

## Whittier Housing and Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2022, 6:30-8:00pm

Hybrid Format: Provision Community Restaurant (2940 Harriet Ave) + Zoom Digital Meeting

**Attendees:** George Rishmawi, Nate Rastetter, Megan Mathew, Christina Perfetti (MnDOT), Karla Hovde, Paul Forsline, Laryssa Stolarskyj, Stefani Pescitelli, Nick Hutchinson, Chris, Jesse Oyervides, Elizabeth Shaffer, Becky Lewis, Daniel Hansen

**Presenters:** Carol HeijStone, MPRB; Nick Hutchinson, Whittier Neighbor

**Staff:** Kaley Brown, Krystin Eldridge

### Welcome/Introductions

- The meeting is called to order at 6:31.
- The committee went through a round of introductions.
- The meeting chair presented the agenda. Motion to approve the agenda is seconded and passes unanimously.
- The meeting chair recognized Standard of Conduct; Non-discrimination and Anti-racism; and Conflicts of Interest Policies.
- The June meeting minutes are reviewed. Motion to approve the June meeting minutes is seconded and passes unanimously.

Attendees introduced themselves and shared something fun they are looking forward to.

### Updates from Provision Community Restaurant (Meeting Host), Laryssa Stolarskyj

- Provision is a pay-as-you-can nonprofit restaurant
- Currently they are serving breakfast and lunch from 10am-2pm but may be shifting their hours back to evening meal service in the coming months
- They continue to partner with Simpson Housing Services to provide lunches for their shelter guests
- They are often looking for board members if anyone is interested in getting more involved

### Community Development Updates

- Whittier Alliance's 2116 Nicollet Ave Development
  - Community survey currently out on the website
  - We have been doing a lot of pop-up engagement at high-traffic locations around the neighborhood to talk with folks in person and get paper surveys completed
  - The Request for Proposals (RFP) still in progress and should be released in early fall to potential development partners
  - Postcard promoting the survey and project will hit mailboxes later this week
- KMART Site
  - Engagement plans are underway; there are a couple different phases of the project to Phase 1 - Develop tangible strategies to combat displacement; help the City understand how folks currently interact with this area, shopping habits, transportation routes and modes, and needs for the future; what a quality of life improvement would look like for them
  - Phase 2 - what does the transportation network look like to, from, and surrounding the site; connections to the new transit center on the highway, the Greenway, bus rapid transit lines, etc.

- City webpage for this project has a sign-up feature to receive email updates through their system on upcoming opportunities
- **2524 Clinton Ave Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)**
  - City began allowed these units a couple years ago as an additional method of increasing housing options and density
  - They typically are studios or 1-2 bedrooms above a garage or some other structure on a parcel zoned for residential use.
  - A neighbor at 25th and Clinton is pursuing one right now, and more info is available on the WA's Development Tracker webpage if anyone is interested to learn more about it.

#### **Updates Coming to Whittier Parks, Carol Hejstone of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board**

- Updates are in progress for Whittier Park, Clinton Field Park, the 28th St. Tot Lot
- I-35W at 28th St., known as the 28th Street Tot Lot, has been a park space for decades, but has been used as equipment storage by MnDOT for the last 5-6 years during the interstate reconstruction process
- MPRB has been working in partnership with City of Skate to include new skating infrastructure in the Parks Master Planning Process
  - A community designed park could include things like railings, public art treatments on sound barriers, artistic fencing,
  - Other park elements could be boulder seating with shade elements, play areas, greenery and shrubs, gathering spaces for families
  - Access to the Midtown Greenway for skaters or bikers will also be incorporated
- Whittier Park update:
  - Funding- 800k - timeline - Construction starts Fall 2023 - 6 month project but winter halts projects.
  - Key updates in the near term will include new playground infrastructure and basketball courts redeveloped into multi use courts
- Clinton Field Park
  - Implement futsal court with engagement and design happening this summer and fall
  - Construction starts 2024
- MPRB will be carrying out engagement through their project webpage, pop-ups at Whittier Park, an online survey when concept plans are up, neighborhood committee conversations, and more.
  - Q: How do they solicit for public art? What kind of art? A: MCAD and Mia have been solicited; public artists on staff; art could include a range of things like sculptures, artistic fencing, artfully designed play structures and seating. They will solicit community input about what will complement each park.
  - Q: Is lighting a priority? No lighting on site. A: Lighting can be incorporated, but it drives up project cost. MPRB can ask community about those priorities.
  - Q: Could we consider changing the name of the park from "28th Street Tot Lot" given the change in use and focus of the park moving forward? A: There is a public process for that, board approval is required, but it is definitely possible.
  - There are 9 Trees total and would like to preserve the trees in the park as much as possible, arranging the new park elements around the existing trees
  - Elliot Skate Park - 200k idea initially that turned into 800k total project
  - Skate parks include folks on scooters and bikes anything on wheels can be used at a skate park
  - There are 20 Skate parks approved across the City. Skate Communities are huge in Central and other neighborhoods.

