

Design Workshop, Inc.
Landscape Architecture
Land Planning
Urban Design
Strategic Services

Meeting Record

To: Project Advisory Group
From: Design Workshop / Nolte
Date: September 26, 2008

Project Name: Cherry Creek North Capital
Improvements

Subject: Cherry Creek North PAG Meeting
Meeting Date: September 11, 2008
Start/End: 8:00 – 10:00am
Location: CCN BID

Meeting Telephone Conference Call

Following are the minutes of the above referenced meeting. The following people were present: FROM CHERRY CREEK NORTH BID: JULIE BENDER, AND KEVIN WREDE. FROM CHERRY CREEK NORTH BOARD AND CIC COMMITTEE: ROSELLA LOUIS. FROM DESIGN WORKSHOP: ELIOT HOYT AND HEATHER LARSON. FROM NOLTE: WILL COFFIELD AND ROGER MILLER. PAG MEMBERS: CORKY DOUGLAS, JONATHAN SAIBER, DAVID PESSEL, RANDY SCHNICKER, KAREN MOORE, DAVID HADSELL, AND TAM O'NEILL.

Action Items are in Bold.

1. Meeting Opening (Roger Miller - Nolte)
2. Schematic Design (Eliot Hoyt – Design Workshop)
 - a. Streetscape – the plan is divided into three types of landscape treatment:
 - i. Type 1 is tree lawn – what you're used to today.
 1. On the southern and western perimeter
 2. Upper Fillmore (way to distinguish it from other blocks). Extension of the plaza. Wider sidewalks. It is already a great block – enhance what is there.
 3. Steele Street
 - ii. Type 2 is long, low planters with evergreen plantings and some accent color instead of tree lawn.
 1. Applied to the rest of the north-south streets: Columbine, Clayton, Detroit, Milwaukee, St. Paul
 2. This treatment is good for streets that would become event streets.

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- iii. Type 3 is more hardscape treatment with plantings around the base of the trees instead of grates
 - 1. This treatment will be used in the areas where it is difficult to maintain grass (e.g. north facing blocks where chemical snow melt is frequently used, narrow sidewalks where people tend to walk on the lawn, etc.)
 - b. Tree lawn will stay on both sides of Third Avenue:
 - i. Splash block may be narrower to keep the tree lawn wide enough to be viable.
 - ii. Tam: If the sidewalk were wider people wouldn't spill out onto grass to walk.
 - c. Kevin said that the grass on First Avenue is not green very often – hard to maintain.
 - i. **DW to examine grass on First Avenue**
 - d. Julie: The parks department is reviewing the median at University & First to see if there is anything we can do with that.
3. Environmental Graphics
- a. Midblock systems
 - i. We received feedback saying we don't want banners all the time. Better to utilize it for events to trigger something is going on.
 - ii. System of four poles, lights on poles to make it a brighter spot, different paving treatment.
 - iii. Planters on poles at midblocks and Upper Fillmore to make it special and keep it manageable. Quick connect hose to make it easy to water.
 - iv. Studying electrical system to see if we can add more outlets there for events.
 - b. Pedestrian pole has evolved – understanding what the base looks like – more detail.
 - c. Kevin: WiFi radio transmitters sit in the bases of the light poles. WiFi doesn't always reach everywhere in the District. CIC and the design team have been discussing whether we should keep providing free WiFi. People can get WiFi themselves relatively cheaply these days. If we do keep it, do we send it only to SSPs to draw people there to sit?
 - i. Julie: It costs the district \$22,000 per year (doesn't account for maintenance and new equipment if transmitters go down.)
 - ii. Tam: It's old technology now. If you really need to get your emails don't you have a blackberry? If you carry a laptop to Starbucks, they already have it.
 - iii. Julie: Tea Box doesn't have it.
 - iv. Kevin: Pete's doesn't, but it's a market thing, if they want to compete. There will be pushback if we turn it off.
 - v. Eliot: Do you provide it just to Fillmore Plaza? Will that cost just as much?
 - vi. Corky: We have a bunch of people that come into the tavern that use it.
 - vii. Julie: We do have a record of how many people use it, but not unique users. They did have it downtown and eliminated it and had a response to bring it back.
 - d. Going with blue for all parking signs.
 - e. Street signs have been approved by the fire department – black and white with interior LED illumination.
 - f. Directories

