

CENTER OF THE CITY TASK FORCE
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE JANUARY 15, 2020
FEEDBACK FORM COMMENTS

I suggest that we have a perennial garden and have a competition for master gardeners a landscaper to present proposals for garden areas. A committee would determine the winner.

The decision on a building should wait until a determination is made on the decision of the Y lot, Library, Liberty lot and the Spark building.

The public, through the Charter Amendment, voted for City Center Commons and park. A Civic Commons "building" wasn't part of that charter amendment. It's not a large space and I want to see it used as the Charter Amendment states. I am not in favor of a Civic Commons building.

I prefer to have a building manage and activate the park. But if that can't happen, then the Parks Department should manage the park, but it should be funded the same way the skate park was, through private donations and fundraising.

The voters were told that no general fund money would be used and it should not be used.

Liberty plaza

- Problems with the design
- Martin basement space
- Lack of visibility
 - People want viewing area
- Suggestions:
 - Remove Martin building, replace with other City-owned property – flat ground, larger space
 - Possibility for moving or removing other building or block to create larger space.

How about a large mixed-use building over the parking lot that includes and update library, and replacing the existing library with a large park? It seems like it would better use existing infrastructure while satisfying the need for a commons and workforce housing, convention center, with hotel and restaurant and retail space which might bring down rental costs and make it affordable again for low-cost item stores, groceries, etc.

Open space!!! Band shell, bushes, restrooms, carts with ice cream, cart with coffee, small building at ___ with restrooms and maybe an office, totally fountain

Community meeting rooms (non-UM) are greatly lacking, so including them here would be great. Don't ID a bunch of specific uses, stay flexible.

An information/wayfinding office would be helpful, as would a security office.

Whatever building is built, large or small, should be extremely well-designed; beautiful and inviting.

Building and space must be active and open 24/7 and all-season

Definitely bathrooms

Flexible open space

Minimal structures

- Restrooms
- Band stage, performance space
- Benches
- Moveable tables and chairs
- Possibly small concession stand adjacent to restrooms

Use open to all of the public

This is a valuable public asset: A City Commons for use by all of the public

Coordinate use with the Library

This will serve the many new residents coming to downtown living near this site (not on this site) as well as all of the rest of the citizens/walkers/visitors

No big building! One story only!

Green space

Town square

Band shell with restrooms

Hoop house

I would like green space with a lawn, trees, flower beds and areas where people can sit and relax

A fountain/small outdoor skating rink would be nice, but I'm not sure if it's possible

We have a moral issue with housing affordability. We need more housing to fund affordable housing. This will make the public spaces safer and more successful.

I just feel strongly that a "mixed use" is not appropriate to the meaning of what was passed. No private anything here!

I'm liking the idea of funding like the skate park was done. Raise private donations, and no money from general fund.

Taxation? Something we make together.

Keep administration simple as can be – Parks Department with special committee for commons.

Governance of the Central Park should be done by the existing Parks Department. We want this park to be viewed just like any of our other existing parks.

Rotating groups of non-profits who take on weekly project (Governance)

In the PROS plan it says: Central Area – the DDA uses Tax Increment Financing for public projects and pedestrian improvement

Perhaps a combination of DDA and parking revenue could support the management and maintenance of the Commons

City/Parks/Handles permits for space use

Private/Public share finance

- DDA from parking fees
- Parks millage
- Donors

A citizen's commission/board manages program

Paid for from some of the 7 million and growing from within Ann Arbor Greenbelt millage

Very, very unhappy with hijacking to put back to housing not a common

We seem to be able to add new ceps at will for Human Rights Commission FOIA request why can we not hire a manager for this event site all community policy for commons and Liberty Plaza (once a lively urban park)

Discussion Topic #2: Governance – I think “governance” as it applies to the City Center/Commons should be the same as any other City Park – a combination of Parks and Rec, Police supervision, and Social Services. The question seems to veil and ongoing concern about homeless people who frequent Liberty Plaza. We have resources that can be applied here, the money the City received for working with mentally disabled residents could be very useful here. We are a complex city – we have neighborhood parks, but not a downtown park for downtown residents and all the people who want a public space on the Library Lot. This and should remain a public space. Let's combine City Funds (Parks and Rec, Police Dept.) with DDA funds, with a funding through donation and endowments to make this happen.

The City can easily make the space successful by funding onsite to do:

- Childcare at specific times and occasions
- Act as concierge to manage any issues, provide guidance to visitors
- Schedule musicians/buskers to perform
- Provide cleanup/maintenance on schedule

So many other cities have resolved this question and provided public parks/commons – why does Ann Arbor allow developers and opponents to continually obstruct while whining “affordable house” (which is not affordable)

City structure? Is this governed by Parks? Housing?

Must be privately funded!

Does ballot proposal allow for to remain “as is”

For actual “governance, i.e. moving the “commons” from concept to a working public space, let's put a working group together to include architects/planners, Parks and Rec representatives, police dept. reps, library reps, fund-raising experts, DDA reps, and citizens to make it happen.

Is this more of the developers end prime space? Or will it remain the people park? Most all alternatives will in fact be redundant here. The foundation of success starts with the space is public for all. Everything else flows from that.

Is there enough consideration provided to all classes, all employees, all residents, and all visitors or is this just more of the developers and prime space.

ALWAYS remember ALL CASTE has made Ann Arbor what it's has been. IT IS THE PEOPLE PARK.

