



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Melvin Carter, Mayor

*25 West Fourth Street, Ste. 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102*

HILLCREST REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Co-chairs Anne DeJoy and Linda Martinez-Higgins

Meeting #8 Summary

June 16th, 2020, 5:30-7:00pm

via Skype

CAC members in attendance: Anne DeJoy, Linda Martinez-Higgins, Rachel Finazzo Doll, Osman Egal, Tong Thao, Que Vang, James Westin.

Others: Bill Dermody, Mike Richardson, Tim Scanlon-Johnson (City of Saint Paul staff); Andrew Dresdner, Mo Convery, Jeff Mandych, Nathan Campeau (City's consultants); Monte Hilleman George Hoene (Port Authority staff) James Soltis, Tom Goodrum (Port Authority's consultants)

Welcome & Introductions

Co-Chair Ann DeJoy called the meeting to order at 5:37pm and reviewed the meeting protocol.

Site Approaches

Andrew Dresdner and Mo Convery updated the CAC on the project and CAC schedule going forward.

Andrew Dresdner and Mo Convery presented the four initial site approaches and walked the CAC through the background and process that led to each conceptualization. [see presentation slides]

Site approaches initial reactions

The CAC inquired about the definition of low density and its prevalence in the conservation approach. Andrew Dresdner explained that conservation approach has medium and low density, this approach has the highest amount of land dedicated to lower density housing of the four.

Noting the wetlands movement in some approaches, a concern was raised about water flow into the lower area of the sites in some of the approaches that more aggressively reshape the land. Nathan

Campeau addressed the CAC's concerns by explaining that storm water management will occur in the open spaces and in development areas, working with the site's flow (northern 1/3 flows north, and the rest south). The exact analysis of the expected storm water amounts has not been finalized yet but is being looked at. Nathan noted that more investigation and conclusions about the wetlands are needed in the course of creating the master plan.

CAC members expressed concern about the future alignment of Ivy Ave and residents' stated concerns about added traffic. Mo Convery responded that in all each of the four potential approaches we assume that Ivy Ave keeps its current alignment. Mo noted that traffic calming will be key to any of the long blocks present in the Hillcrest Site.

Monte Hilleman asked why the total acreages don't add up to exactly 112 acres. Andrew Dresdner responded that it's for two reasons. First, the right-of-way is listed as a flat 20 acres for each of these approaches, but it has not actually been calculated. Also, the other land use categories' acreage figures are rounded up or down to a whole number.

CAC members raised concerns with business access using Ivy rather than McKnight in the Light Touch approach. It's preferred that truck traffic use McKnight and avoid impacting the St. Paul neighborhoods. It was noted that McKnight will soon be reduced to 3 lanes, and there was a question of whether Ramsey County is coordinating with this project. Bill Dermody stated Ramsey County staff and other transportation staff are involved to analyze the impacts of the Hillcrest redevelopment on McKnight and ensure coordination.

Open space on the southern end was identified as an opportunity to connect to Beaver Lake. The approach with park space on that end is better for that reason.

It was asked why there is no low-density residential shown in the Reshape Approach, given community priorities about respecting the quiet nature of the existing neighborhood. Andrew Dresdner responded that some of the housing could be changed to low-density residential, but that makes it harder to provide the 1,000 units they are aiming for. Bill Dermody noted that you could increase the higher density residential to even higher in some places to compensate for that, if necessary.

Site Approaches : Guided Discussion

[1.] (Question from Bill Dermody) Regarding vehicle traffic, we've used offset intersections, indirect intersections, and a mix of trails and streets to attempt to provide connectivity and to "avoid excess traffic flow" or fast traffic to the west and south. To what extent do you feel these approaches hit the mark vs. need more work?

Comments: Needs more work. Ivy is a concern, whether employment is located on the east or the west side. The Sculpt Approach addresses the business traffic best – will have best access from McKnight. The Reshape Approach would address St. Paul neighbors' concerns. Conserve Approach pushes amenities toward Maplewood, which might not work great.

[2.] (Question from Bill Dermody) The "flat" park space is up high in 3 of the approaches, and down low in 1, but is in a variety of contexts (surrounding uses). Any thoughts on what works best for creating a true "activity center" and community amenity?

CAC members asked for an explanation as to why flat parkland was a priority. Mo Convery and Bill Dermody explained that the Saint Paul Parks and Rec department has identified that the site's 5 acres of active park space needs to be mainly flat so that it could accommodate active recreation such as ball fields.

Monte Hilleman commented that the Port Authority has several concerns with these approaches, including that all of them provide more than the 20 acres of parks and open space agreed to in the City's ordinance regarding bonding for the site's purchase, and that none of them provide enough employment space to achieve the job goals. Also, employment should be near McKnight, the hilltop should be an amenity with a purpose, and wetlands should be sited efficiently.

[3.] (Question from Bill Dermody) Street connections are treated differently in the different approaches, whether it's how Winthrop goes through or connections to McKnight or Larpenteur. Which approaches work better for these?

Comments: As far as approaches with apartments near the McKnight/Larpenteur intersection, having multiple streets to use to get in and out will work better. The Conserve Approach lines up well with the grid.

A CAC member asked if there is a way to combine the Sculpt and Conserve Approaches?

Bill Dermody explained that we're going to take 4 distinct approaches out to the public for feedback in August or so. After that, in the September-November timeframe, we'll be looking to establish 2 or 3 concepts. Those concepts could be combos of these approaches, or they could introduce new ideas if we hear that something is missing.

[4.] (Question from Bill Dermody) Any other comments on how well these approaches meet the community priorities?

Comments: The utilization of the green space in the Sculpt Approach is good and it could act as 3 separate spaces that spread the value of the parks / open space.

ADJOURNED at 6:58pm