

## Harmony Shields Charette - Meeting Notes

**So far:** Many neighbors, pertinent City staff and the development team have shared concerns and hopes for the proposed project in pretty fine detail at the charrette meetings. A summary of the key concerns and issues brought up at the meeting, along with information shared by City staff and the development team, where helpful to flesh out the issues, is outlined below. This list is not exhaustive and can be added to if there are additional issues. Please send Anne Aspen your feedback at [aaspen@fcgov.com](mailto:aaspen@fcgov.com)

**Next steps:** The design team is working on plans that address the issues below that we identified in the charrette. ***There will be a wrap-up meeting on Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup>*** where we'll all come together once more to review and comment on their site plan alternatives and architectural sketches for the general style and design details of the buildings, plazas, etc. After the charrette work is complete, the designers will prepare a formal submittal to the City for development review, which will include a neighborhood meeting and public hearing, which you will be invited to if you received invitations to the charrette events. Notification will also be posted in the Coloradoan.

### Main Issues Discussed at the Charrette with Stakeholders:

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

##### Vehicular traffic patterns

**Harmony Shields Capital Improvement Project:** Proposed improvements with the Harmony Shields capital improvement project: unsignalized  $\frac{3}{4}$  movement intersection at Westbury and Shields (lefts in but no lefts outs), signalized intersection at Troutman and probably a signal at Westbury and Shields assuming that the remaining funding needed is found. A pedestrian-only signal is proposed for Regency and Harmony, though in the future this could become a full traffic signal. Harmony will be 2 lanes in each direction until just west of Regency. Shields will be 2 lanes in each direction to just south of Westbury. This project will start in February 2009 and will need to be done before Labor Day.

There is some concern about too many lights along Harmony slowing down traffic. Dean explained that with timing, additional lanes and the gaps that will happen in traffic because of the lights that traffic should move through the area more efficiently even with the stoplight delays. Traffic signals are warranted when the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, based on data related mostly to traffic volumes.

There was some concern expressed for the speed allowed on Shields and Harmony. Dean Klingner from the City's Engineering Department explained that if they lowered it they would have widespread violations of the speed because the arterials are designed for higher speeds. The widening, if anything, will make that speed more appropriate. Some citizens expressed concerns that once Harmony and Shields become four lanes total, those issues become more serious. Dean commented that when the intersection at Harmony and Shields is done, it should be much safer with better sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks with enhanced crosswalks, signalized pedestrian lights and pedestrian refuges.

**General:** Develop access points to the shopping center and a network of roads to get shoppers to signalized intersections along Harmony and Shields without driving through

established neighborhoods. The light planned at Troutman could provide that release valve if it connects to the shopping center with another road. Please think ahead to accommodating future residents in MMN zoned land to provide capacity for them on new streets, not existing neighborhood streets.

The way the traffic flows through the site will be a concern for years.

**Westbury neighborhood:** There is concern about access into and out of Westbury neighborhood. It is partly inherent to the original design of neighborhood with only two access points which are close to the arterial intersection, but to the extent possible, design shopping center to allow better access than exists now to and from neighborhood and to and from the shopping center.

How would someone have to drive to get in? From Westbury they would go west on Harmony and north on new road from an unsignalized but dedicated left turn lane. The median to be built on Harmony will prevent cut thru traffic on Westbury from the north. Will I be able to make a left hand turn out of Westbury? No, there will be lefts in but no lefts out. You would go to the proposed signal at Westbury and Shields, take a left on Shields and take a left on Harmony.

Developer is considering different places the access point to Harmony would be from the shopping center. One could line up with Westbury and one east of Westbury. The developer would like turn lanes at both but the one closer to Shields may only be allowed to be a right-in, right-out access point depending on how long the turn lane stacking needs to be for left turns from eastbound Harmony to northbound Shields. If an access point is located between Westbury and Shields, it would have a negative consequence of directing headlights into the back yards of people who live on the cul-de-sacs just to the south of Harmony. There's not much room in the median for landscaping, nor is it preferable from a safety point of view, but if one is added here, we'll need a design solution for the headlight situation.

