

Citizens for a Loring Park Community

Land Use Committee

Monday, September 24, 2007

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

@ Loring Park Office Building, Room 207

Attendance: Dick Sandberg (Loring Green East), Jan Sandberg (Loring Green East), Diane Hansen (Copenhagen Enterprises & Loring Park property owners), Neil Carlson (Summit House), Robert Copeland (The Wellington), John van Heel (110 West Grant), Ann DeGroot (OutFront MN), Don Elwood (Minneapolis Department of Public Works), Katie Hatt (1417 LaSalle Ave)

**I. 6:30-6:45 pm Call to Order—Dick Sandberg, CLPC Land Use Committee-Chair
Agenda Approval, Introductions, Approve July 23rd Minutes, Announcements**

Motion by John van Heel, second by Jan Sandberg, to approve the July 23, 2007 minutes.

Motion passed

Announcements

- October 15, 2007 is an added public meeting at the Central Public Library, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm to review the overall transportation plan. The emphasis at this meeting will be on the streetcar plan
- A Community Engagement meeting is scheduled at the Central Library on October 16, 11 am -1 pm
- *Motion by John Van Heel, seconded by Robert Copeland, to move the December Land Use meeting from December 24 to December 17, 2007.*

Motion passed

II. 6:45 – 7:15 Updates

- **1501 Nicollet** – Ann DeGroot

OutFront Minnesota is in the process of hiring a project manager—interviews are in two weeks. After that step, they can begin to discuss design and financial concerns, including long-term operating expense needs and an overall economic model. OutFront Minnesota is conducting focus groups (four total) asking about the desired “feel” of the building. They continue to discover how important this project is to the GLBT community. The project will need to have commercial elements to be financially viable. Ann will return to give the committee a complete sense of what happened during the groups and to introduce the new project manager.

- **Eitel Hospital** – no presenter available



There have been several calls about the bricked up windows on the south side of the restored hospital building facing 14th Street. Committee members felt that during meetings between the Eitel Hospital Task Force (representing the neighborhood) and BKV and Village Green, all proposals included a treatment for the bricked-up windows to produce a better appearance. At no point were the windows to be left bricked in. It now seems that the other windows in the restored building are finished but there has been no work on the bricked-in windows to modify their appearance.

Members of the committee were not certain if the project proposal sent to the City was what had been agreed to by the neighbor-

hood. The committee was told that the developer discovered that the bricked-in windows were somehow tied in to the structure of the interior stairs so that the bricks could not be removed. There has been no fix proposed, such as artificial windows. What makes this worse is that the rest of the work has been of high quality.



14th Street Elevation

Picture taken from materials discussed with the Eitel Hospital Task Force

Loring/EITEL Property Development, nnp/Magellan Development, Village Green Companies and BKV Group

In addition, the Eitel Hospital is one of eight sites proposed to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places—it is unclear what documents have been submitted and whether the current window condition has been approved.

Motion by Robert Copeland, seconded by Katie Hatt, that representatives from the Eitel Hospital Task Force work with staff to prepare a letter for Board approval concerning options for addressing the bricked-up windows. The letter is to be sent to our Councilmember, the city, the National Historical Society and the developer.

Motion passed, John van Heel abstained

- **1730 Clifton Place**

Add to agenda for the October meeting.

III. 7:15 – 7:30 pm. 13th Street Pedestrian Plaza Project: - Don Elwood, Public Works

The CLPC Board referred this item to the committee. See the June 29, 2007 draft Downtown Action Plan at http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/Downtown_Final_Adopted_062907.pdf The specific item is described as “Design and reconstruct 13th Street pedestrian “front door” connection between Nicollet Mall and Convention Center at a cost of \$1.2 - \$1.8 to be spent during the 2007-2008 time period. The report notes that “the design concept being developed, full reconstruction without and with elevator skyway connection.” (page 49)

The project is identified in the proposed 2008 capital budget as a paving project PV045 (13th St S Pedestrian Plaza, Nic Mall to Marq Ave) for \$750,000 of capital funds in 2008. See the capital budget in http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2008recommended/docs/2008RecBudget_Sec8.pdf. This document also states that funding for this street project will come from two sources: \$750,000 from Other and an additional \$500,000 from the 2007 Minneapolis Transportation Action Plan.¹ The ‘2008 Capital Business Decision Summary’ states that the request for the project was \$500,000, CLIC recommended \$0, but the Mayor recommended \$750,000 (page 327). In December 2006, the City Council approved \$270,000 in net debt bonds for the Downtown Action Plan (see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/archives/proceedings/2006/20061211-proceedings-adj.pdf>)

¹ This may also be the 13th Avenue pedestrian project cited under the Convention Center in http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2008recommended/docs/2008RecBudget_ConvCtr_Sec9.pdf. The 13th Avenue project also shows as an Interfund transfer from the Convention Center to the City in http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2008recommended/docs/2008RecBudget_Sec7.pdf

Mr. Don Elwood from the City's Public Works Department was present to answer committee member's questions. The purpose of the project is to make Minneapolis a more walkable city. The City submitted for federal money to add pedestrian amenities to the segment between Nicollet and Marquette (both T intersections) with plans to make the road one-way to allow space to widen the sidewalks. They also want to add greenery.

