

12th Avenue Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes
May 27, 2009 - 6:00pm
WaterTown Coffee, 550 12th Avenue

Questions/comments from the public are italicized

Park at 12th and E James Court (Kate Stineback, Capitol Hill Housing)

- We need to begin soliciting names for those interested in working on park issues because we want and need community input
- We have early planning sketches for the park that were done in conjunction with Seattle University plans for an adjacent site
- The park plan will move forward since the Seattle University adjacent development is stalled

What is the schedule for the park?

Kate: The Parks Department already has about \$400,000 in funding for this Park. If we get a community group together to discuss plans for the Park, the City should respond more quickly.

Bill Zosel: It is important to attract activity to the Park. We will form a committee of neighbors to work on the Park plan. It is also important to involve local artists early in the process.

We should talk to the property owners right next to park It would be good to get their input early in the design process.

Street furniture (K. Stineback)

- Capitol Hill Housing received \$5,000 from the City Office of Economic Development for street furniture. We are hoping to match the \$5,000 with 12th Avenue Initiative funds for a total of \$10,000 for the project.
- We would like to get feedback from the neighborhood on the street furniture design
- 12th Avenue businesses have mentioned their fear of people sleeping on street furniture. That is why we have looked at stools initially.
- These are preliminary designs and preliminary locations. We would love feedback from the neighborhood on designs and locations.

We need more street seating near Seattle Academy of Arts and Sciences (SAAS) near Madison. Maybe near the Chatterbox Café? There is no outdoor seating there. SAAS is looking to put in street seating near 13th and E Spring St.

Are these stools permanent?

Kate: Yes. The picture shows the stools on wheels but the final product will be attached permanently to the sidewalk.

Can we do something incorporated with the Park space? Maybe a cluster of them at the park to start activating the space?

A mix of work from different artists would be good for the corridor. But we should definitely inter-mix the pieces. This would help give 12th Avenue a more cohesive feel instead of one type of street furniture near Madison and a completely different design on the south end of 12th.

Kate: Our initial plan was to spread out these stools in 3 or 4 locations from Pike/Pine all the way to E Jefferson.

Is there a deadline for this project?

Kate: We don't have a contract from the City yet...but we imagine that this work will be implemented by the end of 2009.

How many of these stools can we buy for with the \$10,000 budget?

Kate: We could get 8-10 stools including installation for that price. We are considering 4 locations with 2 stools at each location.

There is some guerilla art outside the café at 20th and Union. This encourages conversation and our pieces should stimulate conversation as well as being gathering places. SDOT also has free surplus granite curbstones – maybe we can use something like that for additional street furniture. We would just need to find a way to anchor them to the sidewalk.

Is there a call for artists? Also, what about tagging?

Kate: Capitol Hill Housing will maintain the street furniture. We didn't initially do a larger call for artists because of a timing issue with applying for the grant from the City. But we could do a call for artists for this or upcoming street improvements.

It makes sense to group a larger number of stools together to allow a larger number of people to gather. We should also think about putting them where there's something interesting to look at.

SAAS student could work as artists. SAAS also has a welding studio.

If there's free material, there's greater opportunity for this street furniture. We should ask business owners for ideas of what they would like outside their shop.

King County Youth Services might be able to help provide labor.

We should also focus on design issues...does Capitol Hill Housing have designers to work with?

Kate: We have a strong network of local designers to bounce ideas off of. Maybe we need a street furniture subcommittee?

Pratt Fine Arts could be a good partner as well.

Seattle University Master Plan (Bill Zosel)

- There is a public hearing on June 3rd at 5pm to discuss Seattle University's Master Plan Update
- Topics include:
 - Potential retail on street front near 12th and Jefferson with parking under with field above.
 - Increased height limits to 65'
 - Boundary expansions
 - 12th and E Madison self storage area to be redeveloped
- The Master Plan is not on the Seattle University website yet
- Seattle University invites and needs public comment.

To clarify, the expansion areas are new areas that would be available for Seattle University to develop later? So if Seattle University does buy property within that expanded area, then they can build higher.

