

# Upper Harbor Terminal Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #9

## Meeting Minutes

04.29.20

### Community Advisory Committee (CAC) General Meeting:

#### Introduction/ Updates (Kate):

Zoom CAC meetings – plan on digital meetings indefinitely

Covid 19 project Impacts

- 2018 State and local funding for the park and public infrastructure (public roads, utilities, etc) are not impacted
- Funding deadline of bidding in 2018 is unchanged
- MPRB reworking engagement plan to allow for social distancing, more time as needed
- Impacts to project and uncertainties:
  - Development progression
  - Future park funding for staffing and programming
  - Future park funding for later capital improvements (future phases of construction)

#### Comments & Questions:

CAC Member: love it. thanks for pulling this together!

CAC Member: Thanks Kate, et al. This is wonderful. Nice work putting this together.

CAC Member: Are these meetings recorded?

- a. No. MPRB does not record Zoom meetings but posts meeting notes.

Community Member: where are meeting notes posted?

- a. Agendas, meeting materials, and notes are posted here:  
<http://upperharbormpls.com/park-board-community-advisory-committee/>

CAC Member: Are there engagement "Benchmarks" that need to be met? Where are we on those benchmarks? Can you give an overview of where we are and what's left in the project?

- a. We have done as much engagement as is useful to ask general questions about what people want to have in the park that help provide values and balancing points to get more info on. We felt it was now most productive to put together draft concepts. We are not asking you to select A, B or C but we wanted to provide clearly different ideas for feedback to help us determine what the first phases of improvements should be and what are the long term things we want at the park.

CAC Member: When will we see the draft layout plans for the whole site and the concert venue designs? I know the CPC has been working on them, and they seem relevant to designing the best park for the surroundings.

- a. Can you clarify are you asking us to make sure we include the context of what surrounds the park in the draft concepts? Are you asking about the impacts of variability?

CAC Member: Specifically, the concert venue because there are a lot of potential impacts to the park experience.

- a. We are working with the materials we are putting together to include the context surrounding the venue and trying to figure out how to best show some variability in what will be around the park. We go back to the latest materials where there is some variation and we will work with the City team to accurately represent development in the drawings. This will be something we will need a lot of discussion on and what potential variables may be and how the park might anticipate and respond to these variables.

CAC Member: Not everyone knows this but our small group at our last meeting we were having some discussion and were having some pretty major concerns about lack of what we felt was intentional reaching out to the Native community. I'm happy to see that we've got a couple of Dakota consultants on board now but what my question is, what specifically are they going to be doing for reaching out to the native community and including them to get feedback on this specific project.

- a. Were you particularly concerned about us reaching out to Northside Indigenous Residents?

CAC Member: Could be Northside, could be people on the south side. Either and both.

- a. What we often find is that we just have to look at every project and determine who is likely to be interested and why, not that we hit it right every time, but our primary goal has been to really connect with Northside residents on this because they have been underserved and parks have been disinvested in in this area and are lacking connection

to the river. So that has been our primary concern; that this park works for Northside residents. I would say we definitely have a fair amount of contacts in the Dakota and Native community, but not necessarily a lot of contacts on the Northside. Even when this project started 4 years ago we worked through existing contacts and tried reaching out to Northside residents as much as possible. We found that a few, but they were weighing in as neighbors, but were not necessarily interested in having more involvement or being part of a focus group, but were happy to give us their opinion. A lot of times we find that we have to show more what we are going to do, so people may ask how are we going to embody any acknowledgement of Dakota land and Dakota people in this park, then often times we need to reach out to community leaders or artists, or language experts or people that are not necessarily Northside residents. Sometimes they can help us connect with people, sometimes they don't have a ton of connections, but they can help give us ideas and guidance. We have to show people ideas in order for them to get more interested. One way we try and reach people, for example Juxtaposition Arts is working on the Public Art Master Plan to make sure that the storylines and expression of the park reflect the Northside. They were able to do some interviews with people on the northside. It's not just one way, we are constantly trying to reach out to people as best we can. I don't know exactly how to answer because it's not just one way. We often just don't know how well a method will work.

