

Roosevelt Road

Streetscape Design Plan & Zoning Regulations

Community Meeting Summary (05-28-08)

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The **Village of Oak Park**, **City of Berwyn**, and **Town of Cicero** have joined together to revitalize a key segment of Roosevelt Road between Austin Boulevard and Harlem Avenue.

On May 28, 2008 the project team hosted a community meeting at St. George's Antiochian Orthodox Church in Cicero to present their preliminary findings about existing conditions and to discuss issues and opportunities for the future of the Roosevelt Road corridor. Approximately 25 people attended the meeting.

At the outset of the meeting, the project consultants gave an overview of the project objectives and a preliminary summary of their initial fieldwork and analysis. They provided a description of land use and development conditions and presented a series of maps identifying streetscape conditions and issue. The consultant team also shared their preliminary assessment of on-street parking availability along the 1.5 mile corridor.

After the consultant presentation, meeting participants broke into three small groups working around a table. The groups were presented with three basic questions, designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of roadway corridor:

1. Is there a theme that could be used to help unify the Roosevelt Road corridor?

The first group suggested that while some unifying theme might be desirable, it was also important to retain a sense of individuality or uniqueness for the three municipalities with jurisdiction over the corridor (Oak Park, Berwyn and Cicero).

The second group suggested that a unified theme could be fairly important and that small-scale ("mom and pop") businesses might be an appropriate foundation for such a theme. They also suggested that prominent gateway features be used to provide a unique arrival experience for those traveling the corridor.

The third group suggested that the area's working class roots might provide an appropriate theme, while also suggesting that, while the streetscape design should be coherent and fairly consistent, it is not important to have a strong thematic element.

2. What types of improvements (e.g., sidewalk widening, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, parking arrangements) would create a more attractive and pedestrian friendly street

All three groups mentioned parking as a critical.

The first group suggested that employee parking should be located in more remote locations in order to provide more plentiful and accessible customer parking. They also mentioned the importance of property maintenance and upkeep and suggested the idea of stricter regulations on the types of businesses to encourage diversity and eliminate clustering of similar uses.

The second group discussed property maintenance and upkeep. They also stressed the need to eliminate unattractive chain-link and security fencing along the street.

The third group stressed the importance of pedestrian safety and comfort, specifically mentioning the need for new pedestrian traffic signals and wider sidewalks—some lined with outdoor café seating.

Other ideas that were mentioned: “bump-outs” at some intersections to provide greater pedestrian safety, attractive banners, landscaped medians along some stretches of the corridor, hanging baskets and sidewalk paving improvements. Another intriguing idea was the notion of greening some of the cul-de-sac streets to provide greater landscape and urban open space amenities.

3. What types of changes would attract more customers and visitors from adjacent neighborhoods?

Answers to this question were similar to question number two. The main themes were addressing crime (or the perception of crime), providing a greater variety of “useful” neighborhood-oriented businesses, more restaurants and coffee shops, additional residential development and facade improvements.

Please visit www.rooseveltroad.com for information about upcoming meetings and project status.

Also, you may send comments and/or questions about the project to comments@rooseveltroad.com.