



MLK Subarea Plan

MLK Subarea Plan/EIS Working Group

Meeting Notes

Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA

Thursday, December 8, 2011 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Attendees

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steen Armstrong | <input type="checkbox"/> Justin Leighton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Beckwith (Beckwith Consulting) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chris Morton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brian Boudet (City of Tacoma) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chelsea Levy (City of Tacoma) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connie Brown | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Price (Beckwith Consulting) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eric Crittendon | <input type="checkbox"/> Dawn Rodin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dalton Gittens | <input type="checkbox"/> David Shroedel (Beckwith Consulting) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greg Hopkins | <input type="checkbox"/> Angie Thomson (EnvirolIssues) |

Welcome and Introductions

Brian Boudet (Project Lead) welcomed meeting participants and led a round of introductions. Brian reviewed the agenda and the purpose of the meeting, as well as discussed the purpose of the Hilltop Project Advisory Committee (HPAC). He noted that this meeting should lay the foundation for the HPAC work over the next 18 months, and identify how the committee can be an integral part of developing the Subarea Plan. The HPAC can help make sure the Subarea Plan is reflective of community priorities as it moves through formal review and implementation.

Project Background

Brian provided a brief overview of the project. The City received a grant for the MLK Subarea Plan, which will provide a framework for making sure the district is a viable area for growth over the next 20-30 years. Goals of the plan will include:

- Protecting single family areas
- Ensuring growth creates vibrant areas for living, working, shopping, etc.
- Revitalizing historic business districts

Along with a vision for the area, the Subarea Plan will include specific details about what the MLK District will look like going forward, including open space, aesthetics, infrastructure, etc. The Subarea Planning process also includes the development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will identify environmental issues that may result from projected growth (e.g., traffic, noise, air quality). The EIS will identify proposed mitigation to ensure that growth happens in an environmentally responsible way.

Committee Structure

The Committee discussed how they would make decisions. While there is a desire to reach consensus on recommendations, the committee noted that that may not always be possible.

The group suggested using a thumbs up/thumbs down approach to making decisions. At any point, there is an opportunity to check in with group members about their opinion on a specific issue. A 'thumbs up' indicates the member is in favor of the issue, 'thumbs down' indicates the member is not in favor of the issue, and 'thumbs sideways' indicates concerns or questions. When taking a final vote, the group suggested that the majority should prevail; defined as 50% +1 (the City does not have a vote on the Committee). Following a vote, members in the minority may elect to prepare a minority report but this will be determined on a case by case basis. There was some discussion about how a quorum would be defined, but no decisions were made on that topic.

The committee also discussed the need for officers. Brian noted that it would be helpful to have a chair who could be consulted about meeting planning. It is anticipated that the chair would periodically attend City meetings to represent the group as the plan development moves forward. The group supported the idea of a chair and vice-chair, and Justin Leighton noted that he was interested in being chair. The committee will discuss the selection of chair and vice-chair at their next meeting.

The committee also noted that HPAC membership should include representatives from the St. Joseph's and Multicare, as well as Evergreen Tacoma and University of Washington Tacoma.

Action item: Provide draft language for decision making for the group to consider (City)

Plan Development

Tom Beckwith (Beckwith Consulting) described some of the activities that would take place during development of the plan. He described the charrette planned for during the plan development, noting that participants would break into small groups to each discuss a series of topics. At the end, input from each group would be collated to inform the plan. The charrette could be a shorter (half-day) or longer (2-3 day) event, depending on what is most useful for the process.

Following the charrette, input received from participants will be tested with the broader community. Based on community comments, the team will develop the final EIS and implementation strategies.

Tom also described a series of subject-related focus groups that will take place, as well as internet surveys, written surveys, and public meetings. All of these activities will inform the development of the plan, and he noted that the input will be tested with the community before final decisions are made.



The group discussed people who would be participating in the focus groups, and identified some additional people/organizations to contact. Those included:

- Congregations (Pastor Banks can represent congregations in the area)
- Tempest
- 1022
- 1111
- LeLe's
- Tacoma Tofu
- Fish House
- Ezell's
- Papa Jones
- Hilltop Pawn Shop
- Key Bank (contact Mary Jo)
- Le Donut
- TPC Realtors
- Barber Shop near 1022
- Safeway
- Save-a-lot
- Johnson's Candy
- Mr. Mac
- Western Beauty Supply
- Hilltop Pawn Shop
- Yakima Law Group
- Tower Coffee
- Tapcar

The group noted that Associated Ministries should also be identified as a housing organization and suggested contacting the Hilltop Business District to identify other businesses in the area. Suggestions for programs that work with young adults and students included:

- Allen Renaissance programs
- Hilltop Artists
- Teachers and counselors
- McCarver parent group with THA
- Upward Bound
- DASH
- Spaceworks
- Youth for Christ at People's Center
- University of Washington Tacoma
- Centro Latino
- Tacoma Community House
- Cross Cultural Collaborative
- Colored Women's Association

Real estate contacts include Timothy Johnson, who is an active commercial real estate agent in the area. Eric Crittendon (HPAC member) is also a real estate broker.

Tom also asked the group to identify key property owners in the Hilltop area. He noted that it is important to have a variety of 'catalytic' properties that can test the feasibility of the plan elements. Catalytic properties are those properties that are ready to be developed. Suggestions included:

- St. John's Baptist Church
- Allen AME
- MLK HDA (11th and MLK)
- Associated Ministries (13th and I)



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- Eric Crittendon's family property (23rd and MLK)
- New Covenant Pentecostal Church (23rd)
- Pickens Brothers (12th and MLK)
- Brian Broussard property
- City owned properties
- McCarver Village (23rd and Yakima)
- Jackson Building (25th and Yakima)
- St. Joseph's
- Multicare
- Catholic Community Services (contact Jim Anderson)

Draft Vision for MLK

The group brainstormed a vision for the MLK area. Themes of the vision included:

- Walkable and multimodal
 - connected to other areas
 - easy to get to from downtown
- Shop, eat, plan, work visit, live
 - Both mixed use and mixed income
- Mixed retail and good distribution of businesses throughout the area
- Clean, safe, attractive
- Sustainable—environment, economic, long-term investment
- “Draw” or focal point, a gathering place for community

Through the discussion the group also identified some priorities and goals for the Subarea Plan. Those goals included:

- Concentrate and strengthen MLK as the “spine” of the area
- Build on what is going well and thriving
- Identify the story and brand of the area—build on what is unique about Hilltop and its history

The group also noted that building height is a potentially contentious issue in the community. There are a variety of opinions about the ideal height of new buildings in the neighborhood.

Next meeting

The next HPAC meeting will be held on January 12, 2012 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm and held on the second Thursday of each month thereafter. The City will look at potentially changing the meeting location to an area closer to the Hilltop.