Does the Master Plan cover a zoning overlay or does it dictate building use also?

Joy Jacobson, Seattle University: It covers both aspects along with a transportation plan element.

12th and E Jefferson Project (Kate Stineback)

- This lot has been vacant for many years – previous development plans were stalled in litigation years ago
- The City later reclaimed ownership and the land was held by the Office of Housing
- Capitol Hill Housing responded to the City's proposal to site workforce housing there
- The current zoning allows for a 4-story building.
- To build an economically sustainable development, Capitol Hill Housing would need 6 floors so we are requesting a rezone.
- It takes about a year for an rezone process to occur

- Capitol Hill Housing is looking into options to a rezone including a Comprehensive Plan text amendment (which may be able to occur sooner than the regular rezone process)
- Council member Sally Clark has passed legislation that would offer incentives for providing Workforce Housing in development projects. If you provide affordable housing, you can gain 2 more floors of housing.
 - The 12th and E Jefferson project may be a good first site for this new legislation
 - We must get feedback and support directly from the community on the impacts of the extra two floors of housing
- It is likely that this type of text amendment would apply to all 4 corners of the 12 and E Jefferson site.
 - If used at these other sites, affordable housing or streetscape improvements would have to be provided to gain the two additional floors of height.

Why aren't you providing much parking at 12th and E Jefferson?

Kate: This site is located within an urban village center. The City requires no parking in these areas. We are planned 6 parking spots at grade only.

But the neighborhood has problems with a lack of parking already.

Kate: Most of Capitol Hill Housing residents don't have cars so this increase in housing might now adversely affect parking issues. The parking lot at our development at Broadway and Pine is rarely used by residents.

It is not fair to say 12th and E Jefferson is the same as the Broadway and Pine location. The 12th site lacks transit.

Why is there no transit on 12th Avenue?

With this added density, will we have new ammunition to pull the streetcar onto 12th Avenue? We may need to show linkages with employment hubs.

Kate: There is no North - South transit between Broadway and 23rd. This is a huge under-representation in this area.

What about Yesler Terrace's development when they add 5,000 housing units? 12th Avenue should still lobby for transit because of under-representation in the area.

Kate: 12th and E Jefferson would respond to the eyes-in-the-street need on that corner as well as responding to safety, affordability, and needed small commercial space.

What is the proposed commercial space rent?

Kate: Around \$10-15 per sq. ft. is the goal.

I like the design of this project, especially the transparency of the glass which helps the retail and looks good for the project. I think it will respond well to the Seattle University up-zone that will increase heights in the area.

What are the negatives or objections you've heard regarding this project?

Kate: We held a community design charrette and the main issues raised were window glazing, landscaping, public open spaces and using quality exterior materials.

Kate: Are there concerns from the community regarding the rezone?

Bill: Noted that increased height may increase shading on single family homes on E Barclay Ct.

Have we done shade studies?

Kate: Yes. Most of the shade will hit the west end of Barclay Ct. We would like to get together with residents of E. Barclay Ct. (closer to 12th) to show them the models and get their input as well.

Is there really that much more shadow created between 65 feet and 40 feet?

There are lots of concerns from current residents about noise issues at the site because of the adjacent night club. What about soundproofing this building? Only 2 original residents are left on Barclay Ct. The others have all moved away because of the noise. Can we work with the City to continue what they were doing to try and control the noise? Capitol Hill Housing is in a position to re-evaluate those old nuisance issues.

Kate: It is Capitol Hill Housing's job to address these issues for the community as a Community Development Corporation.

Drug dealing is also an issue at night.

Kate: Capitol Hill Housing also has experience with drug issues at some of our other apartments. We can have trained resident managers patrol the area.

Kate: Next steps:

- Capitol Hill Housing will move forward with conversations with Council Member Sally Clark on the text amendment/rezone and we will keep the neighborhood informed of the process.

An announcement was made about the Central District street clean-up Saturday, May 30th from 9:00 – 1:00 at Orca Park.

Meeting minutes compiled by Cecelia Gunn