

# Marina District Planning

## Summary of Stakeholders Meeting 1 – September 1, 2010

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### OVERVIEW

The purpose of the first Stakeholder Group meeting was to consider key elements of successful town centers and to begin brainstorming development and redevelopment opportunities for the Marina District.

Staff presented information on the City's planning and economic development goals; strengths, issues and opportunities affecting development and redevelopment in the Marina District; and ideas on what redevelopment could look like.

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to small group discussions, which explored ideas and envisioned land use options for three opportunity nodes centered on S 223<sup>rd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S, S 216<sup>th</sup>/Marine View Drive, and S 227<sup>th</sup>/Marine View Drive. Each group was asked to designate a spokesperson to report out to the at large group at the end of the brainstorming session.

### SUMMARY

Stakeholders Group members broke out into three working groups. Each group was asked to vision future development within three smaller opportunity nodes within the Marina District. Groups were asked to focus on the S 223<sup>rd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S node first, with discussion of other areas as time allowed.

Participants brainstormed locations where taller buildings might be possible and discussed the desired character of the built form and streetscape for each node, keeping in mind the following questions:

*What's needed to support a vibrant and sustainable community?*

*What opportunities or limitations exist that affect your option?*

*How does each node function relative to the other nodes?*

General observations for the Study Area ranged from defining needs to suggesting solutions. Establishing gateways and incorporating artwork into the Marina District were seen as “quick wins” that were easy to implement and demonstrated that the City of Des Moines cares about its image and has a vision for its future. Traffic roundabouts were a common theme to announce “you have arrived” as well as calm traffic speeds along Marine View Drive and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. The view potential was identified as an asset and it was suggested zoning standards need to allow taller buildings where views are not compromised. All three groups saw the QFC site providing an opportunity to increase building heights (60+ feet). Green space, trees and landscaping were also deemed important elements that contributed to the sustainability of the area.

Improved transit service connecting the Marina District to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Pacific Highway S was seen as essential element to bringing people into the area. The area around S 223<sup>rd</sup>/Marine View Drive was identified as a logical location for a bus transit station. Shuttle services from the Marina and bicycle rentals were also identified as ways to improve access to and through the Marina District. Connectivity for pedestrians was a recurring topic among all three groups, pointing to the need for improved sidewalks and streetscape amenities. Other ideas included installing an elevator and stairs at the west end of S 223<sup>rd</sup> Street and enhancing the central stairway off of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue S to improve access to/from the business district and the Marina.

Common themes and ideas generated for each of the opportunity nodes are summarized below:

### **S223rd Street/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S Node**

Discussions around the S 223<sup>rd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S Node focused on identifying new uses to attract people the area and strengthening the S 223<sup>rd</sup> Street connection to the Marina and Beach Park. Specific uses identified for this area included museums, art studios, boutique shops, a winery, antique shop, nice restaurants and cultural activities. Enhancement of the streetscape along Marine View Drive, S 223<sup>rd</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S were seen as important for creating a walkable area and providing strong connections through the neighborhood. Mixed use and affordable housing options were discussed. Gateway treatments, artwork, street trees, open space and overall attractiveness of the area were seen as important elements for creating a positive image for the Marina District. Generally, a more human scale was envisioned for the built environment with building heights around 45 feet +/-.

### **S216th Street/Marine View Drive Node**

Ideas and observations for redevelopment of the S 216<sup>th</sup> Street/Marine View Drive Node included redevelopment of the QFC site with taller buildings (60+ feet) that include mixed income housing, a good grocery store, some retail and ample open space, pedestrian network and parking within. The bridge over Des Moines Creek and the intersections at Des Moines Memorial Drive and S 216<sup>th</sup> Street were viewed as opportunities for incorporating gateway signage, artwork and traffic calming measures and to establish a positive image for the Marina District.

### **S 227th Street/Marine View Drive Node**

The groups did not have as much time to focus on the S 227<sup>th</sup> Street Node. This area was seen as providing opportunities for redevelopment, higher building heights and strengthening the gateways and connections to the Marina.

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

A summary of the ideas and comments generated by each of the working groups is provided below. The summary is based on the notes taken at each table, graphics that were developed, and the group report-outs.

### **Table 1:**

#### **S223rd/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S Node**

- Affordable housing options, mixed use
- Green space and play areas for pets, children, young families (pet potty stations)
- Staggered building heights up to 45 feet
- Lower speed limits on Marine View Drive and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S (25 mph) or slow traffic down in other ways with street shape (i.e., curb bulbs)
- Activities and uses at Marina and Beach Park – variety and built-in infrastructure
- Bike station rentals (i.e., similar to zip cars)
- Art shops, winery, antique shop, nice or eclectic restaurants, cultural activities
- What draws us here?
- Museums, art studios, boutique shops
- Flexibility in design standards and setbacks to accommodate more green space (for all nodes)

#### **S216th/Marine View Drive Node**

- Whole Foods complex with outdoor seating and parking in center of complex
- 60-foot height allowance
- Green space – concrete is dirty
- Site design should include courtyards, kidney and organic shapes
- Looks Inviting – where car wash was, and auto repair spot good candidates
- Roundabout with public art that also provides access into the development at the QFC site
- Three choices of housing – smaller to larger multifamily
- Green space options, creative choices
- Outdoor seating
- No “Theme” that is required, flexibility

