

Project Stakeholders Meeting

DATE: May 28, 2020

MEETING DATE: May 20, 2020

RE: ALBANY TRANSPORTATION CENTER

FROM: AUSTIN WRIGHT

- I **Community Input Meeting**
TurboMeeting Presentation
1:00pm-3:00pm
Presenters: Sharon Subadan, City Manager
David Hamilton, Albany Transit Director
Tennasha Gresham, Superintendent of Operations
Mark Lambert, GDOT
Lester Love, NBA

- Invitees:** **Barry Brooks, Assistant to the City Manager**
Lequrica Gaskins - Downtown Manager
Shelena Hawkins, Director of Community & Economic Development
Paul Forgey, Director of Planning and Development
Kerrie Davis, Transportation Planner
Carolynn Segers, Senior Planner
Thelma Adams Johnson, Chair of Downtown Development Authority
Bárbara Rivera Holmes, President of Albany Chamber of Commerce
Rashelle Beasley, Executive Director of Albany Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tammye Pettyjohn Jones, Office of Congressman Bishop
Patricia Downs, GDOT
George Buchanan, COA Chairperson
Sherrell Byrd, SOWEGA Rising
James B. Pratt, SOWEGA Rising
Dedrick Thomas, SOWEGA Rising
Amna Farooqi, SOWEGA Rising
Michael A. Harper, SOWEGA Rising
Bruce Capps, SAVE THE RITZ! SAVE HARLEM!
David Maschke, Maschke Associates
Orlando Rambo, Destiny Group Inc.
Tommy Gregors, Thronateeska/RiverQuarium Director
Olinda Slaton, #ALBANYMOVEMENT
A.L. Fleming, Albany State University
Darrell Sabbs, Legislative Affairs of Phoebe

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Lisa LaRue-Baker, THPO of United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma

David Proctor, Traditional Cultural Specialist of The Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Omar Salaam

Craig Leake, Greyhound

John Isaacson, First Group

Brian Braun, EMC Engineering Services

Bruce E. Douthit, EMC Engineering Services

Akitee Lewis, NBA

Meredith Beard, NBA

Taylor Kitchens, NBA

Austin Wright, NBA

II Purpose of Meeting:

The purpose of this meeting was to conduct a follow-up to the community outreach meeting that occurred on January 10, 2020 and to share ways community input obtained from that meeting has been integrated into the project in significant and meaningful ways. This meeting was conducted as a "virtual" meeting using TurboMeeting Live Stream due to Shelter in Place orders.

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- 1.01 Lester Love welcomed all attendees. He introduced the presenters: Sharon Subadan, David Hamilton, Tennasha Gresham, Mark Lambert, and himself.
 - 1.02 Sharon Subadan welcomed everyone. She felt good about the input that the community had provided. She mentioned that the design team has taken the feedback and incorporated much of the input into the drawings. While community comments have been incorporated, we are by no means finished. She encouraged the design team to consider new challenges such as social distancing, and how we can prepare the facility for the future. The team did incorporate nice elements of Albany's history giving it a Civil Rights feel. They are certainly honoring Albany's past, and recognizing in particular, the contributions made through the bus movement towards equality and equal treatment of people of color in this country and right here at home. Sharon was looking forward to more input and really hopes the community is satisfied that the team is listening and are responsive to their feedback. She wants everyone to feel heard and understood.
 - 1.03 David Hamilton stated that he was excited that we have come this far. David hoped what the community saw would be satisfactory. He mentioned that they couldn't incorporate all of the community comments but still felt the team had a good design that the community would be satisfied with.
 - 1.04 Tennasha Gresham was grateful we had made it this far and was looking forward to the presentation.

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- 1.05 Mark Lambert welcomed everyone. He understood Albany had been through a lot with COVID-19. He was excited about the project. So far things were moving quite well. He emphasized GDOT was committed, along with FTA, in ensuring that the facility is built with the community feedback in mind but is also compliant with federal regulations and makes good use of tax dollars. We are very excited and hopeful that this project will be a kickoff for future revitalization efforts in Albany and the Historic Harlem District.
- 1.06 Lester Love presented the COMMUNITY INPUT presentation. Included in the presentation was a review of the site, the organization of community comments into a 3-page spreadsheet, the filtering process for comments, and ways community input has been incorporated both inside and outside the Transportation Center (see attached COUMMINTY INPUT presentation).
- 1.07 The meeting was then opened for questions and comments:

The following discussion was via the TurboMeeting “chat box”.

