



National Western Center Citizens Advisory Committee

Thursday, May 28, 2015 – Meeting Summary

1. Welcome and Introductions

Maria Garcia Berry and Terrance Carroll briefly introduced themselves and welcomed the members in attendance. After greetings were made, the meeting promptly began.

2. NWC-CAC Member Updates and Announcements

Steve Nalley discussed recent zoning milestones on behalf of the Neighborhoods and Planning Committee (NAP) noting that the new zoning had been passed onto the Denver City Council floor for a first reading on June 1st and public hearing July 6. Maria noted that the Public hearing would be very long due to the fact that Denver City Council is working to finalize a number of issues before new Council is elected. She noted that NWC-CAC members would be given more information closer to the public hearing date.

Maria Discussed the CSU bill signing ceremony and noted that it was a success – Governor Hickenlooper and Deputy Mayor Kennedy were both present as well as most key legislators who were prime sponsors of the bill.

3. NDCC Updates and Discussion

Kelly Leid explained the role of the Executive Oversight Committee as the interim government structure for the National Western Center with the goal of keeping the project moving forward until a permanent governance structure has been put in place. The EOC meets bi-monthly on Thursday from 1:30-3:00 at the Denver City Building and will likely be moved to the 12th floor at the City Attorney's Office and is open to the public. The EOC includes representatives from the City, National Western, and CSU and will add a member from the NWC-CAC.

Kelly also explained that two EOC subcommittees were being formed (Event Programming Advisory Subcommittee and the Capital Funding Alignments Subcommittee) and will include need one member each to represent the NWC-CAC. The Event Programming Advisory Subcommittee chaired by Ed Nichols (History Colorado) and George Sparks (Museum of Nature & Science) will serve the core purpose of creating a year round events program for the NWC. The Capital Funding Alignments Subcommittee will serve the purpose of working through different funding streams and the agreements/requirements that must be met and requires a representative with a financial background. Neither of the subcommittees have begun meeting but will likely meet once a month at a place and time that have yet to be determined (the Capital Alignment Subcommittee may need to meet more frequently to prepare for ballot/funding measures).

The committee/subcommittee responsibilities will be outlined in early June. Kelly asked members to please submit feedback or any clarifying questions once they reviewed the outline of responsibilities. Those interested in serving will be asked to submit their names for consideration by the full committee and the three representatives will be determined at the June 25 NWC-CAC meeting. AE noted the importance of having all neighborhood representatives present on June 25 for the selection of the committees/subcommittees representatives and noted selection should be based on ability to contribute and represent the voice of the neighborhoods. She would like to hear from people to understand why they are interested and to make sure there is a mutual understanding of their role, and what we need from them, when representing the NWC-CAC rather than just reviewing resumes and holding an election. Those interested will be expected to attend on June 25 and be given an opportunity to express why they want to be considered for positions on the EOC and subcommittees.

EOC and subcommittee attendance will be expected and tracked for each of the meetings. Kelly noted these are formal bodies that will be considering a broad spectrum of issues and making recommendations to the mayor. Minutes will be taken and it will be noted if folks aren't in attendance.

Questions and Comments:

- Maria made it clear that a description of each of the committees must be laid out in addition to a list of all existing committee members and member responsibilities.
- Kelly explained that while both subcommittees report to the EOC, all three representatives have a responsibility to report back to the NWC-CAC.
- It was suggested that EOC and subcommittee attendance be mandatory – representatives cannot miss more than 3 meetings.
- 9-11 members on each of the committees

4. NDCC Updates and Discussion

Eric Shafran began by discussing the process of land acquisition for the National Western Center. The city of Denver is currently in the process of acquiring the 60-80 acres needed for the project. The city is also in the early process of negotiating “opportunistic land acquisitions” with owners who have expressed the intent of selling their land to the city for the National Western Center. As funding becomes available in 2016, more proactive land acquisition efforts will begin.

Planning and negotiations for rail consolidation have already begun. Three tracks run north to south through the property and are owned by BNSF and Denver Rock Island Rail. The BNSF line is to remain as is, however negotiations for the Denver Rock Island are underway to consolidate the two tracks into one. By consolidating the rail tracks, one mile along the river will be reclaimed and about 12 acres along the river will be made available. The US Army Corps of Engineers is currently engaged in a study on how to reclaim the river to keep the 100 year flood plain within the river. The city is in talks with Army Corps Engineers to potentially move the sewer interceptor inboard to make the eastern stretch of the river more accessible.

Preliminary environmental investigations into the historical uses of the planned site have begun. Eric explained that in order to build on the ground, it is necessary to know what is in the ground. In collaboration of with the Department of Environmental Health, city and National Western owned land have been tested. Early, unofficial results of between 25-30 holes that were drilled have tested as expected and given no cause for alarm (some contamination but nothing unusual). Official results of the ground testing will be released in several weeks. Testing will need to continue as the land acquisition process progresses. Contamination remediation has been calculated into the budgeting process however early results have revealed less contamination than expected.

