



Event Record: Condo Boards Focus Groups Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan

Focus Group(s) The Condo Boards of Loring

The following is a summary of two focus group discussions conducted by Peter Musty, CLPC Master Plan Consultant, and Jana Metge, CLPC Coordinator. Representatives of condo buildings throughout Loring Park Neighborhood were invited.

Each condo board was asked to prepare a brief statement to share, prepared on behalf of each property, that addressed three topics:

- A. Identify three important issues that Loring condo owners are facing today.
- B. In the next twenty years, are there ways the city and community can serve your property & owners better?
- C. Are there specific planning, urban design or land use issues in your part of the neighborhood that are worth addressing in a long term master plan?



November 9, 2010

7:00-8:30pm - 400 Groveland

Those present included representatives of five condo buildings in Loring. (Front row, left to right: Nancy Jones of 12th & Harmon Place, Colleen Foster of 510 Groveland, Sasha Mayer of Summit House (410 Groveland). (Top row, left to right: Jana Metge, Mark Nelson of Summit House (400 Groveland), Becky Gullickson of 301 Clifton) The Focus Group was held November 9, 2010 on the twentieth floor community room of Summit House, 400 Groveland. Judy Ericksen, a representative of Loring Way Condominiums, 210 W. Grant Street was unable to attend but issued input in writing.



November 29, 2010

7:00-8:30pm – 1225 LaSalle

Those present included representatives of four condo buildings in Loring. (Front row, left to right: Tricia Simokush of 1225 LaSalle, Patricia Bloodgood of Greenway Gables, (Top row, left to right: Glen Cole of 1200 on the Mall, Jon Derleth of 210 W. Grant. The Focus Group was held in the community room of 1225 LaSalle. 310 Oak Grove Condos issued input in writing.



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Condo Buildings Represented

November 9th, 2010
7:00-8:30pm - 400 Groveland

- **301 Clifton** (built 2004) (41 units)
Becky Gullickson
- **400 Groveland** (Summit House)
<http://www.summithousecondos.com>
Mark Nelson
- **410 Groveland** (Summit House)
<http://www.summithousecondos.com>
Sasha Mayer
- **510 Groveland** (42 units)
Colleen Foster
- **12th & Harmon Place** (42 units)
Nancy Jones
- **Loring Way Condominiums, 210 W. Grant St.**
Judy Ericksen



November 29th, 2010
7:00-8:30pm – 1225 LaSalle

- **1200 on the Mall** (131-139 units)
Glen Cole
- **1225 LaSalle** (22 floors, ~132 units)
Tricia Simokush
- **Greenway Gables** (42 units)
Patricia Bloodgood
- **Loring Way Condominiums, 210 W. Grant St.**
Jon Derleth
- **310 Oak Grove Condos** (built 2006)





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Notes from November 7th (by Peter Musty)

A. Identify three important issues that Loring condo owners are facing today.

301 Clifton – Becky Gullickson

- Pedestrian Access to Downtown
- Cleanliness of Neighborhood
- Property Taxes

Summit House – Sasha Mayer (400 Groveland) & Mark Nelson (410 Groveland)

- Walking to Isles Neighborhood Across Hennepin & Lyndale (Mayer)
- Safety (Mayer)
- Pedestrian Access from Loring Hill (Nelson)
- Safety (Nelson)
- Declining Property Values (Nelson)

510 Groveland – Colleen Foster

Submitted in writing:

- "...1. Increasing pressure of "modernization" is forcing upgrades that are unbelievably burdensome. (Example – elevator code \$1M - \$2M for a small building, AND destorys a signature element of the building)..."
- "...2. Safety in Crossing the Street!!! (15th, and Groveland across Lyndale-Hennepin). ..."
- Condo Market Value
- Inattentive Bicyclists

12th & Harmon Place – Nancy Jones

- Condo Market Value
- Owner Occupied (preserving) vs Rental Mix
- Keeping Association Fees Reasonable

Loring Way Condominiums, 210 West Grant Street – Judy Ericksen *Submitted in writing:*

- Declining condo values (part of over-all housing decline)
- Improving the value of the Association's building and grounds.
- Lack of community and civic-mindedness. People are too busy/caught up with their daily lives.
- Prevalence of pan handling on Nicollet Mall.
- Safety of residents on the street and Loring Park. (both real and perceived)
- Opportunities for walking and informal socializing with neighbors' outdoors.
- Keeping Loring Greenway's vitality and beauty. "



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B. In the next twenty years, are there ways the city and community can serve your property & owners better?

