

**Northfield Master Plan Steering Committee/EDA
Meeting Summary – October 14, 2010
First National Bank**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Estenson, Rhonda Pownell, Jim Pokorney, Steve Engler, Tim Geary, Victor Summa, Neil Lutsky, Mike Berthelsen, Erica Zweifel, Tracy Davis, Pete Sandberg

MEMBERS ABSENT: Scott Richardson, John Klockeman, Glen Castore, Jay Jasnoch, Chris Sawyer

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff McMenimen (HKGi), Economic Development Director Jody Gunderson and other interested persons

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Master Plan Document Distribution

Jeff McMenimen distributed drafts of the master plan document. The document is incomplete at this time, but represents progress on various sections of the document. A more complete draft will be distributed to Steering Committee, Planning Commission, EDA and City Council on October 29th. At this time, a draft of the document will also be placed onto the project website for public review.

Review Storm Water Management Diagrams

Jeff briefly reviewed the draft storm water management diagrams prepared for each site by MSA Professional Services. The diagrams indicate necessary infiltration and detention pond locations and sizes based upon detailed analysis of each site and the proposed development program and patterns. The storm water management study and plan were completed in compliance with the City's recently adopted Storm Water Ordinance and reviewed with the City Engineer.

Review Final Edits to Master Plans and Development Programs

Due to recommendations in the storm water management plan, edits were required for each of the draft master plans to bring them into compliance with the storm water management plan. On the South Site, this meant a loss of potential office (approx. 13 acres) and residential sites (approx. 1.5 acres) to incorporate infiltration zones and additional detention ponds. Other ponds were located onto a couple of the office parcels, but had been anticipated as part of the storm water management needs. On the North Site, additional landscape easements were incorporated to accommodate the need for more infiltration areas, however, this addition would not affect the potential development program. The 100 year floodplain areas shown along North Avenue would actually be smaller than that shown on the map due to existing culverts releasing storm water under North Ave. This diagram will be revised in the final document.

Review Open House Comments/Discussion

Jeff reviewed the written and oral public comments received during the September 23rd Open House, and asked if the Steering Committee had additional comments to add that they may have heard from others in the community.

The following is a list of written comments received at the Public Open House:

SOUTH SITE

Please include any comments, concerns, or considerations about the South Site Parcel Plan

1. Are the townhomes and corporate offices in any kind of walking distance or are they only designed for cars?

Please include any comments, concerns, or considerations about the South Site Open Space Plan

1. Need to infiltrate all or almost all stormwater to protect trout stream.
2. Parcels along north side of stream slope to stream – all infiltration needs to be on the parcels
3. Will the restoration along Heath and Spring Brook include trees and native grasses?

Please include any comments, concerns, or considerations about the South Site Circulation Plan

1. Will the yellow lines be paved trails or grassways? Not clear.

NORTH SITE

Please include any comments, concerns, or considerations about the North Site Parcel Plan

1. The initial concept sold to the community was “workforce housing”. Now we’re hearing “alumni housing” and “senior housing” – both on the far edge of Northfield! Seems more like bait and switch – not planning to put in industrial for many years, so no real workforce housing is in the plan.
2. Can’t see seniors opting to live out there unless they really have medical problems.

In addition to the written comments received from the open house, the following is a summary of oral public comments and/or questions received concerning the draft master plans presented at the September 23rd Public Open House:

1. Concerns regarding the phasing strategies (North Site) including any form of housing in the early phases of development.

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. The phasing plans illustrate potential phasing of the project infrastructure. On the north site, the first phases of infrastructure include an improved intersection at County Road 23 and State Hwy 19 to provide better access to future development off the highway. A portion of CR 23 is included going northeast to provide access to a variety of land uses, including industrial uses located to the north. The phasing plan (Phase 1) is illustrated to provide utilities and roads to approach from the east to the west, which is where the existing utilities reside. Phase 1 also provides the most amount of flexibility for a variety of land uses early in the development of the north site. Whether or not housing is developed early in the process will depend on a couple of important factors, including market conditions and the will of the community. If the community does not desire housing developed early in the process, there are checks and balances in the site review and approval process to prevent this from happening.

