

## **Adam's School Re-Use Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes October 26, 2006**

Public Meeting – October 26, 2006, East End Community School – 7:00PM  
Approximately 75 people in attendance.

Councilor Will Gorham – Introduction

Committee will be making recommendation to the City Council about the re-use of the Adams School site. Thank you to MHNO for their work on this issue. The Committee will be working on the issue until maybe February or March, but it may take less time. The vision of the neighborhood will be put forward to the City Council. The focus is to make a better neighborhood and do the right thing for the site. We are going to hire an outside consultant, Alan Holt of Holt and Lachman Architects to help facilitate the process. No date has been set for our next meeting.

Aaron Shapiro, Housing & Neighborhood – Describes the Request for Proposal process for disposition of City owned property. Criteria for redevelopment would be part of the RFP.

The Committee introduced themselves: Dick D'Entremont, Cynthia Fitzgerald, Ken Bailey, Dan Hailey, Matt Thayer, Justina Marcisso

Commenter - Likes the idea of hiring Alan Holt and doing a planning workshop

Commenter - Do we have copies of the MNHO meeting information? (Answer is yes and these are available on the MNHO website).

Councilor Gorham - Shares listing of housing built from 2001 – 2006 with group.

Dick D'Entremont – We would like to arrive at a shared vision for the site.

Councilor Gorham – Commercial uses would require a zone change. Anything but R-6 takes a contract zone. Business uses raises concerns.

Justina Marcisso – How will we get feedback from the community?

Councilor Gorham – Alan Holt and the facilitated workshops will be a big part of that.

Charley Ferrante, Vesper Street – What's the value on the property?

Dick D'Entremont – its 1.5 acres. About 65,000 square feet.

Will Gorham – We'll get the value without the building under the existing R-6 zoning requirements.

Matt Thayer – City is committed to public participation. I envision the community development & design facilitator doing something like: Session #1 - examples of similar development around the country; Session #2 – developers come in to discuss what might work well; Session #3 – neighborhood brainstorm session. These could be on Saturdays.

Ken Bailey – What's the timeframe for building disposal?

Councilor Gorham – The building will revert back to City ownership from the School Department on December 31, 2006

Question – Would the City be interested in retaining the site for public use?

Councilor Gorham – Not likely the City Council will go for that. Most likely redevelopment use would be housing.

Loretta Griffin – Can you identify locations that have become commercial?

Councilor Gorham – It's unlikely the site will become a commercial property.

Question – Could you imagine parts of the property as public space?

Councilor Gorham – Yes, a playground in one part, for example.

Dick D'Entremont – Parking and traffic was very much part of the MNHO planning workshop discussion.

Nini McNanamy – I think we need to set criteria for redevelopment in advance of the RFP.

Question – What if the vision developed by the community is not met by the respondents to the RFP?

Question – Wants to know if the site has to be housing. Does the process preclude the creation of a park?

Councilor Gorham – Expect that it will be some form of housing.

Dick D'Entremont – At the MNHO the leading interests expressed were for open space and income for the City.

Ken Bailey – Could there be neighborhood doctor or dentist offices?

Councilor Gorham – I don't know.

Ninny McNanamy – Parking is the key issue. Standards have to be established in advance.

Commenter – Why not public transportation or is that just a green fantasy?

Eric Stark – Alan Holt will run a session that will gather concerns. A second session will develop drawings – a charrette type process will end up with images.

Justina Marcisso – Need some outside facilitator to bring reality to the process. Hope positive comes out of this.

Question – Have any community surveys been done of residents?

Dan Hailey – We could do surveys.

Loretta Griffin – Buses don't work well. Transfers are a problem. When you have to take two buses it's a problem.

Question/Comment – Always questions of traffic and parking. We all have to leave the Hill for services. This is caused by the separation of services caused by zoning. It may be a pipedream to imagine fewer cars. The MNHO would love to see a walkable diverse community with a diversity of businesses.

Hillary Bassett – Discusses the South Portland, Brick Hill project. The RFP processes selected the developer. Let's not be stuck with a narrow vision.

Question – Any thought to split the site. Some taxable, some not.

Question – Has an environmental assessment been conducted?

Councilor Gorham – Not yet

Dan Hailey – I know there was once a repair garage on the site and before that a paint factory.

Dick D'Entremont – The height limit is 45 feet.

Councilor Gorham – We don't want tall buildings on the site.

Question – What's going on today with the site?

Councilor Gorham – Still owned by the School Department.

Various comments – The place is not controlled, the site is not secure, debris is left on the site when they removed the trailers.

Matt Thayer – The timeline needs to be determined. Should be fast for security but may be slower for the community process.

Jonah, Kellogg Street – Want to explore the possibility of a cooperative ownership model.

Eric Stark – The immediate concern is site security.

Loretta Griffin – The Baxter School area would be great for a mini-mall.

Question – Will the building be torn down?

Councilor Gorham – Most likely.

Comment – Citizen policing is a good thing. We need to do our part, show community pride and watch over the site during the transition.

Markos Miller – The core issues coming out of the MNHO meeting were: 1) Diversity of uses; 2) Diversity of housing types; 3) Public space; 4) Retain the site as a living part of the community, year-round and day-round.

Councilor Gorham wrapped up the meeting and told everyone they would be kept informed of Committee activities and the next community meeting.