



## Dekum Redevelopment

### Community Advisory Committee – Kickoff Meeting – Part 2 (Focus on Design)

#### Zoom meeting notes on May 6, 2020

**Introductions** – facilitated by Dr. Holt; focusing on voices of CAC members

**Presentation (slides)** – Chandra Robinson, Lever Architects – Overview of Guiding Principles (graphic attached)

- Creating Community
- Active Landscape
- Healthy Home
- Innovative Affordability
- *Other ideas?*

#### Small Group Discussion of Guiding Principles

**Group 1** – Jonathan facilitating & taking notes; CAC members: Blanca, Karen, Barbara, Mateo, Tommy

*Barbara:* Neighborhood resident. Concerned re: parking and design. “Accident waiting to happen.” Her main concern. Use of language is “happy talk”. Cringe-worthy in its lack of specificity. Similar happy talk with New Columbia. She wants specifics about what is going to be

*Blanca:* Interested in jobs and environmental elements. Works for Trash for Peace. Maybe a basketball court? Now they play in the parking lot. Need a place for kids to be able to play. Wants everything to fit. Curious about whether there will be porches.

*Karen:* It is a very congested corner. Concerned about traffic. Sightlines aren’t great. Concern about parking. Needs to be good for the neighborhood also.

**Group 2** – Julie facilitating & Odalis notetaking; CAC members: Spencer, Linda, Steve

*Linda:* How HF and others looks at the longevity of the project or how long into the future do you consider when you are looking at design? The forecast – how far out do you forecast. In past years, I have not seen that focus from my perspective in other projects. How will this project and property look 15 years out? Will it be livable? How is that being addressed, Will it be dated in 20-30 years and what are some things that we can do now that might address that so that people can feel comfortable in their homes years out.

*Julie in response to Linda’s comment:* Great point – the Ideas around longevity, durability, and long-term livability should all be incorporated into the guiding

principles because Home Forward certainly wants to be long-term good stewards of public resources. We will plan buildings that are built with materials that will last 100 years. In addition, we need it to be good for all those 100 years. We make decisions that influence how well materials perform whether the design becomes faded. If you look at Dekum court now, it is only 50 years old. It is not appropriate anymore. It is definitely of 1971.

*Linda:* I think that becomes important not just from the economic stand point but also becomes important with how people feel about living in their homes and what the project says to the community about who lives in that area. Might not have been that people took into consideration all that information 50 years ago. I do not think people of low-income have to and should live in places that other people can stigmatize. Whatever the project looks like, when they walk into their homes they are feeling the same as their neighbors across the street.

*Julie:* We want to be sure that the new Dekum Court be well knit into the surrounding neighborhood. The physical characteristics of the neighborhood but also the social characteristics as well. The point about stigma is really well taken because anything that is significantly different or lesser is very easy for people to point.

*Spencer:* Building on what Linda said, I also want the property to be more open to the surrounding area. However, as a resident here, I also want it to be safer. I know someone in the last public meeting said it was very safe around here but recent events question that. There was actually a shooting in the parking lot and the shooting didn't involve any of the residents here, it involved people that live around here. They just used the parking lot as a free space. People can come on to the site whenever they want – it's treated as public here. That needs to change, I don't know if a fence would be appropriate or security cameras but something needs to change because there are kids here.

*Julie:* Really good point: There are a number of ways and a number of tools in the design tool box to increase safety and still have it be friendly and as we move through to site planning and schematic design we will definitely be looking at all of that. Part of it has to do with density and building design and open spaces and public spaces and paths moving across the site and making spaces occupiable. And there is a conversation needed around security cameras and some technology that is available that might not be visible but very valuable for personal safety.

*Spencer:* My apartment has security camera but as far as any other residents, I don't believe so and we don't have cameras outside to cover the area.

*Steve:* To piggyback with Spencer – I'm all for it. As big as this project is going to be you have to have a lot more security a lot more interaction with the residents. I second a fence, more cameras. They are putting a lot more cameras in my place. Also, staff that are steady maybe staggered. I don't know how many buildings they are going to put on the property but that have them so they are intertwined with each other so that that the residents can get out and mingle and not be afraid. A little more secure environment because they have kids. I agree with the safety. The more interaction staff have with residents the better they feel and the more you will hear the things that happen on the site.

