

A compilation of verbal input from the public at the 3M Site Community Meeting

November 20, 2009

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Created by District Five Planning Council**

This is a complete rendering of key comments and viewpoints. It is not a transcription. Our aim was to represent the key viewpoints of all speakers. Audio quality varied with the speakers. The tape of the meeting is available for listening. You may call Leslie McMurray at 651-774-5234 (Payne Phalen District Five Planning Council if you wish to hear the tape in entirety).

Comments made at microphone:

From Maplewood, a 3M employee. This is a historic site. Let's use the history on this site. Develop an electronics museum. I say it should be here. We have Honeywell and 3M. Univac, Control Data. We have several orphan businesses that could be brought in. I think the buildings are structurally sound and are beautiful. Building 20 needs a makeover. If we look at the site as it is we can bring in options like the Bakken Museum which is seeking a new location.

Let's do something for the homeless - not just deal with housing but let's create an economic opportunity. We have electric blankets - why not create electric sleeping bags. Think about it - 5 or 7 degrees. How many people are out in the cold? This is a business that supports many people.

State of the art Senior Care Centers - a high rise building with shops. We need more spaces for seniors. Close to the bus line. Too many nursing homes are in the suburbs. Let's build a place where we create jobs and housing.

Keeping the area industrial and keep the focus on jobs. I'd like to encourage industrial uses that create jobs and training for jobs.

When I tell my friends I live in Payne Phalen - people do not know where I live. I feel like our area is separated from Saint Paul. This is an opportunity to build our own downtown. Let's build a mix of commercial, housing and retail. I hope there is a unified development that keeps this site connected to the neighborhoods. Let's make it our own "downtown".

I need to tell everyone that if a major site like 3M was developed in other Wards - the community would have been activated much earlier. To say that until the property was fully on the market that the community could not be brought into this discussion - is not correct. I think that the Port Authority has destroyed some significant historic features in our area and nothing else should be demolished by ANYBODY until the neighborhood was in the loop. (Loud applause).

I think the Port owes the neighborhood an explanation about why demolition was actually speeded up following neighborhood requests to pause the project. Who salvaged the historic artifacts from those buildings and can these resources be offered and made available to people in our neighborhood?

(Pause: Question to SPPA) Can you give us information regarding any salvage at the recently destroyed buildings?

Answer: Salvage rights existed with the previous owner in one property. The owner removed several items. The tin ceiling in the Viaduct was covered with asbestos and had to be conveyed pursuant to Saint Paul law.

We tend to embrace our diverse cultures on the East Side. We have schools reflecting this diversity. I know that we have the Hope Academy, the French Immersion School. A German school on University has a lease expiring. The German Institute on Summit is struggling. We have a Chinese Academy Immersion school.

Q. What happens to the 3M site if you walk away?

A. The Port does not intend to walk away from this deal.

Q. What happens if you find the soil is a problem? What has been found? Should we be concerned?

A. MPCA will have information after December 15th. We have been and are doing due diligence regarding soil testing and potential contaminants.

Will Light Rail be built in the near future? On Arcade Street?

A. There are no plans whatsoever for Light Rail on Arcade Street. Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority acquires right of ways for potential transit corridors. We own the rail line. Numerous studies have been done but there is no immediate plan.

I am unhappy with SPPA's suburban style, industrial development (cites pictures of Williams Hill) Only 10 employees per acre is not consistent with the potential or the history of this land. The style of buildings does not fit the local character and historic style we hold dear in our neighborhood. We'd like to see a team of professionals working to generate options. This is a very big piece of property. We should emulate the Ford Plant planning process. .

Become aware of the existing efforts of Metropolitan State University consolidation or potential expansion. Happy to see people coming around to work together. A campus would bring in additional employment and would enhance the area.

Are the Ramsey County Commissioners here tonight committed to the position which Lantry articulated for Lantry and Bostrom?

Commissioner Ortega: Ramsey County was approached by the SPPA to consider possibility of purchasing the property and possibly moving part of the 600 employees on

the river to the East Side. That is what came before the Cmte. This sort of gave us the go ahead to look in a positive way about what could happen.