The committee had numerous questions, most focusing on the need for a project of this magnitude, possible impact on Eat Street, and the motivation for the project. The committee consensus was that these dollars would be better used to develop Grant Street to lead to north and south Nicollet Mall.

- Will there be an opportunity for neighborhood participation in the project? Don Elwood said that his next step is to refine the concept for the project. He will be working with the companies abutting 13th Street and a neighborhood rep would be invited to that meeting.
- What funding requests have been made? The federal application now in process would have a 20% match. They originally asked for Oberstar dollars but that request was not funded. The project is currently in the city's budget for net debt bonds, possibly at a reduced scope.
 - There were several comments about the short timeline and lack of formal rating process when the project came to the Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
- What about the connection to the skyway, what added benefit does it offer given the current configuration of the skyway at that location? Mr. Elwood was not sure if skyway access is still part of proposal.
- What is the project scope and size? Where did this come from—there was a project years ago for lighting and planters but nothing like this. Mr. Elwood said that the scope may be reduced to include lighting but this has not been determined.
- Concerns from the committee about the size of and justification for the project generated most of the questions. Mr. Elwood was unaware of any such analyses.
 - Are there any cost-benefit or needs analyses?
 - Are there pedestrian counts of current use or projects of future use?
 - Is the assumption that this will positively impact convention business?
 - Are there assessments of the impact of the conversion to one-way on taxis?
- How will this project impact Eat Street and past investments for attracting conventioners to Eat Street?
- Several members had concerns about funding this project while abandoning maintenance for a similar enhancement project on Grant Street.
- What impact would this project have on the Nicollet Avenue Service District?

No one from the committee supported a project of this magnitude especially in the absence of justification of any benefits and mitigation of possible negative impacts. There may be some support for scaled-down elements such as improved lighting (added pedestrian lighting) or planters. These small items were in the original project proposed years ago at well under \$100,000.

IV. 7:30 - 7:45 pm. Minneapolis Streetcar Study and Comprehensive Plan— John van Heel

Reminder that the final drafts are available. The June Action Plan is at http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/Downtown_Final_Adopted_062907.pdf and the streetcar plan is at <http://www.-ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/StreetcarDraftFinalReport.pdf> There will be a meeting at the Central Library, 2nd Floor, October 15, 2007 from 4 pm to 6 pm to discuss how the streetcar portion integrates into the overall plan. Discussion will include funding mechanisms such as taxes as well as density issues.

The Downtown Task Force had its final meeting in August but the Downtown 2030 Plan has not yet been completed. Ultimately it will be incorporated into the citywide comprehensive plan. Beth Elliott would be happy to address the committee, but the draft may not be completed for a few months.

VI. 8:00 – 8:30 pm. NRP Phase II

The committee discussed the timeline for the Phase II Plan (to hold community meetings by the end of 2007) and funding issues must be addressed by the Board.

Chair Sandberg distributed a copy of a summary of land use and similar items from other Phase II plans. Committee discussion included

- (1) Basing the Phase II plan on what we are currently doing. For example, is low-end market-rate housing still a top priority for the neighborhood.
- (2) Loss of parking. Like it or not, parking is a problem in the neighborhood and people will continue to drive. Places that are being used for parking are in danger of development resulting in a loss of parking. Recently, the Loring Ramp limited the number of spaces available to a nearby low-income residence.
- (3) Continue to involve the neighborhood in land use meetings.

Action Items

Action Item: chair will work with Jana to get an update from the City on the status of maintenance of the Grant Street streetscape project such as the banners. What is the status of the proposal to enlarge the district?

Action Item: Katie offered to facilitate a brainstorming session with interested folks and committee members sometime in the next couple of weeks, if this would be helpful. Dick offered to work with her. Dick will also check with Jana.

Action Item: Committee would like the Board to formally set a timeline for Plan Development.

Action Item: Check on City's plan to assess properties for street lighting.

Adjourned 8:28 pm.

Agenda Items for Future Meetings

- 1730 Clifton Place
- Eitel Hospital
- Loring Parking Ramp
- 1500 Nicollet Development Proposal
- Commercial Property at 15th and LaSalle
- Loring Greenway/Berger Fountain
- Lunds
- Downtown 2030 plan – Beth Elliott