**Cut through traffic in Westbrooke neighborhood:**

The main traffic issues in Westbrooke include concern about cut-through traffic from delivery trucks and shoppers. Some in the neighborhood would like to see Wake Robin completely blocked off from Shields to Westbrooke Court or realigned to dissuade people from cutting through, while leaving it available as a pedestrian and bike pathway for residents and school children. Explore idea of closing Wakerobin, redirecting it or adding design features to dissuade vehicular traffic from going west of Westbrooke Ct. It was pointed out that the originally zoned plan had its main access off Shields and Troutman. Having a signalized intersection at Troutman, Troutman connected to the east and a new road to connect Troutman and the center would be very useful in getting traffic off Wakerobin. Jogging Wakerobin to the north may also have the effect of dissuading vehicles from traveling up Wakerobin. Staff shared that the process to vacate a street like Wakerobin includes City Council review and can be done concurrently with the development.

Most nearby neighbors wish to prevent semis from traveling through residential areas. The developer agrees that it would not be efficient for Safeway or pleasant for neighbors to have delivery trucks go through the neighborhoods. He acknowledged that the truck traffic must have expedient means for entering, delivering, turning around and exiting the site without going into the neighborhoods. A good design to ensure that trucks can get in and out of the site easily will very likely prevent any trucks from entering the neighborhoods anyhow.

Neighbor shoppers coming from within the neighborhood would add traffic to Seneca and Wakerobin. Wakerobin bears a lot of traffic as it is since so many cul-de-sacs spill out onto it as their only option. Staff added that local roads are typically designed for this sort of traffic, even if it would represent a tangible change for neighbors. This situation would be encountered no matter where the shopping center was located. Some neighbors indicated that they wouldn't mind access to the center from the neighborhoods but not back out again.

Short of closing Wakerobin, there are design changes that could be made to it to make it less vehicle friendly, like speed bumps, bump-outs, and other traffic calming devices.

**Troutman connection:**

Since connection of Troutman may drive other transportation options, we explored that. Cameron Gloss of the City's Current Planning Department explained that the Troutman connection could happen as a Capital Improvement Project and is on the list but has yet to rise to the top of the list for funding so it is not scheduled for the near future. Because of the Troutman connection's importance to the site plan, relieving traffic congestion and meeting neighbors concerns, the Developer will attempt to include this offsite parcel and Troutman completion into this project. His success with this will depend on the property owner Knutson who owns that parcel of land and is also the seller of the proposed site.

There were some questions about bus traffic that could not be answered at the meeting. City staff is doing some research into Poudre School District's bussing and routes. We hope to have additional information at the wrap up meeting.

**Harmony Shields Improvement Project.** Some information was shared about improvements to the Harmony Shields intersection that will happen with the Harmony-Shields improvement project, including continuous sidewalks with parkways, bike lanes, enhanced crosswalks, signalized pedestrian lights and pedestrian refuges. These will be added at Troutman and Shields intersection also. A pedestrian signal will be added at Regency. These will give pedestrians more safe places to cross but will not eliminate mid-block crossings which are unavoidable but unsafe and not sanctioned. The City used to provide mid-block crosswalks but found that they added to instead of solving the problem, since they gave pedestrians a false sense of safety. Now pedestrians are encouraged to use intersections for safe crossing. Dean said that it may be possible to add some strategically placed pedestrian refuges in the medians to at least give jaywalkers a safe stopping spot halfway across.

**Tunnel/Overpass:** There was some discussion about whether an overpass or underpass might be possible across Shields and/or Harmony. Neighbors suggested that that would be a very safe way to travel across the arterials. Though it does indeed function that way very well along many of our bike trails, for example, staff pointed out that they require an enormous amount of space. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires the slope be less than 1' in 20'. Aside from the huge cost of the structure itself, land on both sides of the street is privately owned so acquiring enough land would be very challenging, especially since many yards that border the arterials are pretty small. In addition, by the time a person walked the distance of the ramping required, they could have walked over to the intersection, crossed safely and come back.

A suggestion was made that if Wakerobin was relocated, the new alignment could line up with the cul-de-sac on east side of Shields for a safer and more direct pedestrian connection.

