



City of Madison
Meeting Minutes
Royster-Clark Neighborhood
Planning Team Meeting

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

6:30 PM

Pinney Branch Library
204 Cottage Grove Road

1. Welcome and Introductions

Royster Clark Neighborhood Planning Team Members Present:

Neighborhood Representatives:

BJ Obermeyer, Lake Edge Neighborhood Alternate
John Martens, Vice-Chair RCNPT, Member-at-large
Sheila Guilfoyle, Chair RCNPT, Member-at-large
Kris Whitman, Eastmorland Neighborhood Representative

Business Representatives:

Elected Officials

Larry Palm, City Alderperson
Tom Stoebig, County Board Supervisor

City Planning Staff:

Michael Waidelich, Planning Division
Heather Stouder, Planning Division
Rebecca Cnare, Planning Division

Members of the Public:

Linda Karr
Helen Fruth

2. Approval of August 27, 2008 Minutes

- Motion to approve by BJ Obermeyer, seconded by Tom Stoebig.
- Minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Public Comment Period

- Helen Fruth mentioned that her main interest is to find out more about who is interested in developing the property and what ideas they might have. She asked staff for an update on development interest in the property.
- Staff noted that while the city has not yet been formally notified regarding interest in the property, Hovde Realty might be interested. The company owns land in the Sprecher Neighborhood area, and has recently met with the Mayor and Planning Division Director about interest in property elsewhere in the city, although the Royster site was mentioned

4. Staff and Member Updates

- Staff notified RCNPT members that Agrium had submitted an application to request approval for a demolition permit, to be considered by the Plan Commission at their November 3rd, 2008 meeting, which begins at 6:00 pm. Their demolition proposal focuses on the removal of all buildings from the property, with the intent to leave building foundations, surface parking lots, and the rail spur in place in the short term. In their letter of intent, Agrium acknowledges that more work will be necessary in the future, but argue that many of the safety concerns about the site can be addressed with this short-term "partial" demolition.

- John Martens asked whether there were concerns related to further contamination of the site that could occur during the demolition process (dust, etc.).
- Staff noted that they would work with DATCP and DNR staff to find out about applicable regulations and concerns with demolition itself to inform the City staff position on the demolition request. Staff noted that at this point, the intent is to support partial demolition as long as it is safe, and that Agrium understands that they would need to seek a second demolition permit in the future to remove the remainder of the infrastructure. At the time of this second demolition permit, the planned future land use on the site would be compared with the Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plan for consistency.
- Sheila Guilfoyle asked how neighborhood associations should formally be involved in the Plan Commission decision. She stressed the importance of maintaining the ability of the City to ensure that future land use on the site is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the (not yet completed) Royster-Clark Special Area Plan.
- Staff suggested that the RCNPT could put together an official statement to be included for consideration by the Plan Commission. This statement could include key concerns such as safety concerns about the existing building(s), the need to ensure that redevelopment is consistent with planning process, and the need to ensure that the process of demolition is environmentally safe.
- RCNPT members asked how the demolition of buildings would affect the Habitat for Humanity Restore, which currently leases one building on the site for storage. Staff indicated that this is a temporary arrangement, and that it would not likely affect the demolition timeline.
- Helen Fruth noted that the city process for approving and permitting demolitions seems confusing, and wanted to make sure neighbors had a good understanding of it.
- Larry Palm offered to assist with an informational piece to let neighbors know about the demolition application approval process.

5. Discuss potential date and agenda for next Public Meeting

- Staff suggested that the next large public meeting should focus on presenting and getting public feedback on draft plan components: draft concept plan for redevelopment
- Sheila Guilfoyle noted that attendees seemed to really like graphic representation of redevelopment options, but that there is some concern about the media taking these too seriously.
- Staff noted that recommended future land uses for the plan area could be depicted at any level of detail from "illustrative bubbles" (most general) to a site plan including design parameters such as building orientation, # stories, etc.)
- Alder Palm shared concern that too detailed a plan/design concept may be more difficult to implement over time, and that while it is important to plan for what is actually desired, some flexibility is important to maintain.
- Staff suggested that showing a small set of alternatives for future land use, street orientations, and general design guidelines (including for areas outside of the Agrium property itself) would probably be the best emphasis of the next public meeting.
- Monday, November 24th emerged as the best date (virtually the only possible date that does not conflict with scheduled meetings for RCNPT members) to hold the next public meeting. If not held in November, the meeting would likely need to be postponed until January 2009.
- Staff noted that they would check with the YMCA, Olbrich Gardens, and the Goodman Atwood Community Center for available meeting space.

6. Discuss development of alternatives for Royster-Clark Special Area Plan

- Staff presented two new redevelopment concepts, Concepts 5 and 6, which were based on feedback from the July 2008 public meeting.
- BJ Obermeyer mentioned that she liked the “community” feel of both concepts. No matter where one would be within the site, they would feel like part of either a residential community or group of employers. She felt it important to maintain a separation between residential and employment uses on the site.
- Tom Stoebig noted that he likes the long stormwater management area as shown in Concept 5
- Sheila Guilfoyle likes the “broken up” corner as shown on Concept 6.
- Linda Karr noted that she supports the ideas and street connections in Concept 6.
- John Martens requested data accompanying each hypothetical design concept, stressing that it is important to see numbers with the designs to understand what they mean to the neighborhood. Staff provided draft handouts summarizing each design concept (# units by type, densities, square footage of commercial space, etc.) for the RCNPT members to review. John requested a comparison chart, so that it is easy to see the tradeoffs between the various design concepts (*staff sent via e-mail days after the meeting*).
- Members mentioned the need to show the Royster Ave. connection and figure out how best to deal with it, taking into account concerns from the residents on the street, but being realistic about the need to make a connection on the west side of the property. Connections and access to site are very important issues to be addressed in Plan alternatives.
- Tom Stoebig noted that the Special Area Plan does need to be flexible, and that he likes Concepts 5 & 6. Likes separation between single-family residential and other uses, and suggested widening sidewalk along Cottage Grove Road.
- BJ Obermeyer stressed the need for well-paying jobs on this side of the city, and suggested the Plan push for this
- Larry Palm suggested coming up with alternative plans that either use or do not recommend land use changes to the MG&E property directly to the west.
- Sheila supports pedestrian amenities and green design throughout the Plan Area.

7. Next Meeting (10/22) Agenda Items

- Members requested that Staff bring to the 10/22 meeting a working draft of the staff position on Agrium's request for a demolition permit.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for:
November 19th, 6:30 pm, Pinney Branch Library