CAC Member: If these Dakota consultants do not help you reach Northside community members, what was this the reason for hiring them then?

- a. There are a lot of possible roles beyond just acting as liaisons to other community members. These are consultants who can connect us with other Dakota and Indigenous people, they know a lot of artists and have a lot of input on the treaties, tradition and language and these are all things we have heard are important. We have worked with them successfully on other projects in the past. In addition to reaching residents, we need help with the right ways to make everyone in the project aware about the different ways that we can layer culture into the park. There is a reciprocal teaching arrangement. This group has a lot of good ties and experience with that type of work. We need people who are comfortable with that type of work. Often that may be separate from reaching community members and asking them what they want to have in the park.

Community Member: I had heard community members asking about plans to allow neighbors to become entrepreneurial within the park plans verses being hired to help park visitors. At what point in the plan is that being considered?

- a. We can come back to that more later. We are interested in supporting entrepreneurial efforts, food, programming, artists, jobs with the park board itself, seasonal, training and full-time jobs. There has been a lot of interest in green infrastructure jobs within the park, taking care of native plant areas, working with hydrology of the river, things to do with food sovereignty. When we are doing a concept plan for our park really our task at

hand is to determine the physical plan. We just know when we are determining the physical plan, we want to go deeper into what the benefits can be, but the reality is whoever hires those artists to do that programming, is not going to be us. It's going to be someone in the future, from the Park Board and groups who will be continuing that effort indefinitely. So usually what we do is first make sure we are creating the right physical space here and then take everything to guide the efforts going forward. Trying to consider what are the right spaces in the park, what indoor space makes sense, (is it a youth run bike shop?) but we do have to be very adaptable. There is a lot of change going on around the park that we can't control, but a lot of the specifics about who the park board is going to partner with are not known and are future decisions.

CAC Chair: Isn't how we do entrepreneurial and how we develop activity in the park based on how we develop the park? What type of activities, what kind of food, how the park is designed, people want to have the natural indigenous plants, people want to have a playground, people want to have a building be a segue into the park, and there was going to be housing, and that the park was going to have space for class. Weren't we talking about the development of the area? It's going to take 5 years for the park to develop so we were talking about flexible designs so that as people start coming to the park then we start to know what the needs are of the park.

- a. Yes, I think the main thing is that there is just so much we can't know right now we just want to make sure that we are creating space for those opportunities. Those are typically developed later. UHT is a way a way from having say a permanent food vendor, likely when you think about food entrepreneurial opportunities, the first opportunities will likely be pop up, because there isn't going to be the foot traffic right away. Who the park board works with are pulled together with their own public process? With something like a permanent food vendor there is a sperate public process for that. So right now, the key question is to envision what you want to see for the physical spaces to build towards what you want to see.

CAC Member: Based on the materials that Park staff are developing with City staff what can you tell us to date about some of the components on site that will impact the park design: Fence around concert venue, specifically the size and style of fence being proposed? Ability to access green space and concessions at this site without purchasing a ticket to the concert venue? And potentially the lack of crime prevention opportunities through environmental design and draft layout plans for the whole site?

CAC Member: In addition to Alexis' questions I am also specifically concerned about where 10,000 guests will wait to enter the concert venue and how traffic on event days (lots of buses since the site lacks parking?) will affect the riverfront experience. And how will concert noise affect park users? I'm concerned that all of these issues will add up to make the park unpleasant/unusable on the best nights of summer.

Specifically, my question has to do with the site. What can you tell us about some of the components proposed for the music venue that will impact the park design. I wanted to ask about the fence being proposed, the size and style, would people have ability to access the green space around the venue or non-concert goings be able to purchase concessions on the site are there any gaps or potential crime prevention opportunities that could be woven into design for this entire site?

- b. There might be more discussions since the last city meeting, but from my understanding they had just entered the concept phase and that is when the city went on pause. Regarding the fence around the music venue, from what I understand they need to be able to control access and possibly sound. We need to anticipate that it may not visually permeable and will certainly control flow of people moving in and out. We also don't know timing of development or how things are going to evolve. My understanding is that the City and First Ave want the music venue to be open to the public when not in use for specific events. But designs, agreements, and timing are not finalized.

