



The meeting convened at 6:30 p.m.

Councilmembers present: Tim Brausen, Steve Hallfin, Rachel Harris, Anne Mavity and Margaret Rog.

Staff present: City Manager (Mr. Harmening), Senior Management Analyst (Ms. Carrillo Perez), Community Development Director (Ms. Barton), Economic Development Coordinator (Mr. Hunt), Planning/Zoning Supervisor (Mr. Walther) and Planner (Mrs. Monson)

Guest: Mark VanderSchaaf (Forecast Public Art), Jack Becker (Forecast Public Art), Zakcq Lockrem (Asakura Robinson), Brad Scheib (Hoisington Koegler Group), and Laura Chamberlain (Hoisington Koegler Group)

1. Future study session agenda planning – June, 2019

Councilmember Mavity presented the proposed topic for a future study session of reviewing the tradition of the pledge of allegiance before council meetings. Councilmember Mavity explained that this is supported by the council's strategic priority of race, equity and inclusion. Councilmember Rog asked if this should be replaced with something else. The council decided to continue discussions and review this item at the end of the meeting.

2. PLACES – Public art and community engagement southwest

Mr. VanderSchaaf and Mr. Becker from Forecast Public Art presented to the council a brief history on the PLACES initiative. Mr. Becker explained that the goal is to raise \$5.5 million dollars, from public private partnerships, for public art on the Southwest Light Rail. Forecast Public Art is asking for \$10,000 from each city in order to continue the operational cost of moving the PLACES initiative forward. Mr. Becker explained the importance in public art for place making and as an added amenity to a community. He explained that each city would be responsible for the selection of the artist and art.

Councilmember Mavity said that she is excited about this initiative. She agreed that the Louisiana station location made sense, but questioned the Wooddale station. She noted that Beltline station is a better opportunity for art. Mr. Becker noted that the locations can be reviewed and changed. Councilmember Mavity noted that Beltline needs more character, for example on the proposed parking ramp. Councilmember Rog agreed that the parking ramp is a good opportunity that should be considered.

Mr. Becker explained that each city will have \$1 million dollars to spend at their discretion between the sites. Mr. VanderSchaaf noted that this initiative can be used as a catalyst for future art projects in the city. Mr. Becker noted that there will be opportunities for the council to participate in the fundraising efforts.

Councilmember Rog stated her support with the exception of the Wooddale Station. Councilmember Brausen supports the initiative and is willing to serve as the council representative on the PLACES committee. Councilmember Hallfin stated his support and asked that St. Louis Park Friends of the Arts be included in the projects. Mayor pro tem Harris asked what is included for the cost and the commitments on the PLACES committee. Mr. Becker explained that the cost covers the art, artist fees, engineering fees, installation and maintenance fund. He explained that the committee has a draft charter, but it will be up to the group to discuss meeting commitments. Councilmember Mavity noted her support for the initiative and asked staff to consider Beltline Station instead of the Wooddale Station.

The council agreed to have Councilmember Brausen represent the council on the PLACES committee.

3. Historic Walker Lake small area plan recommendations

Zaqcq Lockrem from Asakura Robinson presented the results of a 7-month study of a small area revitalization plan and design guidelines of the Historic Walker Lake area. Mr. Lockrem acknowledged past planning efforts in the area and noted new engagement efforts that occurred during the study. The findings include recommendations to increase way finding and place making, changes to parking requirements and design guidelines. Mr. Lockrem noted that regulatory changes are proposed in the overlay district that will help the city achieve the goal of having a vibrant commercial-industrial area.

Councilmember Rog asked if a three-story building would feel out of place in this area. Mr. Lockrem stated that it would not. Councilmember Rog explained the need to invest in small businesses to make it affordable and noted that the city should promote walking and biking in the area.

Mayor pro tem Harris said there are many opportunities in this area and is impressed with the parking recommendations. She noted the work of the businesses in the area in meeting and possibly creating a merchant association. She also noted the potential for this as a festival site similar to the West End.

Councilmember Brausen said he was supportive of the policy questions, but worries about how to make the area walkable and draw people in.

Councilmember Mavity said she was in support of the three-story buildings and noted that some industrial areas should have more flexibility. She expressed support for the dog park and showed interest in creative way finding in the area.