301 Clifton – Becky Gullickson

- Pull the benefits of downtown towards Loring while preserving the character of neighborhood.

Summit House – Sasha Mayer (400 Groveland) & Mark Nelson (410 Groveland)

- Loring is “under-restauranted”, provide more things that make Loring better. (Mayer)
- Branding and promotion, in order to draw more retail. (Mayer)
- Lower taxes. (Mayer)
- Extend bus fare zones from Downtown. (Mayer)
- Encourage ‘Renaissance’ of Harmon. (Nelson)
- Encourage policy that ‘supports investment’ along Nicollet. (Nelson)
- Extend DID. (Nelson)
- Improve north-south pedestrian access through Park. (Nelson)

510 Groveland – Colleen Foster

Submitted in writing:

- Remake of Minneapolis transportation that changes reliance on autos and makes the area more livable and walkable. (Bus, light rail, streetcar, more bike rentals)
- More walkable – figure out a way to cross Hennepin Lyndale.
- Fix the damage that freeway and autos have done to the neighborhood. (Sliced the neighborhood up.)

12th & Harmon Place – Nancy Jones

- Manage volume and speed of 394 traffic coming into northern Loring.
- We love the DID people – expand them beyond Grant.
- Contain panhandling and aggressive behavior of some transients.

Loring Way Condominiums, 210 West Grant Street – Judy Ericksen

Submitted in writing: “...

- Encourage/allow for more community building structures along the Greenway. For instance, could some of the Greenway-level units of 110 Grant be converted to little delis/restaurants/places where people could meet and talk?
- Support Loring Greenway’s annual landscape and maintenance planting budget.
- Continue to improve and enhance Loring Park with more lighting, signage, better sidewalks, arts, food vendors, ice skating, boating, etc
- Maintain roads and sidewalks and create safe pedestrian crossings to the park.
- Extend the DID further down Nicollet Ave to Grant Street.



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C. Are there specific planning, urban design or land use issues in your part of the neighborhood that are worth addressing in a long term master plan?

Summit House – Sasha Mayer (400 Groveland) & Mark Nelson (410 Groveland)

- Food carts at edge of Loring Park. (Mayer)

510 Groveland – Colleen Foster

Submitted in writing:

- Continue to safeguard against the threat of development that destroys the character of the neighborhood.
- Create an “entrepreneurs zone” that encourages owner operator to put shops into current buildings. Or small scale of larger entity (i.e. Target’s small urban stores...)

*Related article found by P. Musty
by Anne D’Innocenzio, AP Retail Writer, Sept 24, 2010:*

Target to Open First Small Urban Store in Seattle

Target to open first store with smaller urban format in Seattle
The Associated Press
[Post a Comment](#)
By ANNE D’INNOCENZIO AP Retail Writer
MINNEAPOLIS September 24, 2010 (AP)

Target Corp. plans to open its first store in a new, smaller format in Seattle in 2012, with plans to expand to 10 other markets in such cities as San Francisco and Baltimore in the next few years.

"We've never been a cookie-cutter retailer, but we are increasingly realizing that one size doesn't fit all," said John Griffith, executive vice president of property management at Target.

The new store will be about 90,000 square feet. The new urban prototype will range anywhere from 60,000 to 100,000 square feet. A typical Target store ranges in size from 125,000 to 180,000 square feet.

Company officials made the announcement Friday at a rare media conference at Target Field, the Minneapolis ballpark.

Target is no newcomer to cities. It opened its first urban store in Chicago in 1994 and now operates about 150 stores in cities with more than 100,000 people within two miles.

In July, it opened its first store in New York's Manhattan, though the size was in line with the regular stores.