Steve Nalley explained that the current zoning of the land does not allow for the National Western Campus to be built. Investigation into the legal descriptions of the city and National Western owned land has is extremely ambiguous in some cases (some land titles date back to the 1800s). Due to the lack of clear land ownership, the original area that was planned for rezoning has been reduced by about 50%. Kelly Leid noted that one of the early activities done as a part of the master planning process was to create a program as a guide for the building process. As the entitlements and map zoning/drafting process progresses, adjustments and alterations will be made

Kelly Leid discussed the parking study underway (structured parking vs. surface parking). Firms have been hired to determine the most efficient use of parking while leveraging the investments that have been made. The study will be over the course of this summer and is expected to be a year long process.

Steve Nalley explained the regeneration/sustainability strategy for the campus. The goal of the campus is to have net zero waste energy and water – the campus only will only use what it produces. The goal of zero waste is a process that will be achieved over the next 15-20 years. Eric noted that net zero energy facilities are a rare feat (only one exists in CO in a net zero district). Eric also noted that the National Renewable Energy Lab is so excited to collaborate that they have created a scope of work for the National Western Center. David Oletski asked whether there would be student housing on campus and Eric answered that CSU had not yet come to a conclusion on that matter.

Nalley explained that in the master planning process, the public realm study is intended to develop a set of goals and standards for the parks and the spaces in between the buildings and will determine how pedestrians interact with the spaces and with buildings around them. The National Western campus outdoor space is to be privately owned but publicly accessible, with its own set of rules and ground policies. Eric also discussed the NWC Campus Design Standards and Guidelines which determine the overall unified aesthetic of the campus, but won't go into review until Q2 of 2016.

Kelly Leid discussed the drafting and implementation committees and explained that he drew from material all around the country when putting together the neighborhood engagement plans. He stated that there will be a Globeville Implementation Committee as well as an Elyria - Swansea Implementation Committee each with about 9-11 members. Leid also stated that nonprofits working in the area would be interested in having a voice in the Neighborhood Implementation Committees. NDCC will support and staff the committees and assist in translating the neighborhood master plans into work plans for further implementation in each of the respective communities. Leid also handed out a draft Neighborhood Plan Activation document and, after meeting with the city Attorney, will have the Community Benefits MOU prepared for the June NWC-CAC meeting.

Questions & Comments

- Maria suggested that the community members at the meeting review Leid's Neighborhood Activation document and send back comments for review by NDCC.
- AE suggested the use of "quiet zones" for implementation while the rail consolidation is still in the planning process.
- The Army Corps Engineers are hosting public meetings – time and place to be made public to NWC-CAC members.

5. Potential Lodger's Tax Election

Kelly Leid noted that the same presentation on the Lodger's Tax would be presented before Denver City Council. The presentation gave an aerial view of the National Western Center and indicated the location of each

of the proposed facilities. Leid went on to discuss the importance of agriculture to NWC and how the campus could serve as a “Silicon Valley” to the agriculture business. Some of the impacts of the NWC fueled jobs and tourism were cited including the \$5.9 billion in net new spending expected over the next 30 years. Phases one and two of the construction of the National Western Center were also discussed before Leid reviewed the impact of House Bill 1344 to accelerate the development of the CSU facilities on campus. Leid noted that in order to gain access to the money granted in HB 1344, the NWC must successfully pass the election.

Rachel Benedick discussed the role the Convention Center will play in Denver tourism and how it will relate to the NWC. It was noted that major cities across the globe are building and expanding new convention centers that will potentially draw business from the Colorado Convention Center. It was found that some business had been lost to other cities in recent years and two scenarios were explored: one where Denver did nothing and left the Convention Center as it is, and another, more proactive approach where the city made some relatively simple changes/expansions to the Convention Center. Rachel noted that one key asset to the state is the view of the Rocky Mountains, right in Denver’s backyard. Tourists and businesses want to have a Colorado experience so part of the solution is figuring out how to make the Convention Center authentic to the state. Another hurdle to the longevity of the Convention Center is the swift evolution of technology – how can the Denver CC accommodate to new tech. She noted that when the Denver Convention Center was first completed in 1990, commonplace tech like the iPhone/iPad didn’t yet exist. It was explained that the Colorado Convention Center could accommodate about 90% of the business that exists in the events market, passing off the remaining 10% of that business as being too large to accommodate and more suitable for a city like Las Vegas, Orlando, Chicago etc. The Colorado Convention Center is targeting more small and midsize businesses/events better suited for the space available. It was noted that with additions to the existing center, more events could be accommodated and that just 25 more events booked over the previous year brings in an estimated inflow of \$50 million of direct spending in Denver (\$2.1 billion over the next 30 years).

