



West Side Flats

Master Plan and Development Guidelines Update

The Most Livable
City in America

Thursday, May 23, 2013

West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines Update Community Task Force Meeting #3

Attendees:

Community Task Force (CTF) Members

Attending:

Betsy Reveal (Chair), Benjamin Mike, Jessica Treat, Rebecca Noecker, Karen Reid, Lorrie Louder, Gjerry Berquist, Hokan Miller, Sean McFalling

Project Staff/Consultants

Lucy Thompson, Jeff McMenimen, Jeff Miller, Brett Emmons

Meeting Notes:

1. Review of Meeting Notes from March 14, 2013

- No comments.

2. Developers Roundtable Summary

- Building heights – Group discussed the developers' critiques of the Upper Landing's lack of variety in building heights. The goal is for the WSF to look different than Upper Landing because it will have urban blocks, parks and more neighborhood features. Also, the Upper Landing blocks are laid out in a linear pattern, unlike how the West Side Flats blocks will be arranged, which sets up a different street pattern and building orientation. It is the intent of the WSF master plan to be more open and flexible in regard to building heights. Also, we should keep in mind that Upper Landing will look better as the trees grow taller, filling out the streets and softening the buildings.
- A WSF promotional document would be beneficial for attracting developers.
- It will be important for the WSF master plan to show the City's commitment to the vision for the WSF and the riverfront.
- It was noted that the developers' references to "stick-built" buildings doesn't apply to the existing industrial buildings, which are not stick-built.
- Question of whether there should have been more industrial developers involved in the Developers Roundtable. *Other industrial developers were invited to the Developers Roundtable but didn't attend it. Also, a number of industrial developers were engaged in the project through the Business Owners Stakeholder Meeting.*

3. Draft Vision and Guiding Principles

- The word “industrial” has been left out of the draft vision.
- Consider incorporating the importance of industrial jobs and good paying wages into the vision.
- Industrial may not be the right word. Are there alternative words that would better describe the desired future for the current Riverview Industrial Park?
- It is critical to get people living in the WSF so that there is more ownership of the place and more improvements to the existing environment.
- Some concern that the draft vision doesn’t describe the future WSF uniquely enough. Is the vision’s language too similar to other plans’ visions?
- Counterpoint argument was that the draft vision is a neighborhood vision and we all want similar things in our neighborhoods, which means it will have many elements that are similar to other plans’ visions.
- Consider pulling out the WSF’s unique features, such as the river esplanade and the neighborhood squares.
- The vision needs to mention “water” more prominently.
- Under Balanced and Sustainable Placemaking, the concept should be added of being a leader on this issue.
- The word “jobs” is missing from the guiding principles. Consider adding “good paying jobs” rather than living wage jobs.
- Consider adding integrated energy efficiency as an additional principle that addresses sustainability.
- Merge principles #6 and #8?
- One task force member suggested that principles #3, #5, #6, #10 and #12 seem like the most distinct principles.

4. Design Charrette Summary/Big Ideas

- Is there a possibility that the north-south linear greenway acts as a separator within the neighborhood?
- Will the shift toward guiding land for business park land uses result in loss of industrial land? The Port Authority is very concerned about the continuing loss of industrial land.
- The business park land use designation should be clearly defined.
- There should be a transition in land uses from predominantly residential west to predominantly industrial east.
- Concern about a multi-use trail along Plato Boulevard – side paths don’t work well with intersections, creating conflicts between bikes, pedestrians and vehicles. The City’s Transportation Committee is recommending separation of bicyclists and walkers, and favors on-street bike lanes.
- Vertical circulation will need to be clearly defined in the WSF master plan, e.g. stairs vs. ramps.

West Side Flats

Master Plan and Development Guidelines Update

Page 3

- Car-sharing facilities should be considered in addition to bike-sharing facilities.
- Group likes the idea of using water on the land side of the flood wall, which is a way to reconnect the neighborhood to water, and shows that the neighborhood can overcome the separation created by the flood wall.
- The State legislature just approved funding for stormwater infiltration demonstration projects. Could the master plan identify ways that the WSF could utilize this funding?
- Cross-section illustrations would be very helpful for describing preferred street designs and building heights.
- Consider a smaller green loop along Fillmore, State, the esplanade and the linear green along the tracks.
- Concern that visual preferences/concepts, such as street designs and building heights, aren't conveyed adequately in the draft vision.
- Excitement was expressed for linking public art and stormwater use in the WSF.
- The master plan should identify and describe the future vibe and "big idea" for the WSF.
- Suggested that maybe the Community Task Force could meet separately to brainstorm the WSF's future vibe and big idea, as well as branding/marketing considerations.