As far as crime prevention opportunities, this is something we are looking at especially with the industrial structures where we are thinking about lighting and how people move through the space. This will be a part of the design process. We just want to make sure we have good visibility and natural activation because we know that people won't want to see security force all the time. The best way we can do this is to activate it with positive activity.

CAC Member: These are questions I think can be answered today but are things I want answered later. Some of the things I have seen in the concert venue design do now show clearly where 10,000 patrons will line up before they go into the venue, will this happen in the park? What are the plans for traffic on concert days and how it effects parkway and experience for bike and pedestrians along the parkway and noise? We are taking about some of the best days of summer when these concerts are going on and I just want to understand how those issues can be addressed to make the park still usable.

- a. Sam from JXTA: I was working on massing and designs for the venue. The only thing I can address is the very first question regarding the queuing. They would offset from the property line so that people would que there. The desire was to keep them in line with the road and keep them able to que closest to the venue.

CAC Chair: At the last meeting they were taking about how traffic would go around Dowling and how the trucks would be arranged. I can't speak to what the City is doing, but it seems we are a long way away right now.

- a. It's hard for us to answer questions because there are a lot of variables. This might be a good thing to do when we sit down with concepts so you can see the size and the amount of space things take up and the impacts to the surrounding neighbors, we may be able to think what are the variables we have then. We will want to evaluate what are the variables with the neighbors and what are the ways we want the park to be able to respond? The intention is to bring truck traffic in from the south and along the back, so we don't have big trucks coming in on Dowling, for noise and thinking about turning radiuses as well, there are other questions. How is regular traffic going to move on different times based on different development choices such as when there is an event or not. Even thinking about jobs and how the parkway may be used. With something big with a venue there does need to be a parking mitigation plan, but they are on pause right now so we don't know what that plan will be right now.

Sam from JXTA: Regarding parking the discussion I heard was to use Uber and Lyft options and parking shuttles from downtown. As we know because of the pandemic the last businesses to open are places with large venues. The idea with the semitruck traffic would go along the backside of the road.

- a. Previously at a meeting the CAC passed preferences to bring to the CPC to make sure that certain things didn't impact the park, like traffic. As we go through these designs community members can certainly weigh in on these preferences more formally. The community "Here are the considerations here are the potential impacts to the park," and "here are the things we are going to want to do on the park end of things" and these are the things we highly recommend the city and the developer consider.

CAC Member: I think Alexis and Colleen ask relevant questions. It's hard for me to process those questions until we see draft designs and discuss them as a group. I suggest we should table these details until we see broader vision for the design. What we really want to build here is a destination park that invites the entire community, for a lovely Riverside experience. I think we should focus on that broader view of the site.

CAC Member: Can Staff provide a current status on the 'relics' and the likelihood that they would even be a part of this final design?

- a. The status of the relics is a complex process, but it is something we know how to work through. There will be alternatives within different concepts that should help show the range of possible ideas, but treatment of the relics can be mixed and matched with other concept ideas. Certain things are not going to be possible and not financially feasible, for example we can't save all three domes. We are assuming that they are going to have some historic value, and we know that there is some interest in the relics, but I think we heard clearly that saving the relics was not the main goal. The main goal

was to have a nice park space. We are looking for ways that the relics might contribute to that nice park space or serve some sort of purpose. The draft concepts will give you variables. There were a lot of people who thought they could be cool in the space and people who didn't like them. There are also some art opportunities to utilize them. There are some people who see them as symbolic image of an industrial area which is not viewed as good. Do we want to wipe the slate clean or acknowledge their existence? They are there now and local materials so if there are places where there is cost savings where they can be utilized could be a future goal. They could be treated differently in the different concepts. We want to think about them holistically.

CAC Member: This is a major part of the site right now so when we get to the point where we need to make a decision moving forward we need to be able to address this. I also agree that there isn't a super high demand to keep the relics there.

- a. We do expect that SHPO or the State Historic Preservation Office are going to want to see some interpretation. Being able to use parts of them or repurpose could be the best way to balance keeping somethings and not others.

