

MEETING SUMMARY—721 N. MAIN CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Technical Committee Meeting #3

Thursday, November 8, 2012

5:00—7:00 pm

City Hall, Larcom Basement Conference Rooms A-B

Attendees: Technical Committee (TC) Members present: 10; Sumedh Bahl (City of Ann Arbor- Community Services Area Administrator); Jonathan Bulkley (Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy); Ray Detter (NMVTF Member- Old Fourth Ward); Julie Grand (NMVTF Member- PAC); Jerry Hancock (City of Ann Arbor- Stormwater/ Floodplain Coordinator); Amy Kuras (City of Ann Arbor- Park Planner/ Landscape Architect II); Darren McKinnon (NMVTF Member- Water Hill Neighborhood); Heather Rice (Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner); Colin Smith (City of Ann Arbor- Parks and Recreation Services Manager); Coy Vaughn (Washtenaw County Parks Commission)

Technical Committee Members absent: 3; Matt Naud (City of Ann Arbor- Environmental Coordinator); Wendy Rampson (City of Ann Arbor- Planning Manager); Cresson Sloten (City of Ann Arbor- Systems Planning Manager)

City staff present for meeting facilitation: 2; Kayla Coleman; Connie Pulcifer

Consultant Team for meeting facilitation: 2; Neal Billetdeaux; Oliver Kiley

Public present: 3; Sabra Briere; Sam Koch; Alice Ralph

1. Schedule update—Task 3 Kickoff

- Clarification: this meeting (TC3) is intended for the Technical Committee (TC) to come to agreement on a few alternatives that will be presented to the North Main Vision Task Force (NMVTF). After reviewing the alternatives with the NMVTF we will get input from the community at City-wide Meeting #2 (CM2). Then, at TC4 we will decide on the final concept to propose to the NMVTF for grant applications.
- An application will be submitted to the Washtenaw County Connecting Communities grant in hope of securing match funds for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNDTF). We are also exploring Michigan Department of Environmental Quality State Revolving Loan Funds (MDEQ SRF) funds for the stormwater component of the site.

2. Technical Committee Recommendation

- The recommendations from TC2 were reviewed (text and graphic)
- When reviewing site alternatives remember to make assessments based on the criteria that we have identified within the technical committee recommendation.
- Reminder: the final TC recommendation will be presented to the NMVTF. The NMVTF will submit the recommendation at the December City Council meeting. The recommendation for December will be largely focused on the floodway portion of the site but including some recommendations loosely outside of the floodway. The NMVTF has until July to provide other recommendations for the non-floodway portion of the site and the larger North Main Corridor area.
- Plans for CM2 were discussed. It was suggested that the meeting focus on community input regarding the portion that we are pursuing a grant application for. CM2 will include a summary of what was heard at CM1 (suggestions for use of the site).

3. Conceptual Site Development Plan Alternatives

- Potential amenity uses for the site were discussed.
- Three site alternatives were presented including variation in parking configuration, path location, dog park size and location
- Agreement that the dog park should not be shown within the floodway
- A proposal that at least one of the scenarios should not include the building was suggested; however, it was agreed that this would contradict the technical committee recommendation that the building be maintained until further study has been conducted.
- Proposal that at least one of the scenarios should not include a dog park (should be an active use other than a dog park; TC recommendation says that an active use is needed).
- Dog park location should not back up to the Community Center or residential houses along Felch and should not be in the floodway. The ideal dog park location is against the railroad.
- A comment was made that a partnership with the Community Center could provide opportunities for potential Brownfield Development funds; programming needs of the Community Center would need to be further explored to activate the site.
- The MDNRTF Grant application should not be based on private property uses.
- Identifying parking for the site will strengthen a grant application for MDNRTF because it shows how other people can use the site, aside from just those who are within walking distance.
- The City will plan to have an informal discussion with the Community Center about potential parking options, and their programming needs.
- Site activation needs were discussed. Although many existing City parks are not consistently active 24 hours/day, City Parks and Recreation staff stressed the need for year round use due the near-downtown location of this site.
- The following additional considerations were voiced:
 - o The need to be conscious about whether the proposed use is temporary, or permanent, i.e. could it be changed/ removed depending on future site use and potential development?
 - o Recommendation that porous pavement be used for all paths through the site.
 - o Recommendation to explore solar lighting that is movement activated for the site.
 - o Parking in the floodway would most likely not be allowed
 - o Restrooms for the site were proposed. Staff clarification that the majority of City parks do not provide restroom facilities.
 - o Appropriate dog park size is variable, some cities have dog parks less than 900 square feet that are very well used.
- The existing route from 721 North Main to the Border to Border Trail was shown.
- Potential improved connections from 721 N Main to the Border to Border Trail were discussed.
- The TC reached agreement that the following three active uses would be carried forward to the NMVTF:
 - o Dog park- with the maximum square footage of the options shown at TC3, location to be in the southwest corner of the site, near railroad tracks.
 - o Community gardens/ flex space; including hoop house covering for winter use.
 - o Sustainability education and demonstration opportunities, with a green technology focus.

4. Funding Options

- C. Vaughn commented on the potential strength of the alternatives for the Washtenaw County Connecting Communities grant application

- 721 N. Main has a better opportunity to connect to the Border-to-Border Trail. This type of discussion (along with the NMVTF) represents a short term and long term vision.
- Connection between different park systems is helpful, especially if there is activation that brings people to the site. Show the potential for various connections and explain there are ongoing discussions and momentum about connecting to the Border-to-Border trail.

5. Next Steps

6. Public Comment