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- i. We did research on whether we could do interactive directories in the district. There is not an existing system for outdoor interactive directories. The cost was very high to create that system. People who might be drawn to use the interactive technology are the same people that already have hand-held devices that can access digital information. It makes more sense to work on how to deliver dynamic information to hand helds (instead of interactive directories) and use traditional, static outdoor directories on the street. The types of directories proposed are as follows:
 - 1. Large primary directory with all names of shops/businesses and a map with a pocket for the brochure. These would be horizontal to fit all of the names and still be visible to people standing or in wheelchairs. Located 3 or 4 places in the district.
 - (a) Printed graphic gets changed out 3-4 times/year.
 - 2. Smaller version at every intersection – map and foldout brochure “take away.” Working on enhancing identity of named streets so people start to “learn the map”.
 - 3. Brochure holder only; slander pole or “sprout”. Located at places where someone would want to grab a directory and go, or sit down and study it, e.g. next to a SSP.
 - 4. Directory at exit of every parking garage.
 - ii. Jonathan: Tam made a comment about the black color.
 - 1. Eliot: Color hasn’t really been decided. Design team is leaning toward metallic gray for the poles. Directories could match that. We will mock it up. There also have been questions about material of the directory. It’s not plexiglass; more like aluminum or steel plate with a bend in it – elegant, yet sturdy.
 - 2. Tam: You have to imagine it with 3 feet of snow around.
 - 3. Eliot: We need to figure out exactly its location in relation to the sidewalk. There are chances for them to be perpendicular to the flow of pedestrian traffic where there is now hardscape outside of the walking zone.
4. Small Special Places
- a. Revised the locations and reduced the number to about two dozen.
 - b. Added some between First and Second, following the recommendation of this group.
 - c. Some potential locations are adjacent to properties under re-development. We will not design them at this point, but will write the parameters into the design guidelines so there is an opportunity to create more of these in the future.
 - d. Locations of SSPs are based on (T) Trees, (B) Buildings, (A) Art, (F) Floor, (O) Other
 - e. Key components – floor surface, shade, seating element to create dwelling place, vertical element to give a sense of enclosure, lighting, plant material to distinguish it, ornamentation.
 - i. David P: Is there a way to keep the benches in a way that keeps them clean from bird droppings?
 - ii. Eliot: There is only so much you can do, but we will look at mitigating the impact.
 - f. Tam: I don’t see bike racks anywhere. They’re important along the northern perimeter. Bike racks are hard to get to if you’re coming from the North from the Congress Park neighborhood.
 - i. Kevin: Great areas for those north of Third.
 - ii. Roger: Have you seen an increase in scooters?
 - iii. Tam: Yes, scooters and bikes.

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- iv. Roger: Placement of bike racks is hard – you don't want car doors to hit them.
 - v. David P: We can get a small allocation of space from parking garages for bike racks.
 - vi. Eliot: We could also put bicycle sign on the parking garages.
 - vii. David H: We need to take a survey of where they are parking bikes and scooters now and don't fight it because that's where they're going to put them.
 - viii. Corky: Do you poll shop owners to see if they have a need for bike racks?
 - ix. **Roger: Team to do bike rack survey.**
 - x. Tam: A survey of people in the district – could ask about what furnishings they want.
 - xi. Julie: What about the hitching posts?
 - xii. Roger: There are at least 6 throughout the district.
 - xiii. Kevin: People tie their dogs up to them.
 - xiv. **Eliot will look into the history of them.**
 - xv. Jonathan: If it works it may be nice to have something historic in the district.
 - g. Jonathan: Newspaper pedestals & bike racks – need to consider how these are placed for snow removal. There has been a lot of damage in the past.
 - i. **Eliot: We should talk to the maintenance team about placement.**
 - ii. Roger: Two ideas: put them near coffee shops or put them near parking. That's where we've seen the most success in the past. Random placement means they are less likely to be used. We can reduce the number by being strategic.
5. Intersections
- a. Three categories: gateways, focal points and internal intersections.
 - b. Leave planters, but put in a wall on the outside of it.
 - c. Take out existing seating and replace it with new bench style; add seating to the district primarily in SSPs.
 - d. The design team had talked about turning planter walls into seat walls, which we decided doesn't make sense. The walls are all different heights. Some sidewalks are wide enough to put seating, but sometimes they are too cramped. We will go intersection by intersection to determine where seating should be.
 - i. Julie: the benches are in bad shape.
 - ii. Eliot: We still want to replace seating that is there with a new bench system. We like the idea of having wood introduced to the bench system. We will test materials in the next phase of design. Ipe and tropical hard woods are used in Colorado in a lot of bench systems. Would bring uniformity throughout the district with wood element.
 - e. Want to put trees back into planters in many locations in the district. The schematic design package has a plan that shows proposed new trees.
 - f. System along edges of intersections– cast iron, truncated domes and some kind of a cobbled system.
 - g. Paving treatments
 - i. Current sandstone bands are difficult to maintain – freeze and thaw make them pop up and chip. Would like to get away from that system.

