

Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Community Engagement Meeting

August 16, 2018

Prepared by Marisa Eftefield and Ann Calvert

Meeting held at: MPRB headquarters, 2117 W. River Road N.

Note: Text in *italics* is supplementary information added to the meeting summary to make it more informational.

Presentation

Presentation found [here](#).

Presentation speakers:

Welcome and introduction:	Taylor Cooper, THOR Companies
Slides 1 – 8: Background information on site and goals	Ann Calvert, City of Minneapolis
Slides 9 – 15: Background on previous planning, input and master developer selection	Kate Lamers, MPRB
Slides 16 – 22: Summary of 2017 engagement input	Kristen Murray, Dara Crawford & Sam Ero-Phillips Juxtaposition Arts
Slides 23 – 29: Introduction of overall concept plan	Brandon Champeau, United Properties
Slides 30 --- 51: Community Performing Arts Center	Dayna Frank, First Avenue
Slides 51 – 59: Other Phase 1 development components	Taylor Cooper & Denetrick Powers, THOR Companies
Slides 59 – 68: Park components	Kate Lamers, MPRB
Slides 69 – 74: Answers to other questions	Ann Calvert, City of Minneapolis

Q&A/Discussion/Input:

Discussion

1. Will there be access to the riverfront by water taxi?
 - A. Dock access could be around Dowling Avenue. The riverbank grade is gentler by Phase 3 so that could be a more natural location for canoe or kayak access. Somewhere along the existing river wall probably would be the main destination for a water taxi.
2. So, a destination for boats is in plan?
 - A. Not currently, but we haven't gotten to those details.
3. Could there be more attractions in addition to the CPAC so that people could spend a day at the site?
 - A. The CPAC will be actively programmed. Almost every day of the summer there will be an event going on like a festival, market, etc. Also, there will 40,000 sq. ft. of commercial space on the ground floor of the hotel and other Phase 1 components. This space will provide things like shopping and food.
4. Are you using 60% or 30% AMI to determine affordability? What is the price point for the hotel? Who stays? What kind of First Avenue jobs will there be, and at what pay rate?
 - A. The affordable housing target will be 60 to 80% of the Northside AMI. The hotel price point is still to be determined, but ideally Northsiders (*or their guests*) will be able to stay there. About half of the CPAC jobs will pay minimum wage with tips. The other half will pay 1.5 – 2x times the minimum wage, plus there will be production jobs which are high paying.
5. How do you get people to the site, and will there be new bus routes? What kind of plan is in place to get people from the Northside to the site? How will you make the site and Dowling Avenue more accessible?
 - A. There have been some initial conversations with Metro Transit. They are not interested in serving this area right now because they don't see a market (i.e., there aren't enough potential bus riders). Once there is a destination where people live, work and visit, there could be a market with enough riders that Metro Transit can support one or more new routes or expanded service on existing routes. Unfortunately, given today's funding realities, it's hard for Metro Transit even to maintain the existing transit levels. From a biking point of view, the City intends to work with MnDOT to improve the Dowling Bridge. If there is enough money, there may be an adjacent pedestrian and bike bridge to cross the freeway.

6. Could there be a transit center, not just a bus stop? A transit center or node would be good because there is enough space and it hasn't been brought up.
 - A. Transit centers usually serve locations where one or more high frequency routes convene. It could possibly be nearby where there is already an existing line, for example along Lowry. More discussion with Metro Transit definitely will be needed. The market study looked at transportation and concluded there needs to be housing, retail, etc. to bring demand for transportation.
7. The pollution situation is a serious concern. The fumes from nearby facilities do not stay within the perimeters of those sites, and thus they will negatively affect these amenities.
 - A. This concern is shared and has been discussed. The neighboring facilities are privately held, and that's why development is starting on the north end of the site and Phase 3 is being put off. Convincing people to live near this kind of production would be a challenge.
8. There are not many details. Are there opportunities for proposals or programs from others?
 - A. Absolutely, the plan is broad at this point because it's at a conceptual level and there is an active search for approval and community input. Any community members who have ideas are invited to reach out.
9. The amusement park in Excelsior rewarded children who had good grades. This would be an excellent opportunity to promote studying. Education is an important part of the conversation.
 - A. That's a great idea; maybe good grades could bring a ticket to a CPAC event.
10. Is a music venue what people really wanted?
 - A. Many community members said they were interested in an outdoor music venue, especially if their questions and concerns could be addressed. The 2017 engagement illustrated even larger potential venues, and it's not until now that we have an actual plan to share. People need to see what it would look like before they can decide if that is something they want.
11. Is CPAC relying on community performances and other uses?
 - A. About 60 programs per year will be supported by the per-ticket fee. This fee will go to a Northside community organization to provide events that will really benefit the community.
12. So, the community programs are all supported?
 - A. Yes.