Councilmember Hallfin stated his support for flexibility in the industrial areas. He asked for clarification on the city's investment in the area considering that this is not a special service district. Ms. Monson noted that the planned and suggested work are within the basic amenities included on all streets, and the businesses will have to develop a special service district or similar tool for ongoing management and maintenance if they want additional amenities.

Mayor pro tem Harris also stated her support for flexibility in the industrial areas.

Councilmember Rog expressed concerns about tear down of existing buildings to build new three-story buildings.

4. Former Sam's Club site land use and development study

Mr. Scheib from Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. presented the land use findings for the site of the former Sam's Club. Mr. Scheib noted that during the last six months they analyzed the site, studied market trends, reviewed environmental constraints and developed test scenarios of potential future development at the site. Mr. Scheib reviewed the evaluation criteria and goals of the site and provided the recommendation of a comprehensive plan amendment to guide the site for transit oriented development (TOD) on the future land use map.

Mr. Scheib reviewed option A that focused on increasing employment at the site. Councilmember Rog noted that there is currently a shortage in employees in manufacturing and tech jobs and wants to be cautious of the workforce. Mr. Scheib reviewed option B that focuses on housing and assumes about 600 units. Lastly, Mr. Scheib reviewed option C, a mixed use development with a mix of commercial, office and residential uses.

Mr. Walther noted that the Metropolitan Council regional transportation plan calls for a minimum level of activity which could include residents, employees, and students or visitors that increase transit trips. He also provided some context related to the SWLRT corridor Transit Station Area Action Plan (Investment Framework) and the strength of the corridor connecting people to employment. He also noted the need for living wage jobs that are expected under two of the scenarios. The mix of uses generate more activity in general and support more reverse commute trips. St. Louis Park currently has a balanced mix of 40,000 jobs and 49,000 residents, and creates opportunities for residents to live in the same city where they work.

Mr. Harmening noted the next steps as amending the comprehensive plan land use to TOD and then develop regulations through zoning.

Councilmember Mavity asked if the consultant took into consideration the parking lot on the east side of the site. Mr. Scheib noted that development potential is limited at this site due to environmental constraints. There could be opportunities for use of that off-site parking to support development on the property being studied. Councilmember Mavity said that she prefers option C as it maximizes the investment in the light rail. She also noted the importance to consider environmental justice considerations when discussion affordable housing at this site; this point was echoed by Councilmember Harris.

Councilmember Rog asked for more information on the contaminants. Mr. Scheib noted that the soil contaminants limit how much of the ground can be excavated. Laura Chamberlain specifically listed the main contaminants that have been identified in the review of publically available environmental reports. Councilmember Rog noted that there are forms of mitigation that could help the contaminants. She noted the possibility of partnering with a community college to create a training center due to the job shortage. Councilmember Rog expressed her strong preference to option B as housing is the biggest need, but would be okay with option C.

Councilmember Brausen is in favor of the land use change to transit oriented development and is in favor of option C. Mayor pro tem Harris noted her support for option C, mixed use. Council member Mavity stated that she prefers option C, mixed use, but would also support option B, residential.

Councilmember Hallfin noted that he would prefer a completely different path, but of the options presented, he would be supportive of option C, mixed use.

Mr. Walther noted that the next step is to complete the comprehensive plan amendment, and staff will also prepare a recommendation for rezoning the property and changes to any other official controls that are needed based on the city's goals for the property.

Communications/meeting check-in (verbal)

The city council resumed the discussion on Councilmember Mavity's future study session proposal of removing the pledge of allegiance prior to city council meetings. The council was in agreement to move forward with removing the pledge of allegiance without a study session discussion.

Councilmember Mavity asked about the report on CSAH 25 and asked if there was a way to get more developable land. Mr. Walther noted that staff tried to find ways to create developable land, but the study showed no gain in land.

Councilmember Rog asked about the report on SWLRT and for more information on why the trails had to be closed for three years. Mr. Harmening noted that staff would ask for clarification on the trail closing. Councilmember Rog noted her concerns as the detour is not bike friendly.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Written Reports provided and documented for recording purposes only:

5. **CSAH 25 conceptual roadway layout study**
6. **SWLRT update**
7. **Comprehensive rezoning**
8. **April 2019 monthly financial report**

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Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk

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Jake Spano, Mayor