



To: Mayor and City Council

Agenda Item #: XII. A.

From: Bill Neuendorf
Economic Development Manager

Action
Discussion
Information

Date: June 2, 2015

Subject: Grandview Former Public Works Site
Update regarding Potential Scenarios

Action Requested:

Information for discussion only.

Background:

Planning and visioning for the City's former Public Works site began five years ago when the facility was moved to a newly acquired site. In fall 2014, the City engaged Frauenshuh Inc., as a development partner to provide assistance and professional insight as the City explores ways to re-use the site for a combination of public and private uses. This approach is taken to provide for a new civic facility on the site while simultaneously returning the remaining portion of the site to the tax base with a complementary use.

During the past seven months of preliminary planning and community engagement, hundreds of suggestions and comments were collected from interested stakeholders. Numerous concepts were explored and a variety of uses were considered on the site. Large public meetings were held at key stages of the preliminary site planning process.

These efforts culminated in the preparation of four potential scenarios. Each scenario includes a combination of public and private uses that share parking facilities. The scenarios are rooted in the 7 Guiding Principles adopted in the Grandview Development Framework and address many of the community suggestions.

An Open House to solicit public comments on the potential scenarios was held on April 22, 2015. Approximately 125 residents reviewed the scenarios, asked questions and discussed areas of interest with the design team. 80 people provided written comments and several people provided online comments.

All materials used at the public meeting have been posted on www.edinamn.gov/grandview. Summaries of the written and online comments are attached.

In addition to the public comment, the City Council reviewed the economic impact of each scenario and discussed the four potential scenarios at the May 19, 2015 Work Session. The economics of an "all public" and "all private" scenario were also considered as part of the discussion.

Next Steps:

Based on the input collected, the design team intends to move forward as follows:

- 1) Scenarios #2 and #3 will be further studied to understand the market feasibility and appropriate scale of multi-family housing on the site.
- 2) Scenarios (#1 and #4) with an office building or medical office building will not be pursued.
- 3) Programmatic details and operational feasibility of a large civic facility (approx. 60,000 square foot) will be further studied.
 - a. Programming elements will likely include: multigenerational, multipurpose programming, art center and performing arts.
 - b. Flexible spaces will be pursued to maximize the longevity of the facility.
- 4) Possible funding streams for the construction and operation of the new civic facility will be further studied.
- 5) Alternative uses of the existing Senior Center will be studied as those operations could be combined in the new facility.
- 6) Operational requirements of a park and ride facility and future transit connection will be further studied.
- 7) Transportation impacts of the large civic and multi-family housing scenarios will be further studied.

Attachments:

Open House comments (6-pages)
Speak Up Edina comments (12-pages)

FPW Redevelopment

Potential Scenarios Open House, April 22, 2015

Summary of Written Public Comments

Approximately 125 people participated in the 2-hour Open House. After a brief presentation of the current scenarios, participants spoke with 8 members of the design team who staffed tables with materials about various aspects of the project.

In addition to the verbal comments, 80 people filled out written comment sheets. Those written comments are summarized in this document.

PRELIMINARY SITE PLANNING

SUMMARY - There are mixed opinions on the preliminary site plans. There is general support for a mixed-use, public-private development on the site provided that the private components allow a higher caliber of public space to be achieved. There are also strong feelings that the publicly-owned land should remain for exclusive public use.

The North Civic scenario garnered the greatest support. While the tower may provide “grand” views, many residents feel that it will set the tone for development in the Grandview District that is too high and too dense. Many were pleased with the synergy created by combining the outdoor plaza with the main entrance of the new civic facility. The scale and mass of the apartment should be reduced so that additional green space can be provided. Some of the units should be priced to be affordable to moderate income households.

When a final direction is determined, a full traffic study should be conducted so that necessary roadway improvements can be identified and implemented to better serve residents and patrons. Attention should be paid to the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists, in addition to motorists and transit riders.