2. Concerns regarding the medium density housing being identified as either senior or alumni housing.

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. The type of housing planned for on the north site includes a range of housing density, from medium (avg. 12 dwelling units/acre) to higher densities (avg. 24 dwelling units/acre). The housing

products envisioned might include townhomes, rowhouses, apartments and condominiums. Whether the housing is specifically developed to house seniors will depend on market conditions. The plan identifies it as potential senior housing due to the nearby hospital, potential health and wellness campus and potential mixed use center – all desirable land uses near senior housing.

3. Workforce housing is preferred.

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. The bulk of housing included in the plan is anticipated to house the workforce created by future commercial uses included in the plan.

4. Concerns regarding retail in the plan

- Early phases of development – not desired in early phases
- Amount and type of retail – it shouldn't compete with downtown
- Location near Hwy 19 – some don't like it so close to the highway

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. The amount and type of retail anticipated in the plan is to provide support services and goods for those who will work and live in the area. Whether retail is included in early phases of the project will depend on market conditions and public will. The amount of retail that could be built on the sites identified for retail on the north site might total the equivalent of a grocery store, but due to the small parcel sizes and configuration of the parcels, we do not anticipate a large format store, rather, a collection of smaller retailers including convenience stores, coffee shops, cleaners, small restaurants/cafes, flower shops, etc. The amount of retail in comparison to the retail downtown would be much smaller and it is not anticipated it would or could compete with the authentic, small town, boutique ambiance of downtown Northfield. The plan discourages any competition with downtown Northfield and, in fact, seeks to support a healthy downtown retail environment. The reason the retail and lodging land uses are located near Hwy 19 are due to the understanding that these types of uses are dependant on good access and visibility. Locating them deep into the site might result in these parcels never being developed.

5. Question regarding stormwater management. Is it included in the master plan?

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. Storm water management is and will be included in the master plan. A storm water management plan has been drafted based upon site conditions and projected development programs for each site. The management plan has been informed by and is in compliance with the newly adopted storm water ordinance.

6. Question regarding the development program and absorption assumptions. Where did the assumptions come from? Were they part of the market report?

Open House Discussion: this issue was discussed in the Q and A portion of the Open House. The development program and absorption assumptions were derived from the market analysis. Historic absorption rates were analyzed for the Twin Cities market and applied to the Northfield competitive market corridor (I-35) to develop anticipated absorption of office and industrial uses in Northfield, projected out to 2030. The anticipated absorption of office and industrial uses (based on historic numbers) in Northfield by 2030 is just over 2 million square feet. This provided the planning team with a target development program to plan for. Additional land uses were added to the mix as a result of the market analysis (differentiators) and discussion with the Steering

Committee and EDA. Many of these additional land uses would help absorb the project more quickly in the market place and help to differentiate it from the competition.

7. Comments on the nature of development. Why can't Northfield be more like the State of Vermont?

Comments on Master Plan/Development Guidelines to Incorporate into Plan

The Steering Committee discussed whether or not they each support the master plan and provided the following thoughts to be considered in the master plan document:

In general, all Steering Committee members support the master plan. Specific topics discussed included the following:

1. Getting County Road 23 on Dakota County's radar seems important to the success of the early phases of the north site project. Who does this? Jody and Brian O'Connell have already met with County officials and discussed the plan. It is now on the County's radar which will help to gain future County participation in the funding of CR 23 improvements.
2. Should phasing cost estimates (infrastructure funding and potential tax generation dollars) be added to the document? Historically these numbers are not included into a master plan document which could guide development for many years, even decades. The numbers represent current values and may be misleading 10 or 20 years from now. We will include the phasing numbers in separate documents.
3. The plan should include an executive summary. The executive summary should narrate what the master plan is, and what it isn't.
4. The City will need to determine what recommendations from the master plan are included in the LDC and the Comp Plan. Each policy document will have to be amended based upon an adopted master plan.
5. Land ownership is an important issue. How is the plan realized over time?
6. Concerns regarding how the plan gets implemented were raised.

Next Steps/Meetings

Draft Master Plan Document: October 29, 2010
Deliver to City – distribute to EDA, PC, CC, Steering Comm
Place on project website for public review

November meetings: November 18, 2010 (EDA Meeting – AM)

November 18, 2010 (Planning Commission Meeting – PM)
Draft EDA and PC Comments – deliver to CC

November 23, 2010 (City Council Worksession – PM)
Make final edits to plan based on input

December Meetings December 14, 2010 (Public Hearing/City Council Meeting)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.