The new format represents Target's new approach to urban markets. Now, as Griffith noted, the company is making the store fit the site, not the "site fit the store." The new prototype will be in essence a mini-Target, offering a broad array of merchandise from fashion to home furnishings but it will focus on daily essentials.

- Equal the playing field – between investors in neighborhood so that current establishments get the same benefit as (large) corporations. (i.e. Target)
- Encourage a diversity of retail and restaurants. (Tea house, deli, small grocery.)
- Neighborhood visual design demarcation. Attractive lights. “You are now entering the magic land of Loring.”
- Join in the city food and health efforts by locating a farmers market in the neighborhood.
- More services.



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12th & Harmon Place – Nancy Jones

- Contain campuses so we don't get engulfed.
- Harmon – incentivize services w/ sufficient parking.

Loring Way Condominiums, 210 West Grant Street – Judy Ericksen

Submitted in writing: "...

- Loring Greenway will increasingly become a major pedestrian corridor for people going and coming to/from downtown for jobs, shopping, restaurants, concerts etc. A long-range capital improvement fund will be needed to ensure its continued maintenance and major improvements including seating, directional signage, enhanced lighting (for safety and beautification) and colorful installations of banners etc
- The Lyndale Hennepin corridor cuts off access to the Walker Art Center, is not safe for pedestrians, and makes the West side of the park very unattractive.
- Do something with empty buildings on 15th between LaSalle and Nicollet.

Repeated Issues, Areas of Extended Discussion and/or Consensus

Public Safety

- a. Public perceptions are growing that public safety problems are increasing in the neighborhood, despite statistics that may show otherwise.
- b. Increased public safety concerns are now contributing to decrease in property value.
- c. Streets along I-94 from Clifton to Groveland and across bridges to Stevens Neighborhood are problem areas, often 'spooky' at night.
- d. Walking in the neighborhood at night is increasingly scary, although used to be a 24-hour neighborhood, with enough pedestrian activity to keep streets safe.
- e. Alternate routes to Loring Hill are taken depending on time of day due to public safety concerns.
- f. Stairs from Oak Grove up to Clifton @ World Mission Prayer League were closed due to public safety concerns.
- g. There is a desire to preserve the reputation as a safe neighborhood.

Walkability

- a. "Everywhere we go, we run into barriers."
- b. "Walking to Isles...seems so far away."
- c. "Walking to Sculpture Garden...seems so far away."
- d. Clear agreement that Hennepin Lyndale is uncrossable by pedestrians – too far to get across in one cycle, too many conflicts with bikes & cars.
- e. Just getting across 15th at Hennepin is also very difficult.
- f. There used to be steps up to Oak Grove near Dunn Brothers..."Is there some way to get up there?" Mid-block connection from 15th to Oak Grove would be appreciated.
- g. "Bicyclists don't think they have to pay attention."
- h. There needs to be better access north-south through the park.
- i. It is difficult to cross at 15th & Oak Grove.
- j. Four to five I-94 bridges should be improved; ideas ranged from bridges with generous landscaping to bridges with structures. Nicollet was identified for widening to perhaps include retail or some other active use to help strengthen link Nicollet from Stevens to Loring Neighborhoods.



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Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan

Development on Loring Hill

- a. There was no disagreement voiced when it was stated that the Loring Hill Guidelines should be 'etched in stone'.

Harmon

- a. There was some discussion regarding "so much opportunity to create a vibrant little neighborhood..." (on Harmon).
- b. It was voiced that "some coordination would be good" regarding the MCTC Master Plan and the Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan. Some fear was voiced that campuses (MCTC/ST Thomas) would "engulf the neighborhood".
- c. Incentives should be put in place to reuse empty buildings on Harmon.
- d. Near Northeast was raised as a precedent;
 - i. It's the new Uptown.
 - ii. Lunds helped.
 - iii. They recruited, changed zoning and managed traffic.

Precedents Mentioned

- a. Chelsea
- b. Washington DC (Dupont Circle, Adams Morgan)
- c. Knob Hill, San Francisco
- d. Mears Park
- e. Near Northeast
- f. Providence RI (specifically??)
- g. Oakland CA (specifically??)
- h. Dubuque IA (specifically??)

