

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works – Strategic Development Framework

Initial Input on Draft “Project Overview” Content, Issues, and Stakeholders

These pilots were organized with known organizational stakeholders to provide initial input on draft project documents and to hear an overview of key community issues. This information will be used to shape plans and materials for forthcoming Neighborhood Listening Sessions. For more information contact Anne Carroll, Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works public participation lead, at 651-690-9162 or carrfran@qwest.net.

Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association Invitees: 10 April 2008 at Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) Office

This session was organized by SENA community organizer Shirley Yeoman, who invited various subgroups along with others on their listserve to attend. The agenda had three parts: provide input on a draft project overview document intended to be handed out at various listening sessions; brainstorming a list of key issues related to the corridor’s future; and providing input on a draft list of stakeholders and engagement methods. Participants included two staff members, a board member, a community partner, and two interested residents. It was facilitated by HKGi Team member Anne Carroll along with her Humphrey Institute Capstone Team.

Longfellow Community Council, members of the Neighborhood Development Caucus and guests: 14 April 2008 at Hiawatha School Park Recreation Center

The Longfellow session was organized by the Longfellow Community Council housing coordinator, Kim Jakus, as part of the regular meeting of the Neighborhood Development Caucus. The agenda had three parts: provide feedback on a draft project overview document intended to be handed out at various listening sessions; brainstorming a list of key issues related to the corridor’s future; and providing input on a draft list of stakeholders and engagement methods. The session was facilitated by HKGi Team member Anne Carroll along with her Humphrey Institute Capstone Team. LCC participants included Kim Jakus, four members of the Neighborhood Development Caucus, two staff from Seward Redesign (who were there for another portion of the agenda and stayed to provide input on this), and project staff Robb Luckow and Ann Perry.

Comments on Draft “Project Overview” Document

- Put more detailed information on the map, such as houses, retail businesses, green space
- Show the whole area that’s affected – not just the narrow corridor – perhaps a wider rectangle
- The project goal is not clear; are they doing something only with the industrial space or what? Be clear that it is industrial redevelopment
- Clarify HKGi’s independent role and that they’re working for the county
- Clarify that this isn’t a preexisting plan to take people’s homes – the grid overlay seems threatening
- Clarify what “next phase” means – be specific about money and process
- Include examples of redevelopment opportunities (such as from the other county projects)
- Be clear whether the redevelopment opportunities address *neighborhood* issues (amenities)
- Indicate what kind of input we will be seeking – about what? What kinds of questions?
- Explain that this planning process is to help guide the redevelopment that *will* happen
- Clarify how this fits in with other existing plans and how it relates to existing zoning
- Explain how restrictive this redevelopment area is and how it relates to bonding areas

- Present is as the County providing additional support to this community
- Use “revitalization” rather than “redevelopment” – words like “redevelopment” and “tax base” may be threatening to people
- This document should be an invitation to community members to provide answers to questions that will help shape future redevelopment in the corridor and thus help improve the entire community
- Create a community dialogue
- The LRT makes this entire project different – not just greenways and roads – also transit-oriented development and leveraging transit use
- On the Longfellow side there are concerns about “spiffing up” Minnehaha without losing its character – hence revitalization vs. redevelopment
- 38th Street corridor has lots of potential but there are too many vacant commercial spaces
- Clarify the timeline for participation and that there are various ways to participate
- Make map smaller
- Instead of map, consider a visual of what is and how it needs to be better (such as vacant buildings)
- Call it a corridor project so the map makes sense
- Put more emphasis on cross streets (crossing Hiawatha), properties, bikeway... highlighting how communities are connected
- Standish-Ericsson and Corcoran thought of as urban, Longfellow suburban
- Provide recognizable icons on both sides of Hiawatha- libraries, schools, YWCA, major streets, parks, fire/police, community or recreation centers, keep even among neighborhoods
- Think about more like those fun maps, with neighborhood-level drawings
- Try a draft with the neighborhood names
- Spell out and explain HKGi and their role
- Remove Metro Transit, they are not a partner, change to “other agencies”
- Bullets
- What are natural systems?
- What is visioning?
- Looks like a planner’s document
- Too text dense
- A calendar with milestones and end point defined would help
- Connect to grassroots groups who are a part of this
- Give people a reason to get involved and care about this
- People aren’t used to being listened to by the county
- How will this affect me and my neighborhood? Tax impacts?
- Emphasize idea of making neighborhood come alive
- Connect the project with the neighborhood
- The document should be personalized and addressed to “you”
- One way to do this might be to talk about the great things that could happen in the neighborhood
- Document should describe that we’re listening to you, and this is why
- Need to include *people* in the document
- Document needs to be catchier, like advertising- bold, short, quick, personal
- Put this document in The Messenger, too
- Need to brand the project
- “Corridor Project” brought to you by...
- Logo representing images of area

- Map ideas

Handout Purpose and Community Input Process

- Looks like a planner's document; too text dense
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Specific Language and Layout

- What are natural systems? What is visioning? People don't know what these principles mean
- Use bullets
- Call it a corridor project so the map makes sense
- Use "revitalization" rather than "redevelopment" – words like "redevelopment" and "tax base" may be threatening to people
- The document should be personalized and addressed to "you"
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- Need to include *people* in the document
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- "Corridor Project" brought to you by...
- Logo – see Holly's idea (with a communications/PR background: combination of blue river, green parks/space, and the corridor in some bright non-land use color)

Project Goals and Process

- The project goal is not clear; are they doing something only with the industrial space or what? Be clear that it is industrial redevelopment
- Clarify what "next phase" means – be specific about money and process
- A calendar with milestones and end point defined would help
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Project Information

- How will this affect me and my neighborhood? Tax impacts?
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Roles

