

5th Avenue Steering Committee

Saturday, February 15, 2020
Naperville Municipal Center Meeting Room B
Meeting Summary

A: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 am.

B: ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilwoman Brodhead, Councilman Kelly, Marybeth Box (ECHO), Dr. Bob Buckman (NAHC), Thom Higgins (Park Addition), Jim Hill (STF), Jessica Lyzun (Pilgrim's Addition), Jim Ruhl (WHOA), Katia Sowa (Commuter Rep.), Mark Trembacki (DCM), and Laura Zeman (Park Addition)

STAFF PRESENT: Allison Laff, Amy Emery, Doug Krieger, Mike DiSanto

C: INTRODUCTION TO REVISED BASELINE CONCEPT

Councilman Patrick Kelly provided a brief introduction to the revised concept. He commented on meetings he and Mayor Chirico participated in with the Ryan Companies Team following the vote last fall by the City Council to reject the prior concept and direct the matter to a workshop (now scheduled for March 2, 2020). Councilman Kelly indicated the meetings were in response to a request by Ryan Companies for some guidance and direction to prepare for the City Council Workshop. The goal of the meetings was to see if a middle-ground compromise concept was possible. Councilman Kelly explained he used the ideas for changes he had compiled from listening to residents as his guide in the effort. He concluded his remarks by sharing his belief that the new plan has a lot of positive elements and addresses most of the concerns he had heard about the earlier concepts.

D: **STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER INPUT**

Each Steering Committee Member was provided up to 5 minutes to report on their efforts to inform and solicit input from those they represent and share the feedback received.

WHOA – West Side Homeowners Association

Jim Ruhl – He solicited input from through the annual WHOA membership drive and a survey distributed to neighborhood with 10 questions specific to the revised plan. He reported his neighborhood has concerns about:

- Added parking spaces - 48% of respondents think there is still too many DMC parking deck spaces due to concerns about traffic
- Pedestrian safety continued to be a key concern near the DMC
- Affordable housing was seen as a positive, particularly if senior housing targeted.

Overall, he concluded based on the survey, 61% still feel major changes need to happen to the revised concept.

ECHO- East Side Homeowners Association

MaryBeth Box shared the following observations she had gathered from speaking with her ECHO neighbors:

- Concerns for safety for children getting to and from school. Similarly, many have concerns still about impact on pedestrians for North Street and School Street.
- Traffic, height and density concerns still exist with the revised concept.
- Questions have come up about the parking structure at the end of Center Street related to noise. Will it just deflect/reverberate sound through the neighborhood?

Overall, she summarized that ECHO appreciates that this plan is lower in density and is a step in right direction, but not there yet.

DCM – DuPage Children’s Museum

Mark Trembaki indicated the DCM concerns remain unchanged from the previous concept. DCM recognizes we are still early in this process, but they have three Primary Concerns:

- DCM wants to be integrated into the development. Previous drawing has interesting design features along Washington and want to see that continue to move forward
- Safety of visitors and staff is top priority. Need to understand ingress and egress to museum and the garage.
- Parking. Presently have days above capacity. DCM believes the development will drive more visitors to the museum, so the DCM is very interested in getting more parking. DCM would like to see a parking study and traffic study to address concerns.

Commuters

Katie Sowa shared that the overarching feedback she has received relates to questions about the expectation from the City Council for the commuter experience. Some feel the Burlington lot is an improvement with more parking near the station. Interest for even more parking there. Questions about how the deck layouts and location related to impacts on overall commute time. She also noted:

- Kiss and ride is a big question. How will it function? How will it be improved? What kinds of improvements specifically will be evaluated?
- Desire to see more technology employed to manage the permit system and parking availability. Desire for assurances the parking permits will it be treated like a capital investment like the physical construction.
- Cost is a concern. How will this plan impact the cost of the parking now and in the future?
- Will adjustments be made to PACE commuter bus times based on new layout?
- How will this revised concept relate to alternative modes of transit?