Loring Park Master Planning Process

Condo Owners II – FOCUS GROUP

Monday, Nov. 29th, 2010; 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Thanks to Tricia & 1225 LaSalle Condo for hosting!!

Those present: Tricia Simokush (1225 LaSalle), Jon Derleth (210 W. Grant), Patricia Bloodgood (Greenway Gables), Glen Cole (1200 on the Mall), Jana Metge (CLPC Coordinator), & Peter Musty (Master Plan Consultant). 310 Oak Grove Condos sent in written answers to Preview questions, unable to attend tonight.

Jana welcomed folks, distributed handouts-tonight's preview, name tags, Jan. 20th & 22nd Events, Consultant Team bios, and handouts from Nov. work. Jana overreviewed work of CLPC and the Steering Committee prior to the selection of the Consultant team.

Pete overviewed the process to date – Sept. 30th was our Kick Off event at the Park featuring a panel on the history of Loring Park followed by a “Discovery Workshop” on Sat., Oct. 2nd. Then on Thursday, Nov. 4th a gathering was held at the Music Box Theatre featuring food from Nicollet Businesses, live music, and a panel on “Creative Neighborhoods in the Creative City”. Saturday, Nov. 6th a “Visioning” Community Design workshop was hosted by the Wesley Church. There will be six (6) focus groups. To date, focus groups have been held with the Property Owners & Managers and another Condo Owner meeting. Nov. 30th will be a Focus Group of stakeholders along Nicollet Ave. and Dec. 7th a focus group for the Harmon area. The Steering Committee will be deciding on the remaining focus groups – options are long-time renters, Arts & Culture/Creative Sector, and developers. Key Stakeholder interviews have been conducted with Diane Woelm (Nicollet Ave.), Ray Harris (Future/past development, walkability, Loring Park), Sen. Scott Dibble (Transportation/potential implementation resources), Kim Havey (Harmon Ave./Sustainability ideas), and HN Co. Commissioner Gail Dorfman. A Dec. 15th date is set for an interview with Councilmember Lisa Goodman. Another is being set up with Bob Copeland/resident & former HPC chair on historic assets & history in the Loring Park neighborhood. There will be ten (10) Key Stakeholder interviews.

Jana reviewed that the four (4) focus areas of the Master Plan have been identified as 1) Nicollet Ave., 2) Harmon Ave., 3) Perimeter of Neighborhood/freeway edges, and 4) Perimeter of Loring Park/safe passage to the Park. The Request for Proposal overviewing the purpose of the Master Plan is on the CLPC website – www.loringpark.org click on Citizens for a Loring Park Community. Peter Musty's contract is based upon that RFP. All information and documentation of this Master Plan process is also available on the web. Comments can also be called in or emailed into the CLPC office at 612-874-9002 / clpc@visi.com.

Jana invited all to the Annual Holiday Party & Curry dinner this Thursday – flyers distributed. “Light Up Loring” flyers were available for the Park event 6:00-8:00 on Thurs., Dec. 9th.

A. Identify three important issues that Loring condo owners are facing today.

- Speed of traffic
- Aesthetics of neighborhood – garbage, well-maintained buildings, noise
- Safety – lighting and foot traffic to keep crime low
- Retain the property values – concern about downward spiral of condo values
- Continuing increase of property taxes (especially with decrease of values)
- Crime & Safety – keep it low – we worked hard to decrease crime 2 decades ago, don't want to see it escalate, especially with the economy, and drive current and potential owners away. Need to keep crime low and address it early to prevent flight.
- Maintain the beauty, charm, and diversity of Loring Park.
- Enhance the lighting in the neighborhood, increased lighting has helped greatly on the Greenway.

