



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Melvin Carter, Mayor

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HILLCREST REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Co-chairs Anne DeJoy and Linda Martinez-Higgins

Meeting #3 Summary

December 17th, 2019, 5:30-7:00pm
@ Hayden Heights Library

CAC members in attendance: Anne DeJoy, Rachel Finazzo Doll, Osman Egal, Linda Martinez-Higgins, Kathryn Murray, Tiffany Scott Knox, Tong Thao, Que Vang.

Others: Bill Dermody, Mike Richardson, Tim Scanlon-Johnson (City of Saint Paul staff); Andrew Dresdner, Coal Dorius, Regina Flanagan (City's consultants); Monte Hilleman, George Hoene (Port Authority staff); Tom Goodrum, James Soltis (Port's consultants); Kevin Bergland (Maplewood resident)

Welcome & Introductions

Co-Chair Linda Martinez-Higgins began the meeting with introductions around the room.

Process Status Update

Bill Dermody gave a brief update on the timeline and status of the process. The highlight of the update was that the consultant firm, Cuningham Group, is now under contract.

Plan for Community Engagement

Andrew Dresdner, Regina Flanagan, and Coal Dorius, consultants for the City, introduced themselves and explained their respective roles in the project moving forward. Following the introductions, they discussed and reviewed the high-level plan and timeline for community engagement.

The consultant team then asked for input on engagement ideas from the CAC members. Proposed ideas included:

An activity in which members of the public were tasked with imagining how they'd allocate a limited sum of money with options like transit, retail, etc. and other interactive, team based tasks focused on designing different parts of a community.

A way to engage with a detailed and realistic map. Would also like to see all ideas from public engagement shown on the map. A visual representation of possible designs for the site that could be moved around on the map would be a great tool as well.

A survey conducted in community spaces and/or of residents in the surrounding area, and the concept of “community connectors”, people hired to reach out to the community on a regular basis. Survey could have multiple locations (postcard, online, social media).

A CAC member cautioned against a survey, citing historic discrimination and lack of consideration of marginalized people’s views could lead some communities not to participate fully.

Another idea proposed was to work with local non-profit organizations that serve this part of the city, in particular, engaging with staff who are in contact with this community every day. Examples: Merrick, CLUES, Freedom Library, East Side Elders, churches/religious organizations, Common Bond, YMCA, Montessori school and other Native American organizations, East Side Wellness. Also, schools could be good sources of information on the community make up, desires, and future trends, wants, and needs.

Artist market like was created as part of a community engagement effort for a project on Payne Avenue.

Engagement at natural gathering spaces, including but not limited to Maplewood Mall.

CAC members commented that it is very important to use the ideas that will come out of community engagement in a meaningful way, and to clearly identify them when this happens. Also, it’s important to educate the public about the process and what could be considered.

It was noted that trust (distrust) of the Port Authority or the City could be an issue.

CAC members commented that area demographics are diverse, and there is not just one type of person who lives near or will use the site.

An emphasis was placed on thinking about the future generations, and our children, and all of the people that will use this site in the decades to come.

Policy / Technical Priorities from Technical Advisory Committee + Port

Bill Dermody introduced the Policy and Technical Priorities for the Hillcrest Site Redevelopment that have been identified by the Technical Advisory Committee in conjunction with the Port Authority. The master plan will be informed by these priorities, as well as the community priorities.

He asked the CAC members to consider how do we frame this information so its most useful to people in engagement?

CAC members stated that the policies listed in the document should more clearly state from where they are derived; whether it be the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Ramsey County policy, a TAC recommendation, guidelines etc.

CAC members stated that some of these policies outlined in the document seem contradictory. They raised several issues as important, including how density will work, transportation impacts, and topography changes (flattening the site).

A couple of CAC members highlighted what they see as a need for multigenerational housing in large housing units; larger homes for larger families of 5, 6, or 10 people are a need especially in immigrant families.

Walkability was discussed as an important aspect to keep in mind while planning and building out the Hillcrest site, including in any industrial/business areas.

Retail was discussed as something CAC members would like to see on the site, in particular a grocery store.

Andrew Dresdner noted that the public engagement in January or February will be focused on working to flesh out community priorities.

The CAC members inquired about what the sustainability direction for the project is and what it has been informed by. Bill Dermody informed the CAC that a broad direction is in place when it comes to sustainability and that experts are working to determine what is possible for the site. Generally, the City would like to see the most sustainable site that is feasible.

A question was raised about storm water management and concern about increased runoff reaching the surrounding areas due to the redevelopment.

Monte Hillman of the Saint Paul Port Authority addressed some of the apprehension expressed by the CAC earlier about the generation of traffic from industrial uses and the ability of these uses and residential to coexist. He explained that sweet spot for Port Authority developments is 40,000 to 80,000 square feet, smaller scale, light industrial uses that typically use smaller trucks for distribution at a relatively low-level intensity. He said that a 200,000-square foot distribution center like Vomela is the exception, not the norm. Trucks and employees from any light industrial Hillcrest will be trying to get out to McKnight and to 94. He noted the success in a recent "4 to 3" lane conversion in Minneapolis along Broadway in an industrial area. He also noted that the Port practices "NextGen" storm water management, and gave some specific statistics about Beacon Bluff's storm water infiltration abilities.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.