CENTRAL CIVIC WITH RESIDENTIAL TOWER AND MEDICAL OFFICE	
POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the high rise & office to complement civic building. (x 7) • Prefer high rise on North instead of on Eden (x 2) • The mixture of day & evening uses creates more of a mix. • New medical offices here would provide better access to services. • An urgent care is needed in this area • Like the office; it should be connected directly to parking garage. • Residential tower provides good views • Like the open spaces of this design. • Prefer high rise residential instead of low rise • This is the right location for density & height due to proximity to Hwy 100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already enough medical office in the area (x 6) • Not enough parking to support the larger civic use • 10 stories is too tall, could it be a mid-rise? • Mid-block location does not seem ideal for civic

CENTRAL CIVIC WITH RESIDENTIAL TOWER & RESIDENTIAL MIDRISE OR HOTEL

POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer housing instead of medical office (x 5) • Would be nice to have a hotel in the area (x 2) • A small scale hotel would be OK. • Supportive of density if it helps fund civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-12 stories is too tall (x 18) • Too much residential density for the site (x 2) • Civic facility needs better visibility and presence from the major streets. • Lack of “wow” factor

NORTH CIVIC WITH RESIDENTIAL MIDRISE OR HOTEL

POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer this layout over the Central Civic (x 25) • Overall density is similar to new Byerly’s on France • Prefer a boutique hotel instead of apartments • Enlarge public plaza, add more dramatic character to draw people here • Catalyst to properties on north and east • Closest to 2012 Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hotel (x 11) • Prefer apartments instead of hotel (x 4) • Reduce apartments and add more green space (x 4) • Concept is too bulky (x 3)

PRELIMINARY SITE PLANNING- GENERAL COMMENTS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are too dense, add grass (x 9) • Provide real traffic figures generated by the proposals; some streets are already difficult and more cars will make it worse. (x 8) • Affordably-priced units must be included too (x 7) • Improve routes for pedestrian and bicyclists throughout Grandview (x 5) • Support any mixed-use as long as larger civic option is included (x 4) • Support each of the mixed-use concepts (x3) • Too many people and too much congestion (x 3). • No more housing in Edina, especially not here (x 3). • Need more green space; where will the children play (x 2)? • Sad to lose public land (x2) • Too much private compared to public (x 2) • Set aside space for future transit station (x 2) • Explore larger park-and-ride with Met. Council (x 2) • Try moving Civic to the south part of site (x 2) • The site designs are improving (x 2). • Can civic be moved to southeast corner? (x 2) • None of these site plans show originality nor do they create a unique opportunity (x 2) • Don’t like any of these options (x 2); keep it as a neighborhood park; site isn’t large enough for public/private combined. • If we already have it in Edina, we don’t need a new one. • We seem to need more senior housing, multi-story is OK. • Ok with residential tower, but add more green space.
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PRELIMINARY SITE PLANNING- GENERAL COMMENTS

- Consider apartments for artists in the community
- Consider cooperative housing
- Can affordable units be for seniors?
- Is low-income housing being considered here?
- Too dense unless it is affordable/subsidized
- Age 50+ families are downsizing and want to stay in Edina
- Not interested in living in a small unit, but a maybe a unit with nice views.
- The whole Grandview area needs to have a “welcoming” density (similar to Byerly’s apartments on France).
- Don’t want new people and strangers in the neighborhood.
- High rise would change the character too much and set precedent to build more of the same.
- Improve pedestrian connects between this site and adjacent properties; consider climate-controlled walkways
- Would like to see community center with residential apartments on top
- Is retail realistic on this site?
- Prefer to see more retail & restaurants
- Excellent improvements for current and future transit use
- Prefer to see more emphasis on restaurants, retail and civic spaces.
- Don’t like any of these –keep it public.
- Need to identify environmental sustainability features
- There will be a parking problem.

PROGRAMMING OF CIVIC FACILITY

SUMMARY – There is broad support for a new community facility that serves multiple ages and multiple purposes. There are multiple preferences for the scale and programming within a new facility. There is support for the Art Center and a desire to create a new Performing Arts space. There is also support for new fitness and recreation space that is community-focused.

There is concern regarding the capital costs as well as the ongoing operational expenses.

When a final direction is determined, interested residents and stakeholder groups should be involved in the design of the actual facility.

NEW EDINA ARTS CENTER (24,000 SQ FT)	
POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Art Center is sorely needed. • Include 5-10 artist studios that can be rented • Smaller size is friendlier; no need for every possible activity in one place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Center will not be profitable (x 2) • Art Center is not needed; others have not been successful; we can use world-class facilities in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. • Art Center is too narrow; add recreation to fund the arts.