- Q: Will the engagement questions themselves invite conversation or ideation on green space restoration, maintenance, and tree cover vs. only new amenities/structures? A: There will be other opportunities that will reflect where they are in the design process. More detailed questions will be implemented as they move along. Questions about pollinator gardens, or types of canopy etc...
- Cityofskate.org

### **Traffic Calming Proposal Draft - Nick Hutchinson, Whittier Neighbor**

- Project work originated in conversation on the Whittier Solidarity Network that has now moved the neighborhood organization venue
- There are many traffic issues including wrong-way drivers and excessive speeding near the 27th and Harriet intersection and around Whittier Park
- There is a new traffic calming program at the City on the city website, which allows for grassroots proposals to secure City support and investments to calm interior neighborhood streets
- Safe Routes to School program is already garnering improvements underway at 26th and Grand 27th and Blaisdell
  - They are narrowing the roadway, adding concrete medians for the bike lane, narrowing the intersections, and adding updated signage at crosswalks
- Proposed options to include in the application:
  - Two-way conversion (Garfield, Harriet and Grand though to Lake and Franklin)
    - Some argue one-way streets are safer but it has not been proven in Minneapolis
  - Mini roundabouts and crosswalks between Lyndale and Blaisdell at 27th St
    - Change stop signs to yield signs
  - Crosswalks and Stop Bars
  - Speed bumps or pinch points (narrowing the road)
    - 27th St (4 of them)
  - Comment: A two-way conversion will require removal of parking lane(s), which will be unpopular; something to further consider and research
  - Comment: Could be helpful to identify some temporary improvements the City could do as a pilot
  - Comment: Could be helpful to get accident data on these streets
  - Comment: Awesome that this is happening and is very needed. Is there a way to get a hold of the planning for Safe Routes to school, other suggestions were presented but they only chose a few. There's been a lot of legwork already done, we should try to find those folks that have other ideas. Jeff Carlson would have a lot of insight on this.
  - If this proposal is chosen by City staff, there is another stage of community engagement that they have to do after being chosen. It would be ongoing until the project is built.
  - If we are aiming to change to two lane traffic, folks on those streets need to be included in the conversation, because they will be most affected
  - [Flow Chart for Traffic Calming](#)
  - Will need a community vote next month for the City's application process.
- [First Ave Reconstruction](#)
  - Presenting again in August or September
  - Getting redesigned- bike lanes permanently protected, median for native planting and tree coverage, new crosswalks
  - No plan out yet, online surveys and workshops will be on the City website. Sign up for email updates.

### **NOAH Properties - Anti Displacement**

- Mapping tool created to understand properties in the neighborhood - which ones are vulnerable to being flipped by speculators buying up properties
- We plan to use the tool to help find properties that are upzoned (4-6 stories); Somebody may want to buy a building that is only 1 level but has potential to be more floors
- Commercial aspect as well to stop displacement
- City Ordinance on ToPA would give us additional ability to support tenants if it passed and coaching can be provided to tenants to get financing and understand how to organize themselves to get the financing needed to put in a collective offer on their building if the opportunity arises.

### **Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.**

HLU Meetings Every third Tuesday of the month

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, August 16th, 6:30-8:00 pm - Hybrid in-person/zoom meeting**

**Meeting minutes submitted by Kaley Brown.**