



Legislation Text

File #: 19-940, Version: 1

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Direct Ryan Companies to move forward with the baseline concept presented on September 19, 2019 for more detailed study to address public concerns and recommendations of the 5th Avenue Steering Committee and preparation of key business terms.

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Amy Emery, AICP, TED Operations Manager

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

The 5th Avenue Steering Committee reviewed the baseline concept on September 23, 2019 and recommended it move forward as a reasonable starting point for additional study (e.g. parking, traffic, fiscal, commute time, pedestrian safety, etc.).

BACKGROUND:

The 5th Avenue Project is focused on the potential redevelopment eight (8) parcels in the immediate vicinity of the Naperville Metra Station. These properties currently include several surface parking lots, an automobile repair business, the City's former Public Works Facility, and the DuPage Children's Museum.

On October 3, 2017, City Council approved a motion to engage and authorize Ryan Companies to conduct community engagement and market research to determine feasible and beneficial options for the redevelopment along the 5th Avenue corridor for the purpose of presenting a concept plan for redevelopment of the 5th Avenue area to City Council for its consideration.

Over the last two years, Ryan Companies has facilitated a dynamic process including meetings and workshops in a variety of settings with a wide range of participants to develop two initial concepts for City Council consideration last fall. City Council then initiated efforts to define commuter parking quantities, provisions for affordable housing, and the future of the DuPage Children's Museum.

On June 15, 2019, City Council directed Ryan Companies to move forward with the preparation of a baseline concept plan. To inform the development of that document, a series of votes were taken pertaining to affordable housing provisions, the mix of land uses, commuter parking provisions, and a pedestrian tunnel.

DISCUSSION:

Baseline Concept

A baseline concept is best understood as a tool that will be the basis for comparison (e.g. the “baseline) for studies and evaluation of the project moving forward. The baseline concept serves as a starting point for the analysis necessary to compare existing conditions to the development proposals and evaluate impacts on parking, traffic, pedestrian safety and more. A baseline is not the same as a final development plan. The baseline will change with the benefit of the additional study and information. However, without a baseline, it is impossible to efficiently evaluate anything beyond existing conditions.

Over the last two years, the efforts to prepare the baseline concept have been nothing less than extraordinary. The level of community engagement and professional input from Ryan Companies have resulted in a very detailed baseline for future study.

Given the fundamental differences between the baseline concept (a starting point) and a detailed development plan (what the City Council typically reviews in conjunction with a development application), at this point, it is not important that every element shown on the baseline concept be agreed upon. Rather, an acceptable baseline should be seen as a design - based on available data and community input, but not a perfect plan - ready to move forward to dig into issues and concerns more thoroughly.

The baseline concept prepared by Ryan Companies refines and builds upon the ideas shown in the two initial concepts presented in 2018. It also reflects Ryan Companies efforts to address the specific expectations directed by City Council on July 15, 2019. Among the notable differences, the baseline concept:

- Adds commuter parking and affordable housing
- Retains the DuPage Children’s Museum at this current location
- Reduces the overall number of residential units
- Changes kiss & ride and Pace configurations
- Introduces the new concept of a Well Community
- Increases overall in green spaces and decreases total building square footages

Public Input

On September 19, 2019, Ryan Companies presented a new baseline concept to the community (Presentation slides are attached) at a public meeting hosted by the 5th Avenue Steering Committee. During the public meeting, after a detailed presentation by Ryan Companies, a three-hour public Q&A session was held. Speakers were able to express their opinions, ideas and concerns. A detailed meeting summary is attached. Concerns with the project pertained to the location of affordable units, potential reductions to Burlington Square for Pace operations, traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, future market conditions, financial strategies, fiscal impacts, safety around the railroad tracks, pedestrian safety, provisions for code-required parking of all uses, commuter access, changes to overall commute times, on-street parking and street design, height, and density.

Steering Committee Input

On September 23, 2019, the 5th Avenue Steering Committee convened to review the baseline concept and public input received. Through a facilitated discussion and series of votes, the Steering Committee discussed concerns and opportunities presented by the concept. The consensus of the

Steering Committee was to move forward with the baseline concept. The Steering Committee shares many of the same concerns expressed by the public about the project and felt moving forward with the baseline will provide the means to complete necessary parking, traffic, and other detailed studies of the area, to more accurately plan for the proper density, mix of land uses, necessary pedestrian and traffic improvements, and provide an adequate parking supply. It was also recommended by a majority of the Steering Committee that the future study include stormwater improvements within Kendall Park to address the needs of the Pilgrim's Addition neighborhood. The Steering Committee is particularly interested in seeing traffic modeling, more information about the affordable housing elements, and green space additions. A detailed meeting summary is attached.

Next Steps

Ryan Companies is seeking City Council approval to move forward with the baseline concept presented on September 19th, 2019 for more detailed study and preparation of key business terms (e.g. ideas of ownership, financing, etc.). The decision to proceed with Ryan Companies is an acknowledgement that this plan is an improvement from the initial concepts and is an acceptable starting point. Moving forward with the baseline sets forth Ryan Companies, the City Advocate, the Steering Committee and city staff on a path to study the possibilities of the area in greater detail. Stated another way, moving forward with this baseline concept is the pathway to get to the next level of analysis - to finally really know the impacts of this development. It also provides a more concrete foundation for the BNSF, Metra, School Districts and Park Districts to provide more reaction and feedback.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact resulting from the continuation of the community engagement process, technical studies and the development of a concept for the 5th Avenue area. The final scope of any redevelopment and associated financial impacts are not yet known. Any City costs associated with redevelopment will be subject to the review and approval of the City Council.