Also, there are some design solutions that can be done to make Wake Robin less attractive to vehicles and more attractive to pedestrians like bump-outs, raised crosswalks, speed bumps, etc.

One resident suggested connecting a sidewalk or path with the concrete sidewalk that goes from the ditch rider road down to Wabash and then over to Horsetooth.

### Pedestrian routes and safety

#### **Safe routes to schools**

Right now, pedestrians do not have adequate crossings at the Harmony Shields intersection. There are many students and residents that cross all along the Shields frontage and the Harmony frontage from both sides of the site to walk dogs, get to the library, schools, trails, etc. There is significant neighborhood concern about safety, especially about the numerous children who regularly cross from east of Shields to Webber Junior High.

Denise Weston from the Transportation Planning Department talked about the Safe Routes to School program and will provide additional information on specifics related to this site at the wrap-up meeting. There are a number of ways the program may be useful. The program starts with elementary school kids to prepare maps that will help parents work with their kids. If there is infrastructure that is lacking, the program seeks funding to make improvements to make it a better route. A neighbor asked about establishing a school zone. Denise will research the possibility of a school zone along Shields but cautioned that there are several criteria to warrant a school zone and this may not meet the requirements.

**Pedestrian-Bike access through development:** There may be an opportunity to bring pedestrians and bicyclists through the wetland at the corner of Harmony and Shields with an interpretive boardwalk not unlike the one at Dragonfly's Lair. This idea will be pursued with the Army Corps of Engineers which will be the regulating agency for the wetlands.

### Bicycle routes and safety:

Several neighbors wondered if the development will be bike friendly. Will we have the ability to ride our bikes to the store?

**Planned bike routes:** The "Canal" bike route is planned to follow the east side of the irrigation ditch as shown on the bike map. Easements will need to be granted to the City as development happens in that area. No funds are dedicated at this time for that section of trail but the City is willing to partner with the developer to construct the trail with development. Bike lanes will be constructed with the intersection improvement project at Shields and Harmony in all directions.

On the shopping center site, there is a strong desire to see dedicated bike and pedestrian access through the site and possibly diagonally through the wetland at the corner.

Wakerobin has bike lanes now and even if reconfigured would function as a bike path. The surrounding neighborhoods have good bike connections, like between The Ridge and Westbury. Perhaps this development and the future MMN development can use this as a model to provide continued bike connectivity.

## ***ENVIRONMENT***

### General

Many comments were made about protecting and enhancing various habitats on the site. The area in general has many natural site amenities including wetlands, foxes, birds (possibly including raptors), foothills views, close proximity to Cathy Fromme Prairie and trail, the ponderosa pine windbreak (also known as the mini-forest). Comments include:

- Minimize loss of the ponderosa pine windbreak and look for ways to protect, preserve and enhance this evidence of our agricultural heritage
- Protect wetlands that have formed in man-made constructed storm facilities, perhaps recreate them closer to location of historic flow of Mail Creek
- Protect views of Horsetooth and into and out of neighborhoods
- Mitigate additional air pollution impacts
- Minimize and mitigate additional light pollution (see more detail under Architecture, lighting)
- Minimize and mitigate additional noise pollution, especially at night
- Highlight green/sustainable development (see more detail under Sustainability)

Concerns were raised about the loss of this open space. A comment was made that reducing the open spaces that we use to connect with nature can directly affect us and our bodies, contributing to additional levels of stress. We need to have some spaces where we leave the trees and grass.

Can the City preserve this as open space or provide incentives to retain portions of the adjacent site as open land? No. This is privately owned land that is zoned for this sort of development. The City's Natural Areas group analyzed this site in the past for possible inclusion in their program and despite its natural features, it was decided that this general area was already very well served with open spaces including: Cathy Fromme Prairie, Pine Ridge, Hazaleus, Mariposa, etc. as well as the Spring Canyon Park. This development has many specific opportunities to mitigate and even enhance the natural features of the site, like connecting the wetlands with bioswales that have dedicated trails along them, using the wind row as a model for visual screening, etc. Links to Natural Areas and Parks:

Map of Natural Areas: <http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/pdf/NaturalAreasMap.pdf>

List of Parks: <http://fcgov.com/parks/park-finder.php>

The City's land use code has strict requirements protecting wetlands, certain habitats and other natural features. City staff would like to see the developer explore creating a corridor which retains the alignment of Mail Creek, but also manages storm water and provides pedestrian and bike connectivity through the site, perhaps alongside bioswales.

