

Loretto Heights Area Plan Steering Committee Meeting # 3



Date and Time: Tuesday, December 18th, 2018 from 6:00-8:00pm
Location: Loretto Heights Library – 3001 S. Federal Blvd.

Attendees

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (AND ALTERNATES)

John Olson, Jim Gibson, Andrew Rogge, Clare Harris, Tara Durham, Sister Mary Nelle Gage, Hany Khattab, Father Joseph Dang, Councilman Kevin Flynn, Martha Kirkpatrick, JJ Nieman, Anita Banuelos, Kasandra Ornelas, Tony Hernandez, Mark Witkiewicz

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STAFF

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

Meeting Summary

1. WELCOME

Jason Morrison introduced the evening agenda and introduced Afor Chavez, Outreach Assistant with Community Planning and Development, who reminded the steering committee of their important roles in the planning process and thanked them for being involved. The steering committee was encouraged to continue to promote the upcoming community meeting on January 15th as well as continued public participation with the online survey.

Mark Witkiewicz announced that the development team is listening to themes that have emerged from the steering committee and is working on creative ways to preserve and reuse Pancratia Hall.

2. INVENTORY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES & SURVEY REPORT

Jenny Buddenborg walked through what the inventory report will include and how it will be used to inform the Loretto Heights Area Plan. A full draft will be released in mid-January for the steering committee to review. She then introduced Jim Steely from Square Moon Consultants.

Jim Steely introduced himself and his background. He then gave an overview and history of the campus. He briefly explained the criteria for designation on the National Register of Historic Places level as well as local designation options (Denver Landmark).

Tony Hernandez asked if the steering committee could see the draft report before staff has put in redlines. Steve Nalley explained that staff needs to ensure that the scope is being met and all information is accurate. Staff agreed to provide the steering committee with a redline of the document as soon as one is available.

Jim Steely and staff had a conversation regarding the findings and recommendations in the report. There was also a discussion of the proposed 2-week review period for the steering committee draft. Staff will look at extending the review period to allow the steering committee more time to review the draft report.

3. PRECEDENT IMAGES

Jason introduced the precedent image homework assignment. About half of the steering committee had prepared images and text to share with the group. Each participant took 2-4 minutes to explain why they chose their images/text.

4. WORKSHOP VISION STATEMENTS

Jason, Brandon, and Fran read draft vision statements and had the steering committee react via a keypad polling exercise. After each vote was tallied, there was a brief discussion about ideas to improve the vision statements. A snapshot of that discussion follows:

Equitable, Affordable and Inclusive

- The steering committee believes that there may need to be more discussion around what it means to be “equitable”. Some members are unsure of what equity is or what it might mean for the site.
- The steering committee believes the vision element should be more inclusive of the diversity that is in the neighborhood.
- There was also discussion around the term “socio-economic” and how this term is defined. The steering committee suggested adding more about income and affordability.
- Within this vision element, the steering committee would like to see “all of Denver” to be thought of more broadly. The steering committee views the future of this site becoming a regional draw.

Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods

- The steering committee would like to somehow state that it’s “a local gathering place” and “welcomes visitors.” This helps better define “cultural hub.”
- The steering committee believes that “cultural hub” can be many things related to the authenticity of place.

Connected, Safe and Accessible Places

- The steering committee believes that the draft vision statement relies too heavily on the term “street”. However, staff reiterated that it’s also important to refer to the entire planning area and not just the development parcel. “Streets” may be more relevant to adjacent corridors like Federal Boulevard but could be more defined internal to the site.
- The steering committee believes that if the site becomes a “cultural hub”, it needs to be more walkable. There needs to be equity of access and the user experience is key.

Economically Diverse and Vibrant

- The steering committee believes that this draft vision element does not 1) speak to visitors, nor 2) speak to the site becoming a destination.
- The steering committee recommends using the term “thriving” vs “self-sustaining”.
- The steering committee suggested including language along the lines of “live, work and play”.

Environmentally Resilient

- A member of the community stated that the term “future generations” imply just people. It was recommended that additional language be added to include more about wildlife, natural ecosystems. The steering committee generally agreed.
- The steering committee asked how plazas play into environmentally resilient theme? It was suggested to modify the language to think more about “natural plazas” with undisturbed land.

Healthy & Active

- There was a discussion around what is meant by “access to opportunity”. It was suggested to think more about this term and if it is appropriate within the context of this vision element.
- The steering committee suggested modifying the language surrounding “people who face the greatest barriers to good health”. It was suggested that the term “greatest” is too “harsh” and that it should be more simple and general.
- The steering committee noted that the “active” element is missing from this draft and suggested adding more language surrounding the programming around the space.

5. JANUARY COMMUNITY MEETING/WRAP UP

Jason concluded the meeting by announcing the upcoming community meeting on January 15th. He asked the steering committee for ideas of what they are hoping to hear from the community.

There was a brief discussion of signage/wayfinding and general logistics. Clare Harris thought it would be interesting to ask the community what would get them to the campus in the future. Sister Mary Nelle Gage thinks it will be important to provide an introduction and background to the community about the project and to build in a more formal component to the meeting.

Jason will build in time during the next steering committee to present preliminary findings of the survey results.