NEW EDINA CENTER FOR ARTS & COMMUNITY (60,000 SQ FT WITH 350 FIXED SEATS)	
POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest civic is most desirable (x 8) • A performance space with tiered seating is most needed. (x 4) • Fixed seats and good acoustics are needed (x 3) • Edina needs a community theater (x 2). • Love to see a marquee arts & cultural amenity in Edina. • Make stage large enough for bands and choirs. • This provides something that Edina lacks – a great idea. • Prefer multiple discipline and innovative community spaces. • Valuable to more people in community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed seats limit use of the space • Arts & culture should not go on this site. It should be a community rec. center, possible with some arts included. • Likely to draw more activity to Grandview

NEW EDINA CENTER FOR ARTS & COMMUNITY (56,000 SQ FT WITH 300 MOVABLE SEATS)	
POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONCERNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer the flexibility of a performance hall with movable seats (x 17) • Flexibility and adaptability for future needs are important • Like the sense of community that results from dual use of the building • Appreciate the multi-generational approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer fixed seats, better quality

CIVIC FACILITY - GENERAL COMMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More civic space is better (x 4) • Would like to see new swimming pool and work out space too (x 4). • Include outdoor space for small community events like festivals, performances and farmers market (x 3) • New civic space must cover its operating costs (x 3) • Need a rec center for all ages (x 3). • Like 60,000 SF civic, add more grass and flowers instead of more buildings (x 2) • Arts and performing space is essential in Edina (x 2) • Include arts, choir, dance & other user groups in the final planning process (x 2). • Would prefer recreation/health/sports (basketball, racquetball, exercise machines) instead of arts (x2). • Would like to see recreation & fitness in addition to arts & all ages community programming (x2) • What data did City Council use to support arts & culture (x2)? • Would like see History Center relocated here too (x 2). • Prefer arts & community instead of workout space and basketball courts (x 2). • Free public parking is important here (x2). Eden Ave Grill and funeral home need more parking sometimes. • Improve parking at existing Senior Center so the building can be used more fully during the daytime. • We already have art center, swimming pool and skating arena, why more?

CIVIC FACILITY - GENERAL COMMENTS

- Include water feature
- I support moving the art center but not at the expense of a new recreation center.
- Thanks for listening to comments from Art Center staff.
- Include windows so people can see artists working.
- Include access to the outdoors from the new building
- Use this site for a community gathering space – recreation center, meeting room, commercial kitchen, etc.)
- Outdoor art should also be included in the public plazas.
- This should be community focused with an arts component (instead of the other way).
- Public space should be performing arts with theater, senior center and teen center.
- Prefer the indoor and outdoor civic spaces to be adjacent to each other
- Would like a low-cost fitness/wellness center; if you can't afford fees, you could work at the front desk.
- Already too much high-quality arts in the Twin Cities. Arts & culture always loses money
- Define new community space by the needs of multiple ages; don't segment into senior, teen, etc.
- Include senior center and new fitness center in the larger options.
- Could usable green roof-top space be added?
- Who wants a railroad running through a public space?
- Consider solar panels and green roofs.
- Consider a park with pool, tennis courts and picnic tables.
- No housing; a dog park would be better.
- Maximize parking potential for future transit hub and future growth
- Civic facility needs high visible and clear entrance.
- Strong and strategic management of the new civic facility is essential; not simply first-come-first-served, but strategic programming to maximize the long-term use.
- Security is important since many different groups could be using simultaneously.
- Don't like any of these; turn it into a neighborhood park.
- As a 30-year resident, the past rationale against new facilities was a lack of public land. Now we have land but still no community center.
- Thanks for the efforts to listen to and engage the citizens to the degree that you have.
- Food operations should be privatized here.
- Add two more stories to civic to provide a "grand" view that is open to the public.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

- Public lands should stay public (x 11)
- City Council isn't listening (x 2)
- Thanks for taking questions (x2).
- If we need restaurants, bring in food trucks (x 2).
- Improve pedestrian access throughout Grandview district
- Will City Council even see public comments?
- Prefer larger public use and less private development

