

Upper Harbor Terminal

City and MPRB staff update to AFCAC

September 26, 2017

1. The team is exploring design, cost, and ownership/operational options and needs to be comfortable that the options are viable before they can be shown for community input. Community engagement around certain topics (such as the upcoming housing discussion) may continue, but we are uncertain as to when we will be ready for large public unveilings of a draft redevelopment concept.
2. Recent community engagement included participation in Open Streets West Broadway. Staff also assisted with FMR's two walking tours in the last two weeks. An Appetite for Change cooking event focused in on the idea of a food hub and the local food economy (and included a short bus tour). Staff met with North Star Community Rowing to better understand their program and spatial needs. The community meeting to discuss housing alternatives is scheduled for Thursday evening.
3. The amphitheater architectural firm has evaluated various potential locations on the site for the amphitheater, and the design team has established a preferred option. The preferred location now informs multiple other site planning options and decisions so that overall planning can proceed. We're also exploring options for amphitheater parking.
4. The development team continues to gather and analyze site information. Acoustics and traffic studies have started, and scoping for the environmental review is under way.
5. We continue to explore possible reuses for the existing structures and the legal status of the powerline.
6. Meetings have been held with MWMO to start exploring green infrastructure possibilities.
7. We're exploring possible mixes of land uses (recognizing that the real estate market changes over time and flexibility may be needed) and phasing strategies. We also have an initial round of cost estimates, which will help inform planning.
8. An application was submitted for state funds through the TEDI program to help with reconstruction of Dowling Avenue between the I-94 ramps and First St. N. (i.e., the street just east of the rail line).
9. We're working to refine our thoughts about funding needs and what could/should be included in a State bond-funded grant request. Bonding tours with some State representatives are planned in early October.

Input and questions after the update:

- One AFCAC member suggested that City and MPRB do an update with more detailed information about the questions being explored during the planning process, what challenges have been encountered and what has been learned to date. This was scheduled for the October AFCAC meeting.

- A business near the UHT expressed concerns that the redevelopment would reduce the parking available to them (and perhaps result in site visitors trying to use their parking), plus increase traffic in the area and possibly reduce safety.
- A question was asked about whether the City and MPRB have established a good working relationship with the development team. The answer was “yes,” and it was noted that all of the parties have been meeting once a week for a half day.
- It was noted that, given the site’s many designations and the number of agencies and parties interested its future, the redevelopment will require multiple different approvals.
- In response to a question about timeline, it was noted that the current goal is to have a concept plan for which initial approval can be sought in early 2018. There then will be additional time needed to do more detailed implementation planning and secure approvals, and all three parties (City, Park Board and development team) will need to secure the funds needed for the first phase of implementation.