

HILLCREST REDEVELOPMENT SUSTAINABILITY WORKGROUP

Meeting Minutes | June 24, 2022

Attendees

- Chelsea DeArmond
- Rebecca Nelson
- John Metza
- Ianni Houmas
- Matt Doll
- Mike Hirabayashi

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Goal of meeting is for Port to respond to Sustainability Work Group's Letter of Consensus Recommendations to address how each recommendation is being considered – including some that are being integrated into the project and others that will be more difficult to achieve
2. First section was very affirming for Port – Work Group goals are in line with Port's approach
3. Port is finishing up the LEED for Communities pre-certification process with US Green Building Council – still aiming for Platinum level
 - a. Verification would occur in 8-10 years, after community is up and running
4. Requiring LEED Silver certification for all buildings
5. Natural gas will only be built out for equity/social justice/economic development reason, otherwise will not be included
6. Demo/remediation grants were not received due to not being far along enough in the documentation process – will resubmit in November and will delay ground-breaking slightly
 - a. EPA grant awarded at \$500K
7. Reducing embodied carbon – mass timber demonstration project down the line courtesy of John Metza
 - a. US Forestry grant – Sustainable Forestry Initiative
 - b. Can achieve LEED points for selections that result in measurable reduction in embodied carbon
8. 12 c. (design for future vertical expansion) is a struggle – might be more applicable to office building environments, and will be hard to expect marketplace to deliver light industrial buildings that could get a second story in the future, particularly with current construction costs
9. Multimodal transportation overlaps with approved master plan and urban design workgroup covenants
 - a. Initial discussions with Hour Car for developing a Heights-specific program
 - b. Workforce agreement stipulations around transit, walking, and biking
 - i. Due to advice to focus the workforce agreement on the top 5-6 strategies to make it most effective, this item is unlikely to be included
 - c. Until transit/multi-modal transit facilities are built out, parking reduction is not as realistic
 - i. Ideally parking could be there initially, but removed in the longer term as systems better support alternative transportation
 - d. Snow melt system, especially in hub, is a cool idea
 - e. Rapid charging for electric semi-trucks is a good thing to plan for, but may not be implemented near-term based on electric truck availability
10. Encouraging healthy landscapes
 - a. Custom-made spade on a truck from Texas could pick up and relocate the largest trees on the site
 - i. \$500K would only cover 6 of the largest trees
 - b. Just by hitting the City's boulevard tree requirement (not including private development) the site will get close to replacing the existing canopy
 - c. EPA grant triggers a section 106 review (historic preservation act) which will focus on potential cultural and archeological resources on site
 - d. Open spaces workgroup kicks off this September and will engage indigenous communities to ensure viable direction
 - e. Species diversity to avoid mass die out is a good idea that is being incorporated into the project

