

Northfield 3rd Business and Industrial Park Steering Committee/EDA/Planning Commission Meeting  
Meeting Minutes –April 15, 2010  
City Hall Council Chambers

EDA MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Estenson, Jim Pokorney, Rhonda Pownell

PLANNING MEMBERS PRESENT: Alice Thomas, Tracy Davis, Suzie Nakasian, James Herreid, Richard Shulte, Steve Rholl

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Neil Lutsky, Glen Castore and John Klockeman, Bridgewater Township member , Erica Zweifel.

ALSO PRESENT: Council Member Betsey Buckheit, Economic Development Director Jody Gunderson, Community Development Director Brian O’Connell, HKGi Project Manager Jeff McMenimem, Dan Olson City Planner, Randy Jennings, Occasional Press, Recording Secretary Barb Thompson

### **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:00PM with introductions of all present.

### **Market Analysis**

Jeff McMenimen presented the group with an overview of the results of the market analysis including trends in industrial properties and the need to differentiate Northfield from other communities within Northfield’s competitive market area – Owattona, Faribault, Lakeville, Farmington, Eagan, Shakopee. The market analysis indicates that Northfield must do more than just offer raw land for commercial development due to competition with other communities in its competitive market area. Land prices, distance from I-35, competing wages, and other market factors related to commercial development in Northfield make it difficult for Northfield to compete with these other communities on a raw land basis. Business and industrial park development in Northfield must be distinguished from its competitors. Ways to achieve this include an integrated set of land uses, plenty of open space and trails, good infrastructure, development standards and plenty of amenities to support the businesses, employees and potential residents within the development.

The market analysis suggests that Northfield can expect approximately 100,000 square feet of new development per year over the next 20 years, leading to an additional 2,000,000 square feet of commercial development by 2030.

### **Project Inventory**

The planning team conducted a review of City policy documents and plans that would have an influence over the master plan concepts. Additionally, the planning team conducted a thorough site analysis of the physical conditions for each site and context yielding an opportunities and constraints plan.

In review of the plans and policies affecting the master planning effort, several common themes were found, including:

- Promote economic development by supporting existing businesses, retaining and attracting talent, aggressive business recruitment,

- Promoting expansion of new commercial and industrial sites without detracting from the downtown
- Engaging the colleges by attracting and recruiting alumni
- Promoting sustainable development practices
- The North property site should be developed differently than the South property site.
- Explore non-conventional business and industrial park development
- Protect and preserve significant natural resources and environmental significant areas.

**Targeted Land Use Program**

The market analysis reviewed historic absorption rates in the Twin Cities and the competitive market areas. The absorption projections indicate that Northfield can expect to absorb an additional 2,000,000 square feet of commercial development within the next 20 years. Additionally, the market study team reviewed historic patterns of office and industrial development in the market area to determine a breakdown on various types of office and industrial development that the planning team should be considering in the development of a master plan for these two sites. The targeted land use program is a result of that study and the basis for land use planning for office and industrial uses. The development program also included several other potential land uses based on discussions with the Northfield business community, the Steering Committee, City staff and comments received during the Visioning Charrette conducted in December, 2009. Mr. McMenimen presented a breakdown of the targeted development program for the properties for Northfield's 3<sup>rd</sup> Business and Industrial Park as a result of the market study and those comments:

| <b>Land Use</b> | <b>Percentage (by SF)</b> | <b>Building Program</b> | <b>Acres</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|

**Industrial/Business Uses**

|  |     |            |          |
|--|-----|------------|----------|
| Bulk Warehouse                                     | 15% | 300,000 sf | 30 acres |
| Office Warehouse                                   | 15% | 300,000 sf | 30 acres |
| Office Showroom                                    | 10% | 200,000 sf | 20 acres |
| Manufacturing                                      | 40% | 800,000 sf | 75 acres |
| Other<br>(Data Center, Professional Office, R & D) | 20% | 400,000 sf | 38 acres |

**Other Potential Land Uses (based on input from market analysis, steering committee, city staff, community)**

|  |               |  |                      |
|--|---------------|--|----------------------|
| Energy Park  |               |  | 20-30 acres          |
| Conference Center  |               |  | 20-30 acres          |
| Corporate Campus   |               |  | 20-40 acres          |
| Community/Technical College  |               |  | 5-10 acres           |
| Hotel Accommodations   |               |  | 5-10 acres           |
| Civic Uses (daycare, recreational, community center, other support uses) |               |  | 10-25 acres          |
| Residential (alumni housing, senior housing, townhomes, live/work)       |               |  | 20-50 acres          |
| Retail (support retail)  |               |  | 5-10 acres           |
| <b>Open Space</b>  | <b>20-25%</b> |  | <b>100-125 acres</b> |
| <b>Right of Way</b>  | <b>10-20%</b> |  | <b>50-100 acres</b>  |

## **Presentation of Concept Plans**

Mr. McMenimem began the presentation with a distinction made between the North Property and the South Property. The North site is more suitable than the south site for large scale industrial, warehouse development due to the flat land conditions, visibility and access to State Hwy 19 and Interstate 35. The South site is a higher amenity site more appropriate to corporate office, some civic and residential uses. These sites may attract different end users. He reminded the members that the more prescriptive the site, the longer time to fill the development, where as the more flexible in the planning and development, the shorter the infill – and this is an issue that the group will have to reconcile during the planning process.