I would be heartbroken if what the voters approved by a wide margin and how is this becoming unraveled? Why isn't it being supported? There is a mission. There have been many plans for the park in the process of discussing this idea. Where are they now?

I was one of the people who voted in favor of the Center of the City Commons. Until this week, when MLive write the article, "Should A2 Voters Consider Mixed-Use Plan for Center of City," I assumed the CofC Task Force was proceeding to carry out the will of the voters to help plan our new public park and Commons would be like. I was very upset to learn that a mixed use space is being considered – on that would require yet another public vote to amend the City Chart. To me, this seems like another plan to subvert and undermine the will of the people it's on been 14 months since Prop A was passed – this process needs to be given the time and opportunity to play out as per the will of the voters.

Dear Task Force – Please adhere to the task you are charged wit, due to our city vote in 2018. If you do not agree with the vote I'm sorry, but you do not have the charge, nor the right, to change it, add retail and or housing.

Proposal A passed so the land can't be developed into affordable housing or anything similar without another vote.

We already have a park in the Center of the City. We should deal with that space and its issues, not ignore it and focus on another, "pretty" space. How will those problems not move across the block?

The library lot is not part of Parks Department and its budget. If the land won't be generating property tax dollars, it should also not such tax dollars away from budgeted projects.

It feels like the city and/or some Task Force people are throwing up every conceivable obstacle to moving forward to create a City Center/Commons. This is a golden opportunity to create something wonderful and active for our entire city and its downtown visitors. We sorely need an energized, active Center of the City, a downtown crossroads where all can meet to socialize, play, relax. Learn, and enjoy our downtown. We don't need to monetize the space – we need to make the "Center of the City" happen. We have the resources and the will. Let's make it happen.

Let's not confound the will of the voters by proposing housing, even affordable housing on this site. We've added thousands of dwelling units downtown already. We need a good city policy for adding affordable housing, not this opportunities attempt to grab part of the City/Center commons for a purpose voters didn't approve.

Certain drawing of proposed plans have the removal of existing businesses. Eroding a tax base further is not a good idea.

Does Liberty Plaza as we know it go away? It has been plagued by drug issues for years. Will these spill over into a new space?

Has an environmental impact study been done?

If mixed use/housing is being considered, what is the point of not selling to private developers in the first place? Who would manage these properties? Would it be public housing?

Nichols Arboretum is already the defacto City Park we don't need another.

Would the downtown library be offended? The addition to or construction of a new one to fit this site shouldn't be the taxpayers burden.

We just gave the school system \$1 billion to be management with few parameters. Authorizing more for a contentious issue like this park is irresponsible.

City has made an effort to remove parking, unconvincing residents and discouraging out-of-town visitors. The removal of more parking for this project is a bad idea.

MUST BE PRIVATELY FUNDED!!

178 parks and facilities in Ann Arbor.

28.7 square miles in Ann Arbor.

6.2 parks per sq. miles

Why do we need another park?!

There is another a good track record for the management of the public space downtown (drug use, drunkenness, fights requiring police intervention). Before any expansion of public space a plan to make it welcoming and useable by the entire public needs to be formulated.

"Commons" in Ann Arbor might have multiple indoor levels, multi-purpose, as part of taller building. Equation of Commons/Central Park with a small pocket park is, I think, misguided, and misleading. An outdoor level underneath a building, at ground level, could be of value, and was part of the rejected commercial proposal. Ann Arbor downtown needs indoor public space given our weather more than outdoor. Also a multi-level structure like the Vessel in Manhattan would be a fund outdoor addition to Ann Arbor.

Uses on this site need to be considered with Y Lot and Library needs and AATA needs and plans Library has public space and could be expanded in new library design. Don't duplicate public space. Housing needs are paramount in this area, with loss of 100 Y units and growing needs for affordable housing. Plaza space at reasonable size would be well used by library goers and downtown visitors.

At very least, any action on the Library Lot should be halted until plans for the Y Lot are better developed. It doesn't make sense to have completely independent planning for this relatively small area of town when it could be considered as a whole.

Plans for the Library Lot should not be enacted until we know where we are putting low-income housing. We need to create an inclusive, welcoming community for all.

I'm not a fan of the park idea, largely for the concerns the library has raised.

Housing (esp. affordable/low-income), to offset the crazy-expensive skyscrapers, would be amazing.

Also in favor of other types of structures (retail shopping/restaurants, hotel, museum) – maybe a combined retail/housing building? I live right across the street (315 S. Division) so I feel a stake in how the Library Lot is developed.

From what I read in MLive, there is some discussion of introducing housing into the Commons. The voters want a park, not an apartment building.

Governance: Public-private partnership! Don't add it to the Parks Dept. portfolio without increasing their budget correspondingly...but that would be a last choice to me because at some part that necessitates new taxes, and simultaneously taking this off the potential tax roles is bad fiscal planning. Older Ann Arborites seem to be dominating the discourse on this City Center project, but young people are the ones who will have to pay for it and make tradeoffs, so please take that very seriously into consideration.

This is a great opportunity to improve Liberty Plaza to a world-class space, get some high-quality plaza outside the library, and get it all paid for by mixed market-rate units in a tall building! There should also be money left over some subsidized housing!! (tax credits)

No need for a second ballot question per Proposition A, the public has already voted to change the City Charter to require a Commons on the Library Lot.