A comment was made that there seem to be inconsistencies - on one hand the wetlands can be moved, and on the other hand, they are protected. Dana Leavitt responded that these areas all have value, but some are ranked higher than others. Dana would not guess as to the rankings, deferring to the ecological experts who craft the Ecological Characterization Study that would be required of the developer early in the development review process.

### Wind Break/Mini-forest

There was some discussion of the wind row and the potential for some loss of trees in the windbreak. In order to connect the site with the future Troutman extension, it is likely that the

future service road would require cutting some trees to put the street through. There is an Inherent conflict between the natural feature of the windbreak and the need for an access point to line up with Troutman. Interests will need to be balanced including using the smallest road section feasible but also possibly needing to cut additional trees for sight distances at the new intersection.

The developer also has plans to put in a Chase Bank and had eyed that corner for its location but will have to meet the environmental standards, which may preclude being able to cut any trees for the bank. This will be determined by the Ecological Characterization Study. If trees are removed, there may be a requirement for mitigation of those trees elsewhere on site, perhaps with greatly upsized trees.

#### Wetland at corner of Shields and Harmony

Will the vegetation at the corner remain open area? Yes, this is a man-made storm water detention facility that has naturalized as a wetland. At the least, the wetland will be enhanced by removing nuisance species such as Siberian elm which pulls water away from native trees and those will be replaced with native trees. The Ecological Characterization Study that the developer will prepare will give us more detail on the character of the wetland.

### **UTILITIES**

#### Stormwater

**Existing:** The basin at the southeast corner of the site, which has naturalized as a wetland was created several years ago as a regional stormwater detention facility, collecting stormwater from this site and others nearby and releasing it at a typical 2-year storm release rate into a storm sewer pipe that crosses diagonally under the Harmony Shields intersection to the FRCC property. This site is not in an identified floodplain.

Miscellaneous: When Harmony expands, we are going to be fixing the problem on Westbury. The storm sewer on Harmony will be fixed with the road improvement project. To the north and south of Troutman is a different drainage pattern.

**Typical development work to be done:** A good portion of the site is lower than the street level. Much of it will require fill prior to development. The site and detention plan must meet the Mail Creek master plan. It will need to take flows from the developed site and reduce them down to a typical 2 year storm. This is less release than as currently configured. This site has been identified as a regional detention facility so in addition to the flows for this development, the detention will be sized to accommodate spill detention from Dragonfly's Lair (also a regional detention facility) to the property and future flows from surrounding developments such as the MMN property to the north and west, though that development will engineer for their flows during their development review process. City Stormwater engineer Wes Lamarque considers this a pretty standard development. There are no special issues. Gas Station concerns: A neighbor asked about how underground gas tanks would be affected if there was flooding. Wes responded that we require a containment structure that would protect the tanks and the detention from contamination. This is regulated by the State according to strict federal regulations that have been in force for about 15 years.

**Best Management Practices (BMPs):** Traditionally in the industry, the main concern has been flow rate, but volume does have an effect too. Mostly stormwater management has been achieved with extended detention--taking the water and holding it 40 hours and then slowly releasing it. The goal is to mimic historic conditions in drainage areas, so in the last

few years, other ways of doing it have been developed that offer additional benefits like more naturalistic configurations and spreading the volume out over an area. Bioswales are one method being used now. Porous asphalt and porous concrete are also options which allow water to filtrate into the ground where it falls and where any surface contaminants can be diluted locally and even processed naturally by microorganisms in the soil. 95% of the typical contaminants are sediments and nutrients. Those pollutants are normally adsorbed through the vegetation. When stormwater runs through this subsurface, water has been shown to come out cleaner than tap water. Porous surfaces are periodically vacuumed to maintain their porosity. The vacuumed debris is properly disposed of. The community has 4 or 5 projects that are testing these methods.

