

OAK RIDGE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION

Jefferson Middle School Library

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Discussion of Y-12 Substation Project – Dale Christenson, Uranium Processing Facility Federal Project Director
- II. Presentation on U.S. Department of Energy's Environmental Management 45-Day Review – Jay Mullis, Acting Manager, Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management
- III. Informal neighborhood discussion with City Council
- IV. Status update on Centennial Golf Course – City Manager Mark Watson

EMORY VALLEY/BRIARCLIFF and LAKEVIEW SUB-AREAS:

Responses & Talking Points

The open house for these Blueprint sub-areas held at Jefferson Middle School, produced many responses from residents. Some are suggestions for improvement, some are complaints, and some are appreciations for things people like as they are. There are a few themes that appear in many responses.

Here are some of them with observations.

Most people are concerned in one way or another about movement of vehicles, but priorities differ.

Several people are concerned about the efficiency of high volume traffic movement along major arteries during rush hours. They tend to be interested in better management of lanes and signals at major intersections. Other people are primarily concerned about public safety, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. They are interested in traffic calming, for example. They want speed bumps on collector streets and roundabouts at key intersections. Both concerns are legitimate. Priorities can be assigned based on data; traffic volumes, location and frequency of accidents, etc. But some of the solution is found in the ability of the people in the community to adapt to new ideas. In west Knox County, a traffic circle replaced a light at the intersection of Northshore Drive and Concord Road a few years ago. Some expressed fear and dislike at the change. But, once drivers grew accustomed to it traffic has flowed more smoothly and with fewer accidents.

Most people want to live in an attractive city. There is broad support for the idea of requiring reasonable maintenance of buildings and grounds.

The reality is not as simple as the idea. There are two kinds of issues. What are the enforceable standards that lead to “reasonable maintenance?” The call for action usually comes from those who are maintaining their property. Those who have to respond are often people who have limited financial ability to meet the standards of the city, or whose personal values make it a low personal priority. They had rather spend their time and energy somewhere else. The second issue is that offending property owners have rights that have to be respected through fairly administered rules that give them time to correct problems and an appeal process that assures due process of law. Neither issue is a basis for ignoring the problem. The city is addressing it, but there are constraints of money, law and culture.

Thank you for being specific.

Anyone can generalize. "We want Oak Ridge to be a better place to live work and play." But several of you took the time to go beyond that. You gave us specific, well thought out suggestions. We got one response requesting provision of a sidewalk along a specific segment of Briarcliff Avenue. The writer explained in some detail why it is needed, describing how the area is used and how the current usage and road geometry tends to create vehicle and pedestrian conflicts. We can use this kind of feedback. It can be checked out and people with technical expertise in traffic management and public facilities can recommend what, if any, action we should take. We may or may not do what was requested. We may agree and do exactly what was requested. We may decide the request is not justified by the facts or we may come up with an alternative solution. The point is, specific responses are useful. Thank you!