STF – Senior Task Force

Jim Hill shared that affordable housing is a long-standing goal of the STF. As such, the STF is pleased to see the number of affordable units remain steady. The STF is eager to learn more about the specifics of the affordable units (e.g. sizes, rents, finishes, amenities). What is most important to seniors is “walkability” (which he defined as ease of access if don’t drive) to retail, entertainment and restaurants. Given this, the STF is disappointed that the affordable housing was moved 5 blocks away from Parkview Lot decreasing the walkability of the housing to desired destinations.

Park Addition

Laura Zeman noted based on her conversations, the general feeling is a “dampening” of excitement from those Park Addition residents who were really excited and dampening of anger from those residents who were strongly opposed. On one hand, those who were concerned primarily about density and height are pleased with changes. Some feel it has lost a bit of the “cool factor” – primarily due to the loss of retail uses. The question asked by some residents has been, “Is the increased density needed to get more “cool” elements?” She felt most of the folks are agnostic on the changes. For this reason, she noted it has been more difficult to get feedback because residents don’t seem to be having really strong feelings. Some specific observations:

- Park Addition Residents she spoke with don’t feel strongly either way about the plaza location. Biggest concern about the plaza is that it includes some drive thru and drop off. Some felt if it is going to be a plaza, just get rid of parking.
- A lot of residents had no opinion about the affordable housing.

- The Park Addition Resident view is generally opposite view from Commuters with respect to parking. Residents question the need for 250 extra spaces. They are interested in looking at more data about usage, changes to cost, surge parking pricing options, etc.
- People would really like to know more specifics about the pedestrian safety as this is always a top priority.

Thom Higgins, shared the opinions he had gathered from coffee conversations with 6 area residents:

- People are feeling this was a big step in the right direction. Happy to see the plaza move. The only concern about the plaza is the little parking area in the plaza. One suggestion was made to put the plaza on the east end of the property to eliminate conflict with people going into the tunnel.
- Kroehler Lot changes met with universal approval.
- Getting parking south of 5th Avenue is a benefit.
- Concern remain about pedestrian safety today. The project must improve pedestrian safety from the current situation.
- Residents would rather have less parking overall at the train station.
- Some had concerns about deck so close to Washington Junior High School.

He noted that with the addition of the new surface parking lot at the former Public Works Building site, today there is almost as many parking spaces now as what is proposed by the concept in the future. He shared concerns that, in its existing condition, the new surface lot is not well lit and very busy.

In conclusion, he indicated no one said they were unhappy. Resident response has been this is a step in the right direction.

Pilgrim's Addition

Jessica Lyzun shared that she had gathered feedback by hosting a neighborhood meeting in her home. She emphasized that the overwhelming consensus of the Pilgrim's Addition neighbors is that they are pleased. She recognized there are outliers, but the majority feel good about the revisions. They are thrilled with the direction and want City Council to support this baseline for additional study. Some items for additional study/action going forward noted by the Pilgrim's Addition neighborhood were:

- Pedestrian safety – Any parking study must analyze pick-up and drop off at Washington Junior High in relationship to this concept. Crossing guards were suggested.
- Parking – Request the City Council establish a Parking Task Force to get commuters to change behavior and study in detail how much parking is really needed and how much is needed in the future.
- Sustainability and accessibility elements appear to be missing. Residents felt Ryan Companies must start with LEED, WELL, and Universal Design as the foundation.

- School Capacity – Anxious to see official position statement from District 203 about this project to confirm it will have a minimal impact on the area schools.
- BNSF/METRA – Would like to understand impact of this development on existing commuter experience and capacity.
- Traffic – need solutions to make sure commuter traffic is accommodated without shortcuts cutting thru residential streets; make sure traffic flows on main thoroughfares. Make sure prevent dangerous cut-thru traffic.
- Kendall Park & Plaza – Appreciate plaza relocation. Asked that efforts be made to examine the plaza in relation to Kendall Park. Suggested improvements could be made in Kendall Park along Plaza so it presents a unified experience.
- Stormwater - Request for concurrent analysis of stormwater for Kendall Park/Pilgrim's Addition with this development
- Overall Design – New plan doesn't have anything that gives it a "wow" factor. Residents are happy things are in the right place now, but a lot of deflated enthusiasm for this plan. It was noted that a pool on the north side of structure can't possibly work because it will be in shadow 90% of time.
- Let down by the experience for those exiting the train. Just see a wall. Feel there is a missed opportunity to have a wow factor – Small retail? Art? Grocery? Dry Cleaning? All are pleased the plaza is relocated, but that shouldn't mean that commuters should just experience a wall.
- Disappointed to see charming row homes removed along 5th Avenue. Like to see some of that returned because it has a neighborhood feel.
- Like to see architecture and design to be complimentary to the downtown if we are promoting connection. Like it to look like the Main Street Promenade. Modern look is undesired.

