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Citizens for a Loring Park Community

Land Use Committee

Monday, April 25th, 2005

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

@ CLPC Offices/Loring Park Office Bldg.
430 Oak Grove St.; Room #207 612-874-9002

I. 6:30-6:45 p.m. Call to Order--Agenda Approval, Introductions, Approve Minutes & Announcements Bob Copeland, CLPC Land Use Committee Chair

Bob led introductions of about 30 persons in attendance. There were eventually nearly 45 persons at the meeting.

Motion by Dick Sandberg, seconded by John van Heel, to approve the minutes from March 28, 2005.

Motion passed.

Announcements:

- Jana announced that they received acknowledgement from the Woman's Club that CLPC will receive a grant that will allow upgrading the computer. CLPC has had no Internet access for many weeks.
- The Housing Trust meeting is tomorrow night.
- Joshua asked that a CLPC member attend a meeting on April 30, 2005 for a citywide meeting sponsored by Children and Family Services bringing together several building owners including the owner of 316 Oak Grove, featured at this committee several times.
- John van Heel announced that the Web site is in better shape with more recent agendas and minutes from up to a year ago.
- Bob Copeland announced that the next meeting of the committee would be May 23.

Bob asked approval of the agenda. It was approved.

II. 6:45-7:10 p.m. Lund's Grocery Store/12th & Hennepin—Renee Plumart/DJR Architects and others

Tres Lund started the discussion and introduced John Pazahanak, and Renee Plumart (/DJR Architects). Tres is here to solicit input on the urban store experience part of which is getting away from a single floor plan. For example, there might be a wine cellar (wine must be sold in a separate space) or a mezzanine. Lunds has also secured an option on the 1208 Harmon Building next door. Lunds may locate the health and beauty care and pharmacy in a neighboring building. The Lunds on Lake Street is 25,000 sq. ft plus a full basement for production—the store at 12th and Hennepin will be smaller--18,000 sq. ft. with the addition. The addition is about 7,000 sq ft with no basement under the addition. .

Renee presented exterior elevations—this is a historic building in the historic district and they are working with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The building originally had large showroom windows that are now bricked up—the brick will be removed and opened up. The HPC did not want the new building to duplicate what had been there; the preference is for something complementary.

The exterior will be brick and stucco, with awnings, and an entry on the 12th Street corner and the parking lot. Alliant Engineering presented the parking plans for the site, including 53 parking spaces. Lunds will reduce the number of curb cuts off Hennepin. There also will be an entrance to the parking lot from the alley.

Discussion items included:

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- Hours of operation—6 AM to midnight or similar with an option to eventually open 24 hours. There are some issues with truck traffic—at the other stores this peaks 7 AM to noon. They hope to limit the size of the trucks at this site. They will be meeting with residents at the Kenosha residence building (above Buca) immediately adjacent to the site. There are also potential issues with the sound of fans on the roof—there is some latitude for placement with the addition.
- The proposal goes to the Heritage Commission in a few weeks and to the Planning Commission at the June 6th meeting. Lunds is not requesting rezoning but they will need two conditional use permits and a variance, mostly due to the parking lot requirements. There will be a green roof.
- There was a comment about dealing with potential problem visitors—the Lunds store on Lake Street employs an off-duty policeman.
- Question about service options for this more urban area—they are open to variety of options, and they have been approached at the Central Avenue site about delivery options for the condo that will be built above. They are also considering bag service to cars. They will be keeping their eye on the carts. They are also looking at ways to offer other options such as very large sizes that might be picked up at the next trip. Another question was about the drive up option to pick up groceries on the way home—there is not room to do that here.
- This building will be on a similar scale as the Kowalski's on Hennepin, about 18,000 sq. ft., with more focus on fresh produce.
- They are shooting to open March 2006, sooner if possible.
- They would like to get a focus group together to review various options for urban shopping. Tres will leave his card with Jana and those interested in participating can contact him.
- They will monitor parking to discourage persons from parking there for long periods of time.
- Bob expressed concerns about traffic from customers and trucks. Tres mentioned that they have some control over delivery.
- They have not yet determined how to work with the upper floors of the building—possibly small use office space. They will use the basement, first, and second floors.

