

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Estenson, Rhonda Pownell, Jim Pokorney, Tim Geary, Mike Berthelsen, Scott Richardson, Jay Jasnoch, Christopher Sawyer, Neil Lutsky, Erica Zweifel, Tracy Davis, John Klockeman, Glen Castore

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pete Sandberg

ALSO PRESENT: EDA Board Member's Steve Engler and Victor Summa, Jeff McMenimen, Anna Claussen, Economic Development Manager Jody Gunderson, Community Development Director Brian O'Connell and other interested persons

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

I) **Introduction**

New members of the Steering Committee – John Klockeman and Glen Castore (Bridgewater Township representatives) were introduced to the group. Jeff McMenimen provided an introduction to the meeting and reviewed the agenda. The primary purpose of this evening's meeting is to briefly take comments on the Draft Market Analysis Report and to present and review progress on Concept Plan Alternatives for the North Site Business and Industrial Park.

II) **Draft Market Analysis Review Comments**

McMenimen asked members of the Steering Committee/EDA if there were comments on the Draft Market Analysis Report. The following comments/suggestions were received:

- What is the significance of the City of Newburg (Oregon) South Industrial Master Plan as a comparable project related to the Northfield 3rd Industrial Business Park? McMenimen explained that the similarities were that Newburg, like Northfield, is located just outside a major metropolitan area and is the home of a college campus (George Fox University). It was noted that George Fox University is a conservative, Christian college. Other similarities include the planning for a business park with sustainable development standards. McMenimen distributed a copy of the Newburg Business Park Master Plan for the group to review during the meeting. Additional clarification on the significance of the Newburg project will be addressed and followed up on by the consultant team.
- The Steering Committee would like to see historical data regarding business and industrial development patterns in Northfield going back 10 years.
- The report reveals how surrounding communities that compete with Northfield for business and industrial development (Owatonna, Faribault, Eagan, etc.) utilize different strategies to attract and retain business development. Each of these communities utilizes strategies unique and tailored to their various assets. How can Northfield capitalize on its unique assets and market those assets to potential businesses?
- The issue of co-branding was raised again – a marketing strategy that sells the City and the Business Park together. The City has a responsibility in this effort if such a strategy is employed.
- What is required to make an Eco-Industrial Park (EIP) happen and succeed? McMenimen explained that there are few examples of successful EIP's in the United States, as pointed out in the market analysis report, because they require tremendous stewardship and coordination. Businesses that have symbiotic relationships must be attracted to the park and management of operations is critical. This doesn't rule out the potential for an Eco-Industrial Park in

Northfield. It points out that there is a significant commitment required to achieve a successful EIP.

- What is required to make this business park economically successful? What are the costs associated with the development of the park and what are the potential financial gains? McMenimen explained that it is too early in the process to know what is required at this time, but that the consultant team will address these issues further into the process by preparing a preliminary feasibility study for each concept that will shed more light on the financial feasibility question.

III) **Concept Alternative Review – North Site**

McMenimen reviewed the progress on three concept plan alternatives. The concept alternatives represent further study of the concepts developed during the Visioning Charrette. The alternatives illustrate different approaches to site organization including development parcel layout and land use distribution, open space, road networks and circulation (auto, bike and ped). Each alternative includes a building site test on parcels to study building program, orientation, service and loading access. The plans generally address the office and industrial target programs outlined in the market analysis, but they also include a variety of additional land uses to support the big idea behind each concept. The additional land uses were discussed during the charrette and in previous Steering Committee meetings.

The office/industrial program:

1. Industrial/Office (for 2030 – based on potential market absorption for Northfield)
= approx. 2,000,000 sf (*150 – 200 ac) consisting of the following:
 - Bulk warehouse (15%) = 300,000 sf (22 – 30 ac)
 - Office warehouse (15%) = 300,000 sf (22 – 30 ac)
 - Office showroom (10%) = 200,000 sf (15 – 20 ac)
 - Manufacturing (40%) = 800,000 sf (60 – 80 ac)
 - Other (20%) = 400,000 sf (30 – 40 ac) (R&D, Data, Medical, Corporate, Training)

**acreage requirements based on FAR assumptions of .30 - .25*

Additional potential land uses:

2. Energy Park = 20 – 30 ac
3. Conference Facility = 10 – 20 ac
4. Community College = 5 – 10 ac
5. Hotel/Lodging = 5 – 10 ac
6. Support Retail = 5 – 10 ac
7. Residential = 20 – 40 ac (live/work, workforce, alumni, senior housing)
8. Civic/Community Services = 5 – 15 ac (daycare, community center, recreation)

The three concept alternatives presented include the following:

1. Ag-Eco Plan

The Ag-Eco concept is rooted in the function and form of the rural landscape, specifically the farmstead; and it is guided by the conservation of natural resources and improvement in environmental function. The Ag-Eco Industrial Park proposes a unique concept built around the idea of combining research and innovation for agricultural related industries and energy efficiency. The concept builds on the regions history of agriculture and food production and the city's desire for intellectual curiosity and environmental awareness. It

is a visionary concept that sees a future of sustainable and innovative agricultural practices being researched and developed within the business park. It incorporates a renewable energy park that utilizes waste from the agriculture and food industries from the business park and surrounding region. Conceptually, the Ag-Eco Industrial Park learns from the natural ecosystem and seeks a closed cycle of materials flow among industries themselves. Practically, the Ag-Eco Industrial Park is trying to find ways to minimize and reprocess the waste rather than discard it.

