**MLK Subarea Plan/EIS Working Group
Meeting Notes
People’s Community Center, 1602 South Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Tacoma, WA
Thursday August 9, 2012 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

* **Justin Leighton(Central Neighborhood Council)**
* **Frances Lorenz(Hilltop Business District)**
* **Jeff Williams(Historic Tacoma)**
* **Mike Denney(MultiCare)**
* **Walter Zisette(Tacoma Housing Authority)**
* **Dorian Waller(Tacoma Urban League)**
* **Connie Brown(Affordable Housing Consortium)**
* **Rebecca Solverson(SpaceWorks Tacoma)**

**Welcome and Intro: Justin**

 **Sound Transit**

Sound Transit will be holding an open house on Wednesday August 22nd at People’s Community Center from 11am-1pm and Tacoma Dome Plaza from 4pm-7pm. This will be looking at the future of and possible expansion of Tacoma Link. There will be information on alternative routes available on the Sound Transit web site by August 17th. Public comment period closes on Sep. 17th, so act now. Comment forms as well as surveys are also available on the web site.

**Jeff Williams – Historic Tacoma**

Historic Tacoma would like to hang on to what few historic buildings remain in the MLK area. Key buildings of interest include the Brown’s Star Grill and Beauty Time properties. If these properties are to be included in the Historic Register it would preserve the outside of the buildings. People could still by the buildings and develop the inside. By saving the façade developers could be eligible for significant tax savings over the next ten years as well as qualify for a grant down the road. This is all available in order to incentivize developers. Jeff added that the Landmark Preservation Society would determine if it would be at all feasible to restore.

Tom Beckwith cited a 2009 study done by the city that estimated it would cost $1.8 million to renovate Brown’s Star and 1.5 million to renovate Beauty Time. Today that would be even more; he estimates $156 per sq/ft. He offered three options for developers:

1. Develop as standalone(restore)-because of failed projects in the area this is unlikely to happen, the problem lies in capacity and minimal return
2. Tear down (start over)
3. Salvage façade- wouldn’t count for tax credit so additional build up would likely be the outcome

Subarea plan and EIS should clarify and help direct the future of these sites by giving definitive recommendations. Tom offered examples of buildings with step back buildups and day light parking in the rear with 119 parking stalls, 8 Live Work units, and 68 housing units as well as 67,000 sq/ft of of retail space.

After a discussion about the importance of these buildings and desire to have them registered vs. the economic feasibility of developing the group decided to do additional research and bring this topic for the next meeting.

**Tom Beckwith – Beckwith Consulting**

Tom offered an update on the status of the DEIS. This offers two plans of action:

1. Do nothing - (maintain present policies from Tacoma Comprehensive Plan and Land Use)
2. Adopt Subarea plan- incorporate everything that has been worked on so far (this doesn’t change the Comp. Plan, it shows how to apply it in MLK area and clean up zoning boundaries)

The EIS plan will consist of two parts:

1. Natural- existing conditions ,etc.(done)
2. Human – housing, zoning, transportation, utilities, historic inventory, and urban design element (done in 1 month)

The purpose of the Planned Action EIS is if a development project is outlined in the EIS then it can be pre-approved. If a developer wants to deviate from the EIS then they must do a separate EIS individually and have it approved.

Tom then shared some envelope studies with potential building designs for key locations in the MLK business district. MLKHDA properties at 11th and J st. and Save A Lot

The groups had questions about the designs and necessity of the amount of parking that was allotted for in the envelope studies.

The group concluded after a reminder and brief description of the upcoming August 16th Open House and a reminder that the health care interns were having another open house on August 30th from 3:00 – 5:00 pmat the University of Washington Tacoma – Cherry Parkes Building, Room 103.

**Next meeting:** Second Thursday of the month

September 13, 2012; 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.; People’s Community Center