

Adams School Committee Workshop

Meeting Summary - Thursday May 24, 2007, State of Maine Room, 6:00pm

Committee Members: Matt Thayer and Dan Haley, Co-Chairs, Dick D'Entremont, Eric Stark, Justina Marcisso, Cynthia Fitzpatrick.

Staff: Alex Jaegerman, Carrie Marsh, Amy Grommes Pulaski

Facilitator: Mike Pulaski

Introductions and Ground Rules

Alex introduces Mike.

Mike lays the ground work for the day: have fun and be courteous. Also the committee will be wearing different hats: Individual Hat, Committee Hat, Community Hat. He than gives a brief overview of the evening.

Dot Exercise

Mike introduces the dot exercise. There are Land Use items and Policy Ideas. Each committee member is given their five dots and is wearing their "Individual Hat." He explains that the numbers next to each item identify how many votes each item received during the design charette.

Summary of the Dot Exercise those with more than 10 votes:

The number in prentices indicates the number of votes from the community design workshop, the number after the "+" sign indicates the number of votes from the committee workshop.

LAND USE (More than 10 Votes)

- (17) + 1 Mixed Use/ Affordable
- (15) + 7 Senior housing or diversity of housing serving various ages
- (17) + 0 Multi use housing, live/ work (artists)
- (13) + 3 Mixed use with small scale retail: grocery, co-op, coffee, hardware, BAKERY
- (21) + 4 Park, plaza, piazza, playground, trees
- (12) + 2 Community Centers

LAND USE (Other Committee Votes)

- (3) + 2 Parking for the neighborhood
- (1) + 2 Owner occupied or rental family housing
- (1) + 1 Athletic facilities, pool, wellness center

POLICY IDEAS (More than 10 Votes)

- (11) + 3 Great architecture and landscaping
- (18) + 1 Perpetuate diversity of housing on Munjoy Hill (age, income cultures)

POLICY IDEAS (Other Committee Votes)

- (1.5) + 1 Elderly Housing, meet housing needs of seniors in their neighborhood
- (3) + 1 Retail that meets needs and fits community
- (4.5) + 1 Beckett/ O'Brien as low traffic
- (8) + 1 Youth Teen space for constructive activities

The committee members discuss their thoughts and reasons of their decisions.

Summary of Ideas Generated by the Community Design Day

Amy summarizes the boards and identifies the themes that were common among the teams.

The committee decides to review the boards and decides to go through a design exercise.

The committee discusses what they liked and did not like represented on the boards. Justina likes the view corridors around the Adams site. It is not square four story buildings throughout the site- its variable heights, with green/ open space, and with view corridors. Eric says that he likes how the Building Collaborative has designed the site with the cady-corner oriented buildings and green exteriors with cross walks. They like that the surrounding community can walk along the green space without intruding. Dick likes the set back buildings with different levels from Team 4.

Eric does not like the “alley” created in Team 3, it is worse than the neighborhood. They are building apartment buildings from the ground up, but the houses in the neighborhood now look like single family homes. He likes Team 1’s diagonal walkways. The interior space is very much a interior community rather than the surrounding buildings. Team 4 assumed the developer would buy out the out parcels.

IDEAS/ COMMON THEMES FROM THE COMMUNITY DESIGN DAY

Source: Design Boards from Neighborhood Teams

- View corridors
- Variety of building heights, spaces and open space
- Green space along the perimeter
- Replicate feel of existing space/surrounding neighborhood
- Alley concept not liked
- Porous site
- Playground must be included

Committee Ideas and Discussions

Eric questions whether the committee wants to keep the building. Cynthia says that should be the first decision. Eric replies that he thinks that it is more “use” oriented than make a decision. They discuss how a good architect can change the look of the existing building. Eric says the committee does not have to say keep or get rid of the building. They do not have to make that decision.

Eric begins talking about policy suggestions for the RFP. He said describes that the policy decisions the committee makes may determine whether you keep or get rid of the building. They need to decide what the priorities are and what the requirements are.

Mike brings the group back to the boards. There are three board topics include: 1) physical design site specific, 2) program use, 3) policy general.

Matt says that he thinks that a policy should be that people should be able to spend a life cycle living on the hill. He specifies that there are two things that cause people to leave the hill: when they have children and when they get older. Two types of housing are family and senior housing.

The committee would like a publicly accessible playground. Alex says all the designs incorporated the walk-able Beckett Street.

Matt brings up the idea of knitting the neighborhood back together. Matt means physically and functionally. Carrie says one of the ideas discussed before was dividing the lots to reflect the neighborhood. Alex says that the name of that idea would be homesteading. There is a lot of general agreement in the committee for this idea. Eric counted 13 lots.

The committee discusses the mixed use retail. There is consensus that there is some need for retail/ commercial on the Hill, but does it belong on Adams square. Dick would like niche retail. Others wonder if retail belongs on Congress Street. Dan says there are no places on Congress Street for re-development.

The committee continued to discuss site specific physical design features, program uses, and proposed policy ideas. The main points of discussion were written by Mike Pulaksi, facilitator, on flip charts during the meeting. All items on the list were voiced by various committee members. These ideas are presented below.

1) PHYSICAL DESIGN FEATURES - SITE SPECIFIC

- View corridor
- Playground (south side)
- Becket Street walk-thru that meets the street pattern and width
- Height restrictions on new construction
- Design criteria- New Urbanism and LEED ND
- Blend-able housing style that is compatible with existing neighborhood

2) PROGRAM USE

- Family housing
- Senior housing
- Community spaces and access (community-based programs)
- Sufficient parking

3) PROPOSED POLICY IDEAS

- Permeability/ porosity
- Housing- mixed income/ mixed ownership/ affordable
- Life-cycle living on the Hill
- Elbow room- open green space, common public space
- Knitting the neighborhood back together, physically and functionally
- Enhanced community
- Green/ sustainable/ carbon neutral design

The committee closes the meeting and will continue the discussion at the next meeting.