*Julie:* (Confirming) Thinking about a staffing plan. How property management team and social services team is available for everyone on site and really thinking through that. Being sure that there is adequate space planned for folks working from the site is a big deal.

Key take-aways – Long lasting design and durable materials. Knitting this development into the surrounding neighborhood in a way that eliminates stigma but also develops a safe site. What are the design tools and technology for a safe site? Foster resident interaction with staffing - What does that mean from a design perspective. How do we provide enough to make sure that is successful?

**Group 3** – Rachel facilitating & taking notes; CAC members: Laura, Karmin, Karen and Delfino, and Miranda

### **Creating community guideline**

Community Spaces: Which community? Kids, parents at home, different ages of kids, what are those spaces supposed to serve? This is a big question because there are so many ways to look at community. Community room space that is very accessible to a lot of different ages and people. Event space would be great, with a grill, shared garden space would be great. Flexibility in shared spaces are important and things that make it accessible for all groups would be a great consideration, agree on garden space priority

### **Active landscapes guideline**

Community garden, play spaces, picnic tables, things that help people gather and commune. Think about what happens at Faubion and thinking about what is well utilized at Faubion and would be well used at Dekum Court. Walkways and trails for kids to get their energy out will be important. A lot of the activities with the youth involve running and sports. More places for people to sit and gather, kitchen for cooking and nutrition classes, basketball hoop. Many kids have bicycles and a bike rack or cage would be important. Outdoor seating so parents can keep an eye on kids while playing, space for outdoor dining builds community

### **Healthy home and innovative affordability guidelines**

Efficiency and accessibility for all people is important; Once everything is up to code we'll be in a better situation than our current situation; Natural light is important, but currently windows are drawn because of privacy concerns; Reuse of resources is important; Trash and recycling that is easily accessible for kids and people of all abilities A place for bulky waste so it doesn't clog the enclosures

**Group 4** – Ericka facilitating; Chandra & Lewis taking notes; CAC members: Choya, Kelley, Professor Hall

### **Creating Communities**

Choya suggest changing the wording to, "Contribute to Community or Strengthening Communities" instead because there is already a sense of community there and the surrounding neighborhood. Strengthening or expanding the community that already exist.

Professor Hall said that he and his family has lived in the neighborhood many years and has seen the good and the bad. He has participated in efforts to try to support the folks that live there. Before losing his audio he was voicing praise of the manager that served

there for many years. It would be good to hear their perspective of neighborhood and what positive things has been done.

### **Active Landscape**

Try to preserve what the residents already like. Example open space off their back patios, and shared community resources. It was suggested that maybe examples of shared community spaces can be provided to help drive that vision in a more specific way.

### **Healthy Homes**

Kelley said the indoor air quality or living environment is very improvement because it can have such a negative impact on people's quality of life and health. Daylighting is also an important factor to consider.

Chandra mentioned that it's important we build high quality homes with good air quality and ventilation for people and children with asthmatic conditions.

### **Innovative Affordability**

Kelley suggested that this principle be renamed to reflect the construction workforce goals focusing on career pathway opportunities or job creation on a journeyman level for the residents. A concern mentioned was the idea of offsite modular building that may take job opportunities away from the project site.

Meyer Memorial Trust Project done by O'Neil/Walsh Construction was mentioned as a great example of how to embed equity and opportunity into a project. Kelley said that it would be nice that the workforce would reflect the diversity of the neighborhood. They have a high percentage of minority, women owned businesses and apprentices working on site.

Strive to have the workforce in construction be reflective of the population in the community. Create career opportunities - even if it takes a long time to get to journeyman level someone from the neighborhood could start their career and work on project via intern/apprenticeships etc. It would be good to work with/hear from Home Forward on only goals for that and make them explicit in the guiding principles. Maybe the Innovative Affordability can be renamed or incorporate these goals into it

Chandra mentioned that a similar approach is being explored by Johnathan Trutt to would create jobs and opportunities for folks that might not have access to these careers in the construction trades.

