River Road Corridor Study: Community Interview Summary 12/6/18

Overall Goals
- Introduce the project: aspirations, goals, schedule, geography, products/outcomes
- Share and gather input on key documents: Public Involvement Plan, Project Description, Project Area Map
- Identify ways to collaborate and coordinate with neighborhood activities
- Discuss key stakeholders and their role in the study
- Listen to concerns and goals of neighborhood leadership

Thursday, December 6, 12-1:30, lunch provided
Location: Countryside Pizza, 645 River Road
Invitees: RRCO Co-Chairs, SCCO Chair, RRSC Neighborhood Plan Community Advisory Committee
Presenters: Ben Weber, SERA Architects and Julie Fischer, Cogito
Attendees: Jon Belcher, Ed McMahon, Rick Duncan, Kate Perle, Louisa De Heer, Ann Vaughn, Mary Leontivich, Jerry Finigan, Carleen Reilly.

After a presentation by Ben Weber on the study scope, timeline and goals, Julie Fischer introduced the public involvement plan, emphasizing the project description, key decisions, and meeting schedule. Community questions and comments included:

Make connections to other projects
- Including MovingAhead, Beltline Community Advisory Committee, and Lower River Road Concept Plan
- Neighborhood Plan: How and when will we get info to the CAC and Working Groups? Will you look at NW Expressway? Is there an input assumption on housing units? The CAC should specifically be asked about issues

Project Deliverables
- As you start Economic Assessment, can we give input to make sure it is specific to the neighborhood? I would like more information on market studies. Lots of standardization, and would like to make sure stuff isn't left out. Can we get deliverables at least a week ahead of time?
- Please post information about the project on the Neighborhood Plan website

Stakeholders
- How about homeowners who live on this project how will they be involved? Early is essential.

- Caution about getting public input – need to be very careful with that. Upfront and early. Essential. Need to contact all the property owners in the beginning.
- Re. LTD W. 11th – once this is called an EmX Corridor, we need to get out really early to avoid the "no".
- Everyone feels very strongly that you need to talk with people early.
- We really need a working group of business owners along the corridor.
- Interested in renter vs. owner ratio for River Road properties

Ben provided an introduction to the Project Area Map, including station typologies. Following are comments and questions relating to the map:

- The Lower RR areas is a designated "Node" – the code requires an FAR of 1 (Floor Area Ratio) – meaning the area requires a high minimum density to develop…nodal area. When City realized it was too difficult to develop, then they stopped implementing nodal areas.
- Look at redevelopment potential….Knoop is a good idea, focus on commercial, not just retail
- Thomason is important for low-income residents, such as Briarcliff Apartments
- Hilliard is good because it incorporates commercial, residential, school, older buildings
- Break down the lines between commercial and residential. Mixed use is good. Lots of sites are pretty small.
- Might be able to combine the two areas just S. of Beltline. Re. NEHS: Use back entrance by bowling alley to access RR
- Also there is an access from Knoop to River Road
- Husacker node – can you shift center a bit so that you capture Beltline area?
- Do we need a second station area south of Hunsacker?
- Evaluate ownership and choose station areas where there are more owners than renters
- The Corner Market site has a lot of potential
- What are the neighborhood gems?
    o Beautiful homes, large lots
    o Tree stand
    o SC commercial area – essential
    o Access to schools
    o Corner of NW Expressway and RR – lots of potential

Next Steps:

- Send out summary notes and materials and post on website
- Revise PI Plan and post on website
- Connect with full CAC in January. To discuss at next PMT meeting.

Clare Strawn, RRCO Co-Chair, was unable to attend the Thursday lunch, so she met individually with Ben and Julie on Wednesday, December 5 at 1:15 at Reality Kitchen Restaurant, 645 River Road:

- Excited about data, economic analysis. Policy work is informed by opinions. How will the 2 studies interface?

- RR Neighborhood is different than SC. River Road wants a downtown, Santa Clara wants a connector. RR would like SC to take NW Expressway, not RR.
- How do nodes work when they are owned by private property?
- Are you looking at prospective trends? Imaginations create fear of change. Would like more prospective data (people, business, etc). Live, work, socialize. How about a co-working environment? We don't want big box stores.
- I will appreciate concrete data that is coming our way. I currently participate in the Economic Development group. Consider the New Economy model that focuses on developing a neighborhood economic development corporation. The 42nd Avenue Cooperative in Portland is a good example.
- Define the assets. Marketing: River and Garden District. This neighborhood is environmentally focused. There are inadequate protections for the Willamette River Greenway. People are open to EmX, open to homeless projects. Businesses are concerned about traffic going fast. The neighborhood will support transit if you can frame it correctly. Need to embrace more diversity, example: Portland Mercado. Connect RR economy to the bike path.
- Brainstorm business contacts. Focus on mixed use and missing middle housing along RR. Would like to see business services (office). Need an inventory of existing businesses.
- Add Greenway issues to list of existing projects to interface with.
- Think about how this neighborhood has farming as a historical base. How do we maintain that asset, and protect it from cheap dense housing? We don't want cheap apartments like Ecco.
- Re. Low-income housing: existing project by DariMart is a good example.
- Opportunities for economic development: we envision solar installation coops, compost services via bicycle. If we embrace a green perspective, that is an economic generator.