- Nicollet Ave. to Loring Park are very different neighborhoods, depending which way you look out. Skateboarding and panhandling are Nicollet Crimes – public drinking.
- Skateboarders jumping off the stairs along the Greenway.
- Little police patrol along the Greenway – would like to see a schedule when Officers are out there. Sometimes Officers are seen in a squad following Park Police – suggested that Park Police could take care of their area and have MPD maybe drive thru Greenway, esp. at night.
- Some Condos are experiencing foreclosures for the first time in their history.
- Safety and Security along Nicollet and along the Greenway and in the Park.
- Concern expressed that they are not hearing back from MPD when calls are logged.
- Willow Street traffic – folks consistently run the stop sign – extremely unsafe for pedestrians/dog walkers and bikers. Seeing no traffic patrol to enforce speed & stop sign.
- Renovate Berger Fountain and enhance safety & access to cross into the Park from the Greenway.
- Crossing to and from the Basilica is extremely dangerous!
- 15th Street is very dangerous for biking – folks go down edge of park, to HN and up 12th to this area vs. 15th Street and Willow. Traffic vs. bikes and pedestrians. Needs to improve.
- Right turns off 394 by Dunwoody is extremely dangerous.
- Need to walk and bike defensively here – cars seem to rule and not look out for folks here in the neighborhood walking and biking.
- Speed bumps on Willow – they have them all around the City, why not here?
- Speed bumps/traffic calming around the Park – no where is it safe to enter.
- The Park sidewalks/paths need to be maintained – not shoveled or salted in the last ice and folks saw people fall. Lack of M & R prevents folks from using the Park.
- Garage entrance onto Grant/210 building, is difficult with the bus stop there.
- Need to market and promote the neighborhood to foster sales and support businesses, as well as reverse the old stereotype about Loring being an unsafe area.
- No salting or shoveling this weekend on Loring Greenway – very unsafe, much concern expressed regarding this.
- Questions were raised regarding the cattails in the pond.
- M & R of the Park seems to have gone downhill. Very worrisome. Last two (2) years there has been less mowing, plowing, salting. After all of the NRP Phase I investment, it is a shame to see it go downhill.
- Worried that Loring Park is turning into a Corporate Haven vs. the unique neighborhood it is and should stay – need more interesting shops.
- Maintain and defend Loring Park Neighborhood's uniqueness and build upon it.
- Concern that businesses like Dahl Pharmacy are leaving – be careful what is recruited into the neighborhood and what valued business may be put out of business because of it.
- Livability crimes/loitering on Nicollet Mall.
- Parking issues for visitors
- Snow/ice removal on the Greenway
- Free newspaper racks are an eyesore
- Values would stay higher if/when amenities are here – i.e. Lunds, what happened to it?
- Develop a plan to market the Loring Park Neighborhood – still has perception & reputation problems – needs marketing.

B. In the next twenty years, are there ways the city and community can serve your property & owners better?

- Provide more garbage cans that are regularly dumped
- Historic preservation grants for Loring Hill properties
- Maintain streets/lighting so the neighborhood is walkable
- Continue and maintain the Downtown Improvement District. That has been great for this area – Nicollet is clean, Safety Ambassadors are well trained and very helpful.
- Upgrade & enhance walking/biking paths
- Build up our Park - Iconic, urban Park like Millenium Park in Chicago.

- Replace Berger Fountain plaza and do something about the ugly box that surrounds it all winter.
- Develop safe passages to the Park on all sides.
- More and better policing
- More investment into Loring Park (Park) – the Park is the draw for folks to move here/visit and stay. Diversity of population which uses the Park is a plus.
- The City should continue to push an environment that is user-friendly for walkers/bikers.
- Maintain sidewalks, walkways in the neighborhood and in the Park – ensure that curb cuts are cleared for folks in wheelchairs. This is done in the DID area and it is great!
- Develop more private/public partnerships – Loring Greenway and “Save Berger Fountain” the Dog Park, and the flower gardens at Loring Park were cited as examples.
- Ensure that when a project is done, or a developer does a project, that reserves are in place to ensure M & R of that project over time.
- Recruit into the neighborhood a grocery store.
- Recruit into the neighborhood a tourist gift shop, unique shops, dry cleaner
- Be sure that we do not get “plowed over” in the “way of progress”.
- Don’t lose the character of the neighborhood.
- Sidewalks need to be repaired properly. Lately, a shovel of blacktop fills in a hole – vs. adequate, aesthetic repair.
- Continue to build projects utilizing volunteers.

C. Are there specific planning, urban design or land use issues in your part of the neighborhood that are worth addressing in a long term master plan?

