

Loretto Heights Area Plan Steering Committee Meeting # 4



Date and Time: Tuesday, January 22nd, 2019 from 6:00-8:00pm
Location: Loretto Heights Library – 3001 S. Federal Blvd.

Attendees

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (AND ALTERNATES)

In attendance: John Olson, J.J. Niemann, Jim Gibson, Hany Khattab, Adriana Pena, Kristina Evanoff, Anita Banuelos, Kasandra Ornelas, Norma Brown, Mark Witkiewicz, Sister Mary Nelle Gage, Tara Durham, Bill Sirois, Councilman Flynn, Tony Hernandez, Melissa Thate, Andrew Rogge, Clare Harris

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STAFF

Steve Nalley, Jason Morrison, Jenny Buddenborg, Brandon Shaver, Fran Peñafiel Vial

Meeting Summary

1. WELCOME & PUBLIC MEETING IMPRESSIONS

Jason Morrison introduced the evening agenda and invited the steering committee to share their impressions on the first public meeting which was held on Tuesday, January 15th at Machebeuf Hall on the former Loretto Heights College Campus.

Councilman Kevin Flynn said it was a tremendous turnout and applauded the work of Denver Community Planning & Development (CPD) Staff. He mentioned that all of the community feedback he received seemed to be positive. The only complaint he heard was that it became very crowded at some of the open-house stations.

Many of the steering committee members were also very impressed by the variety of media coverage and were thankful that the coverage provided a broad awareness for people unfamiliar with the planning process.

Steering committee members agreed that having a table devoted to the marketing consultant/theater study was a fantastic idea and a success in terms of engagement and input for the marketing study.

Jason presented the demographic data from community meeting attendees. Of the 162 community members who took the demographic survey at the community meeting, there was a fairly even distribution when it came to the gender and age of participants. However, work still needs to be done to engage other ethnic/cultural groups. The steering committee agreed that the group needs to find more ways to engage more people with these diverse backgrounds.

CPD Staff is working with Councilman Flynn and other steering committee members to hold an all-Spanish language community meeting. The date is TBA.

2. SCHEDULE

Jason presented the remaining schedule and agenda for the remaining seven steering committee meetings. Feedback from both the community meeting and online survey will be shared with the steering committee at the February 26th steering committee meeting. During the July meeting, the steering committee will review the draft Loretto Heights Area Plan (Plan) which will be provided to the committee a month prior to the meeting. In June, the steering committee will review final concepts/recommendations in the draft Plan. During the next five steering committee meetings (Tonight – May), the steering committee will begin to discuss specific topics such as land use and mobility.

There may be a need to take a deeper dive into some of these topics, as well as an opportunity to examine unique topics to the site, and Staff will continue to think about ways to best integrate this material into the overall outreach approach.

Many steering committee members agree that affordable housing should be a priority topic and one that may require additional discussion.

3. HISTORIC RESOURCES AND SURVEY REPORT

Jenny gave a brief presentation on the second draft of the report and began by walking the steering committee through a historical timeline of the former campus and highlighting some of the prominent architects, buildings, phases of construction and master plans completed for the property. She emphasized that the report will help inform the planning process in respect to the future of the historic buildings and how they might meet the vision of the Loretto Heights Area Plan.

Jenny walked the steering committee through the maps contained within the report that detail the consultant's evaluations for local and national designation of individual buildings and potential historic districts. A discussion ensued on the difference between local designation (Denver Landmark) and national designation (National Register of Historic Places (National Register)), and how the "significance" and "integrity" of a building or collection of buildings is an important factor in determining eligibility for designation.

Many steering committee members recommended that simple definitions and explanations should be included in the report for those who aren't as knowledgeable or familiar with this subject. Specifically, they are interested in a clear definition of a historic district, and the differences between a local landmark and National Register designation. Staff agreed that including more information would improve the overall readability and interpretation of the report.

Mark discussed options and ideas surrounding Pancratia Hall which will now be preserved for affordable housing. Jim Hartman with Harman Ely Investments – a development and

investment company that specializes in sustainable redevelopment and renewable energy – was in attendance and is working with Mark on this opportunity.

The steering committee discussed what it means for housing to be considered “affordable” and it was suggested that this discussion warrants a deeper dive and research; the same was suggested for the topic of historic preservation. Staff will continue to think about ways to best integrate this material into the overall outreach approach.

4. COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

Brandon gave a presentation on the “Complete Neighborhoods” concept which is found in the new draft of Blueprint Denver. The presentation centered around “future places” in order to provide background for the steering committee’s land use mapping exercise. Future places describe the various scales and types of development that will characterize the Loretto Heights planning area and these places will be comprised of centers, corridors, residential areas and districts.

5. FUTURE PLACE MAPPING EXERCISE

Jason introduced the land use mapping exercise and walked the steering committee members through the activity. Steering committee members were asked to begin by identifying future place types for areas outside of the former Loretto Heights Campus and then work towards the center of the site. The steering committee identified existing land uses they would like to preserve and those they may like to see changed. Similarly, the steering committee thought about how the land uses should relate to one another both inside and outside of the planning area boundary.

The activity lasted about 25 minutes and then each group was asked to provide a brief “report-out” to the larger group.