

Minutes for January 26, 2016

2020 Partners Membership Meeting

HGA, Ford Center

Meeting Minutes – Approved by The 2020 Partners on 3/22/16

Attendees: Bill Blanski, Daniel Bonilla, Josh Brandsted, Pierce Canser, Jon Commers, Ray Dehn, Sandy Forberg, David Frank, Brad Henry, Tricia Holden, Denise Holt, Bob Iwaskeayez, Dan Kenney, Nick Koch, Rick Kreuser, Kevin Kuppe, BJ LaVelle, Greg Lecker, Chuck Leer, Kelly Nelson, Pat Nelson, Mark Oyaas, Robert Pfefferle, Katya Pilling, Keith Prussing, Neil Reardon, Jonah Ritter, Peter Roos, Karen Rosar, Bob Salmen, Max Salmen, Mark Stenglein, Ralph Strangis, Carletta Sweet, Albert Swintek, Marsha Wagner, Dale White

1. Call to Order – Nick Koch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:12 pm

2. Introductions

3. Approval of Minutes from 2020 Partners Meeting on November 17, 2015

Minutes were APPROVED and have been posted on The 2020 Partners [website](#).

4. Transit Development: Southwest/Bottineau/Royalston Station Legislative Update

Commissioner Peter McLaughlin was not in attendance so this item was deferred.

5. Property Development Updates and Announcements

- Bob Pfefferle, Director at Hines, gave an update on Hines' T3 project currently underway next to Dock Street Apartments, across the railroad tracks from HGA. He began by showing progress to date using the [construction camera](#). The project—mixed use retail, office and apartments; seven stories with a rooftop deck as the eighth floor—began late in the summer of 2015 and is expected to be completed by the end of September 2016. The below-grade levels are concrete, with timber (engineered wood shipped from Winnipeg) on top. Columns and beams are from Austrian Spruce and the floor panels are from the Pacific Northwest. These materials were chosen for their structural integrity,

price, and experience of others who had used them. They were also chosen because of their sustainability, warmth and texture, and to maintain the historical integrity of the neighborhood. T3 is the first modern heavy timber building of this size built in the United States in a hundred years. The structural elements will be exposed and fully visible.

- Josh Brandsted, President at Greco Properties, reported that Greco and Opus are making good progress on the ABC industrial site. They plan to begin the 12-14 month construction window by breaking ground on April 1. The project is a six-story, 143-unit mixed-use, multi-family apartment building with about 16,000 square feet of retail and two levels of underground parking. It is located at 314 Sixth Avenue North. Within the past two months they have been awarded FEMA grants to clean up the site.

Nick invited any developers with projects in our area to let him know so they can be added to future meeting agendas and posted on our website.

6. Neighborhood Announcements

- David Frank announced that the North Loop Neighborhood Association was holding its annual meeting at Be the Match on Wednesday, January 27, featuring speeches, election of Board of Directors, and beer. He added that Karen Rosar was stepping down from the Board after serving for the past ten years.

7. Future of the Minneapolis Lyndale Farmers Market Presentation [\[PPT\]](#) – Neil Reardon, UrbanWorks Architecture; Jon Commers, Donjek; Daniel Bonilla, City of Minneapolis, CPED

Neil began by announcing that UrbanWorks Architecture was hired by the City of Minneapolis to conduct a pre-feasibility study on the Farmers Market. In addition to his co-presenters, other members of the project team are Ted Spitzer, a nationally-renowned market expert from Portland, Maine; and Bob Close, a landscape architect with Bob Close Studios, who will be helping with design.

Neil noted that there has been a lot of work by The 2020 Partners in this area. He provided some background and history:

- The Farmers Market has been in this location since the 1930s
- It is currently the largest Market in the Twin Cities region
- Historically it is steeped in a wholesale environment and was the entry point for food throughout the city
- There are 150-200 Vendors on weekends during the growing season

- With a future light-rail stop planned structural changes are now beginning to influence the neighborhood

There are weaknesses and challenges as well as strengths and opportunities. The study of the three options that have been developed (as outlined below) is about preserving, improving, enhancing and re-envisioning. Currently UrbanWorks and its consultant team is seeking input from stakeholders and partners. The three main goals for redeveloping and expanding the Farmers Market are to serve as a catalyst for a variety of types of economic development, making it a food and entertainment destination for the region, and a civic landmark in Minneapolis.

