

Adams School Reuse Committee

Meeting Minutes – Thursday January 25, 2007, Cummings Center, 7:00pm

Committee Members: Dan T. Haley, Jr. and Matt Thayer Co-Chairs, Dick D'Entremont, Cythia Fitzgerald, Eric Stark, Ken Bailey, Mr. Marcisso (sub). Councilors: Kevin Donoghue. City Staff: Alex Jaegerman, Planning Director, Carrie Marsh, Urban Designer, Amy Grommes Pulaski, HCD Program Manager (note taker)

Citizens: Joan Sheedy

1. Introduction Review of Meeting Notes

Matt: Good evening, I appreciate you all coming. We have a few new members at the table. Let's introduce ourselves.

Matt: Our first item is to review the meeting notes. What I propose is that if we take any comments we amend them the next time. Our next step is to review the revised work plan.

2. Review the Revised Work Plan

Carrie describes the changes that have been made to the Work plan dated 1/22/07.

Matt: Any comments? (no one). Well I have a few comments. Item 10 under committee meetings. Miscellaneous Topics such as Non-profit Collaboration. We had discussed teasing this out. But I want to be sure this doesn't disappear.

Carrie: The staff will have to know more specifically what you are looking for this.

Mr. Marcisso: Under Public Forum 1, is this enough time for the developers.

Matt: This is still up in the air. But it's not requesting specific proposals, but rather describing their current or past projects.

Alex: The developers know their own work. They could probably present without preparation, to talk about their own work. I have already started to talk about this with certain developers.

Matt: Any other comments. No? Good.

Carrie: There are two other issues in the packet. One is a letter from the Assessor's Office from Richard Blackburn. The land's tax assessed value is \$314,000 and the entire site is appraised at \$1,852,500. The second item is the 3-D view of the site.

Eric Stark: I'd like to ask a question about the "technical assistance" that will be provided to the community ideas in Public Forum 2. What does that mean?

Alex: Actually, you are the professor at UMA, correct? We were actually thinking of using your students to help assist. Sorry we haven't had a chance to discuss this with you prior. Otherwise we can use professionals from town. But if you or your students are interested, it would be very beneficial to the community and to the students.

(Eric agrees.)

3. Review the Summary of Community Objectives

Matt: Can we move onto the Community objectives that Carrie has been working on.

Carrie: This has been a helpful exercise for staff. It was taken from Markos Miller's article in the Munjoy Hill Observer, combined with notes from the previous meetings.

Alex: The material that was gathered in the fall is valuable. So we'd like to use this summary Carrie put together as a base line. There are two questions: 1) Is this list a full summary of ideas, or are there things that need to be added? And 2) Can we use this at a broader community meeting with a dot exercise? At some point in the future we'd like to narrow the objectives to develop more specifics. The other objective was to condense the information down to 1 or 2 pages rather than having you sort through 6-7 pages.

Eric Stark: Do you see the dissemination of this information as a basis for the CRAZY ideas?

Alex: We'd like this to be the baseline to begin the planning for the CRAZY ideas.

Matt: Good well let's go through them.

Carrie: MHNO did a SWOT analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the neighborhood as well as describing their needs and desires.

Carrie continues to describe the DRAFT Summary of Community Objectives.

Committee discusses the points pointed out by Carrie.

Cynthia: We just had a discussion about the Dunkin' Donuts. Would this be subject to this?

Alex: This is R-6 zoned, so no retail is currently allowed.

Dick: What about the project being economically viable? Where's the tax base? These are all great community driven ideas, but I think that we need to consider the economic viability. Regardless of how we cut it there needs to be some type of economic viability.

Alex: First we make an all encompassing list, and then break it down to smaller stages and test economic viability.

Ed Democracy: I was at this session in the fall. There were 84 people there. The intention was to bring up any and all ideas and then go forward and define options. We are happy to see that this group is following thru with this. But this was only a brain storming activity.

