

Whittier Housing and Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2022, 6:30-8:00pm

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

Attendees: George Rishmawi, Nate Broadbridge, Stephanie Brown, Willow Kreibich, Hannah Kreibich, Chris Miller, Sydney Burroughs, Laryssa Stolarskyj, Sanjit Sethi, Jesse Oyervides, Rochelle Woldorsky, Adam Erickson

Presenters: Nick Hutchinson (Whittier Neighbor), Cameron Flakne (Lupe Development), Jeffrey Mandyk (Cunningham Group), Katie White (City of Minneapolis), Christina Perfetti (MnDOT)

Staff: Kaley Brown, Meggie Garcia

Welcome/Introductions

-The meeting is called to order at 6:31pm.

-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 August meeting minutes are reviewed. Motion to approve the August meeting minutes is seconded and passed unanimously.

-Attendees completed a round of introductions.

2116 Nicollet Lot

- The RFP has been released to the public
 - The webpage content is reviewed, including the final version of the RFP and community engagement summary
 - The timeline for partner selection and project work is overviewed
 - Community members are encouraged to share the opportunity with their networks

Former Kmart Site & New Nicollet Ave Redevelopment

- Whittier Alliance is co-leading the community engagement team hired by the City along with a coalition of other community-based organizations and NEOO Partners, Inc.
- Focus of engagement will be on reaching folks most impacted by the project who live and work here now
- Will be lots of engagement opportunities to participate in, activities aimed at getting a broad range of perspectives
- Project page on City's website has high level goals based on established City policies such as the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Action Plan, etc.
- Sign up on the website for updates at <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/new-nicollet/>

MCAD Student Housing Project - Jeff Mandyk and Amy Cheever, Cunningham Group

- Campus master plan is in the design development phase
 - Needs affordable housing for the school, but also the institution wants to grow further
 - Long range master plan looks 10-15 years out

- Located on the northeast corner of Stevens Ave and 26th Street they are currently in process of developing dormitory-style housing to provide 310 units to bring for 1st and 2nd year students off the waiting plan for campus housing
 - would like to make the freshman housing mandatory and they are confident they will be able to fill the beds
 - students want to live in Whittier but are currently commuting from other neighborhood and parts of the metro
 - the closer they can allow students to be from home, the better for their quality of student life and experience at MCAD
 - MCAD spent a lot of time surveying students on what they wanted to see in their student housing building; open green spaces, exercise space, and communal gathering spaces
 - They have a goal to provide a more authentic and immersive green space
 - Broadly, the campus plan is focused on radical accessibility
- 42% of MCAD students are Pell eligible and already have a high percentage of students already receiving aid; sliding scale on rates will help them target aid to those who need the most
 - Eventually they want to move the MFA building back onto campus to be included with the rest of the students and upgrade the infrastructure available
 - Have been working with the City, neighbors, and WA throughout the year on design and program elements to ensure it supports a continued relationship with the community surrounding the campus
 - Building height is designed with respect to Mia's closest buildings and to match the existing main building at MCAD
 - College is wanting to create more connection the landscape, windows on the floor level, make it feel more in harmony with the exterior street experience
 - Potential for dining hall, public gallery space on the south end
 - Supports and services to the students on the north end
 - Artwork on the North side of the building also more art murals in the middle of the campus
 - They are doing more exploration on material , quality and lighting in the night for safety
 - No green roofs
 - Q: What parts of this larger master plan are being decided now and what will be decided with community input later on?
 - A: Most of these pieces are much further out. These could be 5 -15 years out, they are focused on implementing 26th and Stevens student housing right now
 - Q: Public car share in the lot - can it be relocated or expanded?
 - Will make note of it and explore options

550 W Lake - Lupe Development Partners, Cameron Flakne

- This is the third of three phases in the Lake Street project that came before this committee in 2019 and 2020
- Because of the recent acquisition of an additional adjacent parcel, the project will now be built to accommodate 91 units of family-sized units in response to market demand
- The additional parcel allowed them to reorient the building face, yielding an increased capacity
- The unit mix will include studios, 2 bedrooms, 3 bedrooms, and 4 bedroom units -- all of which are designated affordable units
- Discussion and questions:
 - Would like to see playground infrastructure and green space incorporated into the site plan given the plan to build family-sized units; parents do not always feel safe allowing

their kids to cross busy streets to access parks and spaces in other parts of the neighborhood.

