

Land Use Committee

Monday, February 27th, 2006

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

@ MCTC/Minneapolis Community & Technical College
Management Education Center, 13th & Harmon, Room M1500

I. 6:30-6:45 pm Call to Order-- Bob Copeland, CLPC Land Use Committee Chair Agenda Approval, Introductions, Approve Minutes & Announcements

In Attendance: Those in attendance included Robert Copeland, Jan Sandberg, John van Heel, Phil Davis, Dan Kirk, Bob Hansen, Jim Bullock, Rich Demerr, Robert Cook, Carol Birkland, Lila Jacob, Patrick Bloodgood, Wally Small, Marilyn Small, Ray Harris, Glenn Kohl, Kartra Kohl, Marilyn Turner, Winnie Anderson, Richard Anderson, Doug Wallace, Greg Schroeder, Robb Urquhart, Marsha Weidenhammer, Terry Thompson, Dick Sandberg, Merry Keefe, Libby Omer, and Neil Carlson.

Bob led introductions of the 24 or so persons in attendance. There were eventually about 32 persons in attendance.

Motion by Jim Bullock, seconded by John van Heel, to approve the agenda.

Motion passed

Announcements:

- **Monday, March 6th** – Loring Hill Task Force Meeting, 6:30-8:00 p.m. @ Hennepin Methodist Church
- **Monday, March 13th** – The CLPC Annual Meeting is at the Woman’s Club. The Information. Fair is set for 5:30-6:45 p.m. and the Annual Meeting is 6:45-8:30 p.m. The guest speaker is Barb Sporlein, City of Minneapolis Planning Director.
- **Thursday, March 23rd @ 6:00 p.m. OR Saturday, March 25th @ 10:00 a.m.** – Neighborhood Summit for Small Area Planning at The Woman’s Club of Minneapolis.

II. 6:45-7:30 MCTC/Metro State--President Phil Davis, Dan Kirk (Facilities Planning)

President Phil Davis welcomed the attendees to the campus. The management and business programs are housed in part in the former Graham building in which this meeting was held. President Davis briefly discussed the program, “Power of You,” a joint project with Saint Paul College. The program is designed to make the first two years of college tuition free to those graduating from a public high school in Minneapolis or St. Paul. There are about 11,000 students at MCTC and about 1,500 students at Metropolitan State.

The college hopes to remodel the existing building at 13th and Hennepin to house the College of Science programs such as nursing. The facility will include labs and provide modern technical education for college students. The existing building will be extensively remodeled at a cost of about \$19 million, to be more open to Hennepin Avenue and an attractive addition to the neighborhood. There were funds allocated in the last bonding cycle for planning. The additional funds are in this year’s bonding request with a high priority for MnSCU and the project is in the Governor’s proposal.

President Davis also discussed medium- and long-range plans for the 13th and Hennepin area including possible new buildings on the small surface parking lot. The college is yet uncertain about whether certain buildings will be demolished or remodeled. Part of this area is in the historic preservation district but the only contributing building is the old Standard Oil Building on the corner of 13th and Harmon.

There was general support from those in attendance.

Questions and suggestions:

Is there adequate parking? President Davis noted that the college added parking stalls before the merger and their last census indicated that there is still parking capacity.

Would the college be interested in improvements to Harmon Place from 10th Street to the campus? Improvements were considered in the past but died due to some opposition from a few local businesses which have since relocated. President Davis indicated that they would be interested in looking at a project that would improve Harmon.

What is the availability of meeting space for local groups? There is space at reasonable rates especially for nonprofit groups.

There was a suggestion that as plans get firmed up, that information be widely disseminated to local residents.

III. 7:30-8:15 Loring Greenway Renovation Ray Harris, Doug Wallace (Greenway Committee), (Robb Urquhart, Greg Schroeder) City Staff

Ray Harris described the need for a public meeting in anticipation of spending public funds on the project. Doug Wallace described the history of the Greenway Committee and recent efforts to move the renovation project up on the city's funding schedule, from 2011 to 2006. The Greenway predates the surrounding condo buildings and some of the pedestrian needs may not exactly fit with the original design. In 1999, there was money to develop a design plan for the Greenway and to better integrate the Greenway into Loring Park. There was also new lighting and a new playground. Last December, a consultant from New York (G. Long) presented ideas based on his research on outstanding public spaces. He was adamant on the need for (1) open, accessible public spaces with flexible seating and (2) less concrete and a softer feel. Longo also maintains that the great spaces are not managed by public entities and at least some on the committee hope that there will be a new model for managing the Greenway.