13. I led kayaking trips and bike rides to connect with the community. Overwhelmingly, they wanted to keep the relics (i.e., the existing structures) once they'd seen them. First Avenue can incorporate the relics.

A. Stabilization of some of the relics also will be supported by the ticket fees.

14. Any thoughts of giving this land back to indigenous peoples?

A. Providing interpretation of indigenous history and connection to the site certainly is desirable. The City has not discussed giving the land to indigenous people; it is not clear who we would give it to. The City will, though, be dedicating large portions of this land to the public, e.g., the park areas.

15. Are there Native Americans involved in the conversation?

A. The City and development team welcomes anyone who is interested to get involved in the conversation.

16. The truth is painful, but shouldn't be swept under the rug.

A. Any time something is done along the river, it is important to acknowledge that truth. The truth should be known about how the land was taken. Also, the truth about why people in North Minneapolis have not had access to the river should be conveyed. Employment of local artists and elders to tell stories and build programming for people who have not felt at home here is a goal for this project. Some of the basics of good design can be used to help. Providing a safe environment for people to interact and making it unique to North Minneapolis also are important.

17. Lake Harriet has well attended concerts, but very few MPRB events happen in North Minneapolis. Will some of these programs happen at this site?

A. Some of the programming would be here. MPRB does not own a music venue in North Minneapolis. There is programming, but it is different. There are smaller concerts or movies in the park. There would be a partnership with First Avenue. The CPAC itself will not directly be doing the community programming because it should be culturally relevant.

18. When would the earliest private development start? How are you recruiting tenants? Will there be a grocery store?

A. The first step is to have infrastructure in place to allow for development, i.e. roads and utilities. The development team is looking to talk to business as soon as possible, but not prematurely. There has been interest, but the timeline is uncertain, so discussions with businesses can't get very far. Marketing will begin when we know the community is behind it. The CPAC and park destination will kick start this process because there is excitement. The housing could happen in the first phase. There is openness to a grocery store. Proposals are being accepted at this time, but it will be some time before specific uses and/or tenants can be stated.

19. How can we keep this site from becoming corporatized if there is a demand for tenants? How can you get the types of private development the community wants?

A. From a jobs perspective, the development team will have control over the hiring process for the hotel, whereas office tenants bring their own employees. There may be some control over what types of businesses come to the site. There could be a little control over where tenants can hire in terms of zip codes, which would be stated in the lease. The community is welcome to suggest the types of metrics it wants incorporated. However, the more restrictions on tenants, the less interested they will be. It is also important to prepare jobseekers in the community for the new jobs that will be accommodated on the site, which may be accomplished by working with specific job training organizations. In addition to this, it is important to give opportunities to entrepreneurs who cannot compete with corporate entities who can afford higher rents and may be more credit worthy. An example would be small vendor opportunities for new businesses to have a booth at the CPAC to get their businesses started.

20. Two concerns are housing affordability and jobs. Given what you've mentioned, what kind of jobs and affordability will there be? What if CPAC does not function as proposed and goes bankrupt, what would happen?

A. If the CPAC isn't viable, the CPAC parcel will revert to the City.

The development team will need to seek subsidies to make affordable housing possible. If that funding is not received, it would be difficult (*and housing would not be possible*). The 2040 Comprehensive Plan focuses on affordability so everyone is trying to figure this out, and the hope is that there will be more resources available to make more housing affordable.

21. Do you mean the amphitheater has no control over housing or job creation?

A. The team thinks the best way to kick off the redevelopment is to provide a cultural destination to catalyze everything else. It is necessary to bring about other uses. The CPAC is integral to creating that destination and creating a market for housing and job-creating businesses, but the CPAC won't control the housing or job creation (other than the jobs created in the CPAC).