- 2.01 **James Pratt Jr:**
Thank you for the thoughtful integration!
- 2.02 **Bruce Capps:**
Any renderings of the exterior?

Lester Love said we kept this presentation strictly to how we are incorporating community comments. There will be postings periodically on how the project is progressing on the Albany Transit website. We wanted to focus on how we incorporated the community comments on the inside and outside.

- 2.03 **Paul Forgey:**
The lunch counter is a great feature!
- 2.04 **Barry Brooks:**
The spelling is Ms. Quartimon.

Lester Love acknowledged the comment and will correct the spelling in the future.

- 2.05 **Sherrell Byrd:**
Thank you so much for listening to the community. This is an incredible design that reflects the rich history and pride of Harlem. Thank you so much Niles Bolton Associates and the City of Albany Staff.

Lester Love appreciated the comments. He ensured that we took everything to heart from the January meeting. We feel, as Niles Bolton Associates, honored to be working on

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this project. Very few communities have the story to tell that Albany has. We are proud to contribute our small part and honor the brave people who stood up for Civil Rights. We feel confident we have very appropriate and authentic ways to do it.

2.06 Sherrell Byrd:

When will these meetings be open to the public?

Lester Love said the City Manager has suggested that we have a public meeting. It is not scheduled but we would like to put this out to the public in a public forum. That meeting would probably be in a format similar to the City's Commission meetings.

2.07 Bruce Capps:

Can we integrate the computer room and vending area to make it less confining? Although I do notice that in your diagram the computer room is larger.

Lester Love said changes to the room sizes were in response to Bruce's comments on "fake windows" from the January meeting. We took that to heart and had to rearrange some of the spaces to get all active uses on the outside and to maximize the active uses at the window spaces. We believe the rearrangements worked out for the best. We will continue to look at the vending space in regards to making it a little less "confining".

2.08 Bruce Capps:

Good comment about the windows and I like it. Thanks.

2.09 James Pratt Jr:

Will there be integration of Pre-Civil Rights era artwork, pictures, and other "story markers" that illustrate the black history in the area?

Lester said one of the things the design team focused on was to do something that was important and significant - something that was "authentic". Commemorating the lunch counter sit-ins that occurred at the old Trailways Bus Station, which the new station is being built on is very "authentic" to our site. Same with the Ola Mae Quarterman Plaza. Ola Mae's brave stand against segregation occurred on the Albany bus system. Again, very "authentic" to the project. So our approach has been to tell a limited, but highly authentic story that is specific to this project. There are many similar stories to be told in other parts of this history-rich community. It is our hope that this approach might be a catalyst for other developments, like the Ritz Theater, Cultural Center, and others. A "Civil Rights Trail" walking tour could weave these destinations together and be administered by the Albany Civil Rights Institute.

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2.10 Bruce Capps:

Do you need two toilets in the office space?

Lester mentioned that not only do the toilets serve the administrative staff but also the many bus drivers that will be coming through the station.

2.11 Tammye Jones:

Excellent work. If any additional Federal Funding is needed, please include the Office of Congressman Bishop. We are all in to continue supporting this project. Tammye

Lester expressed appreciation and said he will follow up. He hopes that the project could qualify for additional funding for the Ola Mae Plaza and/or the Lunch Counter plaque wall.

2.12 Bruce Capps:

Vending rooms tend to get hot.

Lester acknowledged that we do not want any public spaces to be too crowded. We want the spaces to be comfortable and will continue to investigate this.

2.13 Sherrell Byrd:

What are timelines for construction to begin and for the station to be open to the public?

Lester said construction will begin 1st quarter of 2021 and be complete 1st quarter of 2022.

2.14 Bruce Capps:

This is for David, currently is there a ticketing area? Do we need one now or would automated vending machines make more sense?

