

MEETING MINUTES
Public Works Site Small Area Guide Process
CAT Summary Meeting
Thursday, April 22, 2010, 6:30-9:30 pm
Edina City Hall Council Chambers

City Staff Present:

Cary Teague

CAT Members Present:

Kevin Staunton, Chair

Greg Domke

Linda Odell

Andy Brown

Josh Sprague

Kim Montgomery

Sue Davison

Gene Persha

Larry Chestler

Steve Buss

Lisa Diehl

Ellen Jones

Chris Rofidal

Mike Platterer

Design Team Present

Mike Fischer, Chair

Scott Davidson

Peter Sussman

Council Members Present:

Joni Bennett

Introduction

Chair Staunton opened the meeting and noted meeting minutes should be available on Tuesday which would afford everyone time to review them. Continuing, Chair Staunton gave a brief background on what has transpired so far and said the goal this evening is to fashion principles and pass those principles along to the Design Team for the Design Charrette on Friday and Saturday.

Chair Fischer explained that during the Charrette the Design Team will take the principles the CAT provides them and organize those principles into design visuals. Chair Fischer said he thinks it would be a good idea for CAT members to present their principles at the beginning of the Charrette (2 PM Friday). CAT

members of course are welcome throughout the day, evening (Friday) and on Saturday (8-5) to stop by and see how the Charrette is progressing. Chair Fischer pointed out a hand-out titled "City of Edina" which provides the history of development in Edina that he thought the CAT would be interested in (Chair Fischer said Edina was one of the few suburban cities that was chosen for a tour on development).

A discussion ensued on how to formulate the thoughts/ideas and present them as principles to the Design Team. It was felt that CAT members would establish a set number of principles and those principles would be laid out and sorted. The principles would start with a broad approach and would be paired down. Those principles would then be given to the Design Team. A general goal of between 5-10 principles was discussed.

Chair Staunton asked CAT members to "call out" principles, adding he'll record them and they'll be sorted later.

Ms. Montgomery said her take on this is looking at what the area is lacking, what don't "we" have?

Ms. Diehl questioned the zoning designation of the area. Planner Teague responded that the public works site is zoned industrial and the rest of the Grandview area contains mixed use and commercial zones.

CAT Members suggested the following principles:

- Davison - Leverage with public areas.
- Diehl - Promote intermodal transportation.
- Platterer - Sustainability (promote) part of this would be to promote pedestrian, bicycle traffic. Look at ways to reduce the need to drive. Conserve energy, storm water management, etc.
- Rofidal - Recognize that this area is important to the business and property owners along with Edina residents. Promote a business/resident/public use synergy. Pedestrian friendly environment.
- Sprague - Promote connectivity external/internal.
- Sprague "Community-wide benefit."
- Diehl – Central Parking – "parking that works."
It was noted that the challenge of this area is that the parking is divided. An area designated as parking centrally located would be of benefit.
- Persha - "Green Space" / Natural Space.
- Domke - Promote varied services to better service the area "diversity of services."

Ms. Montgomery noted the services are spread out; creating the need to drive from service to service. Mr. Buss agreed with that statement, adding

that while the area is compact it is disconnected. Mr. Platteter also agreed adding services are close together; however they aren't connected.

Scott Davidson (Member of the Design Team) suggested that CAT members address their vision of what this area could be, not offer solutions. Focus needs to be on the vision. Vision drives design, reiterating the goal is vision and not getting lost in the solutions. That comes later.

Continuing principles:

- Rofidal – Community Identity – image of the area.
- Sprague – Innovative Design.
- Density – Answer the question why don't I walk?
- Diehl – Public gathering space.
- Buss – Sited topography issues.
- Brown – Access/flow issues. Functionality, efficient movement. Transit
- Rofidal – Economic viability – One needs to consider economics. Decisions need to be made regarding economics. Tax base reasons.
- Shaddock – Business opportunity and support (loading docks, how to handle deliveries, trash, business support is different for each business. Look at infrastructure. Incorporate business needs
- Davison – Pedestrian friendliness.
- Domke – Plan and design for the present and the future. As an example design a parking ramp that can be expanded in the future.
- Davison – Use of the rail line. Rail line regional.
- Chestler – Transportation corridor. Rail line and Highway 100.
- Fischer – Neighborhood Center with regional connectivity.
- Montgomery – Town Center

Discussion on combining/sorting principles:

It was noted by Ms. Montgomery that part of the role of CAT members is to suggest a process to tackle the impediments to change and to figure out what they are. How to deal with road blocks. Work through them and not around them.

