



“CBD-Norhtown-Parking Task Force”

Fourteenth Meeting: Monday, February 18, 2008 @ 7:30 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Ardie Baroni, Beth Barrow, Julie Crnovich, Chuck Foster, Dave Friedman, Jeanie Janes, Jeff Keller, Gary Peart, Ric Pena, and Karl Weber

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

Others in Attendance: Brad Bloom, Chief of Police; Nancy Chapa, Resident; Jean Follett, Village Trustee; and Bob Saigh, Resident

Opening Remarks

Chairman Friedman opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and stated that the evening’s meeting would include the approval of minutes, a parking update, consideration of the draft land use plan, discussion of images for the draft plan, and mentioning of the final report.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Friedman asked if members had reviewed the draft minutes for the meeting of February 4, 2008 meeting that had been provided via e-mail in advance of the evening’s meeting. Since not enough members had reviewed the minutes, Chairman Friedman requested that members review so that approval could be granted at the next meeting. Hard copies of the minutes in question were passed out to the members.

Parking Update

Chief Bloom passed out the current parking map and relayed that the trial changes (presented to the Task Force months back) were implemented on October 1st. He presented data that revealed the 11 a.m. average daily inventories of the parking lots at Washington Street (i.e., 22 spaces) and Chestnut Street (i.e., 31 spaces). Chief Bloom stated that there has been a steady increase in the number of longer-term duration spaces being used at the shopper-only Washington Street lot which is a positive sign that the message is getting through to visitors. He commented that

the commuter permit waiting list had been reduced dramatically, from approximately 980 to 248, with 50 additional permits being released. Chief Bloom noted that 58 spaces were allocated free-of-charge west of Vine Street for employee use and added that it appears that more were being used in the warmer months and less this winter. He emphasized to the group that ongoing evaluation is critical to maximizing the system's efficiency and pointed to the north side of the tracks being converted to red/blue (merchant/commuter) zones from the original merchant-only. Members of the Task Force expressed their satisfaction with and gratitude for the revised parking system.

Consideration of Draft Land Use Plan

The Task Force again reviewed the draft land use table as presented. Some of the clarifications made were for: the area designated for retail uses at the far west end; the buffer area across east downtown retail only on the Garfield side and not Blaine; the middle school area for use as school, open space, parking, or attached, rather than detached, single-family homes; and the places where Village offices should not be located including sub-areas four, ten, and twelve, with eight still being an option.

Ms. Chapa asked for clarification as to the coding of the table and the accompanying text in various cells. Chairman Friedman explained that the white boxes indicate uses were possible but not necessarily preferred, dark boxes being prohibitive, and the use of text in cells being a tool to accentuate a point.

Ms. Barrow expressed her concerns over the timing of the Task Force's output given that the Downtown Land Planning Task Force was moving ahead with work specific to the Hinsdale Middle School site and that the discussions lack financial data. Chairman Friedman clarified that the group's work generally is to prepare for potential change over the approximate planning horizon of 20-years and that the CBD-Northtown-Parking Task Force builds on the work of the Downtown and Northtown Solutions Exploration Groups. He added that specific evaluation of the block that includes the commuter parking lot included preliminary financial analysis in order to work toward a cost-neutral condition for a mixed-use redevelopment scenario and that the programming there remains somewhat fluid given the recent consideration of an Arts Center as an anchor and downtown destination.

Since his residence at 210 S. Lincoln could be impacted by change in sub-areas 9, 11, and 12, Mr. Saigh addressed the Task Force. He expressed his appreciation for the group's detailed work and requested that the Task Force strongly consider forward-thinking, protective ways to buffer his and his eleven neighbors' detached single-family homes from redevelopment in the surrounding zones. Ms. Crnovich echoed the sentiment by claiming that the work done at her church neighbor neither conformed to code (i.e., size of driveway approach) nor to the originally stated plans (i.e., parking lot 6' higher than proposed). Regarding protection of

character, Trustee Follett suggested to Mr. Saigh that his and his neighbors' cases would be that much stronger if they elected to landmark their homes.

As a result of the discussion, members decided that greater awareness of their work should be raised and suggested several ways that it could be accomplished, including publishing of the draft plan on the Village's web site and through an interactive town hall meeting.

Images to Accompany Draft Plan

In order to visit the use of visual references in the Task Force's plan, Chairman Friedman provided members with sheets of images. He noted that the photos were acquired from a brief "google" search and simply a starting point for discussion purposes. Comments from members of the Task Force focused on the appropriateness of: architectural style, materials, craftsmanship, scale, density, and character (i.e., urban versus suburban-village). Trustee Follett commented that she could provide images of some Arts Centers.

Final Report

Chairman Friedman passed out copies of a framework for the group's final report. He requested that members of the Task Force e-mail comments to him in advance of the next meeting so that the group could review and discuss an updated version.

Next Meeting

Chairman Friedman announced that the next meeting of the Central Business District-Northtown-Parking Task Force would be held on Monday, March 3, 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 approximately 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Scott, AICP