Tennasha Gresham said currently, due to transitioning at the current facility, ATS does not have ticket sales; and because we are still progressing through the pandemic, ATS is pulling away from actual ticket sales and fares. We currently have no fare options. Ticket vending machines are something the City is looking at for innovative purposes but as of right now we do not have a definite answer on if that will be an option going forward. So that would be something we would look at through more research regarding costs and make a decision from there.

Lester added that one of the things the design team would like to do is make sure that power and data are placed where we feel the ticket vending machines could possibly be located if the City and ATS decide to incorporate them in the future.

2.15 Sharon Subadan:

I would support vending machines for ticketing

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2.16 **Barry Brooks:**
Lester, Thank you, I need to sign-off for another meeting. Barry Brooks

2.17 **Bruce Capps:**
Do you anticipate a need for lockers - both inside and outside of the building.

Tennasha Gresham said the lockers were one of the comments the City reviewed from the January meeting. From research they have found that lockers from other transportation facilities gave room for drug paraphernalia and drop-off and pickup situations. Illegal substances were being swapped in the lockers. So currently no lockers for those reasons are planned.

Lester Love agreed and mentioned that at one time lockers were a big part of transit stations like Greyhound. But at some point they became problematic and don't see them used anymore.

2.18 **Sharon Subadan:**
I cant support lockers for safety reasons

2.19 **James Pratt Jr :**
I think the emphasis, as mentioned in the last meeting, is that while the civil rights movement era is important, the history of the station and harlem district is more than struggle for rights. Could their be a mural, photos. narratives, and more that capture more than "struggle" and civil rights? Particularly given ML King was one of many figures, many of whom were alban natives?

Lester Love felt there are lots of important stories to be told. The most authentic stories for this site are the ones that deal with transportation and the two that stand out, the lunch counter sit-ins and Ola Mae Quarterman, are such a good fit for this building. But he agreed that all of the stories were important and that there is a place for those stories to be told. Lester felt this approach was something that could be dispersed among developments in the community district buildings and really enrich the neighborhood.

2.20 **Bruce Capps:**
This may be backward looking but do we need a news stand or an area to display tourist brochures or novelties?

Lester Love pointed out that there is a Welcome Kiosk in the main lobby where tourist information will be available. Lester envisioned someone walking up the Trail of Footsteps and coming into the building because they heard about the plaque wall and having the tourist information available for them. There is also a customer service desk where people can ask questions.

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Lester referred to a comment from the January Stakeholder Meeting that we should not really focus everything on the past but to also look at what is happening in Albany right now and even the future. One of the great things about the about the Lobby is as you walk in and look to the right you'll see a powerful lunch counter image that addresses the past. If you look to the left, you see the computer room which shows the future. It creates a dynamic aspect in the Lobby showcasing the old and the new. This encapsulates the intentions of the building, which is expressing both its historic context and the City's embracing of transportation options for its citizens.

Tennasha Gresham asked if having electronic versions of pamphlets would be suitable. Lester believed it was a great idea. It is something that could be coordinated with the Tourism Bureau. Electronic information could be provided or even an interactive touch screen that would allow tourists to receive information in a more exciting way.

Tennasha mentioned that the City Manger would like more electronic forms of information.

2.21 **James Pratt Jr :**
Great explanation, thanks! This helps cover my earlier comment.

2.22 **Bruce Capps:**
Can you comment on energy efficiency, for example on demand hot water tanks?

Lester Love mentioned that the new energy code is extremely stringent. Similar to doing a LEED certified building. The team is looking at all systems to make sure they are efficient. We are also utilizing passive design like the large shade canopy on the south. We are utilizing large areas of glass in the Waiting Lobby to make riders and patrons feel safe, but the shade canopy provides sun protection. We are also required to have air-lock vestibules which all 3 building entrances have. This prevents conditioned air from escaping when the doors are opened.

2.23 **N/A:**
*Thank you for giving the citizens a voice.
I am very encouraged to know our input is being considered.
Praying that everyone stays safe.*

Lester Love thanked the community for providing good comments and their time to support this project. This project has been special for Niles Bolton Associates. This presentation and building design wouldn't have happened without the ideas from the community.

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2.24 **Sherrell Byrd:**

Will this need to be approved by the commission and when will this be presented?

