helpful – no, cannot see a more comprehensive way to calculate traffic in this area and determine diversions; would the stoplight at Taylor Road and State Route 100 be adjusted for different times of day – north side of intersection would be lighter volume than coming out of Town Center, so light could be adjusted, but that would be completed by the Missouri Department of Transportation.; the scenario of changes to the Evergreen Subdivision – the proposed configuration would not incentivize people to go west to PGL and then go east on State Route 100. This traffic would likely use an alternate route, probably their current route.; the additional observations of pedestrians done around school dismissal. Nothing that seemed unsafe during those studies, as mentioned, care needs to be taken at the intersection of PGL and Green Pines Drive.; the difficulty in quantifying pedestrian flow, since people's feelings of safety can't be considered; and Exhibit 6 representing the net summary of changes in traffic patterns. Trip changes were taken into account, so diversions were calculated for parents coming and leaving Green Pines Elementary School.

IV. Public Comments

Steve Casper, 2502 Forest Leaf Parkway, thanked Dustin and noted there has been a large increase in traffic on his street, since he moved in. He then stated his belief the traffic study shows a decrease in traffic, if the road goes through, and it should be extended for the safety of local children.

Susan Treiber, 15912 Sandalwood Creek Drive, noted her opinion the traffic study is flawed because she didn't see any counting devices or cameras, only clipboards and cones, and the traffic count devices don't count the number of pedestrians; the weather was cold and the traffic counters were in their cars and not paying attention; and when she went by the school there were no pedestrians.

Christine Walker, 16616 Green Pines Drive, states she understands the study shows that traffic will be reduced on Green Pines Drive, but what would happen if road is not extended?

Dave Bertolino, 16712 Hickory Crest Drive, thinks the study ignores Sandalwood Creek Drive and asked if people on Sandalwood Creek Drive would use VBL roads, even without the extension of PGL? He also questioned that, if the road is not completed, would the two (2) proposed access points be sufficient to handle the volume of traffic from VBL?

Betsy Vanderheyden, 16560 Birch Forest Drive, believes what is missing is the number of residents who would be negatively impacted by road construction. Requested show of hands (twelve (12)) people in attendance stated they would be negatively impacted by the construction.

Debra Smith McCutchen, 16548 Birch Forest Drive, stated she thought there were three (3) entry points into VBL. She commented that a number of traffic studies take traffic counts and turning movements on separate days and questioned why this approach wasn't taken with the PGL study. She then posed the following additional questions regarding the traffic study: why the levels of service were not included in the study; why all of the roads included in the perspective were not used; what analysis tools were used; what method was used to collect counts; what is a destination route; what types of trips were included in the study; what has been the accuracy rate of past traffic studies by Lochmueller Group; why other studies show street connectivity increases trips, but this study says different; why Thunderhead Canyon

was excluded from the study area; and why the report implied that local residents wouldn't use the street they live on.

Gary Schroeder, 16642 Evergreen Forest Drive, asked the following questions regarding the traffic study: On page 3, in the third (3rd) paragraph, is this statement implying that people would increase their visits to the Town Center Area, if PGL is extended; On page 4, in the bottom paragraph, states there were not pedestrian issues in this location, but a traffic calming device was added on Forest Leaf Parkway, so there must be an issue. He also stated his concerns that, if there are two (2) to four (4) cars per minute on the new PGL, it will be difficult for pedestrians to cross the street and, if Forest Leaf Parkway and other roads in the area are considered Urban Minor Collectors, they should be fine without the road because their counts are low for a UMC.

Denny Welker, 16903 Westridge Oaks Drive, stated he is a Professional Engineer and familiar with these types of studies. He noted his support of the methodology used, and has no problems with this study. He stated his hope was the City is not debating if PGL should be extended, since it has been in the Master Plan since 1996 and is in current Master Plan. He doesn't understand why a government agency with 20+ years of planning around a connection with too much traffic going through a residential area, where it wasn't intended, wouldn't carry forward with the plan, which is logical and has been in place for so long.

Dennis Handley, 2525 Rain Forest Drive, stated he has been looking at Exhibit 6 that shows a reduction of four hundred (400) trips, but doesn't understand how that is possible, since the road extension would add 2600 cars to bottom of that area that will dump traffic into those neighborhoods. He noted he was opposed to the 1990 study done by St. Louis County, which planned the road, and he has concerns with the volume of traffic that would be added if the road is extended. He also noted the proposed road location is too close to a property owner's swingset.

Jane Finnegan, 2517 Rain Forest Drive, will back to new road and has questions on how many new families in VBL are expected to attend Green Pines Elementary, Lafayette High School, etc., and were those numbers considered in the traffic study? She asked why it wasn't included in the study that Lafayette High School students will exit at Clayton Road and State Route 109 and use the PGL extension to go to Dierbergs. She noted she has been opposed to the road for a very long time and believes it does not need to go through, but her neighborhood doesn't have money for attorneys to prevent this road from being installed, unlike the Lafayette Trails Subdivision. She also requested a noise and light study from the impacts of this road on existing residents in the area. Finally, she noted that kids won't walk to school in the rain and they won't be able to ride their bicycles to neighbors, if the road is constructed.

Shirley Roberts, 16016 Sandalwood Creek Drive, noted she is located in the southeast corner of the Sandalwood Creek Subdivision and the road will remove all of the trees behind her home. The road will be nice, but it's not okay because it will be behind her house. She noted that it is great to relieve traffic on other roads and understands why those people support it, but she is not in favor of the road extension and thinks it is unnecessary. She also noted that Westridge Oaks Drive will not be effected by this decision and that resident should not have been at this meeting, nor had a comment.