- Request to share details of the affordability breakdown in the building in terms of income levels and tax credits?
 - 30%--80% AMI range - income averaging to finance the project; 30% supportive housing, 10 studios; 50% of AMI, 18 2-bedroom units; 30% of AMI, 11 3-bedroom units; 30% of AMI, 7 4-bedroom units; multiple units mixed in ranging from 50-80% of AMI
 - Q: Income averaging means that the studios can't be all the affordable ones, correct? Yes - there is a full mix of affordable units across the unit types
 - The MPHA units will help assist the tenants with paying for their rent through their voucher programs
 - Q: If there's a situation where a tenant is having an issue with their rent not being administered correctly, who should they talk to at your company? The rents are tied to the levels that Hennepin County sets through the tax-based system; they can visit lakestreetapartments.com to get in touch.
- Will they continue to hold their building and management after building it? Yes, they will continue holding it and want to remain a part of the neighborhood in that way.
- Q: Is there a place for residents to store their bikes in this project? Yes, each unit has a designated bike storage location.

Christina Perfetti and Todd Carroll - MnDOT

- Came to this committee in April to talk about some parcels of land that MnDOT owns in the I-35W corridor that they'd like to better activate in service of the neighborhood in which they land
- They appreciated our feedback from April and spent a lot of time working on strategies to make these spaces serve the community well
- They ended up collaborating with the Park Board in their redesign of the 28th street Tot Lot currently underway, which has been a really great connection
- There will be robust engagement process led by the Park Board in the future; they are communicating with them now about land acquisition, and in the meantime MnDOT will be doing some landscaping to make sure the spaces look nice in the interim
- They are working with an artist in the Green Crescent to add perennials and shrubs
- The stairs up from the midtown greenway at these connection points are going to get more greenery to help with erosion and general aesthetic improvement
- They are going to start planting this fall and it will carry forward for a 2 year time frame; they are responsible for weeding, pruning, watering for 2 years; we can let them know if we do not see contractors out there with enough frequency, especially when the summer heat returns

1st Ave Reconstruction - Katie White, City of Minneapolis Transportation Planner (CPED)

- Project will span from Lake Street to Grant Street adjacent to the Minneapolis Convention Center
- Includes demolition and reconstruction of the Greenway Bridge on 1st Ave
- Formalizing the protected bikeway - an all ages and abilities bikeway
- The project will go before the City Council at the end of October this year
- They will conduct a detailed engineering analysis for about a year, and the public feedback period will go dark during that time frame
- The expected construction timeline will be 2024 into 2025 for Whittier's stretch, Lake St to Franklin Ave
- They will complete the final stretch north of Franklin Ave into 2025

- Sanitary Sewer is replacing 100% of the underground sewer while the ground is exposed for this project, and Centerpoint Energy may also want to replace the gas connections while the ground is open; these would allow the project to serve multiple purposes and make really efficient use of City funds, as well as preventing the other projects from necessitating another road closure
- They completed 2 rounds of engagement so far and are currently in the 3rd round of both in person and online engagement
- Biggest concerns they have heard are pedestrian safety, cars using the bicycle facility, concerns about traffic flow for delivery trucks, and emergency vehicles blocking traffic and bicycle access
- Fire and emergency services have requested the change to have the bikeway next to the street with a mountable curb to allow for them to bypass cars - an intentional design decision
- Will the native plantings look better than what is planted currently along the Blaisdell stretch of the bikeway? Yes, what is there now is actually just wild growth, as they have not yet been able to get to the planting stage of the native plants slated for that boulevard. So, yes it definitely will be improved from what is there.
- One of the areas that seems to produce a huge amount of risk is the turn locations along 1st; it doesn't seem clear to bikers or pedestrians where to be in the intersection crossings. A: 26th and 28th are going to be protected, raised intersections on the bikeways
- How does this connect to the Kmart/Nicollet Ave project in terms of types of transportation? This project is advancing sooner than the Kmart/Nicollet project, so this will set the precedent and conversation for that latter project.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

HLU Meetings Every third Tuesday of the month

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 18th, 6:30-8:00 pm - Hybrid in-person/zoom meeting

Meeting minutes submitted by Krystin Eldridge.