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

- Prefer 100% public but if that isn't possible, I prefer North Civic.
- Whole complex should be developed and owned by the City, not privately developed.
- Leave it 'as is'; why rush to put profit in developers hands?
- Council member Staunton laid out good priorities on April 7th.
- City Council is on the right track.
- Move the Art Center here and use that building as a nature center or nature preserve.
- When did the streets at Grandview Square become reserved for condo use?
- The City Council should have an actual listening session.
- Thanks for the City's hard work on this.
- Decide something already; 5 years of study is too long.
- Not in favor of 100% public option; would prefer to see City sell the site outright and pay for the 8-acres it bought years ago.
- The final project isn't about the City Council wants, they should represent all of us.
- Many people I've talked with distrust the process. My word, we've been at this for five years.
- Residents should be involved in the final design.
- No TIF or corporate welfare.
- It's been five years since the first planning; what's the hurry in building here?
- I hope the City isn't just trying to pay itself back for money spent on new Public Works facility.
- Public investment in Grandview benefits whole community as opposed to Braemar improvements which benefit a small fraction of community.
- No need to duplicate Southdale
- These meetings are too frustrating; isn't there a master plan for this entire area?!
- Community owned rec centers are self-sustaining and needed in this part of Edina.
- City and School District should consider sharing "community space".
- Pursue opportunities rather than drag out the process.

###

FPW Potential Scenarios – Speak Up Edina Comments April – May 2015

Discussion: [Redevelopment of the Former Public Works Site – Potential Scenarios](#)

Over the last five months, the design team has considered hundreds of comments and suggestions received by the public as they prepared redevelopment scenarios for the vacant 3.3-acre former Public Works site.

Three potential scenarios have been prepared. Each scenario includes a combination of public and private uses. Since the planning is still in the early stages, full details have not yet been determined.

Help further refine these concepts by reviewing the site plan, public uses and providing additional comments below. All comments will be shared with the City Council as they decide on the best options for the community. For more information on the options and the process, visit www.EdinaMN.gov/Grandview.

3 Topics 25 Answers Closed 2015-05-24

<http://speakupedina.org/discussions/redevelopment-of-the-former-public-works-site-potential-scenarios>

Topic #1: [Public Uses](#)



The City Council has encouraged the design team to pursue 3 out of the 4 functional themes that have been popularly supported. The new public facility on the site is envisioned to be a center for arts and community. Indoor programming could include visual arts (such as pottery, painting, glass, metals), performing arts (such as music, theater, film, dance, lectures, poetry) and multigenerational, multi-purpose programming (such as social and recreational, educational, wellness, history, and community and special events). Two outdoor civic plazas would also be included. Adequate public parking stalls would also be included to accommodate a future transit connection and park-and-ride.

What do you think of these public uses at this location?

6 Responses

[Hope Melton](#) 25 days ago

I like this combination of visual and performing arts and multigenerational space. There has also been discussion about moving the Senior Center to the site. Since teens and young people now have no space of their own, and "seniors" have been segregated off in their own space--someone needs to define what "programming" means and how this would work. Above all, the young people and "seniors", perhaps meeting together, need to weigh in on what they would like to see. These decisions should be made by the people who will benefit--not some commission speaking for them.

0 Supports

[Chris Bremer](#) 25 days ago

Spaces for the arts and flexible spaces for various activities seem like good uses of the indoor areas, but I am uncertain about what is really intended by the term "multigenerational." Is it intended that cross-generational activities occur in these spaces (this seems aspirational but maybe not realistic, most of the time), or that different age/interest groups could use the spaces at different times (such as young parents with kids, bridge players, or a martial arts club)? Will there be sound isolation for larger rooms so that a dance or "battle of the bands" could take place without disrupting activities in other rooms or in residential spaces?

0 Supports

[Chip Jones](#) 24 days ago

I really like the idea of having a visual arts and performing arts space in proximity to one another in Edina. This would be wonderful for the residents of Edina.

I do think there needs to be more clarification on the third area, "multi-generational, multi-purpose programming". It's possible that multi-purpose programming like "community and special events programming" could be held in the same space used by the performing arts (theater, etc).

I'm not not sure what "recreational and wellness" programs would entail. This also needs further clarification so that the proper type of space can be identified. The same applies to "social and educational" programming.