### Light and Power

**Existing:** There is a 13,000 kVA three-phase line that's part of the feed to the neighborhood on the north side of Wake Robin.

**Typical development work to be done:** The developer would have to install transformers, underground lines, and street lighting (though on Harmony and Shields that will be done with the Harmony/Shields improvement project). Street lighting for the past 5 years has been a cut-off light which has less spill and no glare. These are what would be used in this project. On a collector street such as Wakerobin, the street light pole height would be 32 feet.

**Existing Street Lights:** Some neighbors said street lighting is very bad. Doug Martine with Light and Power said to call if they blink on and off and they can come and change out the bulb.

**Wakerobin closed or relocated:** There are a couple of electric vaults in the Wakerobin right-of-way that will need to remain accessible and some coordination will be necessary if the design goes that route. If Wakerobin was realigned, power would either need to be moved or put in an easement with access to the vaults. This could get pretty expensive.

**On-site wind generation:** Light and Power treats wind generation the same as any other co-generation system. The developer can install it; it has to meet codes. It just backfeeds through the meter. Under current rates, a credit is given at full retail value for the energy that's put back in the grid. The credit rate may change.

### Water/Wastewater

**Existing:** There is a 10" sanitary sewer that comes from the east and goes west. There is also a 12" water line that can also serve the site. Shields is the dividing line between Foothills Pressure Zone and main water line. To the south of Wake Robin there were some utilities put in with the old Pine View Development, but it was never developed. Harmony is boundary between City water and South Fort Collins Loveland Water District (SFCLWD). Front Range CC is in the district. If Wakerobin is relocated or closed, the sewer would be difficult to relocate.

**Typical development work to be done:** This new development will tie into the water line under Wake Robin. With development of the rest of the area, we would expect that to be looped back up to the north to the large transmission line that is under Troutman right-of-way. Development will have to put in more utilities under there. When the loop is completed, it will increase capacity in that area. We would want that water line extended prior to paving. No major water upgrades are needed.

### Fire

Station 5 east on Harmony would be the first response to a call in these neighborhoods. They would usually head west on Harmony and turn right on Regency. They would have a harder time going north on Shields and then taking a left at unsignalized Wakerobin intersection. New development would be served with existing, relocated or new hydrants as needed to serve the proposed project.

**Wakerobin relocated or closed:** Wakerobin is not the access point into these neighborhoods but if it were closed or relocated, another access point would need to be in place, like Troutman.

### General Utility Easements

**Realigning or closing Wakerobin:** There are several different existing utility lines under Wakerobin. If closed or relocated, existing utilities would have to be put in an easement with access for repair and maintenance or they will need to be relocated at the developer's expense. The easement would likely need to be 50 feet wide. Buildings would need to be separated from the lines by at least 10 feet. A minimum of 10' each side of the water line is needed, 15' each side of the sewer and 10' each side of the electric facilities. Light and power is not under the road. No buildings would be allowed in the easement but parking lots are OK. There are also separation distances from trees. Light and power has separation distances between street lights and trees too: shades trees - 40' from the light, ornamental trees - 15' from the light.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability is a very important concept for the neighbors. Some would prefer to see Safeway find an empty existing store rather than creating a new shopping center that they fear might some day also go dark. Safeway explained that this is what they call an infill site for them. The neighbors within a mile radius of the store already exist and there is demand for a store in this area.

### Strategies specifically suggested by neighbors for this project:

- Solar panels for electric generation, hot water heating
- Natural daylighting
- Geothermal heating and/or cooling
- Recycled and recycled content construction materials
- Locally derived or manufactured materials such as locally quarried stone
- Construction waste sorting and recycling
- Onsite wind turbine for electric generation
- Bioswales
- Porous pavement
- Xeric and native plantings

Safeway representatives explained some of the strategies that they utilize now across the corporation: biodiesel in all trucks, wind energy credits purchased to operate all fueling stations, etc. Safeway has just recently completed its first LEED accredited store in Santa Cruz, CA. They are interested in using sustainable strategies in the Harmony Shields project and are watching to see how the Santa Cruz Safeway fares with the strategies used there. They are open to any suggestions the neighbors have and will consider any strategies that make sense for this site. The developer of the shopping center has also indicated an interest in incorporating proven green strategies.