- Concern over possibility of apartment buildings going into foreclosure and not being maintained or abandoned, *e.g. Secombe Apartments, 300 Oak Grove St.*
- Maintain integrity of neighborhood by controlling over-development
- Ensure that when a project is done, or a developer does a project, that reserves are in place to ensure M & R of that project over time.
- Sidewalks need to be repaired properly. Lately, a shovel of blacktop fills in a hole – vs. adequate, aesthetic repair.
- Continue to build projects utilizing volunteers.
- Safe passage to Loring Park at all sides of the Park, but especially the Greenway crossing over Willow.
- Renovate Berger Plaza. It is a tourist delight. Folks come here to take photos by the Fountain!
- Improve the “Willow Speedway”.
- Direct development & expansion
- Maintain investments and plan for it.

Specific Building Needs and Review –

Greenway Gables and 210 W. Grant have healthy reserves

1200 on the Mall has been working hard for a decade to create operating reserves

All have had capital improvements done - elevator updates, windows, patio doors, updating fire alarms systems. Costs for fire alarm is \$500k+ and elevator costs vary. Some need improvements that will not be covered by operating reserves (parking ramp) and owners will be assessed in addition to their monthly association fees. The plaza in front of 1200 on the Mall/1225 LaSalle will need to be redone. Boards are all discussing the issue of rentals – how to maintain and keep full the buildings and yet keep rental % as set in their bylaws. 1200 on the Mall recently acted to set their rental percentage at 10%. This was adjusted to prevent developers/businesses from buying the units and thus having majority voting power in the future of the building. Gittleman manages all but 210 W. Grant, they are self managed. Most felt that 2-3 bedroom/2-bath units are what folks are looking for now and will in the future.

1200 on the Mall – 131-139 units

1225 LaSalle – 22 floors with 6 units per floor = 132 units
210 W. Grant – 30 years old – 182 units originally, some have been purchased and combined
for additional unit space and additional baths.
Greenway Gables – 42 units

Follow up:

- Jana will email around the Public Works Traffic Report
- Jana will do up notes and get around to all for review
- Jana will follow up with LGE and LGW, Bellevue, and 317 Groveland to get their boards to respond in writing to the questions asked for this Master Plan information gathering phase.
- All should attend and recruit other neighbors to the **Transportation Panel** hosted by the Basilica on **Thursday, Jan. 20th**. The Panel will feature Sen. Scott Dibble, Councilmember Robert Lilligren, Anna Flintoff/Public Works – Nicollet Streetcar, Ray Harris/Walking Mpls. There will be food provided by MCTC student Catering Club and live music by local musicians. This event is from 6:30-8:30. It is followed by a Transportation/Public Realm workshop on **Sat., Jan. 22nd** hosted by Hennepin Ave. Methodist Church from 9:00-noon.
- Mark the CLPC Annual Meeting on your calendar – **Tuesday, March 22nd** – hosted by The Woman’s Club of Minneapolis. There will be a Resource/Information Fair from 5:30-7:00. Master Plan maps and work done to date will be on display and open for public comment. Then, during the Annual Meeting beginning at 7:00, a presentation the Master Plan will be the main feature of the evening. Refreshment will be served and live music.
- **Property Taxes** – Jana reported that **Public Hearings are this week. Pull up information at both the City and the County websites. Each are holding meetings.** If you cannot attend – send your elected official an e-mail with your position:

lisa.goodman@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

gail.dorfman@co.hennepin.mn.us

Follow up to issues raised tonight:

Jana reviewed –

- St. Stephens Street Outreach program and distributed cards for buildings.
- Lt. Matt Clark is our Sector Lt. She suggested that each building designate someone to contact him via email monthly or weekly if needed and overview and safety concerns. His email is matthew.clark@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
- Get to know Park Commissioner Anita Tabb, maybe bring her to a Condo Board meeting to discuss the concerns with the Park. Jana will also forward Lee Frelich’s email to folks/President of Loring Park.
- Jon will let Merry Keefe/President of Loring Greenway Association aware of resident concerns regarding the M & R of the Loring Greenway/lack of salting and shoveling this past weekend.

Respectfully submitted, JLM/CLPC Coordinator