



“CBD-Norhtown-Parking Task Force”

Thirteenth Meeting: Monday, February 4, 2008 @ 7:30 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Beth Barrow, Chris Callahan, Chuck Foster, Dave Friedman, Jeanie Janes, Jeff Keller, Gary Peart, Eric Pitcher, and Karl Weber

Staff in Attendance: Timothy Scott, AICP, Community Development Strategist

Others in Attendance: Jean Follett, Village Trustee and Michael Meissner, Hinsdale resident and registered architect

Opening Remarks

Chairman Friedman opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. He stated that the items for the evening would be approval of minutes, consideration of the draft land use plan including a discussion of the Village-owned commuter parking lot, and a discussion of images for the draft plan.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Friedman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2007 meeting. Mr. Peart made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Consideration of Draft Land Use Plan

By sub-area and category, the Task Force reviewed the draft land use table as presented. The analysis was accomplished predominantly by noting where members did not want to see various uses.

Study Area

The group discussed the overall study area boundaries and addressed the notion of including buffer areas as presented. Mr. Weber questioned the study area as being larger in scope than he thought was originally intended, noting that almost the entire central business district had been included. Chairman Friedman replied that

the charge of the Task Force was to review both sides of the railroad tracks including buffer areas.

Timeline and Related

Chairman Friedman informed the group that a reasonable goal would be to wrap up the work of the Task Force by the conclusion of the academic year. Ms. Barrow inquired about the status of the Village-owned lot. Chairman Friedman replied that securing visualization services for this area is still being pursued, that Mr. Meissner has offered his assistance, and that he would provide a review of his initial thoughts this evening.

Clarification/Review of Table

Trustee Follett suggested adding a qualifier that states “residential scale on Blaine should be maintained.” With respect to a question on blank cells in the table, Chairman Friedman said that these could be considered not objectionable but not necessarily desired either.

Village-owned Lot

Mr. Meissner presented his initial review of the site and potential spatial relationships of the various uses desired by the Task Force. He emphasized the importance of using traditional vernacular architecture since it most closely reflects the established character of the historic downtown. Mr. Meissner expressed that the key corner of the site would be the southeast since it presents the greatest opportunity to address and tie into the downtown and the restored Barth Pharmacy building (now Starbucks).

In order to mitigate the perception of mass, Mr. Meissner expressed that a design would likely be comprised of separate elements, that it should step back as it ascends, and that recesses should be deployed where possible. He noted the inclusion of a pedestrian pass-through that would bisect the site and that such a feature could provide interesting public spaces, including some for outdoor dining, seating, and perhaps even physical activity. Mr. Meissner added that light wells could be used in order to illuminate any lower levels with as much natural light as possible.

Included in the working site plan drawing were an arts center and a relocated Mobil station. The arts center could potentially include an open air veranda at its top. The Mobil station would be moved to the northwest corner of the block in order to concentrate auto-oriented uses near one another. Specifically, this location would be directly across the street and kitty-corner to Fuller’s Car Wash and Fuller’s Auto Center, respectively. A new Mobil might afford its owner a better retail convenient store and perhaps better parking and circulation while allowing the Village to better leverage the open spaces of the Memorial Building and Burlington Park.

With respect to the parking component of such a mixed-use proposal, Mr. Meissner stated that this initial concept included a combination of conventional parking and an automated system, the latter of which had been mentioned at a previous meeting of the Task Force by guest attendee Joyce Wixon. Some discussion by members occurred regarding the mix of traditional with automated parking and how user groups would have to be clearly-defined and demand estimated to properly balance the system with the overall parking supply downtown.

A consideration factored into the rough site plan included provision of access and/or air rights to the 96" Flagg Creek storm sewer that runs underneath the block.

Images to Accompany Draft Plan

Chairman Friedman passed out several sheets with images of structures (e.g., housing, mixed-use, parking) in order to begin the discussion of what members of the Task Force feel would make for desirable references in the group's plan. He emphasized that these were merely a starting point and encouraged members to provide their own.

Next Meeting

Upon consideration of several dates, Chairman Friedman announced that the next meeting of the Central Business District-Northtown-Parking Task Force would be held on Monday, February 18, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Old Board Room located on the second floor of the Hinsdale Memorial Building, 19 East Chicago Avenue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Scott, AICP