NAHC – Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation

Dr. Bob Buckman began his remarks by explaining the NAHC perspective is as a representative for outlying areas, not just those residents living immediately adjacent to the property. From NAHC perspective:

- Traffic remains a concern. Additional study and answers are needed. What happens to traffic flow on Washington? Want to appreciate traffic impact on DCM. What will queues be like to get into the DCM from Washington Street?
- Pedestrian safety is critical issue.
- What is the timeframe of this development?
- Lingering questions about whether we should be selling the property? Preference among many is a lease arrangement to control tenants and retain people's property.
- Affordable housing is really needed for everyone, not just seniors.
- Need to appreciate overall commute time. Concerns about time to cycle thru parking decks having a negative impact on commuter experience.

- Requested clarification about Metra Train involvement in this project. How does this project relate to their system? Given it is the busiest station on the line, NAHC expectation is there will be a lot of attention by METRA on this project.
- Final, overall question, what is the benefit of this project to the overall homeowner? NAHC position is to remember it is still a train station. How will this development impact the greater Naperville population in that context?

Councilwoman Judy Brodhead

Councilwoman Brodhead shared that she was not surprised by the “dampening” of enthusiasm reported by others on the Steering Committee. With the reduced scale of the revised concept, the “wow” factor was destined to be impacted. Going forward she indicate the following were important to her:

- A cohesive, overall, attractive plan that benefits for all - not just a train station for commuters, but for all residents.
- Quality Design. She understands concern that contemporary designs can get dated very quickly, but she is happy with the forward-looking design and believes we can absorb the combination of traditional and modern elements.
- Affordable Housing. It is federal law and something Naperville hasn’t been successful at addressing. This development provides a great opportunity.
- Parking. She will be looking to the experts to address parking issues. She observed the current system is from the 1960s and 70s. In her opinion, it really only works for few commuters who have permits nearest the train. She believes we need a different way of looking at and using parking. To that end, simply expanding surface parking is not a 21st century solution. What we have now is not being used efficiently. It may be that making all commuter parking daily fee spaces is the most efficient way to use the parking. Parking experts will need to provide more information.
- Safety. Today the area is not particularly safe when exiting the train. As such, it is important to understand we are not looking at a situation where a development is going to take us from a safe to an unsafe condition. Anything should work toward improvement.
- Input from the school district about the project. She is confident the school district will weigh in.
- Recognizing that some of the existing area problems will not get solved unless there is some building. For example, construction is a means to addressing local storm water concerns.
- Recognizing the benefits a new parking deck, when designed in a safe manner, can have in such close proximity to the entrance doors of the DCM, to address their existing parking availability concerns.

Overall, she noted she was in favor of something more ambitious, but certainly in favor of this baseline plan. There is no perfect plan. No possibility of getting everything everyone wants.

At this point, all members of the Steering Committee had shared input from those they represent. Some time was provided to discuss thoughts and reactions among the Steering Committee Members having now heard all perspectives.

Thom Higgins shared his observation that there is a general tension from two opposing needs and desires. He recognized this is a train station and it has to serve commuter needs, but the project should also benefit the residents who live in the area. In his opinion, Ryan Companies has looked at the area to identify the best place for for-profit elements and doesn't feel this is the correct approach. He said the priority should be: 1) the Train station; 2) the neighborhoods; and then 3) profit margin.