Bob asked them to return to the May 23rd meeting so that the committee could vote on the requests for variances and conditional uses.

III. 7:10-7:30 p.m. Eitel Hospital Site Presentation—Robert Cook, Jack Boarman/BKV Architects

Robert reported that they are on the second scheme for the project. The first scheme with a tower on the park side lot, restaurant space, and restoration of the Eitel Hospital and low-rise rental on the Spruce to LaSalle block, and this was objected to. The new scheme puts low-rise rental on the park side block along with renovation of the Eitel Hospital Building, tower on the Spruce to LaSalle block, with ground floor commercial to help sell the re-located tower portion of the project. The developer also wants a six-story parking ramp (that may not look like a ramp) above the commercial space—developer cannot put parking below grade. There will be a traffic study at the next meeting. There is also concern about the affordability housing part.

Ray Harris mentioned an idea for Spruce Place (two blocks) to be used mostly for pedestrian traffic with some limited delivery use, possibly with pavers.

Jack Boarman shared his info that he will be presenting at the May 11th TF meeting. He distributed a drawing that incorporated the paver concept with negative impacts on on-street parking and one bldg with only access from Spruce. All buildings next to the park are five stories or less, well within the 84-foot limit. Buildings on the park are all rental, and vary in their focus on high and midrange rental and lofts in the historic building. The tower bldg is away from the park, possibly pedestrian town home first and

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second floor with less commercial space than originally envisioned. The tower building would step away from the parking base. There would be 34 stories total, 30 stories of housing over four stories of parking. There will be additional parking under the buildings adjacent to the park. There will be 300 in the condo tower and an additional 170 in the other buildings—current zoning allows for 600 units.

There was a positive comment about wrapping the townhouses around the parking.

The timeline is to get through the city process in late August with a construction start as early as late 2005.

Jack will be returning at the May meeting of the committee.

IV. 7:30-8:15 p.m. Moratorium Proposed for Loring Hill Jana Metge

On April 1st, Councilmember Goodman introduced language at the City Council meeting for a one-year moratorium for the Loring Hill area. A public meeting will be held May 5th at 9:30 AM at City Hall, Room 317. The CLPC Board passed the one-year moratorium contingent on Land Use Committee review, comment, and approval. City staff is developing the language for the moratorium and the waiver process.

Resident comments:

- Moratorium is a good thing for the Hill for various reasons including light, traffic, and others. This would give time to review these issues.
- Neighborhoods should have an opportunity to review what residents want for developments going into the neighborhood. Not just development, but good development.
- Moratoriums are nothing but a stall. Vacant lots used to have buildings with residents. We should be encouraging people to move back.
- These lots will be developed but there are questions about infrastructure. The traffic is already bad especially with the construction trucks from new projects. What about water and sewer? If there is too much building, the units won't sell and this will devalue the properties already there.
- She supports the moratorium because those in the neighborhood should have a say about what happens there.
- The traffic is already a serious problem and yet no one has really moved in as yet. With all of the plans, such as for Eitel Hospital, there will be even more.
- A resident from 5r10 Groveland circulated a letter from the 510 Board and residents that supported the small area planning process and moratorium and added additional specific comments about a nearby proposed development.
- The small area plan is not about a specific development in the neighborhood but about being proactive concerning residential and commercial development in the neighborhood. This will help developers who want to propose developments that are agreeable to the neighborhood.
- A question about what the moratorium would affect—the initial language was vague and may be interpreted as allowing a wide range of projects or might be interpreted to be much more restrictive. For example, what is the impact of the shoreland overlay district? Would the approval of the neighborhood still be “required” or “preferred”?
- Clarification—is this really a six-month moratorium with the possibility of a six-month extension.
- The moratorium will put pressure on completing the small area plan very quickly and this may not be possible. Also this seems obstructive and the low interest rates that may help finance good projects now may not be available one year from now.