Several neighbors expressed that they would like to see a vision and commitment from the developer and Safeway outlining the sustainability plan for the Safeway and shopping center. Neighbors would like to know if Safeway invest in sustainability on this project or if this will fall to the developer or if it will be a joint endeavor. The developer said that Safeway will invest in green strategies and that he is interested in exploring the possibilities too. Safeway representatives made a strong statement that the store will include substantial sustainable gestures.

City staff offered that while there are no sustainable or LEED requirements at this time for private developments, the City is very supportive of the project incorporating sustainable practices and LEED certification. We have the Integrated Design Assistance Program (IDAP) which can assist with technical expertise and funding for sustainable aspects of the project.

A neighbor suggested a possible partnership with the Institute for the Built Environment at CSU, headed up by Brian Dunbar. Subsequent emails with Brian, shared with the developer, indicate an interest and ability to assist with many aspects of achieving sustainability. At the developer/Safeway's request, staff will coordinate a meeting between them, City staff and staff of the IBE.

### ***SITE PLANNING***

Basic information: the proposed store is a 65,000sf store with about 300 parking spaces in front (approximately 220,000sf).

Neighbors and members of the design team acknowledge that big gains in sustainability can be made early on in choices about how the building is oriented and otherwise sited.

Some neighbors, especially from the Westbury neighborhood suggest placing the store further north on the site. Other neighbors said that they in the wider neighborhoods may not want it to be further north. Safeway needs room for the store and parking in close proximity and they can't build over existing utilities, so they can only move it so far to the north, however the design team suggests placing smaller "360 degree buildings" which have no backside along Harmony, along with enhanced landscaping to buffer and step down the massing between the store and the Westbury neighborhood. This received a positive response from neighbors.

Loading docks and service areas need a high degree of screening from neighbors. One good example that came up was the back side of the Safeway on Harmony and Wheaton.

When neighbors drive on Shields, they want to be able to see the mountains.

The design team and neighbors were in alignment that plazas and outdoor spaces should be high quality and take their cues from the Oak Street Plaza, downtown alleys (Trimble Court and Tenney Court) and Old Town. Neighbors expressed an interest in the project providing pleasant, free environments for school children while also discouraging negative or destructive behavior.

### ***ARCHITECTURE***

#### **Style**

Neighbors are very interested in the architectural character of the outside of store. Safeway is committed to this store being its signature store. Neighbors would like to see the corporate model adjusted to reflect characteristics of the surrounding area. Safeway wants the store to have some identity that reflects their lifestyle brand. Challenge was put to design team to explore ways to customize this lifestyle center to reflect the values and natural amenities of the surrounding area while maintaining its identity as a Safeway lifestyle store.

Some neighbors want a very low building, others value stepped heights for massing variety and good design. Safeway has an interest in varied heights to allow for variety of spaces inside and sense of openness. The non-Safeway stores need to be about 20 feet for marketability. Safeway needs 21'-23' inside which means about 28' feet max outside height. Much lower and the building would feel very cramped inside. Many neighbors like Sunflower Market and how low their building is. They see it as unobtrusive. Design details can help bring the scale down. The architect plans to create spaces that take advantage of the sun.

The design can incorporate several strategies to achieve its goals including: massing the building to feel like smaller buildings in the front and sides of Safeway; trellises; espaliers with wisteria or trumpet vines; trees in tree grates; cornices and wainscoting. Neighbors would like the buildings to feel like a townscape not a big rectangle.

The design will need to balance desires of wanting attractive, solid materials but not creating trendy style that will go out of style. One neighbor suggested using local materials like sandstone, pointing out that this would earn LEED points also. Other types of stone treatments could relate to the area too. One neighbor didn't like dry stacked stone.

