

Minutes for September 22, 2015

2020 Partners Membership Meeting

HGA, Ford Center

Meeting Minutes – Approved by the 2020 Partners at its meeting on November 17, 2015

Attendees: Dave Albersman, Ian Alexander, Kathleen Anderson, Nina Axelson, Bruce Bahneman, Joey Betland, Peter Callaghan, Joan Campbell, Pierce Canser, Ehsan Dehbashi, Alice Eichholz, Beth Elliott, Sandy Forberg, David Frank, Jeff Handeland, Marybeth Harris, Diane Hofstede, George Holden, Tricia Holden, Denise Holt, Matt Hoy, Bob Iwaskeayez, Steve Johnson, Joanne Kaufman, Dan Kenney, Rick Kreuser, Bruce Lambrecht, Chuck Leer, Andrew Leith, David Loehr, Sherman Malkerson, Kelly Nelson, Mark Oyaas, Katya Pilling, Neil Reardon, Jonah Ritter, Peter Roos, Karen Rosar, Bob Salmen, Max Salmen, Beth Sweeley, Carletta Sweet, Brian Turner, Marsha Wagner

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 July 28, 2015

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

4. 6th Avenue Historic Reconstruction Update – Beth Elliott, Principal Planner, Minneapolis CPED; Jeff Handeland, City Street Design Supervisor, Minneapolis Public Works [[PPT](#)]

Beth began by giving the project history. She referenced the North Loop Small Area Plan, Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines, and the Warehouse District Heritage Street Plan as resources. On this street they noted the infrastructure, road condition, and a number of loading docks that had to be accommodated. The City determined that it could improve accessibility while preserving the character, balance and livability components—in a sustainable manner—by adding sidewalks and trees, and restoring some of the brick streets. When asked why Sixth Avenue North was chosen over other nearby streets, which are in equally poor shape, Beth replied that Public Works had chosen Sixth Avenue to be in

its Five Year Capital Improvement Program and that federal grant money was available to do it the right way.

Jeff described the project limits that run south from Fifth Street North to one-half block beyond Washington Avenue North, where Sixth Avenue terminates. The scope of the project includes removing and reusing brick pavers, protecting loading docks, providing ADA compliant pedestrian walkways, parking modifications, and upgrading the storm water management system. Funding for this almost four million dollar project comes from net debt bonds, municipal state aid, special assessments, water revenue and a Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant.

Layout considerations were guided by the Heritage Street Plan. They include different pavement types (asphalt, concrete, and an asphalt base under brick pavers salvaged from this and other streets), working around loading docks, street lighting, fitting in sidewalks/pedestrian zones from 15 to 20 feet wide (along some loading docks sidewalks will be 8 to 10 feet wide), 8 foot wide parking lanes, and 11 foot wide driving lanes. Outside of the historic zones curb extensions will be installed to improve pedestrian crossings and trees will be planted.

Two public input meetings were held to create and complete the preliminary concept plan. It was submitted to MnDOT in June, and a hearing before the Heritage Preservation Commission will take place in November. That will be followed by meetings with property and business owners to discuss construction and special assessments. Construction is expected to begin in early spring 2016, with trees and seal coating added in 2017.

When asked if four way stop signs would be added in the intersections, the answer was that automobile and pedestrian traffic levels do not warrant changes in intersection control, but this could be easily changed. Adding in bump outs and narrowing the street is expected to slow traffic. Beth said pedestrian traffic was a concern at the public meetings, and neighborhood groups are looking at it.

Additional discussion on this topic dealt with the expected increase in foot traffic following the demolition of ABC Electronics and subsequent development, and the large amount (\$400,000) in special assessments that will be divided among a dozen properties. For further information or questions, contact information was provided on the last page of the PowerPoint presentation along with a link to the project website which in turn has links to other resources.