Katie Brown: To follow up on economic viability. Cannot community stabilization be thought of as economically viable? It can attract people to it, does this count as economic viability.

Councilor Donoghue: Good comment. I think that will play out.

Eric Stark: I notice having a walk-able neighborhood is discussed several times. The idea or potential of a walk-able neighborhood is a great one. But you cannot buy all the things that you need in this neighborhood.

Councilor Donoghue: I like your comment. It's not just the size of block that makes it walk-able. There has to be an end destination.

Gary Marcisso: There does not seem to be a traffic analysis. This is important. The businesses on Congress street add traffic to the neighborhood, I think a traffic impact study should be considered.

Councilor Donoghue: I'd also like comparisons of traffic studies between say Adams square and Reiche for comparisons sake.

Dick: It's not just traffic but parking as well.

Councilor Donoghue: Well you get rid of all the parking and there's no more traffic.

Matt: I think we can review this summary and determine. We'd like input from the committee before we put it forth to the public.

Alex: We will further consolidate and sort. We don't want to lose anything, but we do want to help consolidate.

Councilor Donoghue: When you refine and refine and refine you end up with mush.

Alex: But there's ways to better summarize and it can be done.

The Committee discusses the summary from the original meeting.

4. Status Report on the Developer's Panel

Matt: Let's turn to the developers panel, what's the status?

Alex: Well I have calls into Nathan Zantan, and a few other developers.

Matt: The way that the panel is passed in the work plan, it mentions "local" developers. I thought we discussed at the last meeting to broaden this to allow input from developers from outside Portland. I'm glad you contacted someone from Brunswick. I think they could contribute very useful information.

Councilor DOnoghue: I think both types of developers can contribute valuable information, but different. Local developers can tell us how the rules work here in Portland. While outside developers can offer different type of projects. Both beneficial, but different.

Matt Will they both be incorporated in this panel?

Councilor Donoghue: My thoughts were that developers would be beneficial in sharing the information relevant to the local. I think that the bringing in developers from other sites could add a more creative or wider view, but not with the detailed input for the local.

Ken Bailey: Would these developers have an interest in developing this site?

Alex: This presentation would not be for them to present their own project/ ideas for the site. But for them to present other projects they have completed. Then have some discussion or questions or answers. It is a community education process and since they have done projects here, then they have a certain knowledge specific to here. We did talk about having case studies about projects from away, but we haven't put anything together.

Dick: How about out of state?

Alex: Sure

Councilor Kevin: We really want the pictures, ideas etc. not celebrity drop ins.

Eric Stark: If there were developers from outside the area, and if they were putting forth ideas that were built in other areas, the local developers could say whether the projects are viable. The developers are a great idea, and it gives it viability.

Dick: Do we have a time frame?

Alex: The soonest would be March. That gives us time to put it together.

Matt: We will take public comment.

Odelle Bowman: You keep discussing mixed use. What about including architects in addition to developers because they look at the space in different ways. There are some innovative mixed use ideas that developers don't consider.

Saul from Peoples Free Space: Can we contact someone from the committee or the City, I've found several ideas.

Comment: www.munjoyhill.org there is a page there we can get a link to the City's website.

5. Review of Housing Data and Comprehensive Plan

Amy Grommes Pulaski presented an overview of the Housing Data from the Comp Plan.