Laura Zeman noted that she really appreciates that more parking is provided south of the tracks on the DCM lot. She believes that will solve problems for the 80% commuters who live south of the station. She also believes the parking on the Water Tower West property will be attractive to residents who live further east and north. As such, she thinks the mix will work substantially better than the current situation.

Jim Ruhl expressed his appreciation to Mayor Chirico and Councilman Kelly for their efforts to come to a compromise. He relayed his own concern that when we develop something, it must include elements that can sustain, from a financial perspective, the whole project.

E: PUBLIC COMMENT

54 residents attended the meeting. 19 attendees provided comments.

1. Gail Diedrichsen, 533 N. Eagle
Two primary concerns - safety and storm water. Asked that tunnel under the railroad tracks be looked at to improve safety for children walking in the area. Also suggested using pervious pavers like at Morton Arboretum parking lots to control storm water flows.
2. Marilyn Schweitzer, 210 S. Charles
Believes the design is a vast improvement. Appreciates the flexibility by retaining some surface parking. Appreciates reduction in housing units and retail to support balance in the whole area. Noted this is the first concept with enough greenspace to accommodate a full tree canopy and plant beyond tree grates and potted plant. She also appreciates some safety elements of previous design have been retained. Believes cleaner design has actually improved the "wow" factor. Eager to see traffic and safety study. She realizes traffic and safety concerns are problems across Naperville.
3. Josh Cusack, 1124 Catherine Ave
Spoke as a member of the Environmental Task Force, a commuter, and as a lifelong resident. He also supports permeable pavers, liveable walls, and green roofs. He agrees with possibility that all commuter parking spaces should be changed to daily fee to maximize use. Permit spots are not working. Like others, he noted that that the parking deck design will be critical to minimize impact on overall commute time as – particularly related to entrances and exits. He also

suggested that the density should be even greater to make it more walkable and support development of more things for people to do.

4. Mary Stoltenberg Smith, 519 North Ave
Pedestrian Safety remains her top concern. She is excited to see more green space on this concept. She wants to see more green space throughout the community, not just with this development. She also expressed concern about the balance of representatives on the Steering Committee. She would like to see more equal/balanced representation.
5. Brian Ondyak, 624 N. Brainard
Excited about project. Pedestrian safety is improved. Supports changes to parking system to get better utilization, particularly for the future. More parking doesn't necessarily need to be an automatic answer. Lost a bit of "wow" factor. Preferred more retail.
6. Amit Aeatuur, 80 N. Sleight
"Wow" factor is gone. Need to have a longer view than just commuter parking. Need to also look at utilization of parking. Safety considerations are important, particularly for children going to and from schools.
7. Charles Canning, 351 Big Rail Drive
Serious concerns about pedestrian safety and traffic on Spring Avenue. Adding parking at DCM Lot will exacerbate problem and create shortcut traffic problems. Need to make sure we are not creating more problems. Suggested creation of a greenway all the way from Kendall Park along the Children's Museum frontage all the way to Washington Junior High School. This area could accommodate some retail and café uses that would be attractive to museum visitors. Also supports making Spring Avenue a cul-de-sac to effectively would cut-off the inflow of traffic to a new parking garage. Believe the size of the parking structure at the DCM needs to be reduced by 50% or more. Within 10 years demand for parking is going to drop. Concerns about building garages that will not be needed.

Steering Committee Member Laura Zeman noted:

- Ryan should confirm that the garages are being built with floor heights to future-proof the design to accommodate future development
- Agreed Reduce demands for parking – solutions to reduce demand and indicated this could be added to the agenda of the Parking Traffic Task Force recommended by Jessica Lyzun.

8. Jeff Oken, 109 S. Brainard
Observed that we don't know impacts until we get a detailed traffic study. One must be done. Don't believe we need to wait for this development to undertake a study. We can study existing conditions. Suggested an inflow and egress study be done now of commuters. Feels that is a critical next step to ensure that development will not adversely impact downtown. Also asked for detailed study of infrastructure– storm water, lighting, sound, and more before a decision is made on this whole project.