0 Supports

[Jennifer J](#) 23 days ago

This is not a smart way to define the need for or programming of a new public facility. The public is playing second fiddle to the private development interests. If millions in public dollars will be spent on a new facility, the process to determine the need for and uses within that facility should be free of developer influence. If we are going to pay for a new public facility, let's make sure it is what we would envision if all options were on the table. What would we do with 3.3 acres of public land and up to \$38 million in public money if we could do anything? That's the question we need to ask.

0 Supports

[Joel Stegner](#), Community volunteer 23 days ago

Really like it that the City has responded to the strong public preference for Grandview to have a major public use that will enhance life in the community. To remain a destination community, our public investment in modern public facilities to appeal to all ages, interest and backgrounds must continue - updating what we have and adding facilities to meet growing and unfilled needs. If we stand still and rest on our laurels, we get left behind.

0 Supports

[Donna Callender](#) 19 days ago

I attended the April 22 open house about the Grandview project.

This is the first city (?) presentation on Grandview that I have attended, and I found that whoever was running it showed contempt and rudeness to me and my fellow voters...er...residents.

At 5:30, the start time, an unidentified man addressed the seated assembly. He did not identify himself or his role in the proceedings. He said there was no structure for the meeting, and he would wait 10 minutes to start until the room had "critical mass," and then he would take questions from us.

At 5:50, 20 minutes later, he came back and addressed us again. He said that, after a quick summary by another man who also was not identified or introduced, questions from us would be answered.

After the summary, the man asked for questions from voters....er...residents. After a very few pointed questions about density, who would own what, and traffic concerns (for which he had no answers), the man abruptly announced that question time was over and we should go look at the posters until a second, unidentified group of residents arrived. He ignored the confused expressions and questions from the residents. A henchman in the back of the room started applauding, as if to signal that our participation was ended. I call him a henchman because I heard the two of them talking about it just before the meeting started.

And just like that, the community was dismissed. I still don't know who these people were. I looked around for Rod Serling to tell us we were in an episode of the Twilight Zone, but he wasn't there. I don't blame him.

This contempt for community input shows how bogus this process is. When those in charge only offer "input" on options chosen by themselves, in a forum that was advertised as a discussion but was immediately shut down when people started to discuss, we're not dealing with democracy. We're dealing with something Stalin-esque, a discredited government model that is very disturbing to find here in the U.S.

I'm thinking that we need a city council who practices democracy instead of giving it flaccid lip service. This lack of transparency and prohibition of open discussion of issues is not, in my opinion, good enough for any American community. I'm still waiting for a response from any of the council members I contacted about this.

The contempt and rudeness shown to voters....er...residents, is shameful. No one's buying this clumsy farce. I would suggest that, next time, include the community for real and respect us as the reasonable voters...er... adults we are. I was going to suggest it, but this is one farce over the line. I don't believe anything this City Council says anymore, and I'd like an investigative journalist out there to follow the money trails and see where they lead. I'm glad I only wasted one evening to find out that the Politburo is alive and well in Edina. I won't waste any more.

0 Supports

Topic #2: [Site Plan](#)



The potential site plans contains different combinations of public and private uses at sizes necessary to be successful in the marketplace ([click here to view all three concept plans](#)). The new public facility could be complimented by new apartments, hotel, or office space with retail and restaurant space. Each use has an impact on the traffic patterns and neighborhood feel that will be fully evaluated after the general direction is selected.

What do you think of the potential site plans?

7 Responses

[Hope Melton](#) 25 days ago

The developers are trying to cram way too much into the space. This is inevitable, however, because its a privately driven decision process. In other words, the "highest and best use" of most of this very valuable public land must translate into significant profit for the developer.

The public needs to know if the public uses will also involve public ownership of the land. In any case, in order to make a profit on the deal, the private developer has to make up in private ownership/use what he loses in public use/ownership on the site.

That's what's wrong with this whole deal. The planning should have been led by an independent planning consultant.

1 Support

[Chris Bremer](#) 25 days ago

I agree that there does not seem to be enough space for all of the proposed uses, and I am surprised that it is not specified whether land will be leased or sold, which seems like a big deal. It seems like developers might get most of the benefit from rising property values. Some questions: What kind of housing is being proposed? Will it be affordable for retirees or middle-income families? Would existing spaces like the Art Center and Senior Center be kept as public space and used for civic purposes? Will there be adequate public transit and parking to adequately serve the civic spaces at all times of the day and year? For example, what happens if the Senior Center schedules a large social event during the holiday shopping season?

