

Kearney Street Redevelopment Plan

Summary of Public Input Meeting #2

September 25, 2017



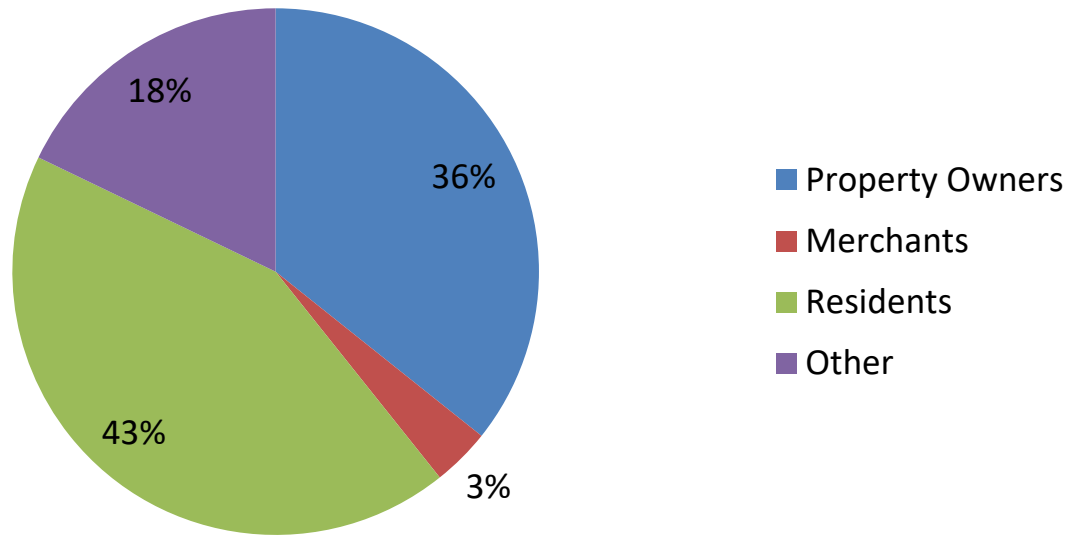
A public meeting was held on Monday September 25, 2017, from 5:30 to 7:00 PM, at Robberson Elementary School located at 1100 East Kearney in Springfield MO, to provide information and receive input on the Kearney Street Redevelopment Plan. Approximately 35 members of the public attended the meeting. A Meeting Notice was posted with the City Clerk's Office, and the Public Information Office issued a press release one week in advance of the meeting, resulting in reports from the Springfield News Leader and KSMU Radio in attendance. The Springfield Business Journal also followed the meeting and published a report online. A Facebook Event was created by the Public Information Office and 24 people indicated on the page they were interested in attending. It was also shared on the Cruising Kearney and Zone 1 Facebook page. In addition, several city staff attended, and the Zone 1 and Zone 2 City Council representatives, Phyllis Ferguson and Dr. Tom Prater and Councilman Mike Shilling. The presentation, summary report of the first meeting, and the draft Redevelopment Plan were all posted on the City's website at:

<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/3532/Kearney-Street-Redevelopment-Plan>

