



POND-GROVER LOOP ROAD COMMITTEE

Record of Proceedings

City Hall Community Room – 16860 Main Street

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

I. Welcome to Group Members and Opening Comments by Mayor Woerther and the Departments of Planning and Public Works

Mayor Woerther welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked the Committee Members, and general public, for giving their time to this discussion. He then requested a roll call of attendees, which was completed with the following results:

Pond-Grover Loop Road Committee Members present: Christy Pitney, Paul Pohlers, Debbie Sinden, Ed Marshall (Council Member Ward 2), Joe Garritano (Council Member Ward 8), and Mayor Woerther. Absent: Jim Baugus (Council Member Ward 3)

Other City Officials present: Jim Bowlin (Council Member Ward 6), Debra Smith McCutchen (Council Member Ward 5), and Dave Bertolino (Council Member Ward 5).

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

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

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich introduced the staff members and outlined their roles and expertise for the Committee Members' benefit. He noted the Committee is comprised of seven (7) individuals, including three (3) Council Members, three (3) citizen volunteers, and the Mayor.

He then provided a summary of the packet of background information and highlights of each:

a. Review of Background Materials

- i. Pond-Grover Community Area Study – St. Louis County, MO (1989)
- ii. St. Louis County Highway Systems Plan (1985-1990)

This document was one (1) of a number of area plans completed at that time by St. Louis County. Then County Executive, Gene McNary, authorized the plans to try and forestall incorporations and annexations in unincorporated areas of St. Louis County. After the plans were adopted, however, the County Commission and Council did not adhere to them. The plan included the St. Louis County Highway Systems Plan, as well.

The first mention of the Pond-Grover Loop Road was in this study. The County intended to build the Pond-Grover Loop Road, similar to the Chesterfield Parkway. It would be a 4-lane, bi-directional road that routed traffic around a major commercial node at State Routes 100 and 109, which would include a large indoor shopping mall. Prior to the City's incorporation, a small section of the northeast portion of this roadway was constructed to provide access to a number of residential subdivisions approved and platted by St. Louis County. Additionally, a greater extent of the right-of-way, past its current terminus, was dedicated and graded for a roadbed, but the construction was not complete, since the properties it would serve were not yet developed.

iii. Master Plan of the City of Wildwood - 2006

The City adopted its first Master Plan in 1996. The Plan was amended in 2006 and a second update is nearing completion. The 2006 and 2016 versions do not have significant modifications from the first plan. Each version of the plan directs the City not to follow plans from St. Louis County, especially relative to the Pond-Grover Loop Road, unless specific area plans identify street connections. This language, in the Transportation Element, abandoned the full loop road around the quadrants surrounding the State Route 109 and State Route 100 interchange. However, the Pond-Grover Loop Road is noted as to be connected to State Route 100 in the Town Center Plan, which is adopted as part of the City's Master Plan.

In 1996, the City began creating the Town Center Plan by hiring Andres Duany, a national leader in the New Urbanism movement. Duany's team created a plan with grid streets to create connectivity and community. Due to the City's topography, however, a true grid plan is difficult to achieve. This plan directed the connection of the Pond-Grover Loop Road, from its current terminus, to State Route 100, at Taylor Road.

iv. Town Center Engineering Study for Streets and Road - 1997

An engineering consultant was hired by the City to fact check the Street Network Plan created by Andres Duany's team. This consultant's job was to identify if the grid pattern of streets was achievable. Certain modifications were made by the consultant, mostly due to the topography in the area, and some streets within the plan were modified. The Pond-Grover Loop Road, however, was again shown to connect from its current terminus to State Route 100, at Taylor Road.

v. Town Center Development Manual - 1998

This manual was created to make the new design and architectural requirements, required in the Town Center Area, easier to understand. The Development Manual is a supplement to the Town Center Plan, which again noted the extension of the Pond-Grover Loop Road from its current terminus to State Route 100, at Taylor Road.

vi. Town Center Plan - 2010/2013

A process to update the Town Center Plan was begun before its ten-year anniversary. The City engaged Jonathan Barnett, a nationally recognized urban planner, professor, and Fellow in the American Institute of Certified Planners, to review the plan and its implementation. A committee of citizens, along with Mr. Barnett and several other consultants, participated in this process and

reviewed the plan. At the conclusion of their work, the revised plan was adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 2010 and the City Council in 2013. The plan adopted by both of these entities retained the extension of the Pond-Grover Loop Road from its current terminus to State Route 100, at Taylor Road.