9. Kathy Benson, 51 Forest

Majority of residents in WHOA have challenges because of the amount of parking added to the DCM lot. Existing traffic and safety concerns are already the subject of an on-going study. She is supportive of the density changes. The DCM lot is still far too dense. Spring Avenue is a major thru street in the neighborhood (and even school bus traffic). It is already a situation impacting resident life. Outstanding questions for workshop:

- 1) What is the objective? Need viable objectives for this development defined by the City Council. Need to know what City Council wants
- 2) Can we create Parking Task Force? She supports such a group being established. It is very difficult to get commuter voice heard. She has not had her opinions solicited and that voice needs to be better represented.
- 3) North Side Bus Depot – Need more clarification about where is and how it will function
- 4) DCM Lot, does the count include the 100 spots the museum already has? Are there really 680 spots?
- 5) Do not understand keeping Parkview and water tower lots as surface lots. Requested more information on this recommendation.
- 6) What is the opinion of the City Advocate? Suggested since we have a City Advocate, we need that expert to tell the residents and Council what they would expect as a result of this development with respect to economic payback. Unless understand that economic benefit, feels we are in poor position to understand tradeoffs. Must assure we get a fair deal in the long-term.

10. Jim Koller, 710 N. Center Street

Believes revised concept is moving in the right direction. What is the budget for this concept? Are we going to own or lease? Need to understand its affordability and where money is coming from. What do the numbers look like? What is the revenue? What is the perceived payback? Need to have some level of detail before we decide to move forward. Much like a traffic study, we need more information about costs and funding before taking action to move ahead.

11. Jayme Koller, 710 N. Center Street

Not excited about 60 – 70' tall buildings. Offer context by sharing the Shuman is 63' tall; Hotel Indigo is also 63' tall; Kroehler is 48' tall. Asked that nothing be taller than Kroehler. Prefers no more than 4 stories. Asked for definition of floor height. How tall are the floors? What is actual building height? Also, need to protect commuter experience. Protect what we have and make it better. Believe there are options for signalization and light timing improvements at 5th and Washington. A deck should be placed at 5th and Washington, not a plaza. Concerns about how many spaces are placed south of the train tracks. Believe the spaces shown at DCM should move back to the 5th and Washington location. She shared that she is working to prepare a revised alternative plan drawing from a case study of Dodson Place in Geneva, IL as a model.

12. Stephanie Downs Hughes, 916 Royal Blackheath Court

Speaking as a NEST member offered the following suggestions to integrate green considerations:

- Social program be developed with physical program to market to residents who want to downsize and use train to move to the proposed units; appeal to older people who cannot drive and need to have an in-town experience. Density does not need to be our enemy. Can be our friend.
- Can be shared vehicles – look to Boston as example – so everyone doesn't have to have their own vehicle.
- Solar panels must be integrated into the development
- Like to see energy generated on-site to accommodate this development
- Would also like to see more consideration for green walls, solar panels to provide weather protection areas.

13. Jennifer Taylor, 309 Spring Avenue

- Stated there can be no give or take for pedestrian safety. It must be the primary focus.
- Expressed concern about impacts of parking deck on DCM Lot on pedestrian safety.
- Stated that a traffic study has already been done and accused City Staff of not releasing the information. Claimed staff is purposely hiding, delaying, withholding, and canceling information release because the data will show problems exist.
- Expressed her opinion that the only reason why parking is being put on the DCM Lot is because Ryan Companies is demanding it. Asked for answers.
- Agreed with others who suggest a cul-de-sac on Spring to keep street safe
- Also appreciated suggestions for other uses on the parking deck – less parking, some retail and mix use suggestions.
- Asked for confirmation as to whether this plan includes a pedestrian tunnel and if North Avenue is to be realigned.

Councilman Kelly responded that traffic in this area will be discussed at an upcoming Transportation Advisory Board meeting.

