

May 17, 2010

Board of Directors
c/o Mark W. Bollinger, Executive Director, Facilities
Minneapolis Public Schools
807 NE Broadway
Minneapolis MN 55413

Re: Community Goals for 2225 East Lake redevelopment and RFP process

Dear Mark,

On behalf of the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO), we thank you for attending our April 19, 2010 Land Use and Transportation and Housing committee meeting.

Over the last seven years the school district has been a generous host and partner in making the Midtown Farmers Market the success it is today. In gratitude, the Midtown Farmers Market is dedicating its 2010 season to Minneapolis Public Schools. A very big “thank you” for allowing us to connect over 40,000 residents to local agricultural and crafts vendors each year.

Not surprisingly, the Land Use and Transportation and Housing committee was pleased to hear you reiterate at our last meeting that continued operation of the Midtown Farmers Market at 2225 East Lake Street is secure for the near future, and that through the upcoming RFP process the Market is assured to be part of any future redevelopment of the site.

The committee was also pleased to learn that MPS plans to relocate its Welcome Center and Adult Basic Education within all proposed redevelopment projects for 2225 East Lake. Along with the Midtown YWCA and Minneapolis Sports Center, South High School, the Midtown Greenway, the Midtown Farmers Market, and Minneapolis Police Department 3rd Precinct Headquarters, the Welcome Center and ABE will help to establish the Lake Street Station area as a civic and regional destination.

In accordance to your request, we are writing to provide you with an overview of the neighborhood's past planning activities related to redevelopment of the 2225 East Lake Street site (the result of over 10 years of grassroots community input and professionally facilitated planning work), as well as a brief summary of the neighborhood's history and ambitions for involvement in the current RFP process.

Regarding the redevelopment: The Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan (“the Plan”) describes planning goals for properties contained within a two block swath south of Lake Street between Hiawatha and Cedar Avenues, and was amended to the Minneapolis Plan by City Council vote in 2002.

Highlights of the Plan include:

- A mix of low and mid-rise mixed-use housing and commercial space next to the Lake Street Light Rail Transit station, with taller structures (6 or more stories) located to the north near the station and Lake Street, with other structures stepping down in scale to 31st Street (where the parcel adjoins a mix of single family residences and three story apartment buildings).
- A permanent home for the Midtown Farmers Market, to be visually and physically linked to the Lake Street station and neighborhood thoroughfares.
- Structured or below-grade parking that will afford inviting, higher density retail along Lake Street, and keeps surface parking to the minimum needed for metered, short-term visitor and ADA parking.

- Zero or limited building setbacks, articulated and active Lake Street storefronts, and high quality building materials that will create an inviting, attractive, and pedestrian friendly public realm.
- Quality and durable lighting, signage, landscaping, and street furniture.
- Plaza streets that calm traffic and preference pedestrians and bicyclists over car drivers.
- Sustainable design for buildings and landscapes that are efficient, self-sustaining, and regenerative, and that can be adapted or revitalized into the indefinite future.

Regarding the Request for Proposals (RFP) process: In keeping with the Jan. 8, 2010 letter to the school board from Council Member Gary Schiff and CNO, we ask that MPS employ a fair, transparent and competitive Request For Proposals (RFP) process specific to 2225 East Lake in partnership with CNO and the City of Minneapolis / CPED.

Hereto with:

- CNO would like input in creation of the RFP document with MPS and CPED, including review and recommendation of revisions to the document before it is finalized and issued to the development community. Council Member Schiff promised the CNO board this opportunity at its February 3, 2010 meeting.
- CNO requests insertion of the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan as a framing requirement of the RFP.
- CNO requests inclusion of the Project Program Brief for the Midtown Farmers Market as a requirement of the RFP. (See attached.) This follows from the commitment made by MPS staff at the Dec. 14, 2009 meeting with CPED and elected officials, and summarized in a Dec. 18 e-mail by the CPED Director of Planning.
- CNO requests that the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) report “Envisioning a Permanent Midtown Farmers Market,” (recapping a 2009 research study of transit-oriented farmers markets nationwide) be appended to the RFP. (See corcoranneighborhood.org/market.)
- CNO requests inclusion of CNO's Sustainability Statement and Performance Goals as a requirement of the RFP. (See attached.)
- CNO requests opportunity to review all received proposals, and to provide a non-binding recommendation to MPS regarding the proposals prior to MPS staff review.