- Spell out and explain HKGi and their role
- Clarify HKGi’s independent role and that they’re working for the county

Map Content

- Provide recognizable icons on both sides of Hiawatha- libraries, schools, YWCA, major streets, parks, fire/police, community or recreation centers, keep even among neighborhoods
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- Instead of map, consider a visual of what is and how it needs to be better (such as vacant buildings)
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- Standish-Ericsson and Corcoran thought of as urban, Longfellow suburban
- Try one draft with the neighborhood names and another without – not sure if they are unifiers or dividers

Key Issues

Traffic and Transportation

- Always comes up in community meetings, and parking
- When LRT opened it was a mess because they did not consider development impacts on traffic; there are more people and cars there now
- Fear of Traffic
 - Safety
 - More traffic
 - “Fear of crossing Hiawatha Avenue.”
 - People “terrified of hitting pedestrians.”
 - Drivers using River Road more frequently, but “River Road should just be for bikers.”
 - People do not like driving Hiawatha.
- Minnehaha Avenue as a Neighborhood Corridor
 - Talk of ripping it up.
 - “Not a place for commuters, but for local destinations.”
 - Safety crossing – pedestrians and bikes.
 - “Maybe want Minnehaha to be like Central Corridor.”
- The LRT makes this entire project different – not just greenways and roads – also transit-oriented development and leveraging transit use
- 38th Street corridor has lots of potential but there are too many vacant commercial space

Eminent Domain Fears

- Need to educate people.
- Hiawatha Flats doubling in size.

Locally-owned Businesses, Local Land Owners

- No chain businesses.
- No big boxes.
- Minnesota = “locally owned”
- East Lake Street – still considered local

Increase in Liquor Licenses and Bars

- People are afraid of the increase of liquor licenses and bars
- Minnehaha could increase in crime, noise, and drunk drivers
- Restaurants want tables outside – beer/wine – no liquor licenses

Vacant Buildings

School Building Closings

Need Conversation for Used Nodes

Environmental Concerns

- Rain gardens
- Quality of water (rivers, lakes)
- Water containment
- Impervious surfaces (parking, schools, police precinct)
- Green roofs
- Visibly ecologically friendly

Green Space

- Need for green space
- Parks with trees and come play space, but not just cement

Graffiti

- 38th Street
- E. 41st Street
- Alleys
- City policy about graffiti is unclear
- Fear of reporting because of cost to property owner
- Lack of knowledge about City’s policies and services

Pedestrian Safety

- Associated with corridor
- Hiawatha crossing
- Impacts of more people coming into the corridor
- Bikes and cars need to be considered

Ethnic Population

- Change in population makeup: now many more Ethiopian, Latino/Hispanic, Vietnamese, Hmong, Somali
- Must reach out to all

Housing

- Affordable housing prices in corridor need to be maintained.
- Renters – a lot on Minnehaha – need to listen to their concerns (“reconnect”)
- Impact on renters/rent price

Housing Market

- Relation to retail
- Possible ripple effect
- New housing vacancy
- Sequence and need of housing and retail
- Capacity
- Housing types

Multi vs. Single Family Housing

- Open pieces of land such as the property adjacent to Hiawatha at 32nd Ave. and 42nd St. and questions about a new project there
- Questions about who new residents are -- group homes and quantity of services they demand
- Concentration of low income people
- Difference of rentals vs. ownership housing -- causes conflicts because some support affordable housing, while others oppose rentals altogether
- City regulations for more low income housing; what are the guidelines? At meetings, we'll need to be able to direct people to information

Density

- Source of conflict
- Because of LRT it may be expected
- Affordable housing and proximity to LRT
- Building height
- Sunrise/sunset loss

Private Property Impacts

- New development and control over land uses
- Property values, safety related to new developments

Redevelopment/Revitalization Questions

- What kinds of things can the county do for us?
- What kinds of opportunities should we consider?
- How does this relate to/enhance LRT and green transportation?
- How will it enhance amenities so people move into the neighborhood?
- How will it improve the neighborhood?

- What will happen during construction disruptions -- such as pest control with mill demolition
- Taking down huge concrete buildings raises concerns such as asbestos mitigation and associated costs

Stakeholders

Potential Changes to Initial Stakeholder Grid

- Seward Redesign is the neighborhood CDC, no need to have “Neighborhood CDCs” on the map
- Greenway Coalition is part of midtown community works, the MCW doesn’t have to be on the map
- River gorge; high interest

Potential Stakeholders

- African American congregations (the church is in the Longfellow Directory)
- Somali Church on Minnehaha
- East African Church on 28th Ave
- Older Americans/senior citizens
- Latinos en Action
- Lake St. Development
- Hispanic business owners
- East African business owners
- Becketwood residents
- CTOD – Center for transit oriented development
- Green Institute
- Smiley’s Point Clinic
- Fairview
- HCMC clinic
- Charter schools will have good insight (one is by the Skol liquor store, one is by Target)
- Nonprofits
 - Articulture on Minnehaha (Elizabeth Greenbak(?))
 - CAPI-art organization on Lake St.
 - Patrick’s Cabaret on Minnehaha
 - Ballet on Minnehaha
- Nokomis-East Neighborhood Association
- Park Board is missing from the grid
- Environmental advocacy groups are not represented; Clean Water Action or the Sierra Club; Sierra Club has an office in the Seward neighborhood but it most likely will not have anything to do with the corridor
- ACORN – doesn’t do much in the area
- Habitat for Humanity works in the area because the cost of homes is currently high, but they may be interested in the future if land becomes available in the corridor
- Roosevelt School Staff and PTA are not in the map
- Active local business owners
- There are 11 worshipping communities on the Longfellow side
- Fix the name “Holy Trinity Lutheran Church” on draft grid, this church is stewardship driven and people are advocates for various causes