Upper Harbor Terminal

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #2

Meeting Purpose:

• Build deeper understanding of:
  o CAC responsibilities & procedures
  o The UHT landscape
  o The evolving park and redevelopment construct at UHT

• Hear from the public

Thursday, August 15, 2019
Make approval recommendation to the MPRB Board of Commissioners of preferred park guiding principles, program, concept plan and phase one implementation priorities.

Become familiar and knowledgeable with:
- The site and its context.
- The Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan.
- The UHT redevelopment concept.

Advise MPRB staff on:
- Evaluating data and park program/design alternatives.
- Refining alternatives into preferred approaches.
- The interface between park and other aspects of UHT redevelopment.
- Park-related job creation, anti-displacement strategies, and community benefits.
- Recommended vision, goals, and principles, park concept design alternatives, priorities for first phase park improvements, and project process.

Contribute to broad community engagement by acting as communication conduit.
CAC Procedures

- Attempt to reach decisions on CAC recommendations by consensus
- When a vote is necessary, CAC members must be present to vote
- CAC Alternates may be named by the approved appointer
- A quorum (9 or more) CAC members should not engage in project discussion/decision-making outside of posted CAC meetings.
- Final recommendations by the CAC are presented to the MPRB Board of Commissioners at a public hearing.

CAC procedures are established in various MPRB policies and ordinances. CAC meetings are always public and will include time for the public to speak and participate. CAC meetings are governed by open meeting laws which is why project discussion and decision making should be within a public meeting. Ongoing emailed discussions are considered to be non-public serial meetings.
CAC Procedures

MPRB staff/consultants will:
• Coordinate meetings, agendas & meeting minutes
• Assist CAC Chair in facilitating meetings
• Prepare presentation materials
• Prompt CAC for recommendations under its Charge

CAC Chair will:
• manage meetings & facilitate discussion
• Coordinate with MPRB staff on meeting agendas/content
• Call for CAC recommendations/decisions under CAC Charge

CAC meetings are discussions among CAC members – public comment is an agenda item for every meeting and most meetings will include public engagement activities
At the City’s Upper Harbor Terminal Collaborative Planning Committee (CPC) meeting on Wednesday, August 14, the City presented a possible shift in the concept layout. The slide above shows the concept approved by the City in 2019 and identifies key park areas. Some of the potential challenges to developing park space include “side-yard” park situations where a smaller area of park is between two development parcels. Side-yard parks can be difficult, although not impossible, to develop in a way where the park feels inviting and accessible to the public. There are also two areas where the parkway (vehicular circulation) is divided from the riverfront park by private development parcels. Typically in Minneapolis the parkway helps to define the line between public space and private development. In the past MPRB has faced challenges with creating visible, safe, and inviting park land in narrow corridors between private development and water ways.
These areas would need to be carefully developed and the relationship between the private development and the public land would be particularly important. Most of the riverfront park land would serve as a place for shoreline restoration and linear connections (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways). Two additional areas of larger park land that is directly connected to the riverfront park (not across a parkway) are more similar to other park areas found along the river and around the lakes. In the last year, the project team has heard concerns from community members about development options for some of the park spaces. Community members also expressed concern that the main access to the river along Dowling Avenue felt too private and the arrival at the river was dominated too much by the proposed private development on either side.
From Concept Approval to Coordinated Plan Approval March 2019 – March 2020

Intended as an “Editing” process
- Listen to community
- Analyze environmental impacts
- Learn
- Reflect & Critique
- Test feasibility
- Refine program and approach
- Design to greater depth of detail

Edits are happening
- Shifting location of music venue & other development
- Consolidation of parkland at Dowling terminus
- Parkland boundary adjustment to include relics
- Elimination of one stretch of parkway separation
- Elimination of side-yard park situations
- No loss of park acreage
- Continuing to refine with park interests in mind

The proposed shift in the concept layout would consolidate the park land nearer to the end of Dowling Ave and shift the music venue downstream (south). The amount of park land would not shrink, but would be rearranged. The rearrangement would put more of the park land between the parkway and the river, eliminate the side-yard situation to the south, and eliminate one stretch of parkway separation. In this scenario the proposed park land would also include the industrial infrastructure (relics). This shift in layout appears to address some of the concerns from community members, however the City and MPRB wanted to show this option for input. The team is also continuing to study the layout and understand all of the infrastructure implications such as transportation, utilities, development parcel size, topography, etc.
The Upper Harbor Terminal is still being operated as an industrial site and is generally not open or safe for public access. MPRB is bringing the CAC on a site tour as it can be an unfamiliar site and challenging to understand from photographs. In particular the industrial relics, if on park land, are important to understand. The site tour will bring the group in on Dowling Avenue where participants can travel the key corridor to existing residential areas. The first stop will be near the northern extent of the proposed larger area of park land and the tour will walk down to the southern extent of the proposed larger area of park land. The linear park land will extend further up and down the river but the tour will not be able to access the full property.