

Marina District Planning

Summary of Stakeholders Meeting #2 – October 6, 2010

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Stakeholder Group Meeting #2 was to gain a better understanding of the various facets of development and redevelopment and to review and comment on land use Scenario 1.0 which reflected the input and ideas from the Stakeholder Group Meeting #1.

Staff presented additional information on the factors that affect the success of development projects such as required utility infrastructure, precedents for higher building heights and land values, along with an overview of some of the tools and incentives to support redevelopment. Insights on job creation and resident spending were also presented to demonstrate the potential economic benefits from new development and redevelopment in the Marina District.

Scenario 1.0 was introduced to the group. Staff described the general land use, scale of development and pedestrian environment for each node. Initial modeling for the S 233rd Street corridor from Marina View Drive to Cliff Avenue was also shared with the group.

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to small group discussions to refine Scenario 1.0. Each group was asked to think about some of the broader policy questions for implementing the Stakeholder Group's ideas:

- Should the City initiate/jump start change with public investments?
 - Purchase property for public-private partnership?
 - Relocate City Hall or the library to Marina District?
- Declassifying Marine View Drive from a State Highway designation was proposed - Given the time and cost associated with this action (i.e., City takes over the ownership of the bridge and operation and maintenance costs for Marine View Drive and Kent-Des Moines Road):
 - Should this receive priority over other improvements identified for the Marina District?
 - If so, who pays for the new operations and maintenance costs? City-wide tax levy? Marina District levy?
- Roundabouts have been discussed many times over the past years
 - Is this an important element that the City needs to explore further? If so, what priority should it take?
 - Who pays for improvements? Establish Local Improvement District?
 - Should this receive priority over other improvements identified for the Marina District?

Each group designated 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 evaluate Scenario 1.0 keeping in mind the following questions:

- *What is needed to support a vibrant and sustainable community?*
- *What opportunities or limitations exist?*
- *What is missing?*

Refinements to Scenario 1.0 reinforce the need to improve the character and image of the Marina District through enhanced gateways, wayfinding signage, pedestrian scale lighting, and branding. An eclectic mix of uses as well as entry level, mid level and high end housing are important elements for attracting people to use and live in the area. Many recommend focusing economic development efforts on one node or at the Marina and letting the market determine how the other areas develop. At the policy level, it was recommended that the City initiate the zoning changes and incentives now to be ready for an upswing in the market. This included raising building heights and extending the multifamily tax exemption to the Marina District to help jump-start development. Traffic roundabouts at S 216th and S 227th Streets were seen as important gateway and traffic calming features. Options for angle parking along Marine View Drive and 7th Avenue S were also discussed.

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 and the group report-outs.

TABLE 1:

General Comments

- The Marina is the key to revitalizing the community
 - Restaurant and amenities at the Marina so it is used (not a “walk through”)
 - Maritime museum on Marina floor
 - Facility for community/group events
- Electric Utilities – Need a map showing 3-phase power grid to better understand the system; Are there latecomer fees?
- Signage – “Welcome to Marina District”
 - From gateways to Marina
 - From Des Moines Creek Trail to Marina
 - Should there be consistent/conforming signs on all storefronts? (no consensus)
- Branding – fun destination, maritime images (including modern images)
- Inexpensive artistic effects – altering chain link on bridge, night lighting
- Pedestrian traffic – slow down cars, night lighting
- Angle parking along Marine View Drive

- Idea - property owners can give up some frontage to accommodate angle parking similar to what's in front of the theater
- WSDOT comment - back in angle is safer
- Make land use changes now before economy pops
- Building heights – raise them now
- Hard to compete with cost of existing space unless heights are raised to spread costs over more square footage
- Don't move City Hall or library to downtown – they don't draw enough people
- Market will determine land use at each node
- Housing should be a blend of entry level, mid level and high end
- Land is still affordable in Des Moines
- MFTE – expand Multifamily Tax Exemption to Downtown for mixed use buildings

S223rd/7th Avenue S Node

- 7th is the key component to success - create vitality, pedestrian friendly (Note - in response to the question “How should each node function?”)
- Leave Marine View Drive alone
- Could S 223rd Street become Main Street?
- Boutique hotel on S 223rd above Marina

TABLE 2:

General Comments

- Wayfinding signage is needed
- Need a front door entrance at each side of a store (i.e., corner lots)- example Mill Creek
- Incentives – pedestrian friendly
- Hire one person to put developers and tenants together (i.e., Walla Walla success story)
- Speed reduction – convert Marine View Drive and 7th Avenue to one way couplet
- Allow for angle parking
- Make one node work, success of the others will follow

S216th/Marine View Drive Node

- QFC Plaza – find anchor tenant such as Whole Foods and Starbucks

TABLE 3:

S223rd/7th Avenue S Node

- Keep buildings south of S 222nd lower
- Stop light signals need to be more equal for east-west queues (e.g., cars on S 223rd E/W wait longer than cars N/S on Marine View Drive)
- Bars – need standards for the type of bars located in the Marina District
- Running paths
- Trader Joes

- People Avenue to Marina
- Bring museum to S 223rd
- More art, more green...

S216th/Marine View Drive Node

- Change perception from residential to commercial – lots of retail and services
- Des Moines Memorial Drive and S 216th is the entry from north to commercial
- Mid-height buildings 35-45' (minority opinion)
- Make entryway inviting (arch/gateway) to raise anticipation and make people happy to leave Normandy Park and Burien
- Connection to Des Moines Creek Trail and Beach Park Historic District
- Pedestrian crossing – light at S 219th Street or red flags at a minimum
- Businesses should front on 7th Avenue from S 216th to S 227th Street
- Integrate lights (pedestrian scale??)
- Roundabout at each end (S 216th Street and S 227th Street)

S 227th Street/Marine View Drive Node

- Improve aesthetics – make more attractive
- Restore small boater access to water
- Design to create anticipation:
 - Beautiful water feature/plaza
 - Attractive businesses
 - Kiosk for visitors/Marina customer
 - Clean up roadway along Kent-Des Moines Road/10th Ave S to S 227th/Marine View DR
 - Attractive cinema at S 226th Street (Stegan property)
 - Lower scale size buildings
 - Make old theater into a live theater
 - Join the yacht club to launch
 - Opportunities to generate revenue
 - Integrate branded lighting that says “Des Moines”
- Boutique shops, restaurants w/ outdoor seating and things that advertise welcome folks
- Create a sense of place with street arches/entry ways
- Use more “green” technology
- Business should reflect the Marina
- Incentivize building in the Marina to grow the Marina District
- Create a “Blue Zone” (e.g., support arts, boost walking and biking, create greenbelt, prohibit drive through, shrink signage, control signage)
- A place to escape from the world (District)