CAC Member: Since the CPC isn't allowing public comments, I'm curious what kind of relationship you are having with the CPC and how is the Park Board communicating with the city, and how is that information being utilized?

- a. You are always welcome as individuals to provide your comments to the city. I know that because the CPC paused for the month of April and are not convening, they are not able to have any public discussions. Because they don't have public comment during their meetings, it is best to email staff or I can pass comments along. I was thinking as the CAC and community are looking at the park that it makes sense to look at the variable. It may be that we form a more informal list of things we want them to consider or a more formal list that the CAC votes on. We can provide recommendations they should consider in terms of the private development as it relates to impacts on the park. You'll have opportunities during the meeting to articulate those ideas. We can give them a list from the CAC, similar to the way they did before.

Community Member: Except what we had discussed didn't really matter because they had already made the decision about the Parkway.

- a. The issue of the parkway was not the only thing that was weighed in on related to the park boundary and I know that the CPC was going to consider those same things later right after the CAC had, but then their meeting agendas changed and they ended up getting to that discussion later. By the time they got to that discussion the City felt there was only one option. However, I think there actually were two options – the two that MPRB and the park CAC discussed. I don't think when the CAC weighed in on this issue the decision was made. By the time the CPC weighed in on the issue there was a very clear best option and recommendation by the CAC that aligned. So the CAC was influential in making that decision.

Community Member: I'm just trying to make it so that they listen to what we have to say when we take the time to make considerations.

CAC Chair: When we made that presentation the recommendations those were still viable to them, the CPC did look at those. However, the CPC was not aligned with the CAC. The CPC had so many entities and battles going on. When we finally did get a chance to present the CPC agreed with the recommendations already that we didn't want the venue over by the relics that we wanted that out of the park. We did not want the park divided. I do know when we gave our recommendations and we did present, and it did give enlightenment and CPC members had said they took everything into consideration.

Community Member: I do remember you Robin being able to bring the recommendations or concerns to the CPC. It would have been great to have been able to have these discussions much sooner, but what Michelle is saying as by the time you were able to give the recommendations, it was so after the fact that the alignment and the trail location of the music venue wasn't made on a collaborative situation. I think what Michelle is saying is that there needs to be a better way of communicating to the CPC in a more timely matter so that it feels like we are in some type of relationship with each other rather than being siloed or disjointed.

- a. As soon as the CPC restarts that can certainly be part of the discussion we initiate with them.

Community Member: what have been the primary obstacles to reaching north side residents and what has so far been tried?

- a. We have managed to reach a lot of Northside residents. The project has morphed over time. We started in 2015 with joint outreach by City and MPRB. When the Park Board does engagement, we try to do a variety of things because we figure there is no one method that works for everybody. Early on we asked community members whether we should have a community advisory committee (CAC) at that point it did not seem like

there was a ton of appetite for an official committee. Instead people liked the idea of getting a variety of perspectives and reaching out more informally. Juxtaposition Arts and other organizations we partnered with were a huge help with informal engagement, trying to find people where they were at, convening focus groups, and hiring people to help connect us. We learned that getting people to the site was really important. This site is not an existing public park and so people don't have regular access to it. Having people experience the site helped them provide feedback. We did everything from doorknocking to online surveys to some really focused work groups on equity goals, etc. Since we have started the CAC in 2019 we haven't stopped general engagement. We try to look at who have we not been able to meet with and reach out to them. We have reached out to city committees such as the Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities and the Transgender Equity Council. We have hired liaisons to help connect us with community members and they are also hired to come to CAC meetings so they can stay on top of the project.