Meeting Format

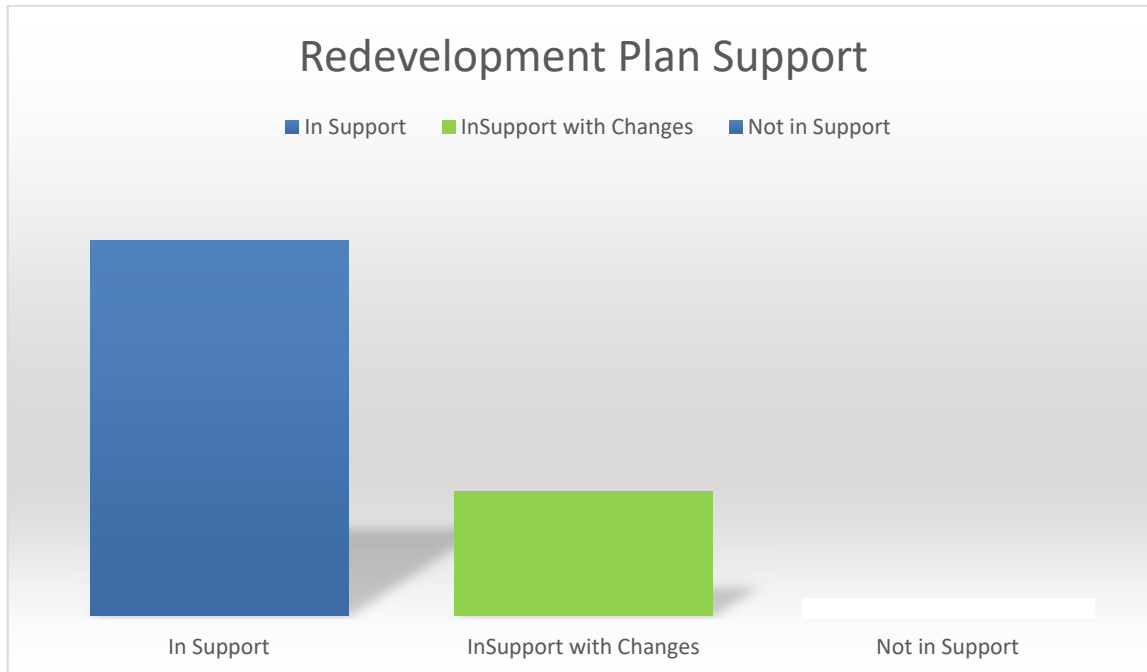
The meeting format consisted of welcome remarks by Zone 2 Councilman Tom Prater, followed by a Staff presentation of the proposed Redevelopment Plan, including specifically Chapter 99 Property Tax Abatement information for background, the proposed boundary, land use plan, criteria for abatement, and other required sections per State Statute. An eight-foot long large scale aerial map showing the Redevelopment Plan boundary was on display at the meeting. Copies of the proposed Redevelopment Plan were available as well as information on City Loan Programs. Councilman Prater moderated an interactive public input session following the presentation for approximately one hour, with many ideas shared and questions answered by Staff and City Council. Comment cards were distributed and collected at the meeting and through Thursday, October 9th.

Meeting Attendance



Results of Public Comment

Participants were asked to indicate whether they were in support of the Redevelopment Plan. The chart below shows the votes in support of the Plan, in support with some changes, and not in Support of the Plan as indicated on Comment Cards. Based on discussion at the meeting only one person in attendance was not in support of the Plan.



Summary of Written Comments from Comment Cards

1. Require Hiland Dairy to offer land for right turn lanes at Kearney and National.
2. Happy to see eminent domain will not be allowed.
3. A grocery store would be great! Like Harter House or Hy-Vee. Price Cutter and Aldi's selections are limited and not progressive in building improvements.
4. Need Branding for the Kearney Street name.
5. Route 66/Kearney provides good ideas!
6. Kearney needs a community center, Boys and Girls Club, two gas stations/convenience stores, a Dollar General store, and infrastructure improvements.
7. Every Bus Stop needs a bench, a shelter, and information.
8. Safe crosswalks and speed controls for traffic on Kearney.
9. A park would be nice with a pavilion.

Redevelopment Plan Schedule and Next Steps

The following are the next steps in the process:

1. Comment Cards collected through October 9, 2017

2. Staff will review the results, update the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority and make any needed changes to the Redevelopment Plan.
3. The formal approval process will require a recommendation from the LCRA, Planning and Zoning, with final approval from the City Council.
4. Current projected schedule will be to have the incentive available in early 2018.

Summary of the Questions and Comments at the Public Meeting

The following are some of the questions and comments raised at the meeting along with staff responses. These do not necessarily include all the questions raised at the meeting due to space. However, overwhelmingly, those in attendance were in support of the Redevelopment Plan, as presented, with only one person vocalizing they were not in support.



Comment: I appreciate the time and focus City Council and Staff have put into improving Kearney and the Boundary looks good.

Comment: Kearney needs a Boys and Girls Club and/or Community Center with daycare and tutoring, perhaps as part of a BBC, City, and Evangel cooperation.

Comment: Kearney needs more gas stations.

Question: We don't need any more car-lots, so why are car lots not an excluded use in the Redevelopment Plan?

