Stantec

Memo

To:	Mark Lyons City of Green Bay	From:	Fay Simer, AICP Stantec
File:	Velp Avenue Areawide Plan	Date:	February 22, 2017

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

VELP AVENUE AREA WIDE PLAN PARTICIPATION PROCESS

STEERING COMMITTEE

The City of Green Bay City Council appointed a steering committee to guide the Velp Avenue areawide planning process. Steering committee members will participate in every stage of the plan's development and provide input at key points of the process. The steering committee has five members including representatives from local businesses, the Mather Heights neighborhood association, the Perkins Park neighborhood, and one member of the Green Bay planning commission. The steering committee will meet a total of five times throughout the planning process. These meetings will address:

- Meeting 1: Project Kickoff and Issues Identification, August