0 Supports

[Chip Jones](#) 24 days ago

I like the idea of having limited commercial space, like a gallery, a coffee shop or limited retail but I don't like the idea of having an office building on this property. There's already plenty of office space within a block or two of this property.

If revenues are needed to finance this project for generations to come, then I think that the office space should be located on an adjoining piece of property. This would allow enough space and flexibility for the 3.3 acres of land to be developed as needed for future public use.

0 Supports

[Jennifer J](#) 23 days ago

Imagine everything at Grandview Square (condos, park, Library/Senior Center, office building and parking) crammed onto the former public works site. That's pretty much what they're proposing.

Grandview Square is approximately 12 acres. The former public works site is 3.3. Yet, they are proposing nearly as much to more development on the former public works site as currently exists at Grandview Square.

Only 9-22% of the estimated interior sq. ft. of the proposed scenarios would be dedicated to civic/public space. 78-91% would be private.

All scenarios would require rezoning and comp plan changes. If residents were concerned about the proposed density at 7200 France, these proposals far exceed that.

0 Supports

[Joel Stegner](#), Community volunteer 23 days ago

This is an ideal place for density, as there is no adjacent residential neighborhood and it is several stories lower than the buildings on Vernon. The public facility should have the best site, and putting housing on top of it should be considered - small affordable market rate and affordable housing units. If commercial space is inadequate, then let the developer buy the bus garage space and develop that. The City could help the school find a new bus location with lower value real estate.

0 Supports

Beck Jacobson at May 19, 2015 at 7:29am CDT

<http://www.inforum.com/news/3742774-solar-gardens-coming-soon-fargo-and-moorhead> Lets make some future investment for our community and make the best use for the entire spaces available soon, including transportation line. Progressive ideas that the next generations can be proud of.

0 Supports

Jon DeMars Victorsen at May 20, 2015 at 10:12pm CDT

I liken railroad tracks to airplane traffic: fun to watch, but noisy and disruptive if you're trying to hear anything. Unless they design quieter rail cars, the noise and tremors from the train tracks are not going to go away, and in my mind forever disrupt any performances, businesses, and homes on this site. And, it is entirely possible, the rail traffic will continue to increase on this line.

The three proposals are shown, quietly, on paper and computer graphics. To evaluate the uses proposed on this site, we need to have the proposals presented with full volume sound to comprehend the railroad's impact. Now, imagine you're listening to a play or a concert and a long, long, long train comes rumbling by; how's that going to work, intermission? Suppose you're on an important business call or have your fifteen minute appointment with your doctor and a long, long, long train comes rumbling by; are you going to hear all the details? And we're proposing to tightly pack civic space, business and homes on this site, so more people can be affected, why?

0 Supports

Topic #3: [Other](#)

Members of the Edina community have a wide variety of passionate feelings for this site. What other comments would you like to share?

12 Responses

[Hope Melton](#) 25 days ago

Why is the City once again seeking public comment?

In response to charges that this has not been a democratic planning process, council members consistently assert this "wide variety of opinions" argument, including the fact that it's gone on for years, and hundreds of people have weighed in.

That's not the issue. The issue is that hundreds have weighed in on surveys, letters to council, "discovery" sessions, SpeakUp Edina, and letters to the editor in the Sun Current, but the Council continues to ignore what a majority of residents are saying. The public is saying (data from public records summarized on the Public Grandview website):

- Grandview 2014 Survey : 51% oppose more office space, 54% oppose townhouse and condo development, 64% oppose more apartments, 66% favor public purposes only, 61% oppose selling the public land, and 72% favor arts/cultural opportunities.
- 2014 Letters to Council: 68% favor a community center (6% oppose), 54% favor a moratorium on the RFI for private developers.
- SpeakUp Edina! as of 2/13/15: 74% endorse a community center (8% oppose), 44% endorse retaining public land, 5% favor mixed use, 24% have concerns about traffic/transportation.
- December 4th and January 15th (high school) Discovery Sessions: 59% and 53%, respectively, support public uses of the land, 1-2% and 3-8%, respectively, favor private use/housing.

And what do we get?

