



## Porterdale Steering Committee Meeting #3

09-22-2020

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**Attendees:** Josephine Kelly, Mark Beatty, Jon McBrayer, Marty Boyd, Michael Patterson, Phil Bone, Adrienne Moore, Lowell Chambers, Carlos Jon(ze).

Start Time: 9:04 am

### Surveys & Photo Campaign:

- 37 Responses for the Online survey
- Deadline is October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for Photo submissions and the Online Survey

### Overview of Projects:

- Porterdale Depot and Multi-use Path Phase II (\$250,000)
    - Funded by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)
    - Near completion
  - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Sewer Replacement (\$500,000)
    - Expected completion date of October 31, 2020
    - Replacing sewer lines in the Rose Hill neighborhood
  - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Sewer Replacement
    - City was awarded \$1,190,000 in grant funds & \$2,277,000 in loan funds
    - Project is currently under easement acquisition phase
    - Contractor bids are under review
    - Project will replace all sewer lines on the north-side of the Yellow River
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- White Water Overlook Project (project costs undetermined at this time)
    - Can apply for the Water Conservation Fund Grant (Yellow River Park)
    - Mark B. will forward notes to Josephine for LWCF grant opportunity
  - Newton Trails is paving 3 miles in Covington. The goal is to pave as far as Newman/Shady Dale. County will be paving in the unincorporated sections.

### Broadband Internet:

- Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (DCA) reduce number of private sector barriers to install broadband
- Grant funding will eventually be available for broadband initiatives, timeline is yet to be determined

- DCA published a general broadband ordinance that local governments can adopt to help ease the process of letting private companies install broadband in rural areas
- Porterdale City Council to decide if they would like to adopt the model ordinance following the comprehensive plan update
- Adopting the ordinance allows the local governments to be in a prime spot to receive grant funding when it becomes available

#### *Internet Issues:*

- Some residents experience unreliable service with Spectrum internet provider
- Adopting model broadband ordinance could potentially open up the competition for ATT and Spectrum (look at XFINITY to come in).
- Currently there is not a public access point for free WiFi use in Porterdale
  - Potential work item: determine where a good place to offer public free High-speed WiFi
  - City has discussed offering WiFi service in city alley on Broad Street/Hwy-81 or Porterdale Gymnasium
- Lowell Chambers supports the action

#### **Transportation:**

##### *Upcoming Transportation Projects*

- City continuing efforts to resurface roads using annual LMIG funding
- There are no local roadway projects underway or planned aside from annual LMIG-funded resurfacing activities
- GDOT in preliminary discussions with the city on rebuilding the SR-81 Bridge. Lowell Chambers made a few requests on the bridge rebuild for wider sidewalk widths
  - NEGRC offered to participate in meetings with GDOT upon city's request
- SR-81 Corridor Project (no new progress, still in conceptual phase)
  - Discussion of use of golf carts along Washington Street corridor into Covington
  - Likely that golf carts would not be allowed on multi-use paths connecting Porterdale and Covington; speed limit reductions throughout Washington Street from 45-mph to 35-mph would be necessary

##### *Transportation Concerns*

- Mapped out problem areas with sidewalk connectivity
- Good sidewalk connectivity with new housing development should be a major concern in regard to Cedar Shoals development and the further development of the Hwy-81 corridor
- Developers talked about building a new trail system around the new housing development that would also include a boat launch on the Yellow River
- Traffic congestion on Hwy-81 and Crowell Rd. intersection is currently experienced; Crowell Rd. receives heavy use; future development on this corridor would need to be sensitive to this

##### *Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure*

- Lack of on-road Bicycle facilities throughout city

- Hwy-81 pedestrian access is lacking in certain portions
- Deficiencies in pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalk extent and quality)
- Potential Ideas
  - Identify problem areas to prioritize and addresses
  - Bike/Ped Master plan (update to 2012)
  - Sidewalk audit
  - NEGRC audit and update to bike/ped master plan would require \$1,000 fee

#### *Public Transit*

- Currently no access to public transit
- Newton County 2020 TSPLOST for county wide public transit is TBD
- NEGRC and Willie Milligan to update steering committee on Newton County vote

#### *Transportation Questions / Additional Feedback*

- Use of Golf carts
  - City of Covington and City of Porterdale allow golf carts (on roads with speed limit of 35-mph or lower)
  - Any multi-use path would likely not be a facility for golf-carts
  - Discussion of lowering the Washington Street corridor to 35-mph throughout would need to happen in order for golf cart transportation between Covington and Porterdale

#### **Land Use:**

- Format of land use is either Future Land Use (FLU) or Character Areas
- 2016 Comp Plan uses Character Areas
- “Is FLU better than Character Areas?”
  - No, each have their own benefits
  - Character Areas provide some flexibility in terms of land use in a given category
  - Future Land Use is parcel-by-parcel, is more specific, and would mirror the zoning ordinance
- Lowell Chambers: preferred to keep the Character Area method for the 2021 comprehensive plan
  - No objections
  - NEGRC to continue with Character Areas unless directed otherwise

#### *Map/Land use Comments*

- Parking, tree restoration, landscaping, sidewalks issues
  - City in past wanted to address parking issues in historic district/neighborhood residential areas to allow for sensitive off-street parking
  - Potential work item: NEGRC could assist the city with hosting a design charrette workshop to determine best design interventions and applicable zoning characteristics in a target neighborhood

- Potentially create a “Neighborhood Parking Master Plan” Lowell Chambers
    - Neighborhood master plans would include details for parking, tree restoration/protection, landscaping, sidewalks, etc.
- City needs to update the zoning maps
- Zoning question: Can the city have a conditional zoning ordinance that requires developers to complete/begin the project within a designated timeframe or the property will revert to its previous zoning designation?
  - NEGRC will research and provide information to the city
  - Potential work item to be included in community work program
- Cedar Shoals development will bring a commercial node along the bike path on the southern section of the property. Cedar Shoals is also proposing multi-family residential along the bypass portion of the development.
  - They will have to apply for a rezoning on the southern segment due to commercial zoning designation
  - Further discussions need to be had with the developer for clarification on plans
  - Current action plan is to use Character Areas to reflect the zoning map and wait on the site plan for rezoning
- 2016 Comprehensive Plan included need to address zoning ordinance in regard to development on steep slopes
  - Has not been accomplished, will be included in the 2021 CP update work program
  - NEGRC will provide preliminary informational resources for best management practices regarding zoning regulation on steep slope development and habitat conservation / natural resource protection

#### *Land Use Changes*

- Osprey Mill building redevelopment is currently under foreign ownership
  - Owner has not approached Porterdale with plans for redeveloping the property
  - City has reached out, but have heard no responses
- Industrial development in Porterdale:
  - Not any major proposals currently
  - Any future industrial would need to be light industrial to be sensitive to the community
  - Proposal for waste disposal truck parking on bypass road currently underway
- New development proposal for 115-multifamily units on westernmost parcel of Porterdale along Hwy-81
  - Zoning considerations may need to be addressed
  - Parcel is adjacent to a stream and has steep slopes present
- Zoning Ordinance Updates
  - Zoning requirements are not in one consolidated place for people to access
  - City staff and potential developers frequently have to cross reference ancillary zoning requirements
  - Potential Work Item:

#### **Comments:**

- Concerns about increased traffic along Crowell Road due to the new development in Cedar Shoals. (Insert turn lane or look into a new design)
- Traffic on Hwy-81 through town center will need to be taken into consideration during approval process for the new developments.
- Traffic light upgrades or road enhancements could be considered along Hwy-81/Washington St. to alleviate any increases in traffic

### **Park Space / Open Public Space:**

- 70% of all Porterdale Properties are with 0.25 miles of a park
- 92.8% of Porterdale are within 0.5 miles of a park

#### *List of Parks:*

- Porterdale Yellow River Park
- Cedar Shoals Park
- B.C. Crowell Park
- Veterans Memorial Park
- Elm Street Park
- Walnut Street Park
- Pine Street Park

#### *Connections*

- Is there potential to provide connection between Cedar Shoals Park and Porterdale Yellow River Park
  - Acquiring the property is the issue
  - Multiple land owners between the two parks

#### *Upcoming Park Projects*

- Porterdale Skate Park in discussion phase
  - City has this on work session agenda to discuss in September to determine a path forward
  - Skate park would likely be funded by a combination of grants and privately raised funds if accepted
- Whitewater Overlook
  - In conceptual phase
  - To be located on city-owned property on southeastern side of Yellow River and Hwy-81 bridge
  - Josephine to discuss grant opportunities with Marty Boyd, Carter & Sloope and NEGRC
- Kayak accessibility
  - Currently the best way for through-kayakers is to take out at Yellow River Park boat launch and shuttle to Cedar Shoals Park to put back in

- Distance from Cedar Shoals Park to the next output is significant, approximately 8 hours' worth of travel is required
  - Cedar Shoals mixed-use development has discussed installing a new boat launch which would greatly improve the accessibility for kayakers
- Future access for kayakers immediately below the dam is possible, but unlikely due to the heavy water flow and rocky conditions – advanced kayaking experience would be required

**Comments:**

- Aging water mains are a concern/need due to the type of material that the current lines are made of – water leaks are frequent
  - Study being done in coordination with the Georgia Rural Water Association on local water rates
  - City could qualify for a Community Development Block Grant in lower-moderate income areas of town for water upgrades
  - NEGRC to forward Lowell Chambers the threshold requirements for CDBG water dashboard rates

**Next Meeting:** October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 9:00 am