Commissioner McDonough: The County's perspective. If it made sense that could happen. We had not fully explored this with everyone involved. The conversation at the County Board was to take a look Our employees are working now at the West Building. We have many other options to explore. The community has been adamant that they do not want to have the building there,

Commissioner Rettman: Represent part of the District Five area. I went to their Clean Up to work and the first thing I heard was "what is Ramsey County doing and why wasn't the community involved?" I believe in citizen participation and I believe the decision is yours and that is the only way this property should be developed.

The Port Authority considers industrial uses. I hear the community saying they want more than this use. Who could take over the site if the Port Authority is not the right developer? Whatever the outcomes we need to consider uses

We should not constrain ourselves just to this space. We have the Hamm's brewery, we have the Griffin site. We should be looking at this entire space together.

Consider including all neighbors on the East Side (District 1). Invest Saint Paul, Green Jobs, and Preservation of the Buildings.

Small business owner. Develop this as a retail corridor that supports small businesses, street front businesses, offices upstairs. Look at this as an incubator for small businesses that makes this a destination place. Too many people get their shopping needs met in the suburbs. Let's create shopping options here.

We need living wage jobs on the East Side. I'd like to see this area zoned for manufacturing. We need decent jobs on the East Side. Alternative energy and hi-tech manufacturing jobs are still on the rise. Each of these jobs would create additional jobs that support this industry.

Want to mention two ideas. When the Ford plant was considering shutting down there were Task Forces working hard for several years. There is no reason we should not have support for this level of

Some commercial along 7th street and possibly on Arcade might be appropriate. I would like to see tax generating jobs, not nonprofit uses of this space. 3M has potential as a historic district. Hold the bulldozers back until there is more planning work. It would be nice to have some green space and

Before we build anything we should put the promised light rail in. If we could just bring what has been talked about into being. The train tracks connect the region. All we have to do is throw a train on the track.

Need for jobs for East Siders. We have a wealth of talent in the neighborhood and need to create opportunities.

I encourage the community to stay engaged and on top of this issue. You have got to stay involved.

The area is not the safest neighborhood. We need to make sure that whatever we do we are bringing the area back to be a safe, family area. I moved here because I thought I was moving up in life. I would like to stay proud of our neighborhood.

Get the kids off the street and into a trade school. Let's teach youth a trade and get them a job. Let's have a space for seniors to walk, and get exercise – especially in the winter.

I would like to see this area respond to the many cultures in our area. Look at uses for all communities who live here.

Bring more jobs for all East Siders. Reach out to underserved and underrepresented groups in our neighborhood.

Half full rather than half empty view. I'm a jogger and I run. I see the incredible change that has occurred. The Phalen Corridor has changed so much. Let's celebrate the accomplishments to this date. However, we are not done. This is a great crowd. We've come a long way and accomplished a lot of things. We have opportunity but we have to work together. I really applaud the people who have made this opportunity tonight to happen.

Live, work, breathe and sweat 3M. We have to care for our roots for the branches to grow. This site is a unique space. The SPPA has shown some disregard for the attachment the community has to this site. I would like to volunteer to help inventory resources in the neighborhood and support the salvage and re-use of them.

Please do not give us a Wal-Mart.

Transit oriented development, respect the history, and get real jobs.

Green industry is desired.

When we go through the process – we need to include the individuals with disabilities. The process should be available for everyone to participate. We must look at how people with disabilities participate in the planning and benefits for this site's development.

Hope is needed in the neighborhood. Examples in Mpls (Grainbelt, warehouse areas, Midtown Greenway). Look at area examples and learn from them.

Business likes access. We have access. Business needs to move things. We have rail. We miss the best and highest use of this land if we pick a use which does not utilize the rail lines.

3M helped build Saint Paul. Let's do our best to move in the same sort of successful business that brings new jobs and anchors people on the East Side. We have vacant homes – we'd really like to encourage people to move back to the East Side. This combination of jobs coupled with good housing would solve many of our current problems.

We heard many opinions and these will be published. We will seek a transparent process. We also heard some key public commitments. There will not be a Ramsey County building on the 3M site outside of a community supported and inclusive planning process.