Sam (JXTA): What made it hard at first was no one was familiar with the site. You can't get engagement on a site if no one knows what you are talking about. At first it was getting people aware of the site and know what was happening. 2019 felt like a very pivotal year with local news carrying info about the project. The word started to get out more and what is really sad is that I feel like this summer was going to be a good way to go out and do a good push because we could really go out and do engagement. It would be a conversation that was not just about asking if the people knew of the site, we would be able to talk more about what was actually happening there. Coronavirus is making the community engagement harder. We had very good momentum all of last year and in the fall, obviously the winter makes you slow down, but we had a lot of workshops at the park board where we had community sessions where people got to sketch and do things with Perkins and Will. We were planning to do a lot of stuff this summer so we will just have to pivot and see what we can do given the context. Like Kate has mentioned we (JXTA) have been working on the site since 2016. We worked with the Parks Foundation doing kayaking tours and Anthony Taylor with the slow roll and pop-ups. Seeing is believing was our main strategy. Helping to partner with the park board to have our youth from the community be paid to be apart of the process. Because a large majority of people don't trust community engagement is because they feel like it's done by other people. By involving the kids from the community to be apart of it, hopefully they become able to describe the project to their friends and families in better ways than people like myself would be able to.

Kate: When doing activities like the river tours, we found that reaching out to existing and active groups was successful. We would reach out to a group that is Northside based to see if they would like to engage in a hands on way. This was often a good way to get Northside residents to the site in a fun way, and have residents meet each other during the process.

CAC Member: I see at least one MPRB member in the audience. Our job ultimately is to make a recommendation to the Board. Would any MPRB board members present that would like to comment overall on what are they looking for from us, as their CAC?

- a. Park Commissioner Forney: There are a lot of different ways I can answer that. As many people know I have been really passionate about the river front for years, I was on the original Above the Falls Community Advisory Committee (AFCAC) so I have probably have a lot of specific personal things to mention. From a commissioner standpoint (1) I am just blown away how many of you are engaged on this. I just want to tell everyone this is just so unbelievable seeing you all engaged. I think that is really what it is hearing your voices and you reaching out and hearing other people's voices. I know a lot of you and you come from very different perspectives and that is so important to share that and to hear what the greater community is looking for. This is an incredibly unique situation and it's going to be there for hopefully centuries. Your input is greatly appreciated. Do I have a specific outcome I am looking for? No. First of all, I should say we have incredible staff and they do a marvelous job of community engagement and this is one more piece of evidence of their creativeness. What all of you bring is critical and I appreciate it. There are some intriguing questions. Alexis, I appreciate your comments about the type of fencing around the music venue that will be used and how it will impact the park space. Think of the details but also think of the big picture. Thank you for being here.

Community Member: With the big changes maybe a huge sign would draw attention to the site to the people who live here?

- a. People are asking can we do something at the site. Right now MPRB doesn't own the site so we can't necessarily put something there. The site is not safe or open to the public right now. It's being leased out so we need to get permission to go on the site. This is something we have talked about to get something on the site that says "Northside Park Coming Here." I think once the park has a land transaction with the city, which is a way down the road, there are ways we can draw attention to the project. We may want to utilize the park spaces that people walk by all the time in their existing neighborhoods. These are all things we are talking about. I also don't think there is that much traffic near the site, so putting something at that location may be less effective.

Community Member: I agree with Jennifer about getting something posted at the site. Also, with everyone using electronic communication can we reach out digitally?

- a. Sam: We're thinking about a sign. Or a mural if possible. The question is what should we ask or say with the sign or mural. Ideas?

We are excited to find a way to push forward. The worst thing we could do is drop this and not find a way to engage the community so we are thinking of creative ways to do that. Zoom works great if you have a laptop or a smart phone, but I'm wondering how we can in our community engagement how we can use this tool to speak to the community that aren't in the zoom meeting. With parks being closed with the pandemic in that things like pools are close people are still going to the parks. I've been taking my kids to the parks because school is closed. I feel there could be ways to reach people by using existing parks and talking about the great services parks provide. I saw news that talked about using the National Park System as a space for people to heal for people who have potential symptoms of Covid-19. People are getting creative with public land in general. I'm not suggesting we do that here but what I'm suggestion is we use the parks as an advocacy tool. Everyone is in their home and they need to walk around and go to parks. If we can find ways to put up flyers and talk about engagements that we are doing. A lot of things prior to Covid don't feel relevant. We need to hold space for the shock [of what has happened with the pandemic]. The real factors such as how do you even pay May rent are still there. We are still working on it and I am open to suggestions. I saw a lot of suggestions in the chat so please keep sending those to Kate. I think collectively we will find the appropriate way to address people. I'm committed to continue to come here and do this.