- vii. Record Plats for Hickory Manor and Kingstowne Estates Subdivision, including governing ordinances approved by St. Louis County, MO – 1989-1993

Both of these subdivisions were approved by St. Louis County, prior to the incorporation of the City of Wildwood. These subdivisions border the Pond-Grover Loop Road and their platting processes included the dedication of the Pond-Grover Loop Road along their entire frontage. Accommodations were made with small common ground buffers between perimeter lots and the road itself.

- viii. Letter of Recommendation on Bright Leaf Project and governing ordinance – 2016

The Planning and Zoning Commission's Letter of Recommendation on this subdivision ended in a tie vote. The subdivision was approved by the City Council, but the final determination of the road extension was deferred to a decision by this Committee.

- ix. Traffic Study from Bright Leaf Project – 2015

The petitioner provided a traffic study to project the impact of the Villages at Bright Leaf development on the existing and proposed street network.

- x. Letter of Engagement for New Traffic Study by City of Wildwood – 2016

The City has now engaged its own consultant to conduct a thorough traffic analysis in this area and the impacts of allowing or not allowing, the extension of the Pond-Grover Loop Road.

b. Process and Goals of Committee

The Committee will be exploring three (3) basic questions/goals:

1. To determine if the roadway is needed;
2. If needed, to determine how the roadway should be constructed; and
3. If not needed, what should happen next.

The Committee will make its recommendation, which will be forwarded to the City Council for final action.

c. Meeting Schedule of Committee

A total of four (4) meetings have been set aside for this Committee to complete its work. If additional meetings are necessary, more can be scheduled. The three (3) remaining meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays, on the following dates: May 24, 2016, June 28, 2016, and July 26, 2016.

d. Comments and Questions from Committee Members

Discussion was held among the Committee Members regarding the following: the County plan to limit the heavy commercial traffic from residential streets with the construction of the loop-style roadways; the factors that make a roadway a certain classification, i.e. an arterial versus collector, etc.; the purpose of the City's traffic study; the previous studies done in this area, including speed studies; the desire to tour the site; the traffic calming measures tested by the City in the past; the list of streets included in the new traffic study; and the desire of the Committee to request information from the City's traffic consultant, Lochmueller Group, regarding past studies it has completed and any verification to determine if these items have been accurate.

II. Public Comment

Steve Casper, 2502 Forest Leaf Parkway, noted he wants the road to be extended, so the traffic is dispersed and children will be safer, when playing and walking in the area. He believes Forest Leaf Parkway has to accommodate too much traffic.

Susan Treiber, 15912 Sandalwood Creek Drive, noted her concern about the area where the road would be extended is contaminated, since there is dioxin in the Caulks Creek Watershed, and this property was previously used as an orchard.

III. Next Meeting Date of the Committee

Several questions were posed by Committee Members and the general public, which staff noted they would research and provide responses to at a future meeting. These items/questions were:

- What would the environmental impact, and quality of life impact, be on the entire City, and just this area, if the road is or is not extended.
- Once the Committee makes a recommendation, how does their action meet the five (5) goals of the Master Plan.
- An assessment of a safe and optimal level of traffic on the surrounding streets, not just a count of what exists.
- A list of frequently asked questions that recurred during the Villages at Bright Leaf discussion.
- An assessment by the Lochmueller Group on the impact of the Community Park's access at State Route 109.
- An evaluation of the traffic volumes, current and recommended, at Forest Leaf Parkway and Fullerton Meadows Drive.
- A Phase I environmental assessment from the Villages at Bright Leaf project.
- A description of the functional classifications of roadways.
- A distribution of schools where students from the Villages at Bright Leaf development would attend.

IV. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Marshall, seconded by Committee Member Pohlars, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken, with no opposition, whereupon Mayor Woerther declared the motion approved and the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.