We get a majority of the space for high rise (10 - 12 story) office buildings and housing including mostly apartments. The condos and townhouse mix is unclear. I have asked two developers at two meetings if this will be more luxury housing. The answer is overwhelmingly yes, with perhaps a few "affordable" units for "single young people" on the lower floors. We do get some community space/use for "programming"--but within the larger context of majority private/commercial uses.

This faux public participation process is a dangerous game. It feeds public cynicism and lack of trust in government. It's a game we all lose.

3 Supports

[Chip Jones](#) 24 days ago

I am not opposed to the proposed residential component. In fact I like it for two reasons. One, it brings more people into this area which will add some vitality. Secondly, it provides tax revenues which should help offset the costs of this project on a long term basis.

With the right mix of people, coffee shops, gallery space, concerts and more this could really become a lively area, BUT I think residential is an important element for that to work.

I also hope that the city would be willing to create a climate controlled walkway over to the Jerry's building from the proposed residential tower. This would be a wonderful addition for all and would provide access to the arts and cultural center, both TO and FROM Jerry's .

0 Supports

[Joel Stegner](#), Community volunteer 23 days ago

The City needs to control the outcome. The outcome needs to be a new development with the public purpose put first. This is more like Braemar, less like Centennial Lakes, a nice project, but one for which the public component appears to have been put in on space left over - the best example being the band shell - right next to a noisy road, but with poor parking access, too little space to handle a large audience, no permanent seating and very hot in the summer sun. If it had been done right, it would have been a showpiece, but clearly the development was about a residential community, offices, and retail - with the public purpose being a fourth priority. At Grandview, it needs to be number 1.

Coming back with new concepts for public input is fine, as long as the City remembers the research it already did that showed a clear interest in putting the public purpose first. Now we should be focused on the best way to do that, with no backsliding.

0 Supports

[Jon DeMars Victorsen](#) 20 days ago

Is it possible that Edina is inadvertently limiting community participation to geeks with fast computers? How many of you are having trouble navigating these reports? I find that the redevelopment scenarios are published in large, graphic-laden files. While they are thorough, I believe a significant amount of our residents with average computers find these reports hard to navigate. It takes a significant amount of time to review a graphic, then wait for the computer to catch up, so one can read the explanation, then wait some more, to go back to the graphic. Unless our residents are extremely patient and/or motivated to endure this process, they will and do give up on reading the entire report. In conclusion, please publish future reports parsed into chapters.

2 Supports

[Jon DeMars Victorsen](#) 20 days ago

All three redevelopment scenarios, in my opinion, propose a static and unrealistic vision. The graphics show only what is proposed for the site itself. In my experience, there is a ripple effect in rezoning and development. Specifically, the adjacent properties believe they too can rezone their property to have buildings with an equal-or-greater height and density. Therefore, it would be in the best interests for a community evaluation process, to have one graphic of the site development with existing neighboring buildings for orientation, and a second graphic showing adjacent properties with buildings of equal height and density. I believe this would show a truer impact of redevelopment scenarios.

4 Supports

Jon DeMars Victorsen 19 days ago

If we, the current generation, cannot find clarity and consensus in how to use this property, what is the harm in planting a forest on the land, entrusting it to a future generation to develop?

4 Supports

Donna Callender 19 days ago

I attended the April 22 open house about the Grandview project.

This is the first city (?) presentation on Grandview that I have attended, and I found that whoever was running it showed contempt and rudeness to me and my fellow voters...er...residents.

At 5:30, the start time, an unidentified man addressed the seated assembly. He did not identify himself or his role in the proceedings. He said there was no structure for the meeting, and he would wait 10 minutes to start until the room had "critical mass," and then he would take questions from us.

At 5:50, 20 minutes later, he came back and addressed us again. He said that, after a quick summary by another man who also was not identified or introduced, questions from us would be answered.

After the summary, the man asked for questions from voters....er...residents. After a very few pointed questions about density, who would own what, and traffic concerns (for which he had no answers), the man abruptly announced that question time was over and we should go look at the posters until a second, unidentified group of residents arrived. He ignored the confused expressions and questions from the residents. A henchman in the back of the room started applauding, as if to signal that our participation was ended. I call him a henchman because I heard the two of them talking about it just before the meeting started.

