



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

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

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

6:30 PM

Pinney Branch Library  
204 Cottage Grove Road

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

**Royster Clark Neighborhood Planning Team Members Present:**

*Neighborhood Representatives:*

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

*Business Representatives:*

Jim Mohrbacher, MG&E

*Elected Officials*

Tom Stoebig, County Board Supervisor  
Larry Palm, District 15 Alder

*City Planning Staff:*

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

*Members of the Public:*

Ed Woolsey

**2. Approval of November 19, 2008 Minutes**

- Motion to approve by Tom Stoebig, seconded by John Martens. Minutes from November 19, 2008 were unanimously approved

**3. Public Comment Period**

- No comments

**4. Staff and Member Updates**

- Staff received a call from "Brownfield Partners" in Denver, which may have interest in the site.
- Staff noted that Habitat for Humanity Restore reported receiving a \$10,000 donation from Agrium. The Restore plans to expand their building. Habitat for Humanity may be interested in exploring residential development possibilities on the site. Alder Palm was to meet with Habitat for Humanity on January 29<sup>th</sup> to learn more.
- Staff noted that in a recent staff meeting about planning for the Madison Public Library system, it was mentioned that the Pinney Branch might be seeking a larger space.
- Tom Stoebig noted that in a conversation with DATCP staff, he learned that soil borings recently completed in the northern portion of the main granulation building came back with mostly clean results. Staff noted that Mr. Couture had also indicated this in a recent email.

**5. Agrium's Demolition Permit Application**

- Staff summarized the January 26<sup>th</sup> Plan Commission discussion and conditional approval of Agrium's request to partially demolish the buildings on the site. Staff noted that it was unclear

at this time whether or not Agrium would move forward due to their concerns with some of the conditions of approval, but based on earlier statements by Mr. Couture, it may be unlikely.

- Ed Woolsey asked why the item was so late on the Plan Commission agenda. Staff explained that requests for demolitions and conditional uses are routinely placed after rezoning requests on Plan Commission agendas; but that in this case, the Plan Commission had voted to take another item out of order just ahead of Agrium's demolition permit request---apparently not recognizing or appreciating that several attendees, including the applicant's representative and environmental consultants, staff from two State agencies, the Alder and Supervisor, and several citizens were present for that item.
- Sheila Guilfoyle noted that the approval was a good outcome, suggesting that Agrium has an opportunity to make the site safer now. Alder Palm noted that while the chance Agrium would move forward might be slight, the approval will hopefully put the ball in their court and allow the RCNPT to move forward with the broader planning process.
- Tom Stoebig asked how many conversations staff had with Agrium representatives since the Plan Commission referred the case at their early November 2008 meeting. Staff estimated having had four or five telephone conversations and several e-mail exchanges to try to work with Agrium on a list of recommended conditions of approval that would be acceptable to both Agrium and the City.

## 6. Agenda and Format for February 19 Public Meeting

- Staff suggested that the public meeting focus on a presentation of preliminary recommendations for the Planning Area, to include future land use, urban design guidelines, and infrastructure improvements. Staff distributed working drafts of the following items: a proposed land use map for the Planning Area, design concept sketch for the Royster-Clark site, goals and recommendations (based on input from earlier public meetings), and potential design guidelines for development.
- Sheila Guilfoyle suggested that it is important to stress that the design concept sketch is flexible, and illustrates one suggested way that that goals and recommendations in the plan could be implemented. Private developers may, and likely will, modify the design concept, but will be expected to maintain the overall vision for the Planning Area that it illustrates. As an example, Ed Woolsey suggested that the "townhomes" illustrated in the design concept sketch could take on a variety of forms, and perhaps become senior housing.
- Staff noted that recent discussions with MG&E indicated that they would like to be able to double the size of the fenced substation in the future, and that this possibility had been reflected in the design concept. It was also noted that the small buildings in front of the substation were primarily associated with the training facilities and would not need to be retained if those facilities relocated. John Martens suggested showing the transmission line poles on the design concept sketches as well.
- Staff noted that it is important that the land use and design recommendations have the support of the RCNPT, and encouraged continued comment and discussion as the preliminary recommendations are prepared for the public meeting. Ed Woolsey suggested that if the southern connection to Royster Avenue was omitted, the plan might gain more support from neighbors to the west. Sheila Guilfoyle noted that while another pedestrian connection across the railroad tracks might be impossible to get approved, it is important to provide good connectivity to the Capitol City Trail.
- Jacky DaWalt noted the importance of discussing at the public meeting the way the plan recommendations evolved from the public input received. All agreed. Jim Mohrbacher added that a reference to the market study was also important to share at the public meeting. Ed Woolsey suggested finding ways to stress that a lot of time and work had gone into the preliminary plan recommendations. To emphasize this, Sheila Guilfoyle suggested advertising it as the "Third Public Meeting." Tom Stoebig suggested making it clear that a planning assumption was that the Royster-Clark site would be privately owned, and that the plan would mostly be implemented by the private sector, rather than implemented as a public facility such as a park or set of public buildings.
- Staff mentioned that potential development financing tools would be explored and a description and/or recommendations would be included in the special area plan to the extent possible.
- Jacky DaWalt stressed the importance of including time for questions on the agenda for the February 19<sup>th</sup> public meeting.

- Regarding the design concept, members offered the following comments:
  - Tom Stoebig asked whether an off-street bike path might be built along Dempsey Road, instead of bike lanes.
  - Jim Mohrbacher noted that 16 ft floor-to-ceiling heights are typical for employment and light industrial buildings, and that investors generally know the exact square footage needed for these buildings.
  - Kris Whitman suggested that 2-3 story buildings are a more efficient use of space available on the site than 1-story buildings.
  - The group generally agreed that a 1-story building would not be appropriate on the corner of Cottage Grove Road and Dempsey Road.
- Staff reviewed the working drafts of the goals, recommendations, and design guidelines. John Martens asked for clarification between recommendations and guidelines, noting concern that there not be too much rigidity in the plan, especially in this economic climate. Staff noted that planning recommendations will include infrastructure improvements and an overall land use plan for the Planning Area, along with reference to how each recommendation should be implemented. Formal design guidelines are one of several implementation tools that can be used to realize the goals and recommendations in a plan. Typically, design guidelines set out more-specific (often quantified) parameters for physical development, which developers should follow (or at least consider) in creating their site and building plans; and which staff, the Plan Commission, and Common Council will consider when reviewing development proposals for consistency with plan recommendations.
- Other suggestions by RCNPT members included the following: If community gardens are planned, consider elevated, fully accessible community gardens as a more formal, architectural feature. The "Complete Streets" concept is important to consider throughout (and beyond) the Planning Area. Safety along Cottage Grove Road is important, and improvements to the pedestrian experience in this corridor should be strong recommendations. Improvements to bike and pedestrian safety at the Cottage Grove Road / Dempsey Road intersection should be recommended.

**Next RCNPT Meeting Date** (*February 12, 2009, 6:30pm at Pinney Library*)

- The RCNPT decided to schedule a special meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>, one week prior to the February 19<sup>th</sup> public meeting.

## 7. Adjournment

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM*

**Next meeting scheduled for:**

February 12, 2009, 6:30 PM, Pinney Branch Library

**Third Public Meeting:**

February 19, 2009, 6:00 PM, Olbrich Gardens Atrium Room