#### **S 227<sup>th</sup> Street/Marine View Drive Node**

- Wayfinding signs to bring people down to Marina and guide them to parking, etc.
- View corridors
- Trees in median (keep medians weeded)
- Variety and flexibility in architecture
- Roundabouts for intersections (i.e., S 227<sup>th</sup>/Marine View Drive)
- Artistic shops, plants, public space on interior
- Pedestrian friendly
- Strobe warning lights for crosswalks

- Establish “Adopt a Street” and “Adopt a Green Space” programs to help with beautification and maintenance
- Provide lots of open space and green space

## **Table 2:**

### **General Comments**

- Establishing basic 20-year plan (downtown vision) is important
- What is the 20-year cost of paving/maintenance along Marine View Drive S? It may be beneficial to declassify/remove the state highway status (i.e., balance the City cost vs. the ability to create a vibrant Main Street with angle parking along Marine View Drive)
- Roundabouts on Marine View Drive to improve circulation and calm traffic
- Wayfinding/signage to help people navigate to and through the Marina District
- Gateways – decorative light standards to create sense of place (example: bridge at S 216<sup>th</sup>/MVDS)
- Water feature at gateway/s
- More shops, retail, more parks and recreation activities, good grocery store (i.e., PCC – Puget Consumer Co-op)
- Shuttle between Marina and Downtown
- Transit loop from Marina District to Pacific Highway S
- More defined walking path around downtown
- Fewer bars
- Banners (seasonal)
- Street trees, flower planters and/or hanging baskets (drip irrigation) throughout; incorporate infrastructure such as access to water when water system upgrade occurs
- Developers will not want to pay for all infrastructure improvements
- Marine View Drive - traditional main street with angle parking
- Invest in alleys
- Maximize height where feasible/not overbearing
- Mixed use development
- Gathering place on waterfront in Marina area

### **S223rd/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S Node**

- Need businesses to walk to in center of S 223<sup>rd</sup>
- Smaller scale, quaint, walkable, historic
- Focus on getting down to Marina via S 223<sup>rd</sup>
- Stairs at end of S 223<sup>rd</sup> above marina hill climb (i.e., stairs with elevator similar to Pike Place Market and/or Harbor Steps)
- More restaurants at Marina/Beach Park
- Declassify Marine View Drive from State Highway status
- Focus on Marine View Drive as “Main Street” to support existing businesses

- Development along S 223<sup>rd</sup> should only extend partially onto 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S (mid-block from S 223<sup>rd</sup>) then grow out over time
- Keep buildings on Marine View Drive lower scale (35-40 feet)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S - maximize heights without compromising views
- Add street trees and flower baskets along MVD, S 223<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S
- Marina serves as main gathering place
- Add bus terminal at S 223<sup>rd</sup>/Marine View Drive
- Stairs/elevator at hill climb to/from Marina

### **S216th/Marine View Drive Node**

- Increase height (60+ feet) at QFC site to encourage redevelopment and increase the number of people living in Marina District
- Possibly increase heights to 45 feet directly to the south
- Roundabout at S 216<sup>th</sup> Street/Marine View Drive to provide gateway and slow traffic
- Create a gateway at bridge from Des Moines Memorial Drive/MVDS – incorporate gateway signage, decorative fencing, artwork and pedestrian scale lights – shows Des Moines cares about its image and enticement that there's more to come
- Fountain/water feature at Big Catch Plaza
- Future use at Des Moines Elementary potential asset for sports activities

### **S 227<sup>th</sup> Street/Marine View Drive Node**

- Potential for higher building heights
- Strengthen connections to the Marina

## **Table 3:**

### **S223rd/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S Node**

- Green and trees on Marine View Drive makes it more pedestrian friendly
- Marine View Drive: 19,000-20,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S: 3,000-4000 vpd
- Lack of benches
- Feel unprotected next to the traffic on Marine View Drive
- Lack of sidewalks along S 223<sup>rd</sup>
- No destination – No incentive
- Only one waterfront restaurant
- Lack of easy connection to the Marina from node – lack of clearly defined sidewalk
- Lack of sidewalk on S 240<sup>th</sup> Street creates a barrier for Highline Community College students to walk to Downtown
- City should take risk and buy land to consolidate for redevelopment project – to relocate library Downtown? Or even City Hall? – this will generate more business for cafes and lunch spots

### **S216th/Marine View Drive Node**

- Create a clearly visible pedestrian access off of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S down to Beach Park Trail with signage to it that is visible from Marine View Drive
- Metropolitan Market instead of QFC, PCC
- Like to see mixed-use
- More inviting art/water feature at Big Catch Plaza – we already have a glass artist in Des Moines

### **S 227<sup>th</sup> Street/Marine View Drive Node**

- Cover/screen boat yard at entrance to Marina District and use its surface for a “Welcome to the Marina District” sign or put up historical images of Des Moines
- Don’t like seeing Jack-in –the-Box, Taco-Time, 7-Eleven or other fast food as “first impression”
- Provide continuous sidewalk (paved with trees and landscaping) from Pacific Highway/Kent-Des Moines Road to S 227<sup>th</sup>/Marine View Drive