Unknown who said this: Equity should be part of each of the guiding principles

### **Group 5 – Alescia facilitating; Dr. Holt notetaker; CAC members: Jeb, Maija, Vivian**

Safety and security is key – Cameras needed in the parking lot, perhaps having a more gated community; concerned that people are able to enter at all times of the night

Need laundry rooms/spaces that are easily accessible and in more places

ADA units (need more of them) - Universal Design

Active landscape creating some opportunities for safety – environmental elements and sustainability (environmental sustainability)

Centering equity & voices that are not at the table. What are the needs that might be different/ Thinking about different voices.

How to build community in this new experience that we are having, especially with Covid-19 – creative ways to establish that welcoming environment.

### **Summary reports back from small group to full group**

#### Group 1:

- Uses on the site need to be equitable
- Make sure we keep an open dialogue/ sincere and authentic; Make sure this isn't all "happy talk" but we really do it
- Develop trust and positive collaboration
- Safety concerns
- Congestion and traffic concerns

#### Group 2:

- Durability of buildings; Design that can last and be comfortable for 20-30 years for residents
- Want to feel more connected to the rest of the neighborhood and feel like a community; No more stigma! Want to be seamless with rest of community
- More safety measures are needed as much of site is currently treated as the public (recent shooting was by people who do not live at Dekum)
- Need to have staff on site more than they are now so they can monitor safety
- Staff needs more communication with residents about what's happening day to day

#### Group 3:

- Define "which community" the community spaces are for. For little kids, teens, adults? All need their own type of space
- Spaces need to be accessible to all and have flexibility
- Event spaces need to be large enough to convene large gatherings
- Need spaces for shared gardens (community gardens)
- Flexibility needed in shared spaces
- Spaces outdoors need to include play areas and picnic/bbq gathering spaces
- Importance of trash and recycling easy for kids to get to since they are the ones doing that as a chore
- Place for bulky trash that doesn't block trash doors
- It would be nice to have good daylighting because now blinds are always drawn for privacy

#### Group 4:

- Strengthen and expand community that already exists
- Expand personal porch spaces (really valued by current residents)

- Include workforce development in concept of innovative affordability

#### Group 5:

- Need to define what are the equitable outcomes?
- Equity needs to be a grounding principle inside every other principle
- Need to consider multigenerational design
- ADA needs/Universal design in the landscape
- Think intentionally about safety; Bring safety into all principles
- Sustainability- think about it as a way to enhance safety; consider other sustainable practices such as green roofs
- Address how to build community through design

#### **Presentation (slides) – Chandra presented initial site plan concepts (final two slides attached)**

Notes from CAC members discussion of site plan:

*Maija*—likes community space in middle. Need to think about kids and safety with South Street.

*Laura*—Same as Maija on street. Where's the bus in this layout? How do make sure people can wait for the bus in the rain?

*Linda*—Ditto on street and kids, Questions re: parking and the distance you'd need to travel to get to parking. How do you achieve equity on the parking?

*Barbara*—Parking. On-Street parking is going to be insufficient. There's already overflow back onto Bryant. She wants us to survey how many HH have cars. Just because we're building a new place doesn't mean people will be getting rid of their cars.

*Spencer*—Community center needs to be big enough to get together comfortably (contrast with the converted apartment they use now).

*Kelly*: Parking questions. Even when we don't want to use our cars, we still need them. Concerned about the distance between the parking and housing. Especially for families.

*Jeb*: Concerned about parking inadequacy, especially since most people have 1 – 2 cars.

*Mateo*: Echoing concerns parking and safety.

*Tierra*: Safety. Lots of kids walk to school. Would like to see a community garden to create accessibility to food.

*Vivian*: Need covered area for bus. What could covered open spaces look like?  
Echoed interest in community gardens.

**Next steps:** Pamela reiterated Home Forward's valuing input and commitment to transparency in decision-making. Another CAC meeting in 2-3 weeks to be followed by monthly meetings once the design process is further along. Meeting adjourned by Dr. Holt at 5:40 pm.