

Upper Harbor Terminal Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #8

Meeting Minutes

02.13.20

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) General Meeting:

JUXTA Presentation:

Kristen: I think as we have mentioned in some of the other CAC meetings, we've been working on identifying at storylines and developing an artistic pallet to think about the public art plan.

Juxtaposition Arts staff and youth do introductions.

Sam: We've been talking with Northsiders about Upper Harbor for several years now since 2015. And we have done a wide variety of different events to help people gain awareness and give people to be more knowledgeable about what is happening there. There are a couple of key takeaways and these are the 3 main takeaways.

1. The need to build community and make sure that this is a place where people can come together and feel like they have ownership over the site. And we can talk about public art can help towards that goal.
2. The art needs to be reflective and responsive. There is something really valuable about people from the Northside doing the public art because that gives them additional buy in.
3. Healthy environment. There have been a lot of discussion about the environmental racism that has been prevalent in North Minneapolis with the pollution and toxic sites that are along the Mississippi River. Making sure that as this site gets redeveloped the folks that who have been historically denied access to the riverfront get access to the site.

Kristen: We see these priorities and these things that we've heard are ways that public art can respond to the things we have heard. The landscape itself has been used to disconnect people from the land. Spirit Island which was dismantled by the Army CORPS has created harm for people, habitat and the river itself. The engineering that has taken place on the land and on the river has created harm for people, habitat and the river itself. There are stories to tell here.

We identified that environmental justice has been shaping and is continuing to shape the north MPLS river front and there are stories to tell here about the work that organizers have done and

are doing. This is both recent, present and future and there is a need to have a transformation so that people are able to remain and promote greater healing for people.

JXTA Youth: I just wanted to say that this is one of the most important storylines in my opinion. Working against the exploitation that this community has faced is one of the biggest themes I am working on.

JXTA Youth: (Having) environmental justice is the main thing we face on the Northside in general. Having opportunities to brainstorm to create a vision together to come up with ideas for what we want and what is best for our community.

Sam: (Referring to the census map showing settlement history of the North side). This isn't the official census map, but unofficially this still carried a lot of weight because this is how the city was formed. We point this out to show you the history of N MPLS and to show how development and planning happens to the community instead of with the community. So, if there is some distrust of this process or planning processes in general, I think it's warranted to examine the systemic oppression that has happened. (Interstate) 94 went right through the old projects. When my mom moved to the twin cities here from Texas in the 50s that was actually where she was able to live. That was the only location where she was able to live in the cities and 94 went right through it, right where it says "slum." The history of why the river looks the way it does has a large part to do with the development patterns that happened here in the city. So, acknowledging those histories and thinking about how we tie into those stories as part of this process to heal the trust between the community, the MPRB, the City and everyone involved in this project.

JXTA Youth: I would just like to say that binding of Racial Convents has directly affected access to the river. Northeast has boom island, there is St. Anthony falls, there are many many places on the river that are accessible to all the community except North Minneapolis.

Kristen: We identified food sovereignty in communities of color as another theme that is important.

JXTA Youth: Something that is important for northside is how to you get food sovereignty because it gives people a chance to teach adults and young ones to learn how to plant, to learn how to take care of themselves and create a community bond. That is something we are lacking as well. Doing this project is something that could bring that to the community.

JXTA Youth: North Minneapolis is a good desert and so teaching food sovereignty and teaching urban farming can bring back ownership to the community and bring back genuine skills.

JXTA Youth: We are also looking at the history of this site. There are two aspects of (of this) we are looking at. The first being the more recent history of graffiti and urban exploring. People seem to really be attracted to this space (for that). Then also looking at the workers history of this space.

Workers that worked at the site and on barges and railroads and that connection to the site, the working-class history of North Minneapolis.

Kristen: As a next step we are going to talk to the community about these storylines and these themes and start doing interviews and document this as part of the public art plan. Tonight, we want to hear your input and your thought about these storylines. We have some small group discussion questions.

Small Group Discussion Minutes:

Table 1/south (Rashi - Kate was at this table taking notes for a while)

- Sculptures to interact with
- Inclusive for all cultures
- Ways to exercise, doing more without technology, balance technology & nature
- Changing relics as park/development progresses
- Changeable art => reflects neighbors at any moment
- Small art

-bronze bunny, approachable + climbable

-photos + art + people

-functional art and infrastructure

- Rooted within the river
- Art next to active, but not hyper-active spaces
- Views of art throughout
- Art as learning opportunity
- Art as way to highlight + tell multiple stories
- Sculpture garden intersected in the site
- Industrial structure= "back to nature"
- Creating emotional bonds to site
- Interactive sculpture => photos/IG (online access)
- Winter Art- interesting + engaging in all season
- Art in/on the water
- "Slow park" evolves over time
- Industrial structures

-hearing tool

Table 2/west (Kristen, Crystal & Bird - Robin and Mysnikol were at this table)

- Art to spark curiosity (about coming to UHT/to the park)
- Signs to draw people in at Dowling Ave and 26th Aves
- Art that greets you, announces your arrival OR art that is more subtle - draw people in/attraction Vs. more "in the know"
- Path around development
- Youth farming
- Outdoor classroom
- Edible labyrinth
- Carbon absorbing plants/carbon sequestration
- Pieces that can expand as needed
- Bandshell/performance space that is also a splash pad - can host music and other kinds of performances as well as play and other more informal uses, so that the space is active all the time
- Gravel trail
- Northside settlement storyline/theme - need to have a real discussion about giving this land back to indigenous community
- The symbolism of the domes sits at odds with precolonial storyline and history - would be best to take them all down, but on the other hand, you can't erase history.
- Art that doesn't create more waste - like the idea of aerosol art and free wall, but concern about aerosol cans => river comment about litter & river

Table 3/east (Sam, Qadiym and I believe Preston was also at this table)

- What kinds of public art are already on site?
- Is the existing graffiti worth preserving?
- We talked about the site being a space of pride and joy and that older folks also like to play as well so don't just think about kids.
- How can the playgrounds serve the kids and what do the spaces for parents who are watching the kids look like? Think seating options. What are we looking at while the kids play?
- We all talked about the joy of signing inside the big dome by the warehouse as a place of natural joy because people sign and laugh inside that space as it's a novel experience. How does our public art capture that same kind of joy? Can we create an experience inside that space that's there simply for fun (ex roller-skating, dancing, signing etc)?
- Should there be more murals? Should they rotate over time? And who is approved to create the murals? We talked about the JXTA Freewall model of mural making where an expert leads the job and youth can join in. There was a fear of poorly done graffiti popping up if it's open to anyone.

- A woman asked about light pollution with adding too much light. I felt this was a non-issue as I pointed out the Lowry Bridge as an example of large lights on site, but she was concerned about it so I'm including that comment.
- At the end of the day, we talked about the public art being fun and novel and possibly rotating over time. I think the bike racks and benches could be fixed but the mural and activities could rotate. That was the gist of our conversation.