CAC Vice Chair: I would like to add to what Sam said and say that one of the things I have found beneficial in my use of ZOOM working at the Folwell Neighborhood Association is that we are able to do webinar style. A lot of times people are intimidated by the video conference, but they still want to be part of the conversation. A lot of them don't understand that they can be here and not be seen or feel exposed. So one thing you could do is create this as a webinar meeting and put it on Facebook Live where people can watch and comment just like you would on any other Facebook post. If you are looking to do community engagement you have to make it accessible. I know for our neighborhood meetings we have had higher attendance at the ZOOM meetings than at regular meetings because this is more convenient. People don't have to find childcare or leave their house. I personally think this type of thing needs to keep moving forward if we are really talking about engaging across demographics.

- a. That is a lot of what we are hearing, and we will see how it evolves. In the past, we have focused a lot on the personal to person engagement. We recognize the need to develop other tools, especially digital ones, that are good to have regardless of the pandemic.

CAC Chair: Colleen had a comment about how people are appreciating parks more than ever. Would it be possible to have mail go out in the future? Possibly a survey? Can we start pushing other social media methods for engagement?

- a. Online surveys are often something we will do. We will try to utilize those and making info more accessible and more recorded presentations. We have a community engagement plan for this project and are updating this and finalizing this. This is an evolving document. I will get that engagement plan posted and a summary of the tools we are planning on using.

CAC Chair: What is the status from the last design work and activities that we did in the past? The mapping exercise for example.

- a. The mapping exercise (at a CAC meeting several months ago) was a way for us to try to get deeper input into possible park features. We wanted to have participants see how much space various amenities took up in the park, and also to think about the relationships between types of uses. We did those workshop exercises at some of our focus groups, and we had planned to do these at some neighborhood youth nights. But that was right about the time the pandemic hit. We felt as a team it was time for us to show draft ideas. We have a lot of input of what people want to see, but not everything is going to fit or we may not be able to pay for everything. We need to be able to evaluate priorities and understand decision points. That can be best done with graphics and conceptual designs.

CAC Chair: But we've narrowed down to a few concepts?

- a. The draft concepts include the key priorities that we have heard from community members, including the park amenities, need for flexible design, avoiding green gentrification etc. We want to be able to get feedback on these. Designs give people something to react to and will help us narrow down priorities. These are not the only possible concepts – with design possibilities are endless. But we believe show three park concept designs will help us get to the next layer of understanding.

Other comments from the chat (watch for an FAQ where we will try to address these and other project questions):

- Do you have the funds for that huge billboard right off Dowling?
- Engage everyone visually drive them to FB Page or a website?
- I appreciate the attempt! way to roll with the punches everyone. much appreciated!
- Agreed! maybe a combo of taking digital materials and make them consumable via print, next door postings, and just keep trying. like North Market, Super USA, Camden market.
- yes! flyers!
- what about a park zine connected to feedback loops?

- Agree with Sam's comments. I think folks understand the importance of parks now more than ever, and people probably have deeper opinions about what they want in their parks.
- has social media been used? FB or IG
- I'm a local small business owner and I'd be willing to share information and try and reach out via social media
- yes, package up what you can and get it out there.
- Posters in other Parks? Something visual.
- FB event invites
- yes, this is wonderful too. don't drop any method. find ways to package and expand and share the info and knowledge.
- Park Commissioner Forney: Thanks for your service all! Signing off.
- surveys and/or Facebook polls. love it.
- I know this is early but are we going to build excitement by developing a brand identity for this new Park. A name, a logo and launch kit to start building the excitement and gathering input? We can do this now...
- Sam (JXTA): Great idea Jennifer. We're meeting on Friday to discuss next steps. I'll bring this feedback to the group at JXTA to create a brand identity.
- yes, recorded presentations with Facebook polls for key community input questions. love the ideas for continued outreach
- I like all the examples of how we can do engagement especially during COVID19. while online survey are helpful sometimes they are over represented by well to do, affluent populations. We must be mindful of how we target our surveys.