14. Beth Schaffer McCarty, 231 W. Franklin

- Believes increase of parking at DCM will encourage more cut-thru traffic
- Doesn't understand why Ryan Companies project drives the traffic study process? Asked why the Naperville Traffic Master Plan isn't the guiding force on this? Want to have Ryan work around a traffic plan developed by the City.
- Requested another WHOA Rep on the Steering Committee. Reported the WHOA survey results indicate 80% of respondents believe need major or minor changes to the plan. 80% do not like the plan. Further, 60% of respondents had significant pedestrian safety concerns for children with the revised concept and 80% had general pedestrian concerns.
- Shared that she reviewed reported results from the City of Naperville Open GIS and found in the last 12 months – 28 hit and runs have occurred in the area. Only three speeding tickets were issued in the same timeframe. Feels the area is unsafe and believes data supports that. Need additional police presence and more traffic calming measures now.

15. Ian Holzhauer, 1202 Vermont Ct

- Believes his concerns were best summarized by Dr. Bob Buckman. What is the benefit of this project for Naperville?
- Agreed also with Councilwoman Brodhead comment that existing conditions related to safety are not acceptable.
- Observed, that based on his experience on the train, the Naperville stop is not even in the top 10 of the nicest stops compared to other communities. To think that we are the model suburb and that is the first impression by so many means we have a lot of work to do.
- Suggested we must be keenly aware of timing. Economy is good and interest rates are low now. We are in a good bargaining position. We should be mindful of that.
- Complimented Jessica Lyzun for her remarks about sustainability and the idea of getting LEED certification as great concepts, but also pointed out that the use of public transit is the most sustainable thing you can do at this location and so the emphasis must remain on the train station first.
- Pace bus service is also something that needs to be looked at more closely with this project. This is a unique location with multiple routes as it will provide great access for seniors.
- Agree with comments that some of the “wow” factor has gone down. Prefer some reduction in the number of parking spaces but also believe is because it has been a long democratic process, a lot of compromises are being made, so the loss of some “wow” is natural.

16. Anne Swanson, 145 N. Brainard

Still feels like the buildings are too tall and dense. School bus parking for DCM patrons is unclear and needs to be addressed

17. Dominic Nugent, 809 N. Loomis

Shared a personal story of his son getting hit by a car in front of the DCM to make the point that pedestrian safety concerns must be addressed because the problems are real and solutions need to be specific and quantified. Offered the following suggestions:

- Street parking should be removed. Working Group asked already for it to be removed.
- Divide the Parking decks south of the tracks so not a single large structure.
- Asked that the Steering Committee only support the revised concept IF certain things are addressed. Don't support the revised concept for additional study, but instead drive the study specifics of what must be examined.
- Height has gone down, but not enough. Want to see height closer to 60 feet. Believe in the revised plan still works in the developers favor
- Like Plaza better now. Softer along edges. Prefer it be located away from the corner so away from traffic on Washington
- Suggests reducing the density of townhomes on Kroehler Lot. Too dense. Prefer to see occupy some of the Water Tower Lot surface parking area with townhomes to provide balance. Believe that density, as proposed, on Kroehler lot sets a dangerous precedent for

added density development request in this area. South of 5th is a preferred location for residential density

18. Matt Schweiger, 711 N. Center

Recognizes this project is within the 4th largest city in Illinois. As such, a development of this scale, at least, is the right thing to do for the entire city. Steering Committee gives perspective of the surrounding neighborhood, but a not balanced perspective for all of Naperville. Encourage everyone to think of this as more of an opportunity to make the area safer and better. Don't get lost in the negatives.

19. Jim Shanchuk, 1103 Selma Lane

The concept doesn't provide enough parking options. Decks are all going to increase the parking commute times. Believe the DCM parking structure could be modified to provide additional uses, not just parking. Suggested it would make the DCM better and safer if driveway were provided along the railroad tracks on the north side of the property. The entrance to the deck should be located at the far west end of the deck so as to provide a driveway, the entire width of the deck, for queuing traffic entering the deck from Washington Street. Also suggested, parking permits should be changed to all daily fee. In his opinion, it would be better utilization of the parking that we have now. Support that move to make daily fee happen NOW following parking study of existing conditions. He agreed with others that the revised concept design has lost some of the "wow" factor.

F: ADJOURNMENT

Allison Laff thanked everyone for their time and participation. She explained that the comments shared today will be provided in the meeting summary for the City Council review and consideration at the workshop scheduled on March 2, 2020.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm.