

**PLACE Design Task Force Minutes**  
**January 10, 2018 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Basement Conference Room, City Hall**

Members Present:

Rachel Lloyd, Mike Stoneking, Gennie Keller, Chris Henry, Fred Wolfe, Tim Mohr, Mark Rylander, Clarence Green

Staff Present: Amanda Poncy, Missy Creasy, Carolyn McCray

Call to Order – Chairman Stoneking

Agenda

1. Public Comments (5 minutes)
2. Waterstreet Studio Presentation (30 minutes), Eugene Ryang, Todd Shallenberger, Waterstreet Studio

PLACE met to discuss what's at stake with development along the Preston Avenue Corridor. The discussion included a presentation by Waterstreet Studio on work they've recently done for the area which focused on what it might be like to develop the median into a public park. The PLACE committee then explored the area in a work-shop setting- ideas were shared verbally and with graphic diagrams. Important notions arising from the effort included:

- This was a session on ways to think about an area- it was not a design charrette.
- Any useful progression of an idea for this area would need to stem from residents in area neighborhoods and local businesses.
- We need to relate to efforts already completed or adopted such as Streets that Work.
- Understanding the history of this corridor is a part of successfully envisioning its future.

PLACE will discuss a recommendation to Council and the Planning Commission to have this area studied in more detail.

3. Preston Avenue Corridor Workshop (80 minutes)

The Place Committee Broke into the workshop to discussion the remodeling design of Preston Avenue for the remaining of the meeting.

Keller, Planning Commission liaison, commented I do not believe that many areas can be addressed without greater city context, and certainly not Preston. Even if we were not in the midst of the kind of political environment that exists in Charlottesville at the current time, that

would be not good planning, but right now it appears inappropriate to embark on a Preston initiative without that kind of background data as well as participation by property owners, residents, businesses, and other users not only on Preston but its many adjacencies. Just the transportation information that staff volunteered during the meeting was informative.

Place can play a role in identifying issues and championing projects but we should do so in an intentional way and be aware of how this might be perceived by the greater community and by city officials.

I hope that we can continue to look at Preston in its many facets and with its various opportunities and constraints as well as in its historic cultural and economic contexts. It has been discussed for small area planning before but was not ranked in highest priority for a number of reasons. It has not been reconsidered since its “regeneration” activities have progressed to such an extent that it is now a destination.

Perhaps a first step is to propose officially that Preston be included for small area planning and to offer for Place to undertake some preliminary investigations within our task force. I defer to staff and Councilor Galvin as our council rep as to how that should originate, but I believe that it is important to approach this very carefully and within the city processes.

Preston is quite complicated and is implicated in many previous city decisions regarding urban renewal, transportation planning and connectivity, visual enhancements, industrialization, etc.. We look skeptically at those decisions today and see lost opportunities or insensitivities. Let us be careful to make sure that we approach Preston today mindful of its past but with a very informed eye about how planning and design in our own time can best respond to our community’s needs and desires.

Adjournment: 2:00 p.m.