2002 Councilor Leeman created the Housing: Sustaining Portland's Future.

- Shortage of Housing – There is a significant shortage of all types of housing in 2002. Current housing demands are unmet. Population did not change from 1990 to 2000 but size of household size shrunk. Greater need for housing units but less people in each unit.
- Lack of housing supply causes prices to increase for renters and owners. 57.5 renters 43% own the home. East End was 2500 units with not much change from 1990.
- Portland has limited vacant land for redevelopment so infill space are the opportunity for future housing.
- Committee created objectives to solve the Conditions. Brief overview – The first objective was to ensure a diverse selection of all housing types. You not should be spending more than 1/3 of your income on housing. More than that is not affordable. No one should have to spend more than 30% of income on housing costs.
- Increase home ownership opportunities.
- Ensure that housing is available for people with special needs and special circumstances.
- Identify redevelopment opportunities throughout the City to provide housing.
- Current impacts on neighborhood stability and integrity.
- The need for households has increased on the Hill. Population has decreased 10% between 2000 and 1990.
- There are more jobs than residents in the City. There are 64,000 residents and 83,000 jobs.
- Development in the regions can negatively impact the neighborhoods because of the increase of traffic.
- Accommodating needed services and facilities from excessive encroachment and inappropriately scaled government of other uses of the site.
- Support Portland's livable neighborhoods by supporting a mix of walk-able uses.
- Encourage innovative development that is designed to be consistent in scale to the existing residential neighborhood.
- Encourage neighborhood development in close proximity to services.
- Sustaining Portland as a healthy City. What are the needs and how do we want to see it developed.
- Maintain role as economic, cultural center for the region.
- If the population of Portland decreases, less money comes in to Portland from the County.
- People are leaving the city when they have children.
- Portland has the largest percentage of young adults and the highest percentage over 75.
- Cumberland County has one of the highest conversions or rural and urban land.
- The investments and infrastructure in Portland are becoming underutilized as people move to other places.
- Encourage growth in Portland that strives for a balance in the city, increased transit, expanded economic opportunity

- Encourage neighborhood business centers throughout the City to reduce dependency on the car.
- Locate and design housing that reduces impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.
- Design housing using new materials and technologies that reduce costs and increase environmental efficiency.
- All the Housing in the City that has gone through the Planning Board since 2000 – how the City has addressed the housing needs.
- Under Construction 1081 units, 355 units are affordable

Cynthia: Could you get us the median area income?

Comment: What determines affordability?

Alex: Affordability is 30% of your income.

Bill Sullivan: I am an owner of a multi unit construction company. We are located at 1 India Street and are affected by the redevelopment. I'd like to move to Munjoy Hill, but with six employees I can't move to an R-6 zone. I keep hearing housing, housing housing. What about small business? But there are a lot of vacancies. Maybe we should figure out the vacancy rate in the Hill. There are vacancies out there. I'd welcome any questions. Families want to live on the hill. And I cannot find space for them. I cannot find family units to buy on the Hill. There's nothing. You can call me at 771-5556 Sullivan Multi-Family Realty

Dan: Does Portland Landlord's have vacancy rates?

Bill: I think you can find that fairly easily.

Matt: Does the city have that data?

Alex: No. It's a fairly labor intensive process.

Eric: Maybe we should be open to certain other zonings in this community.

Alex: We will get you a zoning map of the Hill.

Jaime Parker: What are the goals for the city? There's no income to the city right now. So what are they looking for? Typically the parcel is sold. There is a short term gain for the city. There's a long term impact on the neighborhood. Plus there's tax revenue. What are the necessary outcomes for the city? And how does that affect the neighborhood? And the developer will make money...unless it's non-profit...

Dan: The city would like to sell the land for income for next year. But they have not specified for-profit, non-profit or anything.

Jaime Parker: Computer model does not show the building on Wilson and O'Brien. Also it used to be a thru plan. Also everything we hear is mix, mix mix. Housing plus some type of

community place. Anything that goes in will bring in more traffic than is there now. But it can be done right.

Steven Shaff: When the housing plan was developed, we wanted the 4200 housing units. This was a percentage of the county. Therefore there is no breakdown of what percentage it was. The only way to create a livable walking area, we cannot do this in R-6 zoning. We would have to solicit city officials to change zoning.

Alex: For clarification, you don't have to have businesses within the neighborhood. You can have abutting zones with different uses. This still makes as walk-able neighborhood.

Matt: We have been trying to identify current vacancy rates. Is there any data or point person, are trying to locate business information etc.

Alex: Nelle Hanig, she tries to connect businesses to vacancies.

Matt: I think we have wrapped up discussion. Is there any more questions?

See you next time!