

## Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Community Engagement Meeting

August 28, 2018

Prepared by Marisa Eftefield and Ann Calvert

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

Presentation started: 6:20pm; discussion ended: 8:34pm

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:	D'Angelos Svenkeson, 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, 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	D'Angelos Svenkeson, 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:

1. Is this project the best way to address important issues like housing and public education? What unintended consequences have you thought of, and what are the solutions?

- A. One unintended consequence is if we create a cluster of affordable housing and no retailer wants to move there because there is not enough disposable income to support retail. Some businesses may take the risk, some won't. What is the right balance?

Another concern is the lack of transit and how this could impact success. Transit agencies don't want to provide services until there are a lot of people there, but it's hard to get people to the site without transit.

The CPAC consequence might be that it's only patronized by rich, white people without having the impact felt in the community. This is why we put the community benefits package together.

From the Park Board perspective, we wonder who will come to adopt the park and feel like it's home. We'll try to make it for Northsiders. One solution is to make the park job-intensive and hire locals for those jobs.

Other concerns are for displacement and finding ways to get commercial activity on the site without taking business away from West Broadway and other Northside commercial.

2. I never heard the word "swimming." Can we have a beach?

- A. The river current might not allow for swimming. If it could be safe, maybe it can be considered.

3. Somali immigrants and the Park Board are exploring having a goat herd area, which I would like.

4. The design team is great. Not making all decisions about the future of the entire site is smart. Transportation will take care of itself. Would it be possible to relocate the overhead electric lines to the east side of the river?

- A. No; that was explored, but there are already a number of lines there and there isn't room to add the lines currently on the west side of the river.

5. When I think about “sustainability,” I think of water, but what do you thinking of net zero with on-site energy generation as another way to enhance sustainability?
  - A. At this point, we are still trying to see if we have the right land uses. If the community is behind this then we will start to explore strategies for how to do it. United Properties has received LEED certification for some of its developments and developed the greenest industrial building in the state. Net zero is a good goal. There have been early conversations with Xcel (including its Advanced Energy Communities staff) about creating sustainable energy and distribution. These are topics that will be explored more in 2019.
6. Given the concerns about climate change, I urge the development team to focus on efficiency, renewables and sustainability along with affordable housing and equity aspects. The Northside has been affected disproportionately by pollution. This is Dakota land. This area could benefit from Project SweetiePie’s Eco village concept, urban gardening and solar businesses in north Minneapolis.
7. I think the goal should go beyond net zero and seek net energy production. Bring in bio digesters. Use existing assets. What is the community innovation hub? It’s where our business is located right now.
  - A. The community innovation hub concept is far from finalized and is still very open to definition. It can happen naturally, moving from dream to plan to implementation. The financing is not in place, nor is the approval.
8. I encourage the team to explore district heating and cooling.
9. I have concerns about the engagement process and who has the floor to present and benefits from the largest time allocation. I want to see some sort of online forum and online notification. There is some hastiness to reach a conclusion. There are no other plan alternatives to consider, which is bad. Can the team and City figure out a way to post questions publicly?
  - A. Yes, there are a lot of questions. Two FAQs are already posted, and more will be posted online, as will the meeting summaries and the Q and A at the meetings.
10. We need to have a people’s forum; a place where community members can talk amongst themselves. You guys have had two years to come up with this plan, and the community now also needs time to learn and discuss.
  - A. Maybe there could be an online forum; there definitely will be an online survey which will help to capture some feedback. Maybe a future community meeting can be held in the style of a forum. These early meetings are to provide information. This is not the last time for the community to get information or provide input.

11. I would like the people to talk amongst themselves. People with busy schedules are time constrained and their voices are not given as much time. We are being talked *to* not *with*. Some may have skepticism about coming here. This community is suffering trauma. Interaction needs to include all voices.

A. This is primarily an informational session and more opportunities/meetings can be explored once community members have had time to digest the information.

12. I have a statement I want to read, and I invite feedback.

“It is my understanding that good urban planning holds that as density is increased, open space & green space needs increase proportionately, to benefit both the general wellbeing and health of residents.

The Minneapolis public are the owners of 48 acres of land adjacent to the Mississippi River, known as the Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) site. The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the City of Minneapolis are making, or have made, an agreement to divide control of this 48 acres along the riverbank between the two parties, and a developer has been designated for some portion of those acres.

I have heard the park board is to develop one half of the 48 acres; 24 acres.

I have READ the park board is to develop 15 ½ acres of the 48, significantly less than one half of the total.

My wish would be for the latter numbers to be reversed, that the Minneapolis park board RESTORE 32 ½ acres along the Upper Mississippi in Minneapolis on the west bank of the river, and the developer submit their design for 15 ½ acres, even though the best case for citizens, visitors, wildlife, habitat & the health of the river would be the restoration of the entire 48 acres, and have that be the seed for further restoration up & downstream.

The health & value of the natural river has been degraded and denigrated since the arrival of logging and water & steam powered industry. The river has been used as a sewer, for offal and noxious wastes, the river banks as dumping grounds for trash and garbage. The city which rose at the site of the only natural waterfall on the length of the river, with the third greatest drainage basin on Earth, turned its back to its much abused watercourse and anointed itself ‘The City of Lakes.’

