



National Western Center Advisory Committee

Monday, January 27, 2014

Meeting Minutes

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Advisory Committee members, guests, and other observers introduced themselves to the group. A total of 33 people were in attendance (see the full list below).

NWC ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS

Maria Garcia Berry acknowledged that conversations have gone all over the place, and the issue has been made clear: there are many divergent views on the NWCAC. The committee now has clear guidelines to operate under, and moving forward, we will always leave time at the end of meetings to discuss other topics of interest to members.

Tangier Barnes sent an email to certain members of the NWCAC last week, asking to develop some consensus on how decisions get made into the future. She asked if NWCAC members can have representation on other committees in the future.

Discussion regarding the committee process

John Zapien: Let's not get too bogged down in this issue.

Patricia Carmody: There are people on this committee who are not receiving the e-mails that are being referenced tonight.

Maria Garcia Berry: We will automatically start forwarding all communications.

AE: I would request these get forward to us by way of blind carbon copying (BCC).

AE: The purpose of this is for us to be made aware of everything that is happening – Master Planning process included. This whole process needs to be a consensus-based process.

Maria Garcia Berry: We've now created guidelines and we're more formal. This whole committee structure needs to be a full process now, and that includes things like standing meeting dates/times. Self-selection will also be very important, but as co-facilitators, Terrance and I need to think through what's coming down the pipe.

Drew Dutcher: Does this differentiate between the Master Plan team and the Master Plan Selection Process?

Maria Garcia Berry: The intent is to prevent this in the future; other opportunities will arise and we'll bring those decisions to the committee.

AE: Based upon skill level, I have no problem with what happened, but I still need to know why.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

Tracy Huggins, the Executive Director of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority, provided the committee with a presentation on the successes and challenges of DURA. *Her presentation can be viewed as a separate attachment to these meeting minutes.*

To begin, Tracy solicited pointed questions from committee members, including:

- Drew Dutcher: In Elyria, how will we go from being an old industrial community, to a place that creates a real neighborhood? We also envision Transit-Oriented Development(s), but what does that look like?
- AE: Give us a sense of timeline – where does DURA fit into the NWC process?
- Armando Payan: On Fox St., the east side is an economic development area, but the west side isn't. What are the urban renewal programs that could come through for that? Also, do you plan to expand the number of homes in the community?
- John Zapien: National Western is losing property due to RTD and NW will likely need to acquire land. Will DURA be a part of that possible acquisition?

Tracy's presentation then focused in on the following:

Who is DURA? What is DURA? DURA Accomplishments: Tracy explained the creation of urban renewal authorities in Colorado, and the scope of their responsibility. DURA has been a part of more than \$7 billion worth of private investment projects in Denver, where DURA was the catalyst for the utilization of only \$620 million in public funding. DURA has follows some principles and guidelines, which include:

- The project wouldn't happen unless DURA got involved;
- DURA has to allow markets to work whenever possible;
- Always promote public participation in the process.

The Built Environment and the "But For" Analysis: Ideally, there are three parties that should work together in unison on a development project: the public sector, the developer, and the capital market(s). That's not always the case, and DURA, through the tool of tax increment financing, helps to close the financing gap. DURA will always examine each project, but their objective it to accomplish one of three things: address a market failure; act as a market catalyst; enhance a market outcome.

What is TIF?: Tax increment financing is a mechanism that enables the net new tax revenues of a project to be captured to provide up-front financing. This is not money that comes from DURA or the City, but rather money that is being generated by the project itself. It also helps to create long-term value in the project.

How TIF Works: When approached by a develop, DURA will first ask City Council to develop an urban renewal plan, and also ask to utilize TIF as the financing mechanism. They then establish a base for the property or sales tax prior to the redevelopment project. This is done to minimize the amount of DURA's investment while also trying to maximize results. Ultimately, the increment is paid back either to the developer or to the bond(s).

The Urban Renewal Process: Idea -> DURA Analysis -> Legal Documentation -> Approval

Tracy provided three examples of past projects that highlighted DURA's involvement. They were:

1. Dahlia Square in Park Hill: DURA's involvement was for the clean-up of the site. There were some development plans, but those fell through. Denver Health now operates there, and there was a recent purchase by the Mental Health Center of Denver for some land.
2. Lowenstein Theater on Colfax Avenue: This is now the home of the Tattered Cover that moved from Cherry Creek. DURA's involvement was for the structured parking garage, which was something the surrounding community wanted in order to minimize impacts on the street.

3. Gates Factory on Broadway: DURA tried hard to put together good plans for the site, but it didn't work out. Environmental clean-up costs were higher than anticipated, and there were too many expectations that overwhelmed the site/project. One important lesson here is that there is no reset button in public finance.

Discussion regarding Tracy's presentation on urban redevelopment

Armando Payan: With the ASARCO site, what are the future possibilities there (perhaps a golf course or an Olympic training facility)?

Tracy Huggins: First, we have to clean up the property with HUD loans, and we'd like to repay those loans through land sales. We're trying to identify appropriate uses for economic development on the site with Denver and Adams County (of which 2/3 of the ASARCO site sits in). Remediation efforts are on-going but we're getting closer to redevelopment.

Drew Dutcher: What happens when TIF doesn't work out? Is it ever abused? And do TIF projects ever compete with one another?

Tracy Huggins: There is no limit on the number of TIF projects – there are about 40 right now. There is also nothing that says anything about the percentage of total development that can be used to fill the financial gap, either. Stapleton and Lowry complicate that, though, since they were such large redevelopment projects.