Sharon Subadan said once we have all of the community input, we would bring it in front of the Commission. We would receive feedback from the Commission and will look over finances and other details. The team will also need to keep the community informed as to the Project Schedule. The City Commission will view the project several times before it is finalized. Then the project will go out to bid and the Commission will award it for construction.

2.25 **James Pratt Jr:**

How will local and specifically, underrepresented minority and black contractors and subcontractors be integrated into the process?

Lester Love mentioned that the design team took that seriously and more than doubled the GDOT requirement for participation. The City's procurement department will also have regulations in place for construction of the project.

Sharon Subadan said that because of the federal funding there are requirements we have to go by. We are hoping for local and minority participation.

Mark Lambert said the statewide goal is 10.55% DBE participation.

David Hamilton said that is correct and the City will make sure that the requirement is stated in the construction bid package.

Mark said that the number can be higher and encouraged the community to notify any minority or woman own businesses to pursue becoming a certified DBE with the state to be able to bid on the project.

2.26 **Bruce Capps:**

Lester, you also might want to try to accommodate an ATM.

Lester Love said that was discussed early on and was not included in the program.

Sharon Subadan said they would need a bank to support the ATM and the City would need to work out the legalities of it regarding the risk management of having an ATM.

Lester pointed out that there was a bank next door.

2.27 **Bruce Capps:**

Is the wall between the lobby and the computer room made of glass?

Lester Love said yes. Transparency gives a sense of safety and well being.

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- 2.28 **James Pratt Jr:**
Will there be smoking areas and how will they be connected to the main facilities? The concern is about secondhand smoking.

David Hamilton said there will probably be a designated smoking area outside.

- 2.29 **Sherrell Byrd:**
I like that you have the entire design, including the transportation center, RCC and Ritz Theater as one campus. My hope is that moving forward, we can all collaborate at one table to create a design for all of the buildings where they can compliment each other and set the tone for other building aesthetics in Harlem. We want to build that table with the City.

Lester Love expected that as the revisioning of the RCC and the Ritz Theater progresses, there are certain areas that we'll need to coordinate on. We are moving into a more technical phase of the design in the next few weeks. We would be happy to share thoughts and coordinate in anyway we can. We may be ahead of schedule compared to the other projects happening around The Transportation Center but we'll be glad to help along the way.

- 2.30 **Bruce Capps:**
Lester, would it be possible to also post the original floor plan? And I have a version that is slightly different than the current plan. Is there value in posting the evolution of the interior design?

Lester Love said we can post what we had at the January meeting to compare with the current presentation.

- 2.31 **Sherrell Byrd:**
Thank you Lester and your team for a wonderful design project. We look forward to seeing this come to reality and will do our part to help rally public support behind this effort.

Lester Love appreciated the comment and emphasized how important that would be. The comments received from the January meeting have been taken to heart by the team.

- 2.32 **John Isaacson:**
Any plans for digital bus schedule displays?

Lester Love said we would like back to back monitors in the Waiting Room. It comes down to meeting the project budget. The team may at least put infrastructure in place to help facilitate installation when funding for these items become available in the future. The same applies to displays at the bus canopy.

2.33 **Bruce Capps:**

How about a public board for posting notices, announcements, and events?

Tennasha Gresham said currently as part of the City's and ATS's code of conduct, flyers and handouts are not allowed on public property. All flyers would need city approval first.

2.34 **James Pratt Jr:**

Is there room in the design for the addition of other floors in the future or space for integration of other technologies (e.g., electromagnet trains, trollies etc.)

Lester Love said the building is not anticipated to grow vertically. We are anticipating that we will have room for some reasonable expansion within the footprint that is there now. Possible expansions include the adding of seating in the Waiting Lobby, additional bus slip for future intercity carriers, and the layover bus space for Greyhound.

3.01 **Final Remarks**

Lester Love reiterated that the slides will be put on the Albany Transit website. All presenters gave thanks to the meeting attendees and emphasized the intention to implement all of the community comments that have been integrated into the design.

3.02 **Meeting adjourned**

Attachments:

COMMUNITY INPUT presentation dated May 20, 2020

Albany Stakeholder presentation dated January 10, 2020