For many years, the successful redevelopment of the 2225 East Lake Street parcel has been the chief and enduring ambition of the residents of the Corcoran Neighborhood, as well as the scores of regional stakeholders currently participating in the Midtown Farmers Market looking for a more permanent home for this blooming rural/urban venture. We are grateful for your offer of inclusion in the upcoming RFP process, and eagerly await feedback on our planning documents and our specific requests for participation.

Sincerely,



Phillip Koski,
Land Use & Transp. Co-Chair



Eric Lindberg,
Land Use & Transp. Co-Chair



Cynthia Frost,
Housing Chair

Cc: The Corcoran neighborhood's representatives at:
The City of Minneapolis and CPED
Hennepin County and Community Works
The State of Minnesota

Attached: Project Program Brief for the Midtown Farmers Market
Sustainability Statement and Performance Goals

A Permanent Home for the Midtown Farmers Market

Project Program Brief (current as of April 29, 2010)

Find designer resources, precedent study, & background at corcoranneighborhood.org/market

Project Contact

Eric Gustafson, CNO Assistant Director / 612-724-7457 / eric@corcoranneighborhood.org

Project History and Summary

Since 2003, the Midtown Farmers Market (MFM) has connected locally produced food and goods with 40,000 customers per season at 2225 East Lake Street on a surface parking lot owned by Minneapolis Public Schools. The MFM was conceived by local residents and is operated by the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO). The MFM currently operates one day a week from May to June, and two days a week from June through October.

The Midtown Farmers Market is one of 5,000 urban farmers markets currently operating in city neighborhoods and towns across the country. Farmers markets function as a vital economic and social link between urban families and the farmers and craftspeople of the surrounding agricultural region. Accordingly, the MFM was a keystone element of the *Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan* (Plan), which calls for a mix of housing, retail/office, structured/underground parking, and public open space. This citizen generated Plan was adopted by the City Council as part of the Minneapolis Plan in 2002 (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/corcoran.asp>).

Given development pressures and the pending sale of the 6-1/2 acre site by the school district, residents look forward to the opportunity to realize the Plan and create a permanent home for the Midtown Farmers Market at 2225 East Lake on a public square, plaza, or mall shared within a larger mixed-use, transit oriented development adjacent to the Lake Street LRT station, with nearby connections to the Midtown Greenway bikeway, bus transit, and a proposed Midtown Greenway trolley line. To remain successful, the MFM needs a permanent, no-cost lease agreement and assurance of uninterrupted operation during construction.

Project Physical Requirements

35,000 – 39,000 square feet (0.8 – 0.9 acres) of mostly outdoor or semi-enclosed space, to include:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 19,200 sf | Paved surface for 70 stalls (45 parked stalls at 12' x 30' plus 25 stalls at 12' x 10') |
| 10,000 sf | Public circulation aisles between stalls (20' wide) |
| 400 sf | Stage/Demonstration area with a permanent overhead canopy or roof structure |
| 600 sf | Audience/seating area to accommodate chairs and tables near the stage |
| 600 sf | Secured storage space for market operations |
| 200 sf | Garbage and recycling corral |
| 200 sf | Restrooms, including two unisex units and drinking fountain |
| 200 sf | Bicycle parking |
| 7,000 sf | Vegetative landscape to support a tree canopy that covers 50% of site within 10 years |

Utility Requirements

- 120V Electrical service for at least 20 stalls, with additional 240V power at 6 stalls (for food preparation vendors).
- 120V and 240V service for the stage.
- Potable water outlets at 6 locations distributed across the site.
- Site lighting.