2. Campus Plan

The Campus Plan concept builds on the history of Northfield's two renowned colleges and proposes the business and industrial park in a campus setting in which buildings are organized around public open spaces – parks, plazas and greenways, similar to the campus quadrangles found on the academic campuses of Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges. The design of an attractive public realm for employees, residents and visitors to enjoy is critical to the success of the Campus Plan concept. The internal roads should provide adequate circulation to businesses within the park but should also be designed so that the pedestrian and bicyclist can move safely and feel comfortable with the environment around them. As much of the movement within campuses will be on foot, direct, safe and attractive pedestrian routes must be provided. There must be large open spaces within the campus. The public environment therefore becomes the basis for the Campus Plan concept. This not only includes roads, bicycle trails and pedestrian routes; but also includes parks, open spaces, plazas and the general environment. This is fundamental to establishing the ambiance of the business park and attracting businesses to the campus.

3. Mixed-Use Plan

The Mixed-Use concept proposes a more sustainable alternative to typical business park developments by promoting a greater mix of land uses intended to support the needs of businesses, employees, residents and visitors. The concept proposes a business park organized around a more dense, mixed-use center including places of employment, services, places to live and recreate. The concept is to create a “place” within the business park that is distinct, identifiable and pedestrian-scaled. It is intended to fit within the context of Northfield in a way that recalls traditional patterns of development with smaller blocks, narrower streets, public gathering spaces and buildings designed to support a vibrant streetscape. Further from the mixed-use center, the patterns of development are planned to be more flexible and suitable for larger-scaled, industrial and corporate office uses.

McMenimen and Claussen presented the three alternatives, discussing the various framework strategies and land uses associated with each. They explained that these alternatives represent land planning to support the big idea behind each concept. Each concept prescribes specific land uses and locates those uses based on relationships between uses and infrastructure. Each concept also indicates the layout of roads and open spaces.

Following the presentation of the concept plans, the group discussed the issue of flexibility vs. prescribing specific uses on the plan, noting the following:

1. Prescriptive Plan

- Must be patient to get what you want developed

- Requires stewardship – marketing, patience, negotiation
- Longer absorption period
- May be more costly – infrastructure phasing
- May miss out on potential financial opportunities
- If all goes well, you may get what you want.

2. Flexible Plan

- Market conditions dictate development
- Plan is able to adapt to market opportunities
- Shorter absorption period
- May experience greater financial returns
- Requires less stewardship
- You may not get exactly what you want

We then discussed a strategy to develop the plan with enough flexibility on some sites to adapt to market demand, yet protect valuable sites for more prescribed land uses and potential tenants. The concept is to identify high value sites and protect those sites by controlling the types of permitted uses, marketing those sites more actively, and negotiating those sites more carefully. The other sites could be more flexible. They would allow a greater range of uses and would not require quite as much stewardship.

We discussed some of the following measures to ensure a quality development:

1. Framework (Master Plan)

- Road layout
- Parcel layout
- Open space plan

2. Development Standards

- Site orientation
- Building layout, massing and design
- Sustainability requirements

3. High Value Sites

- Identify and prioritize
- Protect
- Steward the type and quality of development on these sites

IV) Comments

1. Do we know the status of MnDOT’s plans for the Hwy 19/CR 23 interchange? MnDOT plans to conduct a study of Hwy 19 within the next 18 months, however, we don’t know how the interchange will be resolved. Our engineering team provided two scenarios for the interchange – one with a roundabout and one without roundabout. Both were utilized in the concepts.

2. The road systems have implications on the parcel layout and overall site organization. How do they fit in the context of the surrounding roadway systems? Connections to Highway 3? What is the timing for CR 23?

3. The organization of the site is important to get figured out – roads, development parcels and open space plan. Specific land uses should support the community goals but can be negotiated during development.

4. Is there an interchangeable quality of land uses? For instance, can the plan be flexible enough to allow different placement of uses within either framework plan?

5. Identifying high value sites may be tricky – for instance, a specific (highly valued) user that locates within the park may influence where the high value sites would be located. Attracting a desirable tenant changes the makeup of the business park. Likewise, if residential uses were a part of the development, the highly valued sites would be different than those for commercial uses.
6. There may be research and development opportunities with some of the current biological science programs being taught at Carleton and St. Olaf. These may be attractive to a specific user. These opportunities should be looked at more.
7. If the City could attract a major tenant like a Hormel Foods (which has ties to the community), it could catalyze the interest of other potential users in the park. How can the City attract a user like a Hormel? McMenimen explained that the consultant team will be developing a market strategy later in the process and include recommendations in the master plan.
8. How can the business park be phased for development to conform with the availability of revenue to develop infrastructure?

Next Steps

The consultant team will begin concept development for the south site and refine the concept alternatives for the north site. The team will begin preliminary feasibility studies for the north site.

Next Meeting: After discussion regarding potentially moving the meeting to Mondays the scheduled meeting for March 18, 2010 was left as is unless otherwise notified.

After a review of the schedule, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.