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Citizens for a Loring Park Community
Land Use Committee

Monday, March 29, 2010

6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Loring Park Office Building (430 Oak Grove), Room 207

Attendance: Dick Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), Jan Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), Jana Metge (CLPC Executive Coordinator), John Van Heel (100 West Grant), Paul Hinderager (Summit House), Robert Cook (Eddy's Cafe), Phil Davis (MCTC), Scott Erickson (MCTC), Gary Gliem (Summit House), Christopher Hoffer (510 Groveland), Dave Hile (Summit House), Neil Reardon (1401 Willow), Neil Carlson (Summit House), Janine Jelks-Seale (110 West Grant), Dee Montgomery (Lowry Hill)

I. 6:30-6:45 p.m. Call to Order—John Van Heel, CLPC Land Use Chair

John led introductions of those in attendance.

Approved the agenda. (Motion Dick Sandberg, second Neil Reardon) Motion passed

Approved the February 22, 2010 minutes. (Motion Dick Sandberg, second Christopher Hoffer) Motion passed

Announcements

- There is a public hearing scheduled on designation of 131 Oak Grove at the Heritage Preservation Commission meeting, 4:30 p.m. City Hall on April 6, 2010.
- Jana distributed copies of the April CLPC newsletter.
- Jana circulated a copy of the CLPC Annual Report, which is also posted on the CLPC website.
- Jana distributed flyers for Cabaret Night at the Woman's Club. The charge is just \$10 for the two-hour events. The four performance dates are April 27, June 22, September 21 and November 16.
- Jana distributed updated information on the Central and SW LRT corridors.
- Jana distributed Hennepin County bike maps.
- Jana announced that census jobs are still available in the Loring Park neighborhood.
- There is a community meeting scheduled for April 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the Loring Park Community Center to review designs for the 15th Street bike lanes and Hennepin/15th entrance to Loring Park.
- Court Watch was cancelled for April; the next meeting will be May 7.
- Loring Kitchen & Bar is sponsoring another community breakfast for Saturday, April 17, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Please post notices in buildings.
- The MCTC Health Fair will be held on April 14th from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. CLPC will have a booth.

II. 6:45-7:15 p.m. MCTC Outdoor Plaza – Phil Davis & Scott Ericson, MCTC

Phil described improvements to the outdoor plaza that abuts Loring Park (see <http://www.minneapolis.edu/campusfacilitiesprojects.cfm> for “Outdoor Plaza Project.”) The first phase of the work is to waterproof the area that covers the lower structure. The rest of the project will add more park-like elements into the area. Phil distributed copies of the aerial view and elevations of the project. In remodeling the Helland Center, there will be expanded windows to

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allow viewing into the building and from the building into the park. Phil has received much feedback on planting materials to use. The goal is to finish the project this spring/summer including plantings.

Committee members had several questions. Phil explained that the storm water management part of the project is driving some of the plantings including trees and rainwater gardens. Scott distributed a list of some of the recommended plantings. They will be using natural grasses and in response to a question affirmed the concern that they not grow too high (safety issues). The pergola will offer some protection from the sun but not the rain. There will be no changes to the blue light system that is active 24 hours a day. A committee member noted dissatisfaction with the proposed plan, specifically some of the plant materials. Phil noted that the plan is still subject to revision.

MCTC Master Plan – A committee member contacted the office with some concerns about the MCTC Master Plan in progress. Phil said that they are required by MnSCU to revise the master facility plan every five years. This is designed to be a 30-50 year plan although things are not always done according to the plan. For example, the last plan envisioned purchasing land across the freeway but instead they purchased some of the Billy Graham parcels. Phil addressed the concern about the future of some buildings in the Harmon Historic District. The building on Harmon and 13th is a contributing property to the Historic District. A neighboring property is not contributing and is identified for possible removal. The buildings on the Hennepin side are not in the historic district. The Wells Mansion (acquired by MCTC in 1996) needs \$10-15 million in improvements. It will probably need to be closed soon. Then the trustees will need to decide if the building is worth the investment or should be torn down. Restoration would focus on the original property, not the pieces added in the last few decades. There were questions about funding for maintenance and possible Legacy Funds through the Department of Interior or the State of Minnesota. Some of the challenges of the building are the porches (pulling away from the main building), roof, heating/cooling mechanicals, asbestos that has been sealed but not abated, and mold in the walls.

Other discussion items:

Streetcars are back on the City Council agenda and hopefully MCTC is looking ahead to connecting with future transit.