Neil highlighted several visions of what the Farmers Market should be, including:

- A Market District
- A strong municipal market
- Hub and Spoke Model: A Central Hub Market to the many Markets throughout the City
- An Indoor and outdoor market combination
- Integrated with Public Spaces
- Educational spaces / opportunities
- Spaces for large events
- Adjacent Development

The Market District is centered around where the current Farmers Market is located. It is all about the connections and lack thereof. To the north and west there are currently major visual, pedestrian, and psychological barriers. The North Loop is disconnected by several large physical barriers; Downtown West by I-394 and underutilized land; and Glenwood Avenue and the Cedar Lake Trail are nearby but not visible, with a lack of synergy.

Option or strategy #1 is to:

- Address and understand current deficiencies and unmet needs of the current Farmers Market
- Keep the location and footprint of the current Farmers Market and understand what can be done to enhance it

Strategy #2 is to expand the Farmers Market footprint to:

- Include a year-round, indoor Farmers Market as a tenant
- Promote new development above or adjacent to the existing Farmers Market

Strategy #3 would be to move the Farmers Market to a new location within the Market District which could:

- Include the Farmers Market as a tenant
- Promote the addition of a year-round/indoor market
- Promote the new Farmers Market as a part of a larger development within the Market District in conjunction with light rail and transit investments

In the discussion that followed the presentation, these additional points were made:

- Timeline: Following the community engagement period, they will do a financial feasibility study and site plan for each of the three options. A report on the prefeasibility study will be done in early March. The timing after that depends on which option is selected, as options two and three would take longer and require additional funding sources. The recommended option will go before the City Council for a vote, followed by the formal feasibility study which will address community engagement, economics (i.e. jobs created, tax impact, operating costs), and barriers that might be experienced which includes monitoring risk to vendors during construction.
- Adjacent development was loosely defined as anything within the defined Market District area. There has been a lot of thinking and work done on the demand for this landscape, and the project team will be exploring why it feels distinct to the point of being separate. They will look at establishing connections from the north, east and west to the Farmers Market District.
- The scope of this project does not include getting into program detail, but they will consider questions about organizing the District in the different strategies/scenarios, general infrastructure implications, and the type of user that wants to invest around the Royalston Station versus elsewhere in the District.
- The proposed soccer stadium in this area has been shifted to Saint Paul, and is not part of this presentation or study.
- Two documents—the North Loop Small Area Plan, which has been adopted by the City Council, and Station Area Planning done in advance of Southwest LRT and the Green Line Extension—expect that the Farmers Market will remain in the current location with relatively dense development occurring in the vicinity. The Market District is within the scope of both plans as well as the scope of the prefeasibility study.
- One consideration in Option 3 is the opportunity to connect the 3,000 people using the Royalston Station on a daily basis with the Farmers Market.
- Addressing the parking situation in the Market District, especially when the Royalston Station is opened, is included in the prefeasibility study. At this point there is not much parking available for visitors to the Farmers Market and others.

- Connections to light rail will be a driver for change in the Market District. Currently there is a significant grade change on Border Avenue, between the location of the future Royalston Station and the current Farmers Market. It may be suggested that the city-owned building would be relocated, but that has not yet been determined.
- Regarding the grade change and the I-94 barrier, it is within the scope of this study to identifying the needs but not to provide a solution.
- This could be a catalyst for investment; Minneapolis doesn't have capital and is looking to the private sector for funding. They are looking at similar projects around the country to see how they have been achieved, usually involving philanthropy, capture of development money, and hosting events.
- The two major components are funding and creating a good public realm.

In conclusion, Neil said that they are still inviting feedback on these strategies through the end of the week, and he provided a link to an online survey which was also posted on our website.

8. Creating A Family-Friendly Downtown Minneapolis [\[PPT\]](#) – Eric Laska and Denise Holt, Co-founders, Downtown Families Minneapolis

As long-time residents and active community members of Downtown Minneapolis, Eric and Denise co-founded Downtown Families Minneapolis (DFM) in an effort to make Downtown more conducive to raising children. In the summer of 2013 Alice Eichholz promoted a survey that was sent out to Downtown families to help understand the needs of raising a family Downtown.

