

Hiawatha Advisory Committee

May 6, 2019 Agenda

1. Welcome & Review Agenda
2. Review Scope of Job Recruitment & Training Center 3:05-3:10
3. Community Center Examples - 3:10-3:25
4. Identify Functional Requirements - Small Group Discussions 3:25-4:15
 - a. Education & Training
 - b. Business Incubator
 - c. Retail
 - d. Community Space
5. Groups Report Out 4:15-4:45
6. Public Comments 4:45 – 5 pm
7. Adjourn 5 pm

Next meeting Monday, May 20 from 3-5 pm



HIAWATHA ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES

May 6, 2019, 3-5 p.m.

Hiawatha Maintenance Facility

Meeting #2

Welcome and Review of Scope

Facilitator Heidi Hamilton brought the Hiawatha Advisory Committee to order, welcomed the group, and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Hamilton then provided a tentative work plan for the weeks to follow including a presentation of development concepts on June 3 and review of resulting feedback on June 17. Hamilton also offered that the Committee might take a trip to visit community centers and asked that the Committee consider which facilities would be of interest.

Karen Clark (who attended in place of absent Committee Member Carol Pass) asked that the meeting agenda be amended to discuss a tour of the Roof Depot facility itself. No objections were made and the agenda was amended to include that item.

Hamilton clarified the scope of the project and charge of the Hiawatha Advisory Committee. Hamilton said that public works will be including an education and training center and that they are looking to the Committee to provide feedback on specific space requirements for programming within that space.

Brad Pass asked for clarification on the Council Staff Direction written by City Council Member Cano (adopted by December 7, 2018). Public Works Deputy Director Lisa Cerney reviewed the direction, which included 9 points. Cerney described which city Department is in the lead for each item and a general timeline.

Pass expressed concern related to expenses incurred by the architectural design team prior to the development of a comprehensive concept plan.

Clark asked for further clarification of the 9 points in the Staff Direction – particularly pertaining to who would be on each of those advisory committees. Hamilton committed to work with city staff to create a document to share with the committee that will identify the lead for each of the staff directions and timeline. Hamilton noted that the charge of this Committee is the place the project needs to start to inform staff direction for item 6 and 8. Other items like the landscaping and buffer (item 2) will follow our typical community engagement process with the neighborhood. Clark requested there be clear communication of structure and membership of committees related to those remaining 8 points in the Staff Direction.

Community Center Examples

Facilitator Hamilton then turned to Committee Member Brenna Brelie to introduce the services provided by Pillsbury United Communities, noting that there might be examples to emulate on the Hiawatha site.

Brelie identified the Waite House and Brian Coyle Center as examples of community centers that the Committee might know and consider as relevant examples. Brelie provided a brief history of Pillsbury United Communities along with the organizational goals and values. Brelie listed three objectives toward which the organization strives – family stabilization, community health, and workforce development – noting the latter as most relevant to the site.

Brelie explained that the focus of Pillsbury United Communities has been to co-create solutions along with the community. Brelie gave Sisterhood Boutique and Full Cycle shop as examples of community driven services built to meet nuanced needs of their specific communities. Brelie offered that the Hiawatha site might be an opportunity to create jobs and employment, provide a place for community gathering (relieving nearby and overbooked community centers), and be a place of business incubation.

Facilitator Hamilton asked how Pillsbury United Communities is funded. Member Brelie said that the organization operates through grant funding and foundational support, government contracts at municipal- and state-levels, and individual and private donations.

Committee Member Cassandra Holmes asked if Pillsbury United works to provide housing. Brelie described the organizations role as a navigator to external resources without a direct role in housing. Holmes noted a need to address homelessness in the area.

Elizabeth Day (who attended for absent Committee Member Robert Lilligren) identified the need for affordable housing in the area and provided Duluth's American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO) as an example that should be studied and potentially replicated. Committee Member Jose Luis Villaseñor asked about ownership of the facility, if it is owned by the City of Duluth, and agreed that the organization is one to model. Villaseñor also mentioned a hydroponic farming facility in a Pillsbury United (North Minneapolis) facility as another model to replicate.

Functional Requirements

Facilitator Hamilton asked that the Committee next work on the physical space needed for four categories of programming – education and training, business incubation, retail, and community center. Hamilton identified members who might be most interested in contributing to conversations related to business incubation, and retail space requirements. Hamilton made a note that Jeff Alexander, who might otherwise contribute to the discussion regarding business incubation, was absent due to a family need.