Mr. Rofidal said before broad decisions are made the “elephant(s) in the room”, the bus garage, RR track need to be tackled. What impact do these have on decision making? Fischer said in responses to both Ms. Montgomery and Mr. Rofidal that maybe the group needs to work around those impediments.

Mr. Davidson said what the group needs to do is establish what they believe are the major driving points and fill in as they go. An example would be

density and with density there are different ways to look at it. It was also mentioned that in the future Our Lady of Grace could propose a senior development which would add density. It was also noted that a critical factor in the Comprehensive Plan was building height and density, pointing out density can be a divider.

Chair Fischer said in his opinion the group shouldn't get hung up on building heights pointing out building heights have been established in the Comp Plan. Chair Fischer did note that from a practical matter he hasn't seen too many municipalities build less or at the same level. Ms. Montgomery responded that the City Council rejected the height increases embodied in the Comp Plan in response to citizens' ongoing statements that they do not want added height; that they wish to retain the small-town neighborhood feel of Edina. Council Member Bennett confirmed Ms. Montgomery's statement regarding the Council's lowering of heights presented in the original Comp Plan.

Mr. Buss said that one thing he believes needs to be addressed is the streetscape, adding in his opinion it needs to be improved.

Mr. Persha said aesthetics should also be considered, adding that the group should also consider tasteful signage. Mr. Persha said traffic is also an issue.

Chair Staunton said a goal could be to create an aesthetic that creates an atmosphere. Chair Staunton did acknowledge the complexity of the area because of its topography, etc. Chair Staunton said maybe the goal should be to view what can't be changed (topography, RR Tracks, roads) as a plus.

Mr. Davidson said one area goal would be to establish a cohesive identity. Do you want this area to be promoted as a "Gateway". What is the image you want to portray of the area? Chair Staunton agreed and reiterated the features many people think are a disadvantage could be turned into an advantage. Chair Staunton said he also feels that the east side of the site is underutilized.

Chair Fischer interjected and said much of this will happen over a long period of time, adding parking is the subset of everything and the barriers are permanent.

Council Member Bennet said what she has gleaned from the discussion thus far is that three issues "jumped out" at her. One - the identity of the area. Two - Features of the area and Three - the method to get there.

Chair Staunton said a good goal is enhancing this "neighborhood center" that also has a regional draw. Chair Staunton said at this time he would combine

the Principles and select (volunteer) CAT Members to present them at the Charrette:

1. Leverage Public Ownership (Steve Buss)
 - City Government Center – Library, City Hall, Senior Center
 - Public Gathering
2. Neighborhood Center with Regional Connections (Linda Odell/Bob Shadduck)
 - Retail business opportunity and support
 - Meet business needs
 - Movement
 - Diverse goods and services
 - Economic vitality
 - Business/Resident Synergy
3. Turn barriers into Opportunity – Work through barriers not around them (Kim Montgomery)
 - School Bus Site
 - Rail Line
 - Highway 100
 - Transportation Corridors
 - Topography
4. Design for Present and Future (Greg Domke)
 - Functionality
 - Density
5. Parking (Mike Platterer)
 - Could fit multiple categories
6. Movement (Larry Chestler)
 - Pedestrian Friendliness
 - Better Connectivity
 - Promote Multimodal Transportation
7. Design/Identity (Kevin Staunton)
 - Innovative Design
 - Aesthetics
 - Natural Space
 - Attractive Space
 - Identity

- Image
- Gateway
- Promote Sustainability

Chair Staunton suggested as previously mentioned that the assigned members of the CAT present their suggestions at the Charrette on Friday at 2:00pm at the Edina Senior Center.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35.