11. Local solar installations
 - a. Meeting with Xcel next Tuesday to check on progress – has been a useful and friendly discussion that will not overturn existing legislation/policy, but will expand knowledge and availability of technology
12. Water
 - a. City Council concern about aquifer contamination due to misunderstanding in how the ATES district energy system works
 - i. Aquifer-only water in one loop that runs through heat exchanger
 - ii. Surface level system is separate and closed off from aquifer (never interacts)
 - iii. Health department will have approval
 - b. Geology onsite is not compatible with any recharge strategies, but district system with BMPs is proposed
 - c. Permeable paving blocks used in loading dock at Midway Building are still functioning – good precedent for future development
13. Resiliency
 - a. Resilience hub was discussed at housing workgroup – goals aligning between groups
 - b. Virtual power plants – Port is still in contact with Department of Energy as a potential funding source
 - i. Ultimate energy systems and distribution across this site over the next 10 years is still unknown – potential for demonstration of multiple technologies across the site
 - c. Future proofing is embedded in every decision for this site
14. Affordable housing
 - a. Housing workgroup will support and expand on this goal – majority of members are highly interested in affordable housing
 - i. Tara Beard (PED housing director) and Gretchen Nichols (LISC) were the guests at yesterday’s meeting
15. Green Job Industries
 - a. Port tries not to narrow the recruitment funnel, but several sustainability-focused companies have expressed interest. This will likely be baked into the DNA of the developers/businesses due to the nature of the covenants/master plan for the site
 - b. John Metza predicts we are getting closer to the tipping point for EVs – with parallels to this type of sustainable development.
 - c. The Port is committed to engaging local contractors – Paris Dunning (ESABA) is going to help Port connect with local vendors to provide services
16. Energy efficient streetlighting that meets LEED requirements is not City standard, but is being pursued in partnership with Xcel
17. Exposed wood – encouraging mass timber in covenants
18. Daylighting in buildings – always a strategy in energy efficiency models
19. Making The Heights repeatable/educational – programming of spaces, aesthetics that are attractive and welcoming to all, and focused conversation on open spaces through open spaces workgroup are all goals/discussions that have come out of all workgroups
 - a. Acknowledgement of significance of site for Jewish community – initiative by SHPO
 - b. Other demonstration/historic interpretive elements have been installed throughout Port projects
20. Items not specifically under the Port’s purview were included at the end of the letter
 - a. City-wide composting is on the horizon – mentioned by Russ previously
 - b. 3 lanes with a turn lane would allow for better traffic flow than the 4 lane – has proven to be a good thing in the Port’s opinion
21. Final Conversation
 - a. John Metza thinks this is an exemplary document and is very excited for what this community will become

- i. Soil removal being delayed is a worry – but should still result in the same site readiness timeline and sites are still intended to be delivered to marketplace by Fall 2023
 - ii. Marketing program will begin with site/broker announcement (2-sided PDF that summarizes the high-level requirements and priorities as well as the site attributes and master plan) with main goal of getting interested parties to reach out to the Port Authority
 - 1. Port is trying to get this distributed broadly to avoid 100% white-owned companies on site
 - b. Chelsea is wondering how the group can continue to stay involved
 - i. Group will be added to Port newsletter. Idea to use an “action alert group” model in relation to sustainability-related items
 - ii. Funding gap is a large problem, and there will be several financial opportunities this group could weigh in on
 - iii. AUAR will set the bookends of environmental impacts based on the intensity of the development – trying to establish how whatever you do will impact natural/humanmade infrastructural systems – Port will forward information on AUAR public comment period in hopes of gaining some letters expressing support
 - iv. Ad hoc meeting requests will be likely as future items come up that need advisement
 - c. The loss of basic infrastructure funding makes applying for sustainability-specific funding harder but not impossible. Port is trying to identify the right language to communicate needs and private financing is still available (e.g., McKnight Foundation). It is on the Port to be good salespeople in highlighting the financial benefits of investing in sustainable systems.
 - d. Net zero goal will not be achieved until performance can be measured, after the entire site is built-out. This may require adjustments to the approach along the way to stay on track.
 - i. Will require intentional messaging over the next decade
 - ii. How is net zero defined? Does it include everything on the property, or just the buildings/infrastructure? Tesla semi-truck charger requires 1 megawatt
 - 1. Defined as all activities that associated with the 112 acres when operational – would include a large oven within a light industrial building, as well as the building itself
 - 2. 2030 seen as a potential good timeframe to start gauging this figure
 - 3. Based on an annual balance between carbon emitted and carbon sequestered or offset
 - 4. Social justice/equity and wealth creation are also priorities that need to be balanced with sustainability goals, so a job- and energy-intensive bakery wouldn't be turned away due to carbon goals.
 - e. District energy system initial buildout (before buildings are constructed) can be risky
 - i. Dept of Energy 20% loan guarantee helps with buyers' comfort levels
 - ii. A phased district energy system build-out would help
 - iii. Everything pencils out as a proof of concept, but equipment positioning (regarding land ownership), metering connections, and the mechanics, logistics, legalities are all under question and need more investigation
22. Final signed letter will be distributed as well as ATES article