Whereas, immediately downriver, the city of St. Paul, besides the recently expanded downtown east & west bank parkland, has, with much citizen input & labor, reclaimed an historic natural area, lately an abandoned rail yard at the confluence of two creeks into a city park; The Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, a true gem on the river, downtown St. Paul, Minnesota. And immediately to the west of Minneapolis, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District has been in the process of acquiring

property, making agreements and restoring thousands of yards of Minnehaha Creek, also including a Minneapolis Parks' Golf Course.

While developers, builders & taxing entities may be pleased with the plan as it stands, lovers of the natural river, admirers of world-class urban regeneration, friends of accessible, living green space, fresh air and clean water, may be heartsore. We could have an outcome that honors this river and honors the Dakota people who were lately its caretakers. It's up to us."

David Luce, Hawthorne

13. More equity in the parks is needed. The conversation in Northside concerns displacement. The Equitable Development Scorecard working group called for at least 50% affordable housing to be available for extremely low income. You have ignored this. There needs to be more affordable housing. Displacement may happen. When you create a destination, sports bars and corporate entities follow, and people will be pushed out. In 15 years, the northside residents won't be the same ones. Light rail will come and push people out. This will really change the northside. This is how displacement happens. You are taking public money to put behind private ventures. What is your commitment to further affordable housing?
  - A. The City's affordable housing requirement is at 20%. The development team will try to get 30%. We need to think about how to do this and are open to options. Is it more individual buildings that are smaller? Do we have 100% affordable projects or mixed income? Do we create more affordable housing supply, or create jobs to help people afford housing? We want feedback on whether Phase 1 has the right combination of housing and jobs. From the All-In-Cities research, it appears that this (displacement and gentrification concerns) has not been solved anywhere at scale. We could do a land trust which prevents wealth accumulation. However, THOR likes to see the homeowner's property values go up like everyone else's. McKinley residents need to come forward and help plan for their own neighborhood.
14. At \$15 an hour an affordable efficiency apartment is \$900 per month. You cannot build this type of housing in new construction and rent it for that amount and make a profit. What is the bridge to get this done? Have you looked at using the river for geothermal? Great River Energy has a storm water pond that is used for geothermal.
  - A. Low Income Housing Tax Credits is the only way to do this. Most projects don't make money on the rents. Any profit is from the developer fees. THOR has interviewed nonprofit developers to determine their interest in participating in this project. Everyone is interested, so we need to figure out the right partner. We will explore geothermal later. We looked at harvesting heat from power lines, but found that doesn't work.

15. I'm excited about the hotel. I think it's perfect. There is a shortage of that use in this part of town. We know the healthiest communities are the most diverse. I want all classes of housing. I encourage you to work hard to balance. This will be an international destination. The benefit is for all of us.
16. I got lost on the parkway and land use. I think we are missing critical details. This is regional and national, but the devil is in the details. We need more information in order to get community support. For example, how does the parking work; will there be other freeway crossings?
17. This will be a regional destination that will benefit all of the city, so the regional context needs to be considered, but the housing needs to benefit the local community.

Who will own the CPAC facility? Will there be a tax benefit?

- A. There is a tax generation opportunity. It will be operated for 50 ticketed events and then community public performances and events. The community public programming will be for and by Northsiders. If a State grant is received, the landownership for CPAC requires a long term public interest. It may be First Avenue owning the underlying land, leasing to the City and the City then giving a long-term lease back to First Avenue. Many details are still to be determined. The City will have an easement for streets. Developers will own the mixed-use spaces.
18. Many artists are excited about this. We are hoping for diverse events. We have been discussing creating our own small-scale project like this. We are concerned about the price point for artists. Are there differences between what kind of artist you are? Within the arts community there are gate keepers and inappropriate activities. Have you considered this and what do you plan on doing to deter this?
  - A. The same affordable housing rules will be apply – income guideline would be in place no matter who you are. For public programming at the CPAC, we will make sure the board is as diverse as possible. The intention is to be equitable.
19. I worry about Dowling which right now is overflowing. It's always backed up. Also, what will we do with Washington? It's effectively a truck stop. There are campers right now.
  - A. We're aware of the traffic challenge and are working with a consultant doing modeling for traffic impacts. Once we have a concept plan approved we can do the full traffic study. We also need to deal with the "truck stop" question. There may be a need to meter parking or some other solution.

20. On behalf of the National Park Service, I'd like to remind folks that most of the site is in our national park. Whatever happens here will last for generations. What does a 21<sup>st</sup> century relationship between people and the River look like? I am disappointed that I didn't hear anything about the river. What is worthy of a national park? America's greatest river? If you create that, the area will benefit.
21. How will the City responsibly choose people to live in the project's housing? Wouldn't it be fairer to not have affordable housing?
- A. Any land that the City sells for housing development must provide 20% of the units at rents affordable to those making 60% of the area median income. The developer then uses their own practices for tenant selection. They will work within the framework related to the affordable housing funding. Developers can't discriminate in selecting renters. Any eligible person can apply, and the property owner selects tenants using their procedures.
22. This is a cool plan. Thanks for allowing input. Are you planning on retaining ownership of the housing or are you selling it as ownership housing?
- A. *THOR will take the lead in the Phase 1 housing development, and it currently is planned to be multi-family rental.* United Properties does not invest in market-rate housing. We focus on senior housing. There is discussion about co-investing in the development amongst the partners. The initial market study says the site could support condo and multifamily rental. All of the housing on the site is expected to be multifamily, not single family homes, duplexes, townhomes or other lower density choices.