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1. One solution would be uniform paving system that covers the whole thing.
 2. Zones would be treated as a sidewalk zone with a different special paver in the middle.
 3. All the intersections need complete paving treatments. Studying options. We have a healthy budget number in paving so we can get to a level of quality. There's a desire to keep natural materials. We need to look at other native stones we can use for paving. There are also concrete pavers with a high end finish that we need to explore. We are building up a library of paving that is used in districts that match the caliber of this district.
- ii. Roger: One complication is the construction techniques for putting in bands and trying to preserve some of the pavements. The cost of replacement might be cheaper than trying to save the current paving. We're going to go intersection by intersection to determine the best means. We also need to look at timing. Demolishing the whole thing might also be faster than saving some things.
 1. Tam: We also need to consider the cost of down time to that tenant while the corner is ripped up.
 - iii. David H: What's the plan on the sidewalks other than the corners?
 - iv. Roger: We're not doing a lot because it's not on public property.
 - v. David H: Can we reinforce sidewalk improvements (with property owners) to compliment these nice corners?
 - vi. Roger: Nolte created a book documenting the areas that need repair. The question is how do we work with property owners to get repairs done that fall outside of the budget we have here. Also there are a number of driveway entrances that need to be repaired. Can we work with the City to repair these? There is a benefit to the property owners to do their required improvements at the same time as the district's improvements.
 - vii. Kevin: The sidewalk issue is going to be the biggest concern because we have so many absent property owners.
 - viii. Julie: These are discussions we've had that aren't captured in the drawings but we want them captured in a document.
 - ix. David H: We need to talk to property owners to ask if they will participate.
 - x. Jonathan: The City is very specific on what variance of elevations are allowed between sidewalk panels. We can call someone to come out and inspect and they will issue citations.
 - xi. Randy: In the past, the City has put the breaks on multiple citations from one source. Many people may have to call.
6. Fillmore Plaza
- a. The primary features are a large expanse of grass that people can gather on for events, a double line of trees along the edges with fixed seating to encourage strolling and sitting in the shade, and something in the middle.
 - b. Packet Eliot passed out contains:
 - i. Information on Netlon grass system, a structural turf appropriate for emergency vehicles and still comfortable to sit on,
 - ii. Writing regarding the design principle of having something roughly in the middle of a public space
 - iii. Article on the importance of shade to the viability of retail centers.

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- c. Moved fountain elements to the side
- d. Need fire department access:
 - i. Eliot met with Fire Department to review their requirements; need to meet again to discuss structural turf. Grasscrete and other grass paving systems have a concrete or plastic structural element that grass grows up through. They get root bound so grass dies. We are exploring a system called Netlon to see if it will work for us. It's mesh fabric packed with sand. Similar rooting base to golf green – very firm. Grass grows into sand & peat. Mesh fabric gives it strength. Can drive heavy trucks across it, it drains well, and provides a soft surface to sit on. Need to ask fire department if they can back out instead of drive through, otherwise the center element has to incorporate
- e. There have been some concerns about visibility on the plaza. We have worked with a 3D model to understand how trees would need to be limbed up to ensure visibility to retailers and from one end to the other.
- f. Added crossing points to grass to enhance cross shopping – need to determine material. Decomposed granite or hardscape that can be shoveled in the winter.
- g. Suggestion of fireplace near wall where steps come up – creates gathering point. Looking at ways to make the center of the Plaza a destination location.
- h. Standard pedestrian light poles along the edge.
- i. LED lights underneath benches and uplighting of trees.
- j. Tam: Any ideas what to do with bronze art piece?
 - i. Roger: We still need to figure out what to do with Cougar & Children art pieces.
 - ii. Eliot: We had not replaced any of the art in this plan. We need to examine the best placement.
 - iii. Tam: People love the wading children sculpture.
 - iv. Julie: The Garts have offered to place it in the Milwaukee plaza.
- k. Julie: Designers are looking at “something in the middle” structures that will not block sightlines.
 - i. Eliot: Structure in the middle will provide shade and draw people in. We can have a clear drive lane if needed. We are working on a number of different forms.
 - ii. Karen: Shade is important.
 - iii. Jonathan: You get shade along the side from the trees. You could do something that is breakaway so the fire department is okay with it.
- l. David P: Could there be an outdoor coffee place or food kiosk? Central Park is littered with them – people don't have to go into a retail store to buy their coffee.
- m. Jonathan: What's good [about the design] is how minimal it is. The success of plaza will be how little there is. I would encourage less. I still have to voice my concern about the wood in the middle.
 - i. Eliot: We're doing research of places it's doing well in this climate. If the district decides it's not good, we'll find a different material.
- n. Jonathan: If the fire department has to put out a rigger, nothing will survive and the district will have to take the cost to replace everything anyway.
- o. David P: What about drinking fountains?