Neighbors like earth-tone colors. Many homes in the area have brick accents. Suggestion to draw from these neighborhood cues. Safeway assured the neighbors that they will not do Santa Barbara style, post-modern, or deconstructed architecture, etc. Safeway would be more interested in a more urban style that is upscale, perhaps arts and crafts style. Neighbors would like the center to employ a style which is timeless and somewhat urban but also speaks to the natural qualities of the area. They also urge the designers to look for ways architecture can dovetail with sustainability, like with deep overhangs for thermal savings.

- Lighting

Neighbors were pretty unanimous that they want the dark sky in this area to be protected. The site must be lit for safety, but equally important is the ability to see the stars. Use soft, safe, no-glare lighting. Consider using pedestrian scaled and functioning lighting such as bollards in walkways. Use more poles but shorter with full cut-off fixtures for lower impact. Consider using motion sensor lighting or lighting that shuts down almost entirely after closing where feasible.

LUC standards are a little behind the state of the art on lighting. We have no minimum footcandle requirement and we require fully-shielded and full cut-off fixtures, but staff has also had more advanced technical training with Nancy Clanton on dark sky strategies. We will work to ensure that the lighting is safe but unobtrusive here.

- Details

Awnings: Many neighbors are not excited about metal because it feels too industrial and doesn't fit into neighborhood. Many would prefer cloth awnings which can be redone in a few years for a fresh look too. The architect mentioned interest in using metal trellises instead of

wood for durability and ease of maintenance and suggested that there are many options now, some of which look like wood.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The developer will buy the Safeway building and Safeway will lease it. The developer will finance the landscaping.

Neighbors would like to see extensive landscaping to break up the parking lot, to screen views into and out of the site and to enhance the aesthetics of the center. Plantings and good landscape design will go a long way to reduce scale of building and allow it to blend into site.

A neighbor asked the developer to avoid bluegrass in the parkways and bring sustainable concepts right out to the street. The City's Environmental Planner mentioned that the Streets Department traditionally wants bluegrass in the parkways but that staff is working to change that and allow alternative sustainable options. The designers have successfully planted fescues in parkways and will explore that

## **QUALITY OF LIFE / VALUES**

- **Gas Station:** Attendees showed little to no neighborhood desire for a gas station on this site. Safeway stated that they need the gas station not so much for profitability but for drawing customers to the store with loyalty discounts. One neighbor bravely confessed that she would use the station.

Concerns about the fueling station centered on a few main issues: where the station would be on the site, how it would be lit, how much additional traffic it might bring to the site and the hours of operation.

The project as a whole and the fueling station within it would need to meet City standards for noise, hours of operations and lighting. Safeway will light the fuel center as unobtrusively as possible for safety. Staff will work with the developer to ensure that the lighting is as soft and minimal as possible, well below allowed maximums. One neighbor asked if it is part of a loyalty program that doesn't rely on drive-by recognition, could Safeway place the station in a much more unobtrusive location? That will be considered. For clarification, the other Safeway at Taft Hill and Drake bought an existing gas station that was on the corner of the intersection so that site plan is not the same as this will be.

- **Open space:** The neighborhoods value and use their special neighborhood amenities: the mini-forest, Dragonfly's Lair and walking paths. They value the wildlife that frequents and even lives in the area from deer to foxes. Neighbors generally value their more rural feel. There are no plans to alter or affect Dragonfly's Lair at all. It is a City Stormwater owned regional detention pond and outdoor classroom. The mini-forest/wind row is a protected natural feature that will be reviewed by the City Environmental Planner. In order to create a roadway to serve the site without neighborhood cut-through traffic, a part of the wind row may need to be removed but if so, there will be mitigation required perhaps in the form of additional landscaping from what would be required or perhaps upsizing of the newly planted trees. This will be reviewed in development review.
- **Community connections:** Neighbors encourage Safeway to forge connections between the Safeway and area schools such as Johnson, Webber, Lopez and McGraw. Hang school kids' art or better yet, incorporate local kids' artwork into permanent artwork on site,

sponsor events, provide connections between the wetlands and plazas on this site and the Dragonfly's Lair outdoor classroom.

- One neighbor suggested providing restaurants that cater to families, especially with the schools in the neighborhoods. She requested that the center not just provide upscale establishments. The neighborhoods east of Shields are largely starter homes and their only dining out choices are at Harmony and College. They'd love to have something closer that was affordable and family-friendly.