And just like that, the community was dismissed. I still don't know who these people were. I looked around for Rod Serling to tell us we were in an episode of the Twilight Zone, but he wasn't there. I don't blame him.

This contempt for community input shows how bogus this process is. When those in charge only offer "input" on options chosen by themselves, in a forum that was advertised as a discussion but was immediately shut down when people started to discuss, we're not dealing with democracy. We're dealing with something Stalin-esque, a discredited government model that is very disturbing to find here in the U.S.

I'm thinking that we need a city council who practices democracy instead of giving it flaccid lip service. This lack of transparency and prohibition of open discussion of issues is not, in my opinion, good enough for any American community. I'm still waiting for a response from any of the council members I contacted about this.

The contempt and rudeness shown to voters....er....residents, is shameful. No one's buying this clumsy farce. I would suggest that, next time, include the community for real and respect us as the reasonable voters...er... adults we are. I was going to suggest it, but this is one farce over the line. I don't believe anything this City Council says anymore, and I'd like an investigative journalist out there to follow the money trails and see where they lead. I'm glad I only wasted one evening to find out that the Politburo is alive and well in Edina. I won't waste any more.

2 Supports

Jim Stromberg 14 days ago

It is obvious to the outside viewer that emotions run high on the Grandview site. My only comment relative to who 'owns' the high road in the discussions is that using percentages of population as opposing or favoring one viewpoint or another is pretty dangerous. One hundred percent of anything is 'all' of it, but if the 'all' is only a fraction of a community, it really doesn't accurately reflect what that community favors. So when I look at 'documentation' with percentages, I naturally wonder how many people in the population are factored into the equation.

0 Supports

Jennifer J at May 12, 2015 at 12:33pm CDT

Regarding the January 2014 Grandview Community survey: "The results of the study are projectable to all adult Edina residents within $\pm 5.0\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases." Regarding the October 2014 Park & Rec Community Needs Assessment: "The results of the random sample of 1222 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least $\pm 2.7\%$."

2 Supports

Mark Mironer at May 18, 2015 at 10:54am CDT

When so many residents favor a public use (and oppose residential use), it's very disappointing to see the City Council reselling the residential proposal over and over again. Over a year ago, my son and a number of his EHS classmates in an architecture course came up with designs for the space, many of which seemed to show more vision than the selected firm. The temporary bump to the city's finances is outweighed by giving up some prime land forever.

3 Supports

[Lisa Nelson](#) at May 18, 2015 at 8:57pm CDT

I know that this process has been going on for several years, and so there is a temptation to say it's time to just wrap it up, but I feel that the city does not have the majority of the public behind the private development approach. With the city bus garage space about to become available, we should go back to the drawing board and look at both parcels and the public option with a fresh eye. If we need to wait until the bus garage property is available, then we wait. It is worth it to get it right. An opportunity like this doesn't come up very often. A different point is that I think it would be well worth it to have a really top quality community center/arts/fitness center. Edina is an outstanding community in many respects, but our community center and arts center are definitely not.

3 Supports

[Amy Minge](#) at May 19, 2015 at 11:15am CDT

I attended the Grandview meeting at which the three development proposals were originally unveiled. Attendees were then allowed to “vote” for the proposal they liked the most, by placing green stickers on the corresponding placard. The problem was that the three plans were nearly identical in their ratios of public to private use.

Of course this was exactly what city council members had intended. By limiting the choices to three nearly-identical plans, the “winning” plan’s composition had been predetermined.

In this way, the Grandview election bore an odd resemblance to a North Korean election. (You can vote for whichever candidate you like, but all candidates espouse an identical ideology.)

Yet, because we have the right to free speech in our nation (unlike in North Korea), one woman had the boldness to take a manila folder & say, "Here's for none of the above!" People smiled and laughed, & then began placing their stickers on the “None of the above” folder.

Results: Plan A-13 Plan B-14 Plan C-26 “None of the above”: 128

In this way, a rigged election turned into a more democratic one.

Since then, city council members and the developers have expressed frustration that people are being too “fussy.” Of course, if people were truly offered a spectrum of options, they would happily endorse one.

Fortunately, in the next city council election, I imagine that people really will have a choice in whom they elect. It will be interesting to see how voters react when city council members have no opportunity to predetermine the results.

2 Supports

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