

Whittier Housing and Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 19, 2023, 6:30-8:00pm
Hybrid Format: WhittierAlliance (10 E 25th St) +
Zoom Digital Meeting

Attendees: Jo Ann Musumeci, Nate, Nick, Dave, David, Ben, Shannan

Presenters: Ryan (Community member)

Staff: Meggie Garcia, Kaley, George Rishmawi

Welcome/Introductions

-The meeting is called to order at 6:30pm.

Attendees completed 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.

-Aug Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved.(1 correction made: Lyndale goes west not east)

Whittier Alliance - 2116 Nicollet Avenue Lot Update

- Overview: WhittierAlliance bought the 2116 lot to create more affordable housing and is partnering with Alliance housing to make this happen. Currently applying for funds to make this happen.
- Q: What do we mean by “affordable housing” what percentage are we going by?
 - With sros’ that rate will be a flat rate of \$500 but other than that not much has been decided on the rent level. This is meant to be more like transitional housing to close the barrier many whittier residents face in housing.

New Nicollet (Former Kmart Site) Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

- Currently finishing up phase 2.1 and early Oct jump into phase 2.2
- Upcoming engagement opportunities:
 - Sept 30th - Slow roll. Biking event going around our neighborhoods talking about significant areas impacted by Kmart
 - Oct 10th Fall Community Festival on Kmart site. Having life size drawing connecting the site to the green way and much more
- Q: Are the concept drawings just for the streets or for the whole site?
 - Both, We have 2 teams working on the street design and others working on the framework of the lot.
- Q: Is the road way team also working on connecting the greenway or not?
 - Yes, that is part of their top priorities.
 - Selling of individual lot spaces has not been decided yet. Hoping that previous engagement done in phase 1 will inform the requirements for RFP’s for lot space.
- Q: What about connecting the greenway with transit?
 - There's lot of talk amount community members wanting this but the strict guidelines currently prevent this

26th Street Demonstration/Quick Build | Ryan Kronzer - Urban Street Design Group

- Trying to get more community members involved and inform about changing street designs happening in our community
- This started because there's lot of traffic issues and bikers going the wrong way. Informally a 2 way bike lane.

- Noticed other neighborhoods asking for pilot programs why not in Whittier too.
- What are we asking for? Is it a protected 2 way bike lane, more crosswalks?
 - Safer ways to school program - something to look into
 - H-sif - improving traffic calming
- Now is the time to push this pilot: there is some space to try this
- 26th Lyndale to the west there is a one way bike lane
 - Asking for temporary striping on this street
- 28th street is another street with high biking and car accidents
 - Was once a one lane but turned it back to a 2 lanes with one side parking but was taken away for biking lane but this change added to the issue
- Are there small stretches of 2 way bike lanes that then becomes a one way bike lanes and how would that work
- City is turning away from creating more 1 way bike lanes
- Looking for city to explore these ideas to better the safety
- C: concerned about traffic backup on 26th. How about one of those speed trackers that show how fast cars are going to see how fast they are really going and slow traffic down? I think one lane of traffic would not be helpful.
- C: Not saying 26th couldn't benefit from 2-way biking. Just that the argument shouldn't be "people are doing it anyway". Cause lots of people out here are doing things
 - Caution on the argument of "people are doing this either way so just change the street"... people use the bus lanes on Hennepin for passing so maybe we just make it a 4 Lane road again? People do 50mph on Lyndale so maybe just up the speed limit?
- What are you specifically asking this committee to do?
 - Asking to support this pilot
 - This means that WA is taking a stance on this pilot program
- Suggestion to naming the ask of Whittier alliance: **Motion to support advocacy around potential traffic calming measures in collaboration with City public works projects already in motion**
 - Understanding that the street will eventually be rebuilt and yet something needs to happen to calm traffic
- C: Concerned with the road getting squished to one lane especially during the winter when the road becomes smaller.
- Wanting to still have a vote on the temporary design choice.
 - Yes, we are not asking for major expensive street designs. Just paint lines
- 27th crosswalk flashing lights work very well
- Ryan has been in touch with the city to collaborate with brainstorming ideas
 - There might be a future date to have a more detailed conversation about what happens at the city level
- Motion for 26th street pilot program: 7 approved motions
- Motions passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, Oct 17, 6:30-8:00 pm - Hybrid in-person/zoom meeting
Meeting minutes submitted by Meggie