## **OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

There are concerns about truck deliveries and trash pick-ups. Deliveries must abide by City Land Use Code requirements for hours (not before 7:00 a.m. or after 10pm at night).

One neighbor wanted to know how much local control the store would have in situations like if the PA system is way too loud. The Safeway representative responded that they are more and more responsive to customers now because of competition for business with other stores such as Walmart.

There are concerns about the store's hours. How would hours be enforced? The developer shared that it will not be a 24-hour store but did not know what the hours were proposed to be—perhaps 5:30 or 6am to midnight. It is not known at this point if the gas pumps would be available round the clock or not, but the store/kiosk associated with the fuel station would not be 24-hour. City staff mentioned that the Land Use Code contains language that allows a condition to be put on the hours of operation of the store when appropriate. There are also noise restrictions that could play into restricting the gas station.

## **MARKET CONCERNS**

- Area served: Some neighbors really don't want the Safeway to be a destination for folks outside the neighborhood. They object to the size of the store and always have. Some neighbors like the amenities this store will offer and don't object to the size if it is well designed and fits into the neighborhood.
- Store size and viability: There are questions among some neighbors about the viability of the Safeway and other stores. Some neighbors do not want to see a new building here. There is some concern that there are many dark stores in the area already. Why not reuse these empty stores? Safeway says this is an underserved area with sufficient existing customers within one to two miles from the store. Safeway looks for demographics population and shopping needs of the neighborhoods surrounding the site. To some neighbors, a 65,000sf store seems to be a destination store where you are bringing additional people into the area. Safeway said that 65,000sf is their standard size for a neighborhood store now and that the size has more to do with the enhanced amenities they offer inside (like coffee shop, sushi bar, cut flower kiosk, bulk foods and organic foods integrated into the aisles, etc.) than it does with attracting customers from elsewhere. These amenities allow Safeway to remain competitive. The representative did acknowledge that since this will be a flagship store, some may come from elsewhere for special occasions such as planning a party. There are also some who may come on their way up or down from Horsetooth Reservoir because of its location. Safeway is not designing or marketing this store to serve a regional market; it is a neighborhood store intended to serve the area within a one-mile radius.

- Local businesses: Several neighbors indicated that they would like to see local businesses in the center. The developer responded that local businesses are tricky because they aren't making it. Common area costs were \$4, now \$10 per square foot. He is interested in supporting local businesses but wants a good sign that they have staying power before signing them on.

## **CONSTRUCTION ISSUES**

- Construction timing: How does the shopping center's construction schedule compare with the schedule for the Harmony Shields capital improvement project? The developer says they'll probably start construction next August if everything goes smoothly. The site improvements would likely take 6-7 months to construct and the buildings would follow that. The road improvement project will likely happen first.
- Construction noise and access: Neighbors want to know how these will be set up to prevent negative impacts in the neighborhoods. The developer assured the neighbors that he also did not want to see construction trucks in the neighborhoods, nor did the City Traffic Engineer. There would be designated ways in and out of the construction site that would be adhered to. The developer also offered that if there were any trouble, that his name and phone number would be on the side of the construction trailer and that neighbors could call any time of day or night and he would address the situation right away.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Rezone: According to the Fort Collins Land Use Code, the entities who could rezone the property again include: a majority of City Council, a majority of the Planning and Zoning Board, the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation or the owners of the property to be rezoned. The Planning and Zoning Board, Director and property owners were involved in the rezoning of 2006 and do not have interest in changing the zoning again. If a majority of Council wished to bring forward a rezoning request, that proposal would be considered by them. As that has not occurred, for the purposes of this design charrette, the rezoning of 2006 is considered final.
- New neighborhood behind the shopping center: There are concerns with the vacant land zoned MMN around the center site and how its traffic and storm runoff, etc will be dealt with and what it will look like. City staff responded that that property is not a part of this development and will be purchased and developed by a different developer. There is no information yet on who that might be or what they plan. This site must address the issues on their site and that developer will have to address the issues on their site. Any discussion about the future development of that site would be conjecture at this point.