5. North Loop District Energy and Development Potential – Ehsan Dehbashi, Principal, Energy & Infrastructure Group, HGA Architects & Engineers [[PPT](#)]

Ehsan began by describing a modern district energy (DE) system as an efficient central plant (or plants) that uses surplus heat, steam or hot water that is sent through an underground pipeline that connects to buildings. DE has been around for more than a century, and is currently being used in more than 100 buildings located in Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Rochester/Olmsted County, and the University of Minnesota.

In addition to cost benefits, DE provides a reduction in HVAC equipment, increased efficiency and reliability, and offers an opportunity to create a green building. It creates a community energy system, results in a reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels, and is aesthetically more pleasing for communities and occupants.

The existing waste-to-energy plant in Downtown Minneapolis is the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC). HERC is owned by Hennepin County and operated by Covanta. It processes more than 365,000 tons per year of municipal solid waste, and reduces the release of greenhouse gas emissions by about 255,000 metric ton/year. Some low grade heat is used for snow melting the public plaza area of Target Field/Target Field Station, and it interconnects with NRG district steam system. The facility helps meet the state's renewable energy goal of 25 percent of energy from renewable sources by 2025.

The North Loop neighborhood, which is adjacent to HERC, offer the perfect density for DE. It is Minneapolis' fastest growing community, with planned development for commercial office buildings as well as new and existing low rise apartments and condominiums. A study done by HGA proposed a cost-effective phased approach which would result in substantial CO₂e reduction: Phase 1, anchor customers, 3-4 buildings; Phase 2, full scale, 3 million square feet. [See Pages 14-16 of PPT]

Major benefits and opportunities of DE include improved plant efficiency which will continue to improve with added customers, reduced water use and discharge, and reduced fossil fuel use. DE offers thermal revenues, renewable energy, and a lower city carbon footprint relative to conventional equipment. One of the challenges of DE is the timing and uncertainty among the developers as potential anchor customers; developers want full control and are hesitant to enter into a long-term contract with DE.

At the conclusion of Ehsan's presentation, Nick added that we need to get the momentum going and get commitment for DE from buildings/developers. He cited the recent story by

Caleb Hannah published in Politico magazine on August 20, 2015: [Minneapolis Gets Trashed](#), with accompanying [photo gallery](#).

6. Property Development Updates

There was nothing new to report at this meeting.

7. Transit Development – Southwest/Bottineau/Royalston Station – Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Commissioner

Peter was not present at the meeting. Pierce Canser from Metro Transit reported that Southwest LRT is going through the municipal consent process again.

8. Update on Security in the Warehouse District – Joanne Kaufman, Executive Director, Warehouse District Business Association (WDBA)

Joanne discussed the incident at 2:30 a.m. on September 12 when six people were shot, none fatally, on the LRT platform on Fifth Street between Hennepin and First Avenues in the Warehouse District (WD). Two arrests have been made, and two guns and 27 shell casings were recovered from the scene. Citing several examples of recent attacks, some during daytime hours, Joanne said that members of WDBA and others are frustrated by the violence in the WD and they have repeatedly asked the city for assistance in combating it. She said that it is not customers of downtown businesses or sports fans causing the problems, but rather people coming into downtown to prey on them. Further, on September 12 trains were not running, so there was no need for anyone to be on the LRT platform.

One business owner in the WD reported that he has had dozens of windows broken and copper stolen from the roof of his building. He said that he cannot get a police officer to come to his property, and Mayor Hodges will not reply to his communications. Subsequent discussion on this topic dealt with concerns that this violence will impact the migration of new residents moving into the Warehouse District.

Nick offered to articulate these concerns and provide an official statement from The 2020 Partners in support of the WD and its efforts to get the city to respond to and provide help with its security concerns.

9. Major League Soccer Update – Nick Koch

Nick reported that at the Steering Committee meeting held on September 17 Ralph Strangis said that everything about Major League Soccer (MLS) coming to Minnesota has been in the press; he had nothing to add. Nick then mentioned an article about MLS by Peter Callaghan that was published in MinnPost on September 22, 2015. It is linked [here](#) with Mr. Callaghan's permission.