Cary Kennedy led the discussion on the source of the funds for the NWC. Big question: how does the city of Denver come up with \$673 million over the next few years? The key funding will come as a result of the debt on the Colorado Convention Center being paid off. Both the Convention Center and the NWC will function symbiotically, each bringing business and tourism into the state. The vast majority of funding that will be used to support the NWC will come from a tax called the Convention Center Expansion Tax which was implemented to build the Colorado Convention Center. With the extension of that tax beyond its initial expiration, it will contribute to the NWC and additions to the CCC. A projected \$476 million in excise taxes derived from the hotel check-out tax and the car rental tax will go to the NWC. No new taxes will be implemented nor will taxes be increased they will simply be extended. Cary noted that projected \$476 million still leaves about \$190 million that the city will fund over the next 10 years. The \$476 million derived from excise taxes is a conservative estimate and will likely be closer to \$500 million.

Cary explained that in order to extend the Convention Center Expansion Tax, it would need to pass in a ballot election. The extension of the 1.75% CCE tax must go to the ballot now, eight years before its expiration, so that the state can issue bonds on a tax that is much longer term. In the planning process, Denver’s tax rates were compared to other cities in order to ensure Denver’s taxes weren’t too high, putting Denver at a competitive disadvantage. Amongst large cities, Denver’s taxes are right in the middle of the grid, between Washington D.C. and Austin.

Ballot language was discussed by Cary as well. She stated that the ballot is worded so that the tax will be extended permanently in order to fund future projects. It was also noted that the ballot language is changing daily because it must be worded so delicately.

Ballot Language Presented at NWC-CAC:

SHALL CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER DEBT BE INCREASED BY NO MORE THAN \$778,000,000 WITH A MAXIMUM REPAYMENT COST OF NO MORE THAN \$1,999,000,000, **WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY NEW TAX OR INCREASING ANY TAX RATE**, FOR THE PURPOSE OF FINANCING THE FOLLOWING TOURISM RELATED PROJECTS:

- THE NATIONAL WESTERN CENTER CAMPUS, AND
- IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER

Some people believe the ballot is, at present, too short and does not cover the specifics. There is a trade-off between too much specificity and too much vagueness. However, the last thing NWC wants is to go to the ballot and have someone challenge the language which must be factual and present no bias. Maria stated that research is being done to determine the best approach and strategy for the ballot process. It was noted that no City employees (Cary, Kelly, Erica) can campaign for the project on city time, they can only be used as a resource. Maria noted that the campaign is being put together rapidly and will have more to show in June. Funds for the campaign must be private – there can be no public funds for the campaign in accordance with the Colorado Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR).

The Ballot schedule is as follows:

Date	Action
May 25, 2015	File ordinance request
June 2, 2015	Finance & Services Committee
June 14, 2015	Mayor-Council
June 16, 2015	File bill
June 22, 2015	City Council – 1st reading
June 29, 2015	City Council – 2nd reading

Questions and Comments

- It was suggested that the community leaders would be most effective in the campaign process through outreach and word of mouth support as leaders of the communities they preside over.
- The blue book will include both a pro and a con. For a TABOR question, you may make a statement against the ballot measure and the city is required to print and distribute that statement to the community.
- An estimated 120,000 out of 419,000 registered voters in the city and county of Denver will actually vote.

6. Open Discussion, Announcements & Public Comments

- It was announced that Terrance Carroll has been elected to Treasurer of National Western Stock Show
- Committee attendance was a major issue topic. It was noted that the committee would implement a policy enforcing regular attendance.
- It was suggested that the NWC-CAC collaborate with the Colorado Department of Environmental Health as well as the Department of Excise and Licenses to address a few notable malodorous areas in the vicinity.
- David Oletski suggested a partnership with Public Works and Parks and Rec on Platte River clean-up on 50th anniversary of the Denver flood.

7. Attendance

Maria Garcia Berry (Co-facilitator)
Paul Andrews (NWSS)
Terrance Carroll (Co-facilitator)
Kelly Leid (NDCC)
Eric Shafran (NDCC)
Steve Nalley (NDCC)
Erica Martinez (NDCC)
Cary Kennedy (Deputy Mayor/CFO)
Nola Miguel (Council District 9)
Susan Aldretti (Office of Debbie Ortega)
AE (Globeville)
David Oletski (Globeville)
John Zapien (Globeville)
Armando Payan (Globeville)

Marina Chotzinoff (Globeville)
Drew Dutcher (Elyria)
Bette Cram (Elyria – Swansea)
Juan Veloz (Elyria – Swansea)
Carrie Atiyeh (VISIT Denver)
Rachel Benedick (VISIT Denver)
Anne Hayes (Westfield)
Heather Lafferty (Habitat for Humanity)
Nancy Grady-Jones (JJJ Properties)
Vernon Hill (JJJ Properties)
Jake Martin
Alan Prendergast (Public/Westword)
Rosabelle Rice (Spanish Lang. Interpreter)
Monica Rivera (Spanish Lang. Interpreter)