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- It is important to preserve the character of the site and the 84-foot height may not be in the character of the area. The historic character is important.
- It is important to take as much time as necessary to review the issues closely. This is not a whole lot to ask for.
- He also has concerns about interest rates and is concerned that this could set a precedent for other areas in the city? Could this have a chilling effect and lose the benefits to the city. Is there another way to look at these questions and are there systems in place.
- She generally opposes moratoriums and asked about the purpose of the Land Use Committee--isn't it to address the issues raised here? In the past, meetings were poorly attended, but in the last year or so, turnout has been high and involved.
- Do people feel that the committee has been that unsuccessful dealing with developers? The Eitel Task Force had a major impact getting the developer to change the proposal. There is a window of opportunity and the moratorium could be negatively interpreted.
- In terms of interest rates issues, people will buy housing if it is quality. He gets the feeling that the neighborhood is being worn down over time with many meetings to make developers stop coming back with unacceptable plans.

Motion by Mike Marn, seconded by Sunny Floum, that CPLC approve the one-year moratorium as proposed by Councilwoman Goodman.

Motion passed
Yes 32
No 7
Abstention 3

V. 8:15 – 8:30 p.m. Loring Greenway Capital Improvements – Ray Harris

Ray addressed the renovation of the Loring Greenway. He provided some history, including the flat budget for maintenance over the last 20+ years. There have been some upgrades in the past few years including a new playground, lighting, irrigation and work at the entrance facing the park. The rest of the work is now in the city's capital budget for 2010 (#46 on the list of 50 priorities). It has deteriorated to the point that it is unsafe. He and Doug Wallace are proposing that the \$1.5 million be done in 2006 and they are looking for support from the area businesses and residents. They may raise up to 25% of funds privately, including the downtown business community and 800 residents.

The \$1.5 million would be the minimum to help bring it up to safe levels and is likely not enough. There were questions about keeping the original design and using more appropriate materials and the condition of the LaSalle bridge piece. Richard Anderson noted that there would be community meetings to discuss the proposed plans. Ray emphasized that for them to raise these funds, the city must commit to a 2006 date for the project.

Mike noted that the city's business plan for maintaining malls and plazas disappears in 2008. Also, the part of Nicollet between 13th and Grant will be upgraded with colored concrete paving.

Ray read a resolution that he proposes for CLPC's position on the Loring Greenway Reconstruction:

Whereas, the Greenway is a truly unique urban pedestrian parkway linking thousands of visitors from downtown to Loring Park, the new Walker Art Center, and the Sculpture Garden, and

Whereas the Loring Greenway is now unsightly, unsafe, illegal, and bordering on dangerous, and

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Whereas Greenway renewal work has been suspended since 2003 and is not scheduled to be resumed until 2010, by which time the Greenway will be an unimaginable eyesore,

Whereas the City has errantly degraded the Greenway by placing it into a category of a street paving project,

Now therefore, it is hereby resolved by CLPC that the City advance the timetable for Greenway renewal to 2006, and

Be it further resolved, that the City place the Greenway in a special capital status reflecting its true unique character as an urban pedestrian parkway, and that

This resolution be presented to the Mayor, to our City Council representative, and all other appropriate offices.

Ray moved the above resolution and Mary Turner seconded it.

Motion passed

VI. 8:30 p.m. NRP Scope of Service/Loring Bike Bridge – Jana

Details on the breakdown for use of CLPC's \$63,950 NRP Phase I dollars as requested by the Land Use Committee at the March 2005 meeting, has not yet been received. The item is deferred to May.

Adjourned 8:45 p.m.