The MCTC Master Plan is targeted for June. John noted that this plan may refer to the Harmon District and hopefully CLPC and MCTC can coordinate these plans.

In response to a question about growth in student population, Phil said that they have grown every year in the last decade which helps drive the need for facilities. They have been good neighbors with St. Thomas but there is no joint planning.

John asked for committee input on next steps concerning the MCTC Master Plan. He feels that the committee should more formally review the plan soon. Concern was expressed by committee members about the potential loss of the Wells Mansion and other historic structures along Harmon Avenue. Jana will forward the link for the MCTC Master Plan to committee members. The committee could ask MCTC to invite their consultant to address the committee. Committee members could add comments online now. There are other concerns about possible acquisitions that are not contiguous – such considerations should be the CLPC neighborhood master plan.

Dick suggested that committee members read the draft master plan and discuss it at the April meeting (sending those comments to MCTC) with an invitation for a presentation at the May Land Use meeting. Another item for the May meeting would be how to be more collaborative, including work on the Loring Park Master Plan.

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III. 7:15-7:45 p.m. Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan Request for Proposal – John Van Heel/Robert Cook

John reviewed the sections of the RFP: background, study area (excluding the park), and scope of services for consultant responsibility. The scope of services includes several sections; he noted that the first two (purpose-vision and survey of existing conditions) are typical of all such plans. The next set of sections—sustainable land use and urban design, pedestrian circulation and transportation, cultural assets and economic vitality and historic preservation—refer in places to the existing Traffic Calming Task Force and a proposed Preservation Task. John considers the use of the task forces as a way to stretch resources. There was some discussion about best strategy for communication with the consultant -- it was left somewhat open for now to allow for strategies proposed by consultant. John then reviewed the timeline for initial Board approval and final selection.

Robert Cook asked about the elimination in section B of a survey of “damaged areas” such as overhead power lines and other negative aspects of the neighborhood. The committee agreed to modify the proposed RFP language.

The CLPC Land use Committee approves the proposed RFP with the following amended language:

B.6. Survey of existing property attributes, both positive and blighted, including land use, zoning, property value, building floor area, height, housing condition, and number of residential units.

(Motion Dick Sandberg, second Neil Carlson) Motion passed

Jana added that she had sent a link to John that should be in the Resources section. Another member recommended adding a reference to the bike plan. John agreed that other materials could be added but they should be available electronically so that the link can be clickable.

IV. 7:45-8:00 p.m. - Creation of a Historic Task Force

The need to more aggressively address neighborhood preservation issues comes from recent issues with the Ladd House, Wesley Church and Wells Mansion. We may want to meet with the City staff person who is handing the Oak Grove houses. It is not clear what work the committee (longer time frame) or task force (more limited time frame) would do. There was discussion about the focus of the committee including a purpose statement. The group could work on keeping some of the properties and maintaining contacts. Dick suggested a preservation prioritization task force that might evolve into a longer range committee. John suggested that in the future a CURA intern might be able to work on this project and Jana described the use of interns on a previous project. Paul volunteered to research the age of the gray Lyon House.

V. 8:00-8:15 p.m. Report from Task Forces

Historic Plaque Task Force – John, Kim, Bob Copeland and Ray Harris have been working on this project with Ryan from Shea, Inc. Ryan will come to the April meeting for a presentation.

Traffic Calming Task Force – Next meeting is Monday, April 19th from 6:30-8:00 at Loring Park Office Building/430 Oak Grove – Room 207. There has been no official response to date from Lisa Goodman.

Shaun Murphy Task Force – Gateway entrance to Loring Park @ 15th & Hennepin. Jana and John attended the second meeting. There will be a community meeting on April 15, 6:30 p.m. at the park. Several committee members requested a copy of the draft design.

Save Wesley Church – No report to date. Jana will ask Greg Donofrio for a written report on the reaction of the Methodist Conference.

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Lurcat Alley – At a meeting with Olson Advertising there was talk about historic designation for the alley in conjunction with a plan to replace the pavers. The old pavers (under asphalt) will be reused if possible. Doug Kress in Councilman Goodman's office confirmed that the brick pavers were not a contributing element to the H.P.C. designation of the block. The project was originally scheduled for autumn of 2009 but was delayed to spring/summer of 2010.

Central Lutheran Church: They are interested in a crossing to the new hotel.

Adjourned 8:30 p.m.