



9/17/2020

County Commissioner Bryan Desloge
County Commissioner Mary Ann Lindley
County Commissioner Nick Maddox
County Commissioner Bill Proctor
County Commissioner Jimbo Jackson
County Commissioner Rick Minor
County Commissioner Kristin Dozier

Mayor John E. Dailey
Mayor Pro Tem Dianne Williams-Cox
City Commissioner Jeremy Matlow
City Commissioner Elaine Bryant
City Commissioner Curtis Richardson

RE: Northeast Gateway Project

Dear Commissioners,

As the largest Tallahassee neighborhood of over 3,800 residents we have been keeping a close eye on the Northeast Gateway project. Leading up to a **historic collaborative success on January 30th, 2020**, came hundreds of hours of work with our Board, residents, our consultant team, and Blueprint staff to arrive at what was widely hailed as a groundbreaking compromise for Killearn and the larger Northeast corridor.

We are acutely provoked to find Agenda Item #14.

In 2019 our Board members were encouraged by the thoughtful wisdom of former elected officials and experienced professional staff working for the Killearn Homes Association. Under their counsel, as a Board and community, **we agreed to pursue a negotiated agreement between the Killearn Homes Association and City and County Commissioners** regarding the planned Northeast Gateway Project.

Both parties agreed to the following conditions to guarantee the future of the Northeast Gateway:

- I. Two connections from Welaunee Boulevard, one at Shamrock, one at Roberts.
- II. Welaunee Boulevard extension to Shamrock road being a "rural road".
- III. The construction phasing of these two entrances to open concurrently.

This motion was supported unanimously by this body, in the second ever substantial amendment process by Blueprint. This is an excellent example of the kind of consensus we as a community can build hand-in-hand with the government when we come to the table, and all agree on a common vision.

Throughout that process, we encountered the countless cynics of Blueprint, City and County elected officials who begged us not to endorse any project other than: (1) a Roberts Road only project, or (2) A No-Build Option. Many residents did not want us to trust our local government. We decided to trust you.

We fundamentally believed that we would work best when working together, and that working together was the way to build the best project for the future of Killlearn and the future of our community. We told the naysayers to trust us, despite their concerns of the City and County Commissioners changing their word once the residents had cleared out of City Hall. We told them to trust us, and to trust you.

Since reading Agenda Item #14, we are left stunned. This proposal (Option #2) is requesting you break your commitment to Killlearn and our people by exploring the feasibility of changing the agreed upon routes as it relates to creating an additional entrance to Welaunee on Centerville Road. We reject entirely any suggestion that this is somehow “part of the normal planning process”, or that directing the PD&E to examine alternative routes for the Northeast Gateway does not predetermine that the agreed upon routes will change through future Board action. Neither claim holds weight to the thoughtful voter. That this proposal would be posited prior to a full and lengthy analysis of the Roberts Road connection is deeply troubling to trust built to date on the working relationship between Killlearn and Blueprint.

We reject the idea that the justification for the Roberts Road connection is because it would create a five way intersection. This was never the intention of KHA or Blueprint staff. Kimley Horn’s traffic analysis was all done on the modeling of KHA and Blueprint’s mutual understanding of the future of Roberts Road being realigned to connect only to Welaunee North. This diagram below demonstrates the confusion demonstrated on this in Agenda Item 14.

The intersection as described by Blueprint to be not viable, is not what BP has ever discussed.



Proposed New Intersection by KHA, study of this falls in the existing PD&E scope, does not require Option #2 to study this further.



To date, we have operated in total fidelity to our mutual agreement on this project, and we hope that this proposal is a brief misunderstanding in our shared direction.

Exploring the creation of any additional Blueprint roads connecting to Centerville Road beyond Shamrock would represent an unambiguous termination of this agreement and our neighborhoods grassroots advocacy efforts for anything other than a No-Build Option moving forward.

It is our expectation that you will support Option #1. It is also our expectation that you will enthusiastically reject Option #2 and enumerate the reasons why this proposal violates our mutual commitment to one another, would jeopardize residents' faith in the institution of our local government and absolve any remaining neighborhood support for the Northeast Gateway's future. We do not have a position on Option #3.

We urge you to explicitly renounce this proposal and affirmatively state your commitment to honor the agreement of the substantial amendment process reached between Killearn and Blueprint. This gesture would go a long way to helping explain this series of events to Killearn residents and ensure them that City and County commissioners continue to remain in lockstep with our neighborhood.

Terminating this agreement would be a substantial step backward in the trust and participation of Killearn in this process moving forward and in any City or County Commissioner who supports this proposal. We look forward to resuming working collaboratively with our elected officials on this project once this proposal has been rejected.

Attentively yours,



David Ferguson, President
On Behalf of the Board of Directors for
Killearn Homes Association, Inc.