John Gragnani, 1510 Scofield Valley Lane, noted he is not affected by road, but why was City founded? Wasn't it due to prevent intrusions from things they don't want? Would any of us buy a home that backs to this road?

Ray Manton, Council Member Ward 2, submitted a written set of questions, which have been attached to these minutes and made a part of the record.

Responses to questions posed during public comment were provided by Mr. Riechmann, as follows:

- Relative to the methodology used in the study – counters can be in cars during study and need to stay safe and unobtrusive to traffic flow; there were eleven (11) people in the field counting; and he has no concerns with the methodology used. The traffic counter machine does include pedestrian counters, all people are trained and it is not a difficult exercise. All methodology used acceptable engineering practices.
- Traffic forecast, if PGL does not get extended, would be maintaining the status quo, but there would be an increase in traffic because of VBL.
- Capacity of VBL was contemplated as part of CBB Traffic Study.
- The proposed access points for VBL would be sufficient, if PGL is not extended.
- Road construction impacts were not considered as part of the traffic study.
- Several factors to why the traffic counters were in the field for only one (1) day: variabilities for location, but within a neighborhood the traffic patterns are typical; had historical data from VBL study; did additional pedestrian study on second day; more cost efficient; and had traffic counts completed by the City in addition to the field work undertaken on the one (1) day. He believes the amount of data collected was statistically relevant.
- Levels of service are necessary in a traffic impact study (like VBL study), but this study was about who would use the roadway vs. other roadways. The levels of service could be calculated, but likely every intersection within the neighborhood is at a level of A or B for capacity, but context is irrelevant for this type of study.
- Daily counts and technology used. City provided twenty-four (24) hour counts that Lochmueller Group utilized. The City uses radar, which is more recent technology than the cables on the road. Two (2) separate units were used and counted six (6) locations over a total of twenty-four (24) hour counts for a week. That data was provided in advance of the 1-day count.
- Several trips relative to mixed use or commercial uses, such as pass-by trips and common trips, which are not applicable in this type of area, were not used in the study.
- Accuracy rate on past studies are generally completed on new development for traffic impact studies and easily calculated. Lochmueller Group doesn't normally do post-follow up studies, given they are not funded by the hiring firm. The best measure is agencies who are repeat customers, which they get often.
- He believes a reasonable study area was used to examine issue, and Thunderhead Canyon is outside of the directly applicable area.
- The traffic study was not stating that new trips would be generated by this road extension, but that some drivers heading to the Town Center Area, from north of State Route 100, may use PGL.
- The street design in the neighborhoods is what led to traffic calming measures, not pedestrian issues.
- The neighborhood streets in this area are considered local, not collectors, because of their design and direct driveway access. This situation is very different from the classification of PGL, which has no direct driveway access.
- The PGL connection is not critical to VBL.
- Connection would decrease traffic counts in front of Green Pines Elementary School.
- Numbers on PGL reflect VBL. Without VBL road construction would anticipate 1000 trips per day on PGL. VBL adds another three hundred sixty plus (360+) trips a day.

- The traffic intersection at State Route 100, was not part of traffic study. The timing of the light cycle at the interchange is established by Missouri Department of Transportation.
- VBL trips to all schools are accounted for in the traffic study.
- Sound and light studies area not part of this traffic study.
- On the day the field work was conducted, as part of this traffic study, there was light rain for a brief period of time, and thunderstorms in the region, but not in Wildwood. Additional traffic counts had already been completed. The amount of rain that day would not have impacted people's routes, but would have effected pedestrians, which is why they did additional pedestrian analysis on another day.
- The methodology used in the license plates analysis was to record the last three (3) digits of as many cars as possible at every point. Then the data was entered into a spreadsheet, where a macro was used to calculate the information and additional manual calculation was also utilized, as well. It is easy to pick up license plates in a neighborhood scenario with 4-way stops.

Other comments from Committee:

- PGL has been identified since original Master Plan in 1996.
- Residents of the Sandalwood Creek Subdivision are concerned with the difficulty in accessing State Route 109 now and that this circumstance may increase when additional homes are added in VBL, if no alternate route is provided.
- The calculation of trip reduction on the adjacent neighborhood streets shows a reduction in trips between 9% and 36%, with an average reduction of 19%. Is that an alleviation and an accurate benefit? Mr. Riechmann noted that a 9% to 36% change would be noticeable and significant for the people on those streets.
- Is there a national average on accident counts versus areas with direct access vs. not?

V. Next Meeting Date of the Committee – Tuesday, June 28, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Next meeting will address answers to questions posed this evening. Have explanations of sale information chart, green space map, and information on street extensions/non-extensions.

VI. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Marshall, seconded by Committee Member Pohlers, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken, with no opposition, whereupon Chair Baugus declared the motion approved and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

KATHY

Questions submitted by Ray Manton

Wildwood ward 2 council member

17700 Birch Leaf Ct. 63005

1. WOULD THE TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENT IN THE STUDY AREA BE IMPROVED OR ENHANCED WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE PGL AND BIRCH FOREST DRIVE CONNECTIONS?
2. WOULD THE EXTENSION OF THE PGL AND BIRCH FOREST DRIVE CONNECTIONS IMPROVE OR ENHANCE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE STUDY AREA?
3. WOULD THE EFFECTIVNESS AND EFFICIENCY OF FIRST RESPONDERS IN THE STUDY AREA BE INCREASED WITH THE EXTENSIONS?
4. WOULD THE SAFETY OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE STUDY AREA BE ENHANCED?
5. REGARDING PUBLIC SAFETY, IS THERE ANY REASON THAT THE PGL AND BIRCH FOREST DRIVE CONNECTIONS SHOULD NOT BE COMPLETED?