Committee member Cassandra Holmes – having missed the first portion of the meeting – asked if the group was focused solely on the first staff direction of the Resolution. Hamilton reviewed the charge to satisfy point #1 of the Staff Direction and stated that information would be brought forward by staff to Ways and Means related to item 6 and 8 of the staff direction. Holmes expressed discontent that the Committee had not been involved in the formation of the other groups. Member Sheldon Mains read staff direction #1 and interpreted the statement as one that included a broader scope than just the recruitment and training center. Facilitator Hamilton shared that she would clarify in a follow-up communication.

Committee member Dean Dovolis expressed concern that the multitude of sub-committees would diffuse communications. Dovolis suggested that members of the Hiawatha Advisory Committee function as leaders of the remaining sub-committees. Brad Pass agreed, arguing that the formation of sub-committees poses potential for messages to get lost. Facilitator Hamilton noted that others thought that smaller groups would be more constructive.

Hamilton listed Committee members who might contribute to the discussions regarding community center, and education and training space requirements. Hamilton noted that the group for community space was large and that some members may wish to join the business incubation group.

Karen Clark asked about a group to discuss urban agriculture – suggesting that the group had been wrongfully omitted. Hamilton said that Miles Mercer (CPED) has reached out the Dean Dovolis to identify individuals and that is a separate meeting.

Facilitator Hamilton asked the Committee focus on questions provided related to spatial needs of the four programming categories – education and training, business incubation, retail, and community center.

Member Holmes asked to know who had made the decision to discuss urban agriculture in separate meetings. Hamilton said that this decision was determined in the City Direction. Deputy Director Cerney read staff direction #6 of the Resolution, noting its independence from #1. Member Dovolis asked that the agenda be amended to include a discussion item regarding urban agriculture. Brad Pass seconded the motion. Member Mark Ruff responded, asking that the Facilitator be respected, that the agenda be followed, and that additional items be added to future agendas if necessary.

Member Holmes expressed frustration with not being heard. Hamilton suggested that a ten-minute period be added to the agenda to discuss spatial needs for urban agriculture on the site and that we could have the discussions regarding each category as a larger group.

Education and Training

Facilitator Hamilton began the discussion regarding education and training – asking the group to identify related activities that may take place on the site. Member Sheldon Mains began, expressing pleasure that ‘building trades’ had been included in the programming, commended Project for Pride in Living for their accomplishments, and expressed a desire for apprenticeships designed for kids in the neighborhoods and students at area high schools – including South High and charter schools – to be included in the programming.

Facilitator Hamilton asked Member Tony Kelly to describe the types of apprenticeships that would be offered on the site. Member Kelly responded that most work currently happens in the field, including in Lino Lake, and expressed the desire to move those training activities to this site. Hamilton noted that there is limited space on site and asked if any apprenticeship or training activities could be located on second- or third-levels of a structure. Kelly said that he could answer the question only partially – but that classroom activities could occur on upper floor. Hamilton asked Kelly to identify the time of year that such activities would take place. Kelly said that activities would most likely take place year-around with heaviest concentration in the spring, and during day-time hours.

Member Holmes asserted needs including rooftop solar arrays, aquaponics training, café space, and space for bike repairs – totaling 3 acres. Holmes added that these spaces would be active year-around and all days of the week.

Hamilton asked what spatial needs would be required by the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority. Member Kyle Hanson noted that most laborers are part of a Union, that most activities on site would probably be related to training and certification work – that most apprenticeship happens in the field, though bobcat and lawn equipment training could occur at the Hiawatha site. Hanson noted that most classroom use would be during daytime hours and require classroom space.

Member Hanson said that there may be opportunities to provide residents of public housing with education and job training, and that the inclusion of urban agriculture could provide new opportunities for residents. Member Kim Havey added that utility companies may be interested in using space for phone banking, and electric vehicle charging training for staff to install and maintenance.

Hamilton concluded the discussion related to education and training, noting that additional comments may be submitted via email after the meeting.

Business Incubation

Hamilton then opened the discussion related to business incubation, noting that Member Jeff Alexander was absent but had provided information prior, including a need for a 'mass' of businesses'; and attention to varied code, plumbing, and electrical needs depending on business types. Hamilton opened the discussion to the group, asking for specific spatial needs, expected hours of operation and active times of year, who might fund construction, and who might fund operation.

Member Sheldon Mains stated a need for attention in non-retail business incubation, noting "Bee's Knees" as an example of a local light-industrial business. Mains expressed a need for warehouse space, and that business incubation requires more than physical space but also assistance in business planning and financing.

Member Dovolis thanked Hamilton for being flexible in facilitation. Dovolis stated the need for use of a portion of the existing Roof Depot building as essential for making the project affordable and feasible as a business incubator. Dovolis noted that Big D construction had analyzed the building and wrote a cost-estimate for retrofitting the existing building. Dovolis asked for one-acre portion of the building to be preserved, adding that a group of businesses had already been assembled – and that most businesses would need ground floor frontage. Dovolis said that space across Hiawatha Avenue would not have the same positive impact on the community.

Facilitator Hamilton asked where funding may come from.

Member Holmes asked if housing falls under the category of business incubation. Holmes said that businesses on street level can support apartments on upper levels.

Member Kim Havey shared Midtown Global Market as an example of a business incubator and flexible space. Havey said that the Hiawatha site may be used or repair lawn equipment or host a call-center, noting the need for preparatory work to secure loans.

Member Jose Luis Villaseñor noted high bicycle traffic counts along the Midtown Greenway on weekdays in the summer and that a bike-related business would ideally be located with a frontage to the Greenway. Villaseñor described bicycle retail as a difficult business based on quick repair turn-around, and with most work occurring in the spring and late fall. Villaseñor explained a need for heavy equipment necessary for the recycling and refurbishing of bikes. Villaseñor expressed an aspiration for students at South High to receive Physical Education credits for apprenticeship on site. Villaseñor said that current retail operations take place on Lake Street and 15th Avenue.

Member Miré Regulus said that coffee shops and cafés are ideal uses until later in the afternoon, when they become inactive. Regulus expressed desire to discuss programming that is active for greater periods throughout the day. Regulus said walk-up coffee counter require approximately six-hundred square feet,

a café with small kitchen requires about two-thousand square feet, and construction can easily surpass \$100,000. Regulus said that potential cafés often sound attractive up-front but result in many challenges.

Member Elizabeth Day asked if kitchen space from a café might dually function as a kitchen incubator space. Member Regulus said that it is possible but that such an agreement must be integral to the vision and business plan. Regulus noted the high cost of commercial kitchens and stressed the need for a heavily dedicated staff.

Community Space

Facilitator Hamilton asked for the group to provide specific square footage needs for community center programming on the site and if ground floor space is necessary.

Member Brelie said that most programming related to classrooms and training could likely occur on upper levels, not requiring ground level space. Brelie said that modular spaces are more desirable compared to large spaces but that spatial needs are not currently defined. Brelie continued that rental and management of the space requires its own discussion.

Member Saeed Bihi asked about recreational space and a place to play basketball.

Member Holmes wanted to ensure that members of the community be heard, asking for neighbors to raise their hands. Brad Pass said that five-million-dollars had been raised to renovate East Phillips Park, that recreational programming takes place there, and that aquaponics and urban agriculture needs a place at the Hiawatha site over additional recreational space.

Holmes listed other parks in the neighborhood and expressed need for community ownership of a space that supports healthy living. Holmes identified Famous Dave's Barbeque and its founder as a model to follow, having grown from the same reservation as Member Holmes. Hamilton asked how much space would be needed for community center programming on the site. Holmes said 3 acres.

Facilitator Hamilton called on Karen Clark, who had identified herself as a member of the community. Clark said that work has been done to create community space, focused on food justice – noting that community space should be focused on feeding hungry people in the community, creating jobs, and supporting clean air. Clark said that community space includes the need for 28 affordable housing units with space to grow vegetation, and that people are asking for urban farming. Clark said that three acres are needed for low-tech and high-tech job training.

Urban Agriculture

Facilitator Hamilton repeated the earlier statement about the need for three-acres of space for urban agriculture.

Karen Clark said that the plans for three-acres have been carefully measured. Clark said that the acreage includes space for low-tech agricultural programming as well as space for high-tech aquaponics, noting that aquaponics is the fastest growing agriculture sector. Clark continued that such programming provides opportunities to share skills and create wealth, and that one- or two-acres may be acceptable.

Member Dovolis mentioned a loss of a separate hydroponics facility due to redevelopment elsewhere. Dovolis said the previous operator of that facility is willing to relocate to the site. Dovolis continued that such agricultural programming would contribute low-tech and high-tech jobs for the community. Dovolis expressed a need for Public Works to share space for urban agriculture.

Hamilton asked if there were any other comments related to urban agriculture and spatial need, noting an expectation that notes be received from Chad Hebert, operator of the previously introduced aquaponics facility.

Brad Pass expressed the need to preserve a portion of the existing Roof Depot building, stating that urban agriculture programming is not economically feasible without it. Pass continued that the benefits of preserving a portion of the existing building extend beyond urban agriculture to include green living-wage jobs, jobs for individuals post incarceration, job training, aquaponics year-around, housing, coffee shop and café, community kitchen, a bicycle shop, and environmental justice. Pass said that the southeast portion of the building is required. Pass said that the Little Earth community deserves more than diesel truck traffic.

Hamilton asked about spatial needs of an urban agriculture facility. Member Holmes said that urban agriculture would provide a statement affirming dedication of city government to residents.

Hamilton reiterated that additional ideas may be sent in after the meeting.

Comparable Facility Examples

Facilitator Hamilton revisited a request made earlier in the meeting to discuss a potential tour of the Roof Depot building. Member Mark Ruff said that there had been a tour along the exterior of the building in the previous year and that damage to the roof had resulted in water and mold on the interior – that no person had since entered the building without proper respiratory protection. Ruff said he will discuss the request for a tour with City Staff and follow up.

Member Ruff asked for information about facilities that might be used as examples to emulate on the Hiawatha site.

Member Dovolis identified the Schmidt and Hamm's breweries in St Paul as model examples, having included aquaponics and a restaurant incubator space named Keg and Case market. Dovolis requested that the group be able to peer inside the windows of the Roof Depot building if an interior tour is not feasible.

Clark reiterated the Schmidt and Hamm's examples presented by Dovolis. Clark also expressed frustration with the physical state of the Roof Depot building, offering its state as due to neglect as an active attempt by City Staff to ensure its demolition. Clark said a developer had certified the building's good condition prior to public ownership. Clark asked that Member Ruff pursue a group tour of the building. Member Dovolis said that the presence of mold is limited to the office area of the building. Hamilton said that a determination related to a building tour would be later communicated.

Jo Ann Musumeci (attending in place of absent Committee Member Peter Bajurny), added that the Creative Enterprise Zone at Vandalia and I-94 in St Paul be another example to study. Musumeci suggested that someone from that organization might come speak to the Committee at a future meeting.

Public Comment

Steve Sandberg said that he has lived one-half mile from the site since approximately 1970 and has been working on the East Phillips project in recent years. Sandberg called to attention the adopted Green Zone Resolution, reading portions related to the prevention of gentrification, foster of community led planning, and prioritization of home-grown development. Sandberg mentioned a speech given at a recent May Day Parade and acknowledged LEED certifications received by Public Works in the past. Sandberg noted a waiting list of kids at Little Earth who are interested in learning aquaponics skills.

Clarence Bischoff identified as a representative of Bluewater farms, having moved to Minneapolis forty years ago and having more recently been involved with the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute. Bischoff expressed admiration for the work developed by the neighborhood group and confusion related to the apparent dismissal of those plans by City Staff. Bischoff asked that Staff take another look at the plans.

Adjournment

Facilitator Hamilton acknowledged that all agenda items had been addressed. Hamilton offered to send previous meeting notes and the supplied sheet of questions to the Committee by the following afternoon. Hamilton asked that the Committee write additional comments on the sheet provided to submit. Hamilton asked if there were any questions.

Karen Clark asked that notes and agendas be prior to one day in advance of the following meetings. Hamilton offered to attempt.

Musumeci said that there were issues receiving prior email communications. Hamilton asked for email address confirmation.

Member Holmes expressed issues with the meeting schedule, stating that the Little Earth organization had been omitted from earlier discussion related to meeting scheduling. Hamilton noted the recommendation from Council Member Cano's Office that the Council maintain a regular meeting schedule.

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