Additional Site Amenities

- Parking within 1 block, provided in coordination with the larger redevelopment project.
- Permanent signage and way-finding system that creates an on-site presence and public identity visible from Lake Street and the Hiawatha LRT line.
- A community garden that demonstrates urban agriculture and restorative landscape methods.
- On-site storm water management system (may include a rain garden or rain water harvesting cistern).

Housing, Land Use and Transportation Sustainability Statement

As we aspire to move toward a truly sustainable urban community, the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization will mindfully put the principles of seventh generation thinking into practice in order to create a more socially, economically and culturally vibrant urban neighborhood. Our aim is to create within the city of Minneapolis an urban village that is connected to nature and the cycles of the seasons, restorative by design, thoughtful and compassionate in use of natural and social capital, and conscious of its stewardship for future generations.

Performance Goals

In an effort to guide development to meet the aspiration expressed in the sustainability statement, the CNO Housing / Land Use and Transportation Committee has adopted the following performance guidelines and targets. These targets are intended to augment other guidelines and programs that may be required by funding sources or the City of Minneapolis.

Energy/Carbon Emissions Reduction (measure kBtu/sf/yr and CO@e/sf/yr)

Meet the energy and GHG emission targets specified by the Minnesota 2030 Challenge. The fossil fuel reduction standard for all new buildings and major renovations at the time of construction shall be:

60% in 2010

70% in 2015

80% in 2020

90% in 2025

Carbon-neutral in 2030 (using no fossil fuel GHG emitting energy to operate).

Potable Water Reduction (measure gallons/person/yr)

Reduce potable water consumption on site thru building and landscape conservation methods in order to exceed the EPA Policy Act of 1992 threshold by a minimum of 30%.

Solid Waste (tons)

Reduce the amount of solid waste both during construction and throughout the lifetime of the project. Recycle 75% of all construction waste leaving the site. Provide effective in development recycling/composting for apartments and single family residents in order to reduce solid waste from homes by 50%.

Storm Water

Meet the City of Minneapolis and MPCA guidelines for onsite storm water retention. Improve water quality leaving the site by minimizing surface water pollutants and minimize impervious surfaces.

Transportation (VMT/yr)

Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through integration of multi-modal transportation planning that includes pedestrian, cycling and LRT/buses.

Vegetation

Increase the density and area cover of the urban canopy through the planting of a diversity of species. Aerial coverage should be a minimum of 50% to improve habitat and decrease heat island effect.

Design and Technology

As a companion to the CNO Housing / Land Use and Transportation Committee sustainability statement and performance goals the committee offers a list of technologies, amenities and ideas to inspire creative and innovative thinking in design of development and programs in Corcoran.

SITE

Transportation – Systems approach to the integration of bikes, LRT, bus, cars, car share, car pool (identification of policy and incentives); Alternate view – shape cities to reduce needs to move around. Strategies to support this are live work, local services, and local business development; Universal accessibility (actually making the city accessible not just checking the list – snow and wheelchairs);

Physical Activities – Seasonal opportunity, accessibility for disabled (also a transit issue), walkable neighborhood, bike friendly community planning;

Vegetation – habitat, edible landscape, fruit trees on boulevards, rain gardens, ash tree (emerald ash borer concern);

Heat Island – shade sidewalks, streets and parking lot (related strategy Vegetation);

Night Sky – habitat and flyway preservation; energy conservation;

Food – edible landscapes, fruit trees, urban farming;

BUILDING

Operating Energy – adopt 2030 Challenge guidelines for new and rehab; access the weatherization program to reduce demand and decrease need for infrastructure expansion; net positive energy generation;

Potable Water – reduce water consumption; grey water systems; rainwater catchment;

Solid Waste – multi-family recycling and composting; garbage and city pick-up improvement; liter reduction.