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- i. **Eliot: We'll add that to our furnishing elements.**
 - p. Rosella: For the bigger planters on the corners (entry way of plaza) – I can envision seating facing the interior as well as exterior.
 - i. **Eliot: We're modeling what those need to be so we can examine that.**
 - q. Julie: Does anyone have a reaction to the fireplace?
 - i. Karen: I love that idea. Makes it more intimate and inviting. Question about wood deck – if there is no shade how hot does that get?
 - ii. Eliot: It is a dark wood, so it will get hot but not as much as stone. All-weather material gets hotter because plastic retains heat. They use ipe for the docks at Cherry Creek reservoir. It's also used on the Atlantic City boardwalk – so it holds up.
 - r. Eliot: We are going to explore the idea of having points in the ground that allow tents to be erected. Netlon (structural turf) material will also hold up for events. We wouldn't have to replace the turf as much. Another positive reason for putting something in the middle, vertical elements could easily hold lights, power, etc for events.
 - i. Rosella: To take the space from day to night – if there's nothing in the middle that feels lit, you'd feel a lack of safety.
 - ii. Eliot: If there's a destination in the middle that's lit you would be more likely to walk down the plaza at night.
 - s. Kevin: Will uplit trees bother the residents?
 - i. Eliot: I don't think uplighting from the ground will affect the residences. It's a soft lighting of the tree that won't shine in someone's window.
 - t. Rosella: Somewhere there needs to be food service.
7. Discussion/ Confirmation of design
- a. Roger: Do you feel like this is going the right direction? If so, we're going to be moving into the details of this plan.
 - b. David P: What is the district's priority?
 - c. Roger: We have a budget that we've been tracking including O & M costs – all of this is within the budget. We're also looking at infrastructure repairs, maintenance systems, walking surfaces, parking meters, parking signage. We want to fix and repair, then add niceties.
 - d. Julie: We're testing 10 smart meters here in Cherry Creek – maybe on the Fillmore block.
 - e. Julie: We're going to go to the Board and the CIC to recommend that the design team move forward with what we're doing.
 - f. The PAG members nodded regarding consensus of the design direction.
 - i. Jonathan: I would give confirmation of direction with these notes:
 1. Narrowing the splash strip where necessary – look at where it really is necessary. Keep it wider and go to full pavement with pocket for trees. The splash block is important.
 2. I'm worried about potted planters on the poles. It's difficult to keep those looking good.
 3. Look at entry points into Fillmore Plaza at First and Second. They are both gateways.
 4. We need to announce the plaza. I like the simplicity of Fillmore Plaza, but on First Avenue there should be a sign announcing the plaza.

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- ii. Rosella: On Second and Fillmore it would be nice to cut it back so people can be dropped off.
 - 1. Eliot: We can't cut out at Second Avenue because it's an intersection and cars can't stop in the intersection. We are looking at a drop of on either side of the plaza along Second.
 - 2. Roger: From a design standpoint it doesn't work to cut out the sidewalk.
 - 3. Eliot: It's also a crosswalk so we get pedestrian conflicts. We want to reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.
 - 4. Rosella: What if you gave it more space?
 - 5. Eliot: I think the answer is to have it happen on either side of the plaza.
 - 6. Kevin: There is no parking on half of Fillmore on the West side North of plaza. We're looking into if we can add four spaces there.
 - 7. Rosella: If we got four spaces there, it would be easier to give up two on Second Avenue.
 - 8. Tam: What about by the Starbucks?
 - 9. Eliot: That's a good idea
8. Upcoming Meetings
- a. The next phase of design is a 3 month process.
 - b. We will not have the October 9th PAG meeting to give the design team more time to further the design, but we will look at moving the November meeting up so there will only be 6 weeks between meetings.
 - i. **Nolte will coordinate this and let everyone know the final date/time of the next PAG meeting.**
 - c. **Open house: October 17 8:30 to 10:00.**

END OF NOTES

The record herein is considered to be an accurate depiction of the discussion and/or decisions made during the meeting unless written clarification is received by Design Workshop within five (5) working days upon receipt of this meeting record.

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