

HILLCREST REDEVELOPMENT OUTDOOR SPACES WORKGROUP

Meeting Minutes | Wednesday, October 26, 2022

Attendees

- Brenda Child
- Thia Xiong
- Joan Huneke
- Melanie Richards
- Patty Gumbulsky
- Christopher Bauleke
- Sharon Wynne
- Ashley Torres Gurrola
- Kaela Meyers
- Mai Xiong

MEETING SUMMARY

1. The meeting kicked off with introductions.
2. Saint Paul Port Authority (SPPA) staff shared the results of previous community engagement events
3. SPPA staff deciphered the roles and responsibilities of the City versus the Port Authority in terms of outdoor spaces
 - a. The City of Saint Paul will lead the creation of a five-acre park; the Port Authority will provide the City with \$2.5 million to be used for development
 - b. SPPA will work with the community on the activation of a portion of the remaining 15-acres of green space
4. SPPA walked through the Master Plan blueprint, pointing out areas designated for housing, light industry, the park, public nodes, roads, and trails.
 - a. SPPA emphasized the work that has been done to ensure truck traffic does not spill into the residential areas
 - b. SPPA emphasized that the Master Plan map does not reflect the amount of green space that will be incorporated into both public and private property
 - c. SPPA emphasized the importance of community engagement in developing the Arts and Employment District
 - d. Committee members asked further questions about the level of contamination and loss of trees. There was a recommendation to share this message more widely with the community, so people understand why remediation and tree loss are unavoidable (due to mercury) and promote this as an opportunity to rebuild/revitalize
 - e. SPPA confirmed that the wetland/holding ponds could be used for ice skating in the winter; when asked who could maintain a rink, SPPA recommended working with the District Two Community Council (D2)
 - f. Committee members want to be sure that the development does not include excessive parking lots to limit the asphalt; SPPA staff reassured committee members that developers are looking at parking ratios differently and parking lot spots are trending down; SPPA also shared the concept of “people first, cars second” which was a hot topic in other community engagement workgroups
 - g. Workgroup members were hopeful that the first floors of high-density housing units would be activated for commercial use; SPPA confirmed that this would be part of the plan, but retail could be a challenge

- h. Workgroup members are hopeful that there will be space available for food trucks; SPPA encouraged people to work with D2 for activation ideas
 - i. The Outdoor Workgroup shared other workgroup's enthusiasm for interpretive panels throughout the site that reflect/educate/celebrate Native American, Jewish, and Hmong culture.
- 5. The Parks department emphasized that like Highland Bridge, The Heights will have a public park (5-acres) plus additional small plaza and park spaces that will be privately owned. The goal is to ensure these spaces complement one another without duplicating services. It will be important to accommodate the incoming density with the right amount of space and the right activities for all age groups to recreate. The information already collected by SPPA will be taken into consideration.
- 6. SPPA discussed how wetlands will be part of the stormwater management system and incorporated into the trails. POPS spaces could be located nearby.
- 7. Workgroup members shared what they feel is most important and/or exciting for the outdoor spaces at The Heights.
 - a. Taking a polluted property and making it into something useful & communicating the degree of contamination (referenced 2x)
 - b. Support for educational panels (cultural and ecological history) (referenced 2x)
 - c. Interest in using the wood from some of the removed trees for public art or benches
 - d. Considerations for managing the cold for those going between work and home
 - e. Encouragement for a more "natural" park (referenced 2x)
 - f. Excitement for the green spaces, new trees, native gardening (possibly fruit trees)
 - g. The ability to venture beyond the golf course fence – accessibility to the space
- 1. Recommendation to research the following: soccer, pickleball, miniature golf, multigenerational approaches, and ADA-accessible park equipment