The plan presented tonight was adopted by the committee on January 26, 2006. Some of these changes attempt to attract more pedestrian traffic. The Greenway is drivable with access for emergency vehicles. There are also utilities under the Greenway. The bonds from the TIF district were retired in 2001 and there has been less funding available than needed to maintain the space. The current design represents most of the intent of the 2001 plan. Modifications include making the pavement thicker than before—there are some heavier utility trucks that need to access the Greenway.

Rob went through a detailed discussion of the work to be done. There will be some work to ensure that water runoff is handled correctly and avoid the sort of problem that has caused deterioration of some of the surfaces. The lighting conduit will be replaced and the irrigation system will be salvaged. There will not be any art put in at this time but all fountains will be preserved as will the playground. There will be work on the connector to Grant Street (in part in anticipation of the new Eitel Hospital project) and reserve a space for a future information kiosk. LaSalle is a bridge and there has been some settling. The elevation of the separations and steps will be less marked and lighting will be improved. Pedestrians may be encouraged to use the upper path but there will still be mixed use with bicycles and pedestrians. There will be additional signing to encourage use of the Greenway and clarify directions. Some trees that are too dense will be removed but will be replaced with the same caliper (one 18" tree = five 4" trees). There will be fewer of the small areas for flowers and more bigger areas for flowers.

Questions:

Will the pavement be replaced? Yes, completely replaced.

What about skateboarders? There will be work in soft edges that will discourage skateboard use.

What about problems with buried conduit in other city projects? The problems have come when the wires have been directly buried. This wiring will be in conduit.

What about a stairway from LaSalle to the Greenway? The city has considered this, but cannot do a stairway without an elevator due to ADA requirements. There are also liability issues with both the stairs and the elevator. There will be no change to the steep stairway off Yale Place between the two Loring Green buildings.

What about the fountain on Nicollet? This belongs to the city and incorporates a steel obelisk that is a working fountain but has no drain. It developed some continuity with Peavey Plaza.

What about the trellises? Several will go. There will be some loss of permanent seating but they hope to add some portable seating. This will not be a strictly pedestrian path.

How do you keep the movable chairs from walking away? The successful places do not have a problem with the disappearing chairs.

How will the up lighting work with all of the residential buildings? There are some truly blank walls and also holiday type of lighting.

How will homeowners know what will happen when? The committee is developing a communications plan. The city will also set up a Web site with timelines.

What happened with the special assessment idea? Nothing is in place yet for funding. Ray said that there are rumors that the entire downtown will be in a special taxing district. The problem is that this might create the same problems as now, with the Greenway becoming a lower priority.

What are some examples of the private management model? The Midtown Greenway has a private group that seeks out management dollars. Rob mentioned a few other examples.

The concept presented here does not show a dog park—does this mean that there will not be a dog park? (This question was asked as part of the discussion following the motion below.) The dog park concept is gone.

Plans are to obtain full Council approval on April 14th and start construction by the July. The landscaping will come in spring 2007. Lee Froehlich, a forester at the University of Minnesota, is working with city staff to select plantings. A public hearing will be held April 4 if needed.

Motion by John van Heel, seconded by Robert Cook, that the CLPC Land Use Committee support the Loring Greenway Redevelopment Concept dated 02-09-06.

Motion passed

IV. The Grand Plan for Peavey Plaza, Loring Greenway, and the Berger Fountain.

Ray Harris noted that during discussions of the Greenway, questions arose about Peavey Plaza and Berger Fountain forming a path from Orchestra Hall through the park to the Walker. Orchestra Hall is planning to renovate the Hall and is also interested in doing something with Peavey Plaza. The representative to the Park Board is interested and discussions have started with the Park Board staff. The Walker is also interested in the concept. This raises the question again of the need for a private management association. Ray is also working on raising funds for project such as this. Now there is discussion of the need for more downtown walkways to the river, in Elliot Park, North Loop, and the Cedar Lake Trail. Now there is discussion of linking

these walkways together. The space could provide access to public art and artistic performances and by tying all of the parts together, it may help fundraising.

Questions:

What about Berger Fountain? The design is nearly complete and cost estimates are due near the end of March. Ray has identified a national foundation that funds city fountains. The group has stepped back from aggressively completing the fountain project to make sure that the work on the Greenway gets done.

IV.8:15-8:30 Reports

- **Parking Lot Use Report**

There were concerns raised at the last meeting regarding parking for fee at the 13th & Yale lot. Councilwoman Goodman's office is looking into this illegal use.

Adjourned 8:18 PM