Concept A North Site: Campus-like setting with buildings organized around central greens or quads. East campus is proposed as a health and wellness related development being adjacent to the existing hospital. A central campus organized around a green area with a greater mix of uses intended to support the office and industrial base. This area of the plan includes a small amount of retail, professional office, workforce housing, hotel and civic uses. The southwest campus is proposed as a corporate office setting. Larger scale industrial uses are located in the north and west portions of the site. Roadways are kept to a minimum to promote pedestrian, bicycle and public transit.

This alternative includes the possibility of a roundabout solution at Hwy 19 and CR 23.

Discussion Points: Concern from Planning Commission members about the inclusion of residential uses in the concept plan. The type of housing proposed would not be single family detached homes, but would include townhomes and live/work housing intended to support future employees and alumni of the area to promote the use of walk to work plan. The anticipated employees generated by the development would support over 1,500 future households. Housing a share of those employees is recommended by the market team to help distinguish this development from others in the region. The roundabout was also seen as a concern for truck traffic. This was included in the plan to show that there are options in the traffic routing available. There was also discussion of the fear of competing with downtown businesses by locating retail in the area. Mr. McMenimen explained the actual percentage of retail development was very small (1-2% of total area) and only to support those who live and work in the area with places for lunch, drycleaning, etc. Members urged Mr. McMenimen to have this information prominently displayed at the public hearings as this could become a hot button issue.

Concept B North Site: Greater mix of land uses proposed. Development is organized around an open space system made up of public greens and greenways, and a smaller block pattern – more consistent with historical block patterns of old Northfield. The roadways are more extensive in this scenario but may lead to a highly walkable development due to good access, connectivity and mix of uses. This concept may generate the greatest amount of tax revenue of the three for this site and absorb more quickly in the marketplace due to its mix of uses, but it is also the most costly in terms of infrastructure costs due to its extensive road system.

Discussion Points: Again, there is concern regarding housing shown in this proposal. The connection of CR 23 to Hwy 19 was also seen as a concern. The actual layout of the roads through the project is not determined at this point, but the team has anticipated a couple of options that MnDOT may choose to employ when determining the future of that interchange. The MnDOT study for the improvements of Hwy 19 will be conducted sometime within the next 18 months.

Concept C North Site: The land use of this concept supports research and innovation in the agricultural related industries. A central hub incorporates a mix of uses including innovation/training center, office, retail, and residential uses. Development is organized around an open space system made up of three greenways designed to handle storm water flows. Roadways are kept to a minimum to promote bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit. This plan is grounded in the idea of a closed loop/no waste development, or Eco-Industrial Park. This option may require more heavy lifting than the others due to its prescriptive nature requiring specific sets of users in certain locations and the need for coordinated management and operations between users.

Discussion Points: The concern with this plan would be the most challenging to fill to capacity as it so specific to the type of development. This concept would require great stewardship and patience on the part of the city/developer(s) including marketing efforts, incentives, coordinated development, etc.

Concept A South Site: This plan proposes clusters of development, organizing in a business park setting maximizing the views of open space. This space plans for a Nature Center or Environmental Education and/or Conference Center at the confluence of the two creeks. No additional creek crossings. Minimum loop roadways in order not to interrupt the wildlife corridor. Residential use is proposed located adjacent to existing residential uses along the north side of the property. A significant amount of the total site is proposed on both concepts for the south site, in particular, along Rice and Heath Creek corridors. The open space accounts for almost 50% of the total site on each of these concepts.

Discussion Points: The planning commission recommended including dimensions on the plans so people can see the proposed buffer zone widths protecting the streams. The residential development would be located near existing residential tracts as a transitional use from existing residential to business related uses.

Concept B South Side: The focus of this concept is a corporate office park balancing office and light industrial uses for the area. The development keeps roadways to a minimum while still providing access to all parcels. It offers a narrower wildlife corridor connecting the two creek corridors.

Discussion Points: The stream buffers were discussed as well as placing the residential near existing residential for a tie-in.

**Public Open House:** The Open House will be held on April 29, 2010 at the Community National Bank. The presentation will be offered to City Council on Tuesday April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Additional Items Suggested for Public Open House:

- Showing the history of development/annexations of the area.
- Showing the tax base correlations of each of the concept plans.
- Showing size correlations of the retail developments in the concept plans.