

Citizens for a Loring Park Community
Land Use Committee
Monday, September 27, 2010
Loring Park Office Building (430 Oak Grove), Room 207

Attendance: Dick Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), Jan Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), John Van Heel (100 West Grant), Neil Reardon (1213 Hawthorne), Gary Gliem (Summit House), Janine Jelks-Seale (110 West Grant), Dave Hile (Summit House), Jana Metge (CLPC Coordinator), Kent Smead (MCTC), Peter Musty (consultant), Jill DeCoursey (CURA Intern), Lauren Huynh (volunteer, Minneapolis Planning Commissioner, USGBC Board Member)

I. Call to Order—John Van Heel, CLPC Land Use Chair

John called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and led introductions of those in attendance after the arrival of Peter Musty and Kent Smead.

Approved the agenda. (Motion Dick Sandberg, second Dave Hile) Motion passed

Announcements

- **Master Plan Steering Committee** – Meets the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is Wednesday, October 27, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Loring Park Office Building.
- **Historic Resource Action Team** – The next meeting is October 6, at the Music Box Theater, 7-8:30 p.m. Discussion will focus on the historic nature of the theater and financing options for historic assets.
- **Court Watch** – Friday, Oct. 1st - from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Central Library downtown - 2nd floor conference room.
- **Community Sing-Along** – The next Community Sing will be Tuesday, October 12, 7:00 p.m. at the Loring Park Community Building.
- **Traffic Calming Task Force** - Mon., Oct. 18th from 6:30-8:00 at Loring Park Office Building/430 Oak Grove; Room 207; Agenda: Master Plan Traffic Calming components. For more information, contact Dave Hile.
- **MCTC WellFest Health Fair** has been rescheduled to April 6, 2010.
- **Master Plan Events:**
 - Thursday, Sept. 30 - Loring Park Community Center/down the hill from Willow & 15th St. - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. (6:00-6:30 social time) Master Plan KICK OFF EVENT!!! Panel on the History of Loring Park featuring Syd Beane/Dakota elder, Katie Hatt/Lifelong resident, Kim Havey/CLPC History, Bob Copeland & Bob Glancy/Neighborhood History.
 - Saturday, Oct. 2nd - The Woman's Club of Minneapolis/410 Oak Grove - 8:30 to noon (8:30-9:00 social time) – Community Design Workshop including neighborhood walkabout
 - Thursday, Nov. 4th - The Music Box Theatre/Nicollet & 13th St. - 6:00-9:00 (6:00-6:30 social time) – Focus on Arts & Culture in Loring Park

DRAFT

- o Saturday, Nov. 6th - Wesley Church/next to Convention Ctr. - 8:30-noon (8:30-9:00 social time) - Community Workshop on Visioning

In response to a question about the dumpster in the Lunds parking lot – it is temporarily on site for work at Laurel Village.

II. CURA Summer Research Project/LEED ND – CURA Summer Research Project/LEED ND – John Van Heel, Jill DeCoursey

As part of its efforts to include LEED-ND principles in the Loring Park Master Plan, CLPC obtained the services of a CURA intern. The CURA intern worked with Sarah Curtner, a volunteer U of M Urban Planning graduate. The interns conducted a site assessment of existing condition over the summer months, documented in a final 66-page report that can be found at: http://www.loringpark.org/minagen/home%20page%20pdfs/LEED_ND%20Report.pdf.

John van Heel provided extensive background on this issue. Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design or LEED is an internationally recognized green building rating and certification system. It provides third party verification that a building, or a community was sustainably designed, built, or operated in terms of measurable things such as energy savings, water efficiency, reduction in CO² emissions, and, the protection of natural resources.

Since its inception in the late 1990s LEED has expanded to provide specific rating systems for a variety of building and construction types. At the beginning of this year the USCBC launched LEED-ND or LEED for Neighborhood Development. This followed a 2 year pilot program. Both Lauren and Peter participated in pilot projects. This new system focuses on the sustainable development and operation of groups of buildings seen through the context of community-wide strategies that look at overall patterns of development.

At the same time that LEED-ND was being launched, the Loring Park neighborhood was preparing a Request for Proposal to do a neighborhood master plan. The intention of this RFP was to establish the purpose and scope of the plan. This served both as a basis for selecting a consultant and as a framework for doing the master plan itself.

“Sustainability” was part of the earliest discussions by the master plan steering committee. I think this came out of a social and environmental awareness. I also think that committee members saw sustainability as an opportunity, since many understood intrinsically that Loring Park’s urban setting provided a whole host of sustainable assets.

The problem lies in the word “sustainability”. The concept is in fact complex as it deals with interrelationships between multiple phenomena, this breadth has helped to make a word that is as much sentiment as it is science. So while there was a desire to make sustainability a basis for the master plan, we needed something more concrete.

