

Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment

AFCAC Update

11/28/2017

Update provided by MPRB and City staff:

Since last month:

- City and Park Board staff and Juxtaposition Arts reps met with the McKinley neighborhood association board to introduce them to the site and project and to review what we've learned from community engagement.
- Staff is planning for a January weekend event and tour targeted at McKinley neighbors (but open to the public, as well).
- The election brings us new City and Park Board officials for the ward and district in which UHT is located. Will need to bring new elected officials up to speed, which may slow the process down a bit.
- The housing meeting is set for November 30. Staff is monitoring the potential impact of federal tax reform, which may eliminate some of the tools used for affordable housing and other programs we had been considering using.
- First Avenue completed a market/feasibility study that the staff is reviewing. The initial results of noise study also are now known. Both the site itself and nearby neighborhoods have a fairly high baseline noise rating, mostly due to the freeway. The amphitheater design process is exploring a noise wall that will keep freeway noise out of the amphitheater and music inside amphitheater, but staff will want to review the design impact of that wall with the community. The study also is exploring the possible mix of ticketed and community programming, for which input also will be sought.
- THOR has been having discussions with Northside food leaders about some type of "food hub."
- The development team has prepared updated park and public improvement cost estimates and development projections that the staff is reviewing. There are many feasibility questions that must be addressed. Once some feasible options have been identified, staff and the development team will be bringing a draft plan (or components thereof) out for input.
- The City and Park Board are gearing up for their combined 2018 bonding request to the State, primarily for funds to build the Phase I park and public improvements.

Input and questions from AFCAC members and other attendees:

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the House capital investment committee had a bonding tour, as did the MMB and Governor's staff. The Senate did not have a bonding tour.
- Q: Would any sound from a performance escape the amphitheater itself and impact those who want to enjoy the adjacent park without extraneous noise? A: Yes, there would be some sound bleed-over during an event.
- Q: What other amphitheaters were studied in the feasibility study, and is the study available? A: Among the amphitheaters considered in the study were Ascend in

Nashville, Red Rocks in Colorado and Pritzker in Chicago. The First Avenue representative at the meeting agreed to explore whether the study could be shared publicly.

- It was noted that the existing sound wall on the west side of I-94 is not considered very effective and improvements are needed. Consideration should be given to making sure that any new sound wall next to the amphitheater doesn't bounce freeway noise back into the neighborhood.
- The THOR representative confirmed that the housing planning is considering a mix of affordable and market rate housing and that both condos and rentals are possibilities. The housing definitely would be multi-family density, not single-family, duplexes or townhomes. Land trust homes also were noted as a way to provide some ongoing affordability.
- It was noted that residential can generate more real estate taxes than industrial. For example, the 2.5 acre Riverview Homes site generates as much taxes as the 11-acre Northern Metals site.
- A question was raised as to what the existing homes between the freeway and river can tell us about the market for residential in that area.
- There was strong consensus amongst attendees who bike that the Dowling Avenue bike lanes are awful and dangerous. Second Street is better (although not ideal). The possibility of have a protected bike lane at sidewalk level or a separate "knot bridge" to carry bikes and peds were noted.
- The Dowling Avenue bridge over I-94 could benefit from having an iconic design, seating, more green (e.g., vines on the railing), pedestrian lighting and an artistic railing. Other suggestions included better signalization at the intersections, no right turns allowed, gates that would protect bike and ped lanes, broader striping at ped crossings and red reflectors on stop sign posts as well as the signs themselves.
- The pros and cons of a roundabout at Washington and Dowling were discussed.
- It was noted that Milwaukee has domes that include different biomes (e.g., tropical and desert). *(These are glass beehive-shaped domes that are part of the Mitchell Park Conservatory.)*