Yes – TIF projects do sometimes compete with each other. Projects don't work out if increment isn't being generated, or if the developer sees reduced investment. Sometimes the end-user doesn't work out, either. Just look at what happened with Lowe's at Alameda Square. As for what might happen at National Western or in the Globeville, Elyria, Swansea neighborhoods, it's premature to say. But, the City doesn't have that many tools it can use, so it's fair to say that TIF will probably come into play.

MASTER PLAN TEAM SELECTION

Kelly Leid provided a short update on the selection process. Since the last NWCAC meeting, the pre-proposal conference right before Christmas really got things moving. Eventually six teams submitted proposals to the City, with the lead teams being the following: IBI, Tryba, Fentress, RNL, Parsons Brinckerhoff, and Design Workshop.

There are now 4 teams moving forward, and interviews with these teams are scheduled for Friday, February 7th. Recommendations will then go to the Director of Public Works, and then the contract will have to gain City Council approval, because it exceeds \$500,000. We are still on track to get the team started by April 1st.

Discussion regarding the Master Plan team selection

Tangier Barnes: I have been enjoying the process.

Tom Anthony: When is the final plan supposed to go to City Council?

Kelly Leid: The goal is to have a preferred Master Plan in front of City Council by the end of this year. It's an aggressive schedule.

AE: Is there a checklist of criteria for this? The loss for us here is not knowing what is going into this process.

Kelly Leid: We are following Public Works protocol; once we have some questions for the firms, I'll be happy to forward those on.

Drew Dutcher: When will you recommend something to Public Works?

Kelly Leid: Hopefully right after the interviews on February 7th.

Drew Dutcher: Having been on the other side of this in the past, I hope this isn't just a quantitative look at these firms. Will you be asking if these firms have a qualitative grasp of the NWC or of the neighborhoods?

Kelly Leid: The second step (what we're in now) will help us figure that out. The questions we ask will make sure we get there.

Tangier Barnes: The questions we have will make sure that they "get it". It would be great to have other comments though.

John Zapien: So we have about 9 months to do this?

Kelly Leid: The Master Plan will create a framework, and it will also frame future conversations, too.

NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR PROPOSAL

Given the time constraints, AE has to table this topic and re-visit it during the next committee meeting. She provided some basic details, and said it would be great to have leaders of the MOU partners "feel and imagine" what it's like to be in the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods. Ideally, the tour will have 5-6 intersections that will act as stops, and they will help spark the imaginations of the tour's guests, especially the Master Planning team. AE has already discussed some potential logistics with Kirk Webb, Dean Forman and others, and this will be a great way to find common ground.

Discussion regarding the neighborhood tour proposal

Kelly Leid: Do you imagine this being a tour first, and then we re-convene later to de-brief?

AE: Yes. But the need to discuss more will really depend on if the Master Plan team is on board. We'll need to have up to 7 disembarkation points to point out the value of each stop.

Mickey Zeppelin: Along these lines, it would be great to have/see a simplified map of the NW site.

Tangier Barnes: And have it up during all of our meetings for reference!

Kelly Leid: Through GIS, we can generate any kind of map.

AE: Let's just see the simple stuff – roads, streets, etc.

Tom Anthony: What is NW's intention with the property on the east side of Brighton Blvd. by 47th and 48th next to Queen City?

Ron Williams: It is property that we use during Stock Show, but we have not purchased it.

Tom Anthony: Elyria has lost quite a bit; we need to squeak by with what's left.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Due to City Council member conflicts, the NWCAC is being asked to not meet on Monday nights. Maria Garcia Berry noted that City Council members need to be part-and-parcel to this process, and we need to interact with them. Larry Burgess suggested that the committee meet the last Tuesday of every month, to which the rest of the committee generally agreed. The next NWCAC meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 25th (additional details will follow).

Discussion regarding future meeting dates

John Zapien: Is the issue the day or the time on Monday?

Maria Garcia Berry: For City Council, it's the time.

John Zapien: We don't want to alienate members of City Council because we're gonna have to work with them and eventually go before them.

John Zapien: Where will the next meeting be?

Maria Garcia Berry: We could go back to the National Western.

AE: What about Mickey's place?

Mickey Zeppelin: There's no real private place to meet.

IN ATTENDANCE

Maria Garcia Berry (Co-Facilitator)
Terrance Carroll (Co-Facilitator)
Ron Williams (National Western)
Kelly Leid (City of Denver; North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative)
Erika Martinez (City of Denver; North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative)
Jocelyn Hittle (Colorado State University)
Ed Nichols (History Colorado)
Steve Turner (History Colorado)
Sherry Lestina (History Colorado)
George Sparks (Denver Museum of Nature and Science)
Jin Alexander Tsuchiya (CRL Associates)
Nola Miguel (Office of Councilmember Judy Montero)
Susan Aldretti (Office of Councilmember Debbie Ortega)
Denis Berckefeldt (Office of the Auditor of Denver)
Tracy Huggins (Denver Urban Renewal Authority)
David Oletski (Globeville)
AE (Globeville)
John Zapien (Globeville)
Liliana Flores Amaro (Elyria-Swansea & The GrowHaus)
Armando Payan (Globeville)
Drew Dutcher (Elyria)
Tom Anthony (Elyria)
Patricia Carmody (Fairmount Heritage/Riverside Cemetery)
Tony Curcio (Family Environmental, Inc.) and his daughter
Tangier Barnes (Groundwork Denver)
Mickey Zeppelin (Taxi)
Larry Burgess (E-S-G Business Association)
Annie Levinsky (Historic Denver)
John Olson (Historic Denver)
Coby Gould (The GrowHaus)
Jeff Shoemaker (Greenway Foundation)
Laura Aldrete (Parsons Brinckerhoff)