At the July meeting of the 2020 Partners there was a lively discussion on the possibility of siting an MLS stadium in the vicinity of the Minneapolis Farmers Market. Mark Oyaas captured the comments and drafted a powerful cover letter and resolution in support which was sent to MLS Commissioner Don Garber, Mayor Hodges and Minneapolis City Council members. Two days after sending the letter and resolution Nick received a letter from Commissioner Garber thanking the 2020 Partners for their support, and the following week Nick had a phone conversation with Mark Abbott, President and Deputy Commissioner of MLS. During that phone conversation Mr. Abbott indicated that they would probably select the Saint Paul location.

To address Nick's query about what more could be done by the 2020 Partners to promote the Minneapolis site, Third Ward Minneapolis Council Member Jacob Frey took the floor. Before discussing soccer, he first addressed the crime issues in the WD. He reported that at the time of the shootings on September 12 a total of 18 police officers (six on horseback, six on bicycles, and six on foot) were in the immediate vicinity. The people involved in the shooting had total disregard for the presence of police officers. It is time to acknowledge the problem and deal with it. The solutions are challenging because while doable some of the actions to dispel the problem population would be deemed unconstitutional or illegal. The city is attempting to get some solutions and assistance from the Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI). RHI offers resources, events and consultation services to help communities successfully plan, manage and police dining and entertainment districts. The Minneapolis Policy Department must push forward on this agenda.

Addressing the soccer situation, CM Frey said that soccer is a critical piece for filling in the West Loop area and connecting North Minneapolis with the central business district. In the last six months several proposals have been made with different levels of success. One current proposal would extend the downtown liquor and food sales tax to that area, resulting in a net positive value of having soccer in Minneapolis. Soccer has a huge millennial and multicultural appeal and is the fastest-growing sport in America.

CM Frey lauded Saint Paul for stepping up. Mayor Coleman, City Council members and Ramsey County board members provided support, visions and options for the team owners. While Saint Paul is clearly in the lead at this time, there is still time for Minneapolis to act.

Asked about the working group established by the City Council to study the soccer stadium issue, CM Frey reported that the group met once in July to hear a presentation from the ownership group. Since then Council President Barb Johnson and others, including representatives from Hennepin County and the Minnesota Ballpark Authority, have met with team owners outside of the working group. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for October.

Chuck Leer, former Chair of the 2020 Partners, proposed that our group offer to bring together all of the key stakeholders to openly discuss how we can bring soccer to Minneapolis, and to do it immediately so we have a plan before the legislature convenes in 2016. He added that one of the great lessons we have learned is that 2020 Partners has strength in numbers, and in the past has been able to bring the best and brightest minds together to figure out a way to get things done. With so many different organizations and jurisdictions involved—Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota Ballpark Authority, and Minneapolis Downtown Council as well as 2020 Partners—we offer the right forum. Nick added that 2020 Partners has standing as conveners and thought leaders.

Several people suggested the effective and powerful use of emailing or calling Mayor Hodge's office encouraging her to support and take action on a soccer stadium in Minneapolis. CM Frey indicated that a majority of council members would support it.

It was agreed that an email would be sent out reaffirming 2020 Partners' longtime support for attracting MLS to the Farmers Market area as a catalyst for city building. Former Chair Chuck Leer was authorized on behalf of 2020 Partners to invite key stakeholders to the table to facilitate a renewed effort to land this important project.

10. Neighborhood Updates and Announcements

Nick reported that he met with a delegation from Uppsala, Sweden, Minneapolis' sister city, at HGA on September 19. The group included city, county and university representatives who were interested in knowing more about 2020 Partners and its impact on community development.

11. 2020 Partners Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the 2020 Partners will be on Tuesday, November 17, from 5:00-6:30 pm, at HGA or possibly Courts at Mayo Clinic Square.

The meeting was adjourned by Nick Koch at 6:36 pm.