The new LEED-ND program appears to be what we were looking for. While the most obvious goal of the rating system is a LEED certified project, the system also held the promise of being a valuable planning and development tool. The

DRAFT

project that was done over this past summer served to assess the potential for a LEED-ND project in the neighborhood, but more importantly, it provided a survey of existing conditions based on quantifiable LEED-ND criteria. This allowed us to begin to answer the question: How sustainable are we?

Considering our limited budget, it would have been impossible to have included this assessment in the master plan consultant work. So we were very fortunate to be able to benefit from the University's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs and their Community Research program. With the help of Jill, Sarah and Lauren we are now able to begin our planning process this fall with a comprehensive overview of the neighborhood's LEED-ND based sustainable attributes.

Jill Decoursey described the data-intensive process (e.g. building setbacks) used. They divided neighborhood into four areas—Downtown (excluded), Harmon, Nicollet and Loring Hill and started with Nicollet. The City provided useful information, but data was still needed from the field. They used GIS software using parcel as the unit of analysis. This helped them explore how well the neighborhood matched up to the LEED-ND credits. They focused on the credits pertaining to neighborhood pattern and design and smart linkages. Loring Park does well on things like linkage to the city and public transit (distance to a bus stop) and walkability. Some items are not uniform across the neighborhood such as parking and tree spacing so it is difficult to say if the neighborhood as a whole would meet those types of goals. NOTE: the focus is likely to be where new development would go in, not the entire neighborhood.

Challenges: commercial density (meets pre-requisite but gets no extra points due to low buildings and surface parking). Another challenge – intersections per mile meets the pre-requisite but does not exceed it. Loring Hill is the farthest off the requirements for LEED-ND--Harmon and Nicollet are a better fit. Harmon's challenge is that LEED-ND does not apply to college campuses and it may be difficult to create a project boundary. Nicollet is the most promising. Jill noted that CLPC may wish to capture the low hanging fruit – incorporate affordable housing, work with existing buildings and get points for working with the community. Jill then reviewed many of the maps in the report. Note that in some cases LEED is looking for a different configuration than required by current zoning such as set-backs.

John discussed ways in which the work and report might be useful to the neighborhood, perhaps in upcoming projects or as incorporated into the master plan. Lauren noted that the green principles could be applied neighborhood-wide (sort of guidelines), even though certification is pursued for a small area.

Pete Musty added comments that focused on transit area development and standards for maturing neighborhoods.

Lauren also added that having these guidelines as part of the master plan will help the neighborhood with specific projects in terms of getting better compliance as the City will give weight to approved guidelines.

Questions & discussion:

Exclusion of colleges—LEED has another set of criteria for campuses, not

LEED-ND. Note that Janine and John are participating with the Climate Control Committee at MCTC.

Parking—the big no-no is parking in front of a building. Underground parking is preferable.

Sidewalk width: a number of the sections did not meet the requirement were designated as commercial which has a wider requirement.

Setbacks – there is some room for flexibility. The idea is that less setback encourages walkability. Pocket parks and similar, like the Greenway, are also a positive.

Emphasis on reducing vehicle miles traveled. For MCTC much of this is student based. They have tried to encourage the use of public transit via passes. It would be interesting to analyze where students live and travel patterns. Jana mentioned the possibility of applying for a CURA intern to work with the committee and to help analyze MCTC data. Discussion about subsidizing Nice Ride for students and otherwise emphasizing biking.

LEED does not fit well with other regional needs such as walking distance in winter.

III. Report from Task Forces

•Orchestra Hall Task Force – Dick Sandberg

Dick had distributed renderings from Orchestra Hall at a previous meeting that detailed expansion of the lobby into a part of the plaza. The City has put out an RFQ recently—the next step will be the designation of a set of landscape architectural firms (about 5 or 6) that will receive the final RFP. Dick noted that there is not enough money for a complete redo of the entire plaza. Dick is interested in the committee's thoughts—he will take this information to the next meeting. Dick likes the amphitheater seating, but he has heard that others like a flatter look. Concerns about accessibility issues may require a somewhat less sunken design. Peter said that because there are so few public spaces such as this, there is a tendency to over-design. He would like to see the use of the plaza expanded to include more months of programming. Another comment was the need for better maintenance overall. Jan added that money from the state will only cover part of the cost—the rest will likely come from fundraising. In response to Dick's statement that the redo of the hall itself will focus on the lobby, Gary commented about the tight seating within the hall.

•Walker Art Center Community Participation – Gary Gliem

Gary thought there might be a meeting in October to evaluate the Open Field program.

•Wells Mansion Work Group – Kim Havey

Kim was unable to attend. This item will be carried over to October.

Adjourned 8:15 p.m.