22. So, housing depends more on subsidies than what First Ave provides?

A. First Avenue will build the amphitheater, which will need its own grants and won't be subsidizing the housing development. The housing will be built by THOR, and THOR will be seeking the funding to make some of that housing affordable.

23. So, to clarify, this amphitheater has neutral contribution to job creation as well as housing affordability without subsidy?
- A. The CPAC will provide some jobs, but it is neutral for housing. The amphitheater is not financially tied to the housing part of the project. It provides the destination to make the site attractive for businesses (to bring existing jobs and create new jobs) and housing.
24. Would the affordable housing be given via a lottery system? How do people access this?
- A. That's up to the developer, but they can't discriminate in selecting renters. Public housing sometimes has waiting lists and maybe uses a lottery system, *but these will not be public housing units*. If a housing project receives an affordable housing subsidy, there will be income limits as to who can live in the affordable units. However, the units will be open to all -- first come first serve.
25. How many housing units?
- A. Up to 150 for Phase 1. Phase 2 may include more housing, but has no number yet. There may be 600 units total at completion. Including Phase 3, the site can support about 1,000 units, but Phases 1 and 2 will determine what should be planned for Phase 3.
26. How tall will the buildings be?
- A. The draft Minneapolis 2040 Comp Plan and resulting zoning will inform that. Because most of the site is located within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, the existing zoning allows for six stories, but with greater height potentially allowed through a conditional use permit (which would be subject to community input when such a permit is sought). But now is a good time for the community to weigh in on the height question.
27. Have you considered using eminent domain, e.g., Jeff Johnson's language?
- A. The City's ability to acquire land through eminent domain is limited. Private land can't be taken through eminent domain for private development. If the site was needed for a road, that could be possible. It is a legal and financial issue. Even if it were legally possible, it would be a very expensive way to acquire property, and it's unlikely that money would be allocated for this.
28. Does this fall into a situation needing City Council approval? Will they ever attend these meetings?
- A. Yes, the concept plan will need approval by both the City Council and Park Board. If they aren't able to come to these meetings, staff will work to inform them about the community input. Councilman Cunningham has been supporting getting the site redeveloped. This engagement process will take a while. The first phase of the community engagement is meant to get the information out there, so that people can talk to each other. At the meetings on August 28 and September 8, we expect

that the presentation will be briefer so that we then have more time to dig into questions.

After the meeting ended, input from one community member:

29. On September 22 a group of community members will hold a similar event. The community will present what they need, and someone from the City or the Park Board shows up to hear what we have to say. It won't be confrontational. The conversation will be on housing and job creation. Whoever comes should address this. There are not enough affordable units. We need to find something else like tiny houses. I want to make an indoor farm. I could have 2.5 acres. The more land I have the less they must deal with in the second or third phase. The food would be free initially. Entrepreneurial activity is critical. UHT should be centered around farming. I don't believe the CPAC and arts will create jobs.
- A. Please note that permission hasn't yet been granted for an event to happen on the site on September 22. Legally there is liability to have people on the site. Everyone needs to sign liability waivers or an organization needs to cover the liability with insurance. It's not the community members' site to give access to.
30. It may be noisy, but there should be more affordable housing by the highway.
- A. Affordable housing cannot be second rate.
31. Could I have access to the \$15 million in State funds and \$16 million in local funds if I tried to build the indoor farm?
- A. No, the State funds and their local match can only be used for specific publicly-owned and operated improvements. An additional local source is needed to move the power line.
32. What if the Mayor said that the City of Minneapolis will own the farm? What if it's not private, but the local community that owns it?
- A. The State legislation identifies how the funds are to be used and that type of use is not included. In addition, the City's role has not been to build and operate facilities like that. We would partner with a private developer/business or a nonprofit. We don't have the staff or skill set to take on those types of operations.
33. What if the Hmong people were willing to run the show?
- A. A Hmong nonprofit certainly could try to get a plan together for the Community Innovation Hub space.
34. The matching funds could go to it?
- A. No, the State funds and local match couldn't be used for the Community Innovation Hub. The legislative language only approved use for specified public improvements, e.g., park improvements, roads, utilities.