Eric said that DFM is comprised of downtown residents who in early 2013 helped Downtown neighborhoods identify a community school solution for families who want to raise their children Downtown. The sole purpose for doing that was to keep Downtown families from leaving once their children reached school age. Since then the scope has broadened. They did some mission and visioning work in 2014 and identified the following:

- Their purpose is to cultivate a community by connecting families with one another and the necessary resources to take full advantage of life in downtown Minneapolis.
- They will accomplish that by leading and partnering with local, regional and state government, business, educational and non-profit organizations to develop and advocate for family-wise programs and policies that enhance family living in Downtown Minneapolis.

There are two parts to this: Social – they aim to connect families together to support each other and show them other families exist; and advocating on behalf of those families.

DFM began in 2013 when the North Loop Neighborhood Association passed a resolution in support of a school, which cascaded to the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association and the Elliot Park Neighborhood Association, both of which also passed resolutions. DFM formed a committee to conduct research which culminated in the survey that reached about 260 Downtown residents, 150 of which were families. The primary question in the survey was, “If you live Downtown today and your children are of school age, would you continue to live Downtown?” They found that 48 percent said yes, and 35 percent said they were unsure. The committee determined that if a good school option was provided they would stay Downtown.

Consolidating the survey results, DFM shared the information with Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS). MPS did two things: they redrew the boundaries around the downtown area so all kids who lived downtown could go to the same community school, and they reopened the Webster School just across the river. Webster School started enrolling students in the Fall of 2015. It will expand to Pre-K-Grade 5, and has a capacity of about 550.

Denise reported that in addition to taking a major advocacy role for a downtown school, their other focus is community building. They held several successful events last year, many of which were or are scheduled again in 2016, including:

- January 24: MacPhail Winter Wonderland Music Party
- February 20: Fancy Pants Winter Dance, that has a charitable component
- June 26: Kids Movie on the Great Lawn at Target Field Station
- September 17: Free Arts Day in Elliot Park

Denise thanked their generous partners for their support, and said they are open to collaborating with others, i.e. architecture firms or developers who want the family perspective. She asked The 2020 Partners to keep families in mind when developing, enhancing and activating our downtown community, and to support them in achieving their Wish List:

- Community center in the North Loop
- Affordable multi-bedroom condos with family- and kid-friendly amenities
- Family-friendly retail, restaurants and activities
- Wider sidewalks and safer street crossings

When asked if DFM has been featured in any news stories, Denise said that other than a brief mention about the Fancy Pants Winter Dance in “Scene + Heard” in the Star Tribune’s Style section, they have not. Eric said that two downtown families, including his, were

featured in Star Tribune stories about living downtown. The consensus was that this was a good story that should be heard. A suggestion was made that DFM contact the YMCA and YWCA about partnering with them on programs for children.

9. Work Plan for 2016

Nick led a discussion about the Work Plan for The 2020 Partners in 2016. Suggestions include:

a. Build a North Loop Park with adjacent community center

b. Make contact with the City of Minneapolis, encouraging them to reverse their stand on parking requirements in new development and redevelopment projects in the North Loop. The current stance is to reduce the number of parking spots in projects in an effort to encourage residents to use public transit, resulting in a shortage of affordable parking.

c. Get involved in the Farmers Market planning process. The Farmers Market is a chief asset of the area and for years has been a high priority for The 2020 Partners. To support the City's effort to revitalize this area, our involvement could include:

- Addressing the parking situation in the Market District
- Creating critical connections west and north of Downtown; connecting Border through to Glenwood Avenue
- Determining how to create value, drawing on expertise of developers, business people and public officials who are members of The 2020 Partners
- Even though there's an agreement that the Major League Soccer Stadium will be located in Saint Paul, the Subcommittee of 2020 Partners Members formed to forward the Farmers Market as a possibility will be ready to present its "Plan B" in the event the Saint Paul proposal falters at the State Legislature
- Focus on development opportunities in the vicinity of the Royalston LRT Station
- What are public realm and public sector catalyst projects?
- Should development be planned or piecemeal?

There was a strong consensus from those present that The 2020 Partners focus its efforts on the Farmers Market and transit. The Steering Committee will consider these suggestions at its February meeting.

10. 2020 Partners Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the 2020 Partners will be on Tuesday, March 22, 2016, from 5:00-6:30 pm, at HGA. Other meeting dates in 2016: May 24, July 26, September 27, November 15.

The meeting was adjourned by Nick Koch at 6:30 pm.