Response: Staff felt that the car lots should not be excluded as to nod the business that are already existing and that fit with the "car culture" theme of Route 66. In addition, most car lots would not be candidates for Chapter 99 incentive as they typically do not have significant improvements involved with their projects (mostly parking lots) and would not pay significant taxes anyway.

Question: What is the City going to do about the homeless problem.

Response: Social issues will be addressed outside of the scope of the Redevelopment Plan.

Question: Can we exclude the "buy her, pay here" car lots.

Response: Predatory lending institutions are excluded uses as the goal is to not incentives high interest, short term lending as specified in the Land Use section of the Redevelopment Plan. Car lots will not be excluded as they are existing businesses and contribute to the “car culture” of Route 66.

Comment: We miss having a Staples Store and people came from Stockton to shop here.

Comment: We don’t need more fast food. Unless it is upscale fast food like Chipotle or Chik Fil A.

Response: Staff discussed the concept of a food hall which was recommended by PGAV in the Market Study and the mix of upscale fast food and groceries typically located in Food Halls that could also serve as a community gathering place with a variety of food options as well as indoor and outdoor seating.

Comment: I am not in support of tax abatement as an incentive in any way because of impacts on schools.

Response: Existing taxes will continue to be collected and distributed, only taxes on new improvements for projects benefiting the district as outline in the Redevelopment Plan would be eligible, so taxes will not be “taken away” from schools.

Question: Is cruising really helping business by bringing customers who will spend money in the area?

Response: Phylis Ferguson responded that restaurants have had an increase in business on cruising nights and some restaurants have stayed open later to accommodate the visitors. The consensus seems to be that cruising has been good for business and the image enhancement by adding activity to the area.

Comment: Kearney needs a community event area.

Response: With the proximity to Doling Park facilities, the Library, and schools, staff believes use of these existing public facilities and wayfinding signage particularly to the Park should be the focuses rather than adding a new public facility. However, businesses that encourage public gathering and socializing are encouraged in the Plan.

Comment: What about a mall on Kearney like the old North Town Mall?

Response: The old North Town Mall is included within the proposed Redevelopment Plan boundary. The market will determine what businesses can be supported on Kearney Street, another attendee also responded that residents in the area and surrounding neighborhoods must support the businesses they want to see in the district for them to be successful.

Comment: To follow up on the comments about Staples, a mall, and upscale grocery, one participant discussed the history of these types of businesses closing due to lake of support from customers in the area. He noted the Sarah Overstreet article about “Springfield’s forgotten Northside.” He stated that the north town mall was not supported and we need businesses that people here will support.

Question: What is the timeline for this plan and how long will it be available? Will it lag like the College Street Plan?

Response: There is not a set timeline for the plan or for the plan to sunset. Once it is adopted by City Council, progress will be driven by private development, and the Plan will remain in place unless City Council decided at some point in the future based on evidence to consider the area no longer blighted.



Question: Will the Plan put pressure on MoDOT to safe crossings and improvements along Kearney?

Response: The City is currently working with MoDOT and MoDOT is supportive of the plan for Kearney Street. As development occurs MoDOT hopes to work to make improvements as well.

Would grocery stores qualify for the incentive?

Response: Yes, if they are in the boundary. This is the type of business that was recommended and is encouraged, along with garden supply stores, and deep value retail stores.

Comment: We need internet hotspots in the area because many people do not have Wi-Fi in their homes. Scholl would be good hotspot locations.

Comment: Consider adding frontage on Grant street to qualify for the incentive.

Response: Staff will review this request and consider what make the most sense for frontage requirements.

Comment: There needs to be better street layout and connections to Kearney businesses from the neighborhoods, and the City should consider allowing housing developments to receive the incentive.

Response: Based on feedback previously received and staff expertise housing is not a use that is proposed to be incentivized, but a mixed-use development that includes housing and retail could be eligible.

Comment: The Northside cannot compete with the south side. Also, we need to bring people from the south side to Kearney to patronize businesses.

Comment: I like the idea of using the Route 66 connection for branding on Kearney and possibly adding banners and/or signage.

Comment: The north-south arteries need to be developed to bring people here from the more easily.

Questions: Does the City own property along Kearney that could be developed as a park?

Response: Doling Park is a fantastic asset one block north of Kearney and the recommendation is for enhanced access and signage to better utilize this existing historic park.