

July 22, 2019

Hiawatha Advisory Committee Small Group Meetings Summary

The following notes capture the input received during the small group meetings held with Hiawatha Advisory Committee members on the revised facility plan options. Meetings were conducted between June 14 and July 10, 2019 at various locations in Minneapolis.

The discussion generally covered the following topics:

- Which Retail Option, 1 or 2, is better?
 - Option 1 – possible contiguous 2125 SF?
 - Option 2 – retail activating more of 28th?
 - What are the retail opportunities that might function well in this location?
- Are there any retail functions that might operate on the second floor?
- Discuss possible uses for the second-floor community space?
- What business incubators could fit in the space available on level three?
- Can multiple sized business incubator elements be split and/or function on the third floor?
- Naming the facility?
- Art opportunities?
- Review building demolition recommendation

Meeting 1

Grace Wachlarowicz, Ryan SanCartier, Abdi Salah

- How well is the 3rd floor constructed over the sand box going to work for the use desired on the 3rd floor? It would require special insulation for sound issues.
- The multi-use classroom could work for the 7-day voting period.
- Retail on 28th Street is preferred to the option with both spaces along Longfellow.
- There is interest in prioritizing workforce development and training over retail; want to ensure that the training needs are met and wouldn't want to sacrifice that for retail.
- Retail would be a way for neighbors to interact with the facility. Community ideas should be considered in determining what retail uses would create an attractive destination.
- How do we create a destination for the community itself?
- 2nd floor education space makes sense.
- A facility name should come from community.
- The group was unsure what types of incubator businesses could work on 3rd floor.
- Green building components are important to the project.
- Staff reviewed the site circulation and operational challenges related to the municipal operations needs and creation of the Recruitment and Training Facility and why this requires demolition of the existing facility. No concerns were raised.

Meeting 2

Cory Bergerson, Dan McConnell, Tony Kelley

- Art ideas should come from local community.
- Dan felt that flexible space for basic, entry level skills should be developed at this site, and plan to send students elsewhere to get more specialized training. He suggested having a person who serves as a navigator person at a front-desk offering information – possibly just at certain times of the day. It could potentially be staffed with a Human Resources employee or people who sit at this site on a regular basis.
- Use circulation space to have kiosks with information about opportunities.
- Talk to Jill Petty about what recruitment should look like.
- Lino Lakes 363 training center is a model worth visiting – all Public Works Services Workers spend a week there when they start.
- The more multi-purpose the space the better.
- Include a vault to be used for confined space training.
- Mini-mart would serve employees well.
- Is there an opportunity for a youth development program with retail? Most likely this would be short-lived based on grant funding.
- An established non-profit would help create long-term success of community activities.
- Staff reviewed the site circulation and operational challenges related to the municipal operations needs and creation of the Recruitment and Training Facility and why this requires demolition of the existing facility. No concerns were raised.
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Meeting 3

Sheldon Mains (by phone)

- Is 2,000 SF enough critical mass for retail to be successful? Affordable space is critical.
- Factors that were important to the success of incubators are noted below. The Du Nord Brewery, Repair Lair, Sonoran Grill, and Bee's Knees are successful businesses to use as examples.
 - Anything food related is very hard (code requirements are significant).
 - Accounting help is often needed for these businesses.
 - A lot of support is needed to start new retail spaces. Another bike shop may not make sense – there is already a lot of them in neighborhood.
- A mini mart may make a lot of sense – to serve employees, neighborhood and trainees.
- Community space makes a lot of sense – he likes the ability to be able to divide into two spaces.
- Restrooms one floor off is okay.
- Incubator on 2nd floor will limit businesses that can succeed there.
- Cheap space along with other support contributes to business incubation success.
- Youth programming and services makes a lot of sense – it would be beneficial for youth to be exposed to these living wage jobs.
- Youth space could operate well on 2nd or 3rd floors.
- Community should provide primary input into naming facility
- Art could go on patio
- The curved wall is an iconic symbol of railroads, so its preservation would be nice.

Meeting 4

Jeremy Barrick

- Think about the standard of care the city is committed to for maintaining bathrooms or other shared facilities. MPRB has found this important when working with concessionaires it has relationships with.
- Connected/contiguous space seems to make more sense because it has more flexibility (for one or two businesses).
- MPRB desires training facilities for laborers and equipment operators. Classroom space and sandbox offerings are beneficial. MPRB just hired a training coordinator; they are working on improving training within the organization.
- Could community gardens occur on rooftops? Jeremy provided an example from New York City, at Randal's Island, where the City Parks Department maintenance facility rooftop has a garden run by the parks department, with controlled access, and bee keeping.
- Recruitment center – job readiness programs.
- Any art should be art that can be maintained effectively.
- Jeremy thinks maintaining the existing building adds constraints to the site that create operational challenges.

Meeting 5

Miré Regulus, Jeff Alexander

- Two smaller retail spaces - probably too small for coffee or food, unless there is significant flow through traffic.
- What is a realistic estimate of traffic that will visit food service from PW facility?
- Need clear visibility from 28th – don't block with trees at Longfellow/28th. A food facility needs to be visible from street.
- Vehicles and large equipment need first floor. Shop space needs to be adjacent. This limits the 1st floor availability.
- People won't go to third floor unless they have a very clear reason to go there. Determine what would attract people to third floor, and that will tell us how much space is needed.
- A space that could be used to make stuff may be viable (Clay Center example – making a craft seems to work) just selling crafts is fairly limited seasonally.
- Parking information is critical to getting people off the street and stopping in. Parking must be very easy.
- Windows are provided to allow people to look in and see what is going on, and allow natural light into the building, and to add to eyes on the street for activation.
- Attractive and visible off-street parking is needed for successful retail.
- 2nd floor – is there a way to have a viewing area into the heavy equipment operating area? People like to watch activity.
- Business incubator ideas? It needs to be plug and play – infrastructure for the desired use needs to be ready to go. Identify what is going to attract customers with dollars? The finances need to work.
- Midtown Exchange – artists were more prominent – but they can't be open all the time – shifted to be more event focused. Artists now come only for certain events. Food has been ongoing – everyone eats 3 x/day. Need 100 people per day per stall.

- What about maker space or community studio on 3rd floor with space to sell creations on 1st floor? The space would need floor drains, electricity, venting, fire suppression, etc.
- Staff reviewed the site circulation and operational challenges related to the municipal operations needs and creation of the Recruitment and Training Facility and why this requires demolition of the existing facility. No concerns were raised.
- Preference for retail along Longfellow based on there being more flexibility (one or two spaces). Food would also need the larger space.
- For the business incubator space, consider reserving space for a shaft for future ventilation ducts that may be needed.

Meeting 6

Marie Larson, Kyle Hanson (by phone)

- Flexible space is good.
- Consider noise impact of adjacent heavy equipment on community and retail spaces.
- Training for energy sector is needed, in general.
- Try to build in ability to include training for green economy – solar installation, energy auditors, etc.
- What extra efforts can be made to minimize emissions?
- There is a lot of space devoted to sand box – is it the best use of space?
- It seems like a training facility that is designed for traditional jobs rather than jobs of the future. At the same time, there is a real need for trades training now (painters, carpenters, etc.).
- Retail spaces could be used as training grounds for people.
- CPED has been asked about tower climbing training. Utility partners and others are asking for this.
- Training needs to be planned to adapt training in the future.
- Look at workforce assessment report completed by Sustainability Office for information about needs for green economy.
- Consider collaborative/co-working space where entrepreneurs could have a resource to do more.
- If goal is for city to train workers for city jobs, then this works.
- If the goal is to provide training for the broader community, then this plan probably needs to be developed differently and seek out other input.
- Center for Energy & Environment may have complementary needs. There are probably other organizations.
- Community Space ideas: ESL and citizenship classes may already be offered nearby elsewhere; that comment came up in small group conversations. Who will operate space?
- MPHA primary interest is looking for opportunities for their residents to get training.
- MPHA employee needs: Painters, carpenters, AFSCME employees, bobcat certifications, upward mobility.
- Business incubator – unsure what types of businesses. Commercial kitchen came up in discussions. Who wants to be here? What is the cost? Who is going to operate it?
- CPED gets a lot of requests from people for space that supports:
 - Industrial sewing (apprenticeships exist)
 - Low overhead or no cost space
 - Other producers

- Detroit has also done this. Co-ops are also a good example of co-working.
- Mechanic training is also a need – we only have small repair shops in Mpls. Small shops look for support about how to get their employees trained because they don't have space.

Meeting 7

Saeed Bihi

- Retail suggestions included a coffee shop or convenience store.
- Vocational training and classroom activities could serve community.
- 800 West Broadway – there is an education coordinator who coordinates educational activities in North Mpls. This person may be a resource for determining programming for a facility such as this.
- Apprenticeship programs are viewed as a valuable concept to the community.
- Small offices on 3rd floor may work – one or two room spaces are frequently being sought out in Cedar-Riverside area. Does that same need exist in this area? Unknown.
- Could we rent the third floor to one employer that would offer jobs that meet community skills? There are a lot of limitations to what could succeed on third floor.
- The Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center provides lots of services. There is a residential tower nearby that houses 7,000 people (40% children). Services offered include youth activities, homework help, training for entry level jobs (nursing assistant). What are the needs for the Little Earth community?
- Size of facility depends on the demand in the neighborhood for whatever services are offered there.
- Consider a name that communicates the opportunity that will be offered there.
- East African perspective: short term training courses resulting in good wage will attract people. Working outside is a particular challenge for East Africans.
- The partnership between numerous agencies is very successful at Opportunity Center (City, County, educational partnerships)

Meeting 8

Robert Lilligren

- The retail and business incubator space was responsive to the community's desires. He wondered if the proposed business incubator space could be used for the desired hydroponics or urban agriculture.
- Could a piece of the land be sold to the community?

Meeting 9

Dean Dovolis, Carol Pass, Brad Pass

- EPIC continues to be opposed to relocating the water maintenance facility to this location due to the number of vehicles, particularly diesel vehicles, that will be added to the site.
- EPIC will continue to fight the project unless they can get three acres of space, including a portion of the existing Roof Depot building, to use for the EPIC plan.
- Program desires include agricultural and/or aquaponics space, low-income housing, post-incarceration jobs, and space for a bike shop along the greenway.
- EPIC remains extremely dissatisfied with how the entire project has been handled, including the HAC.

Members we were unable to meet with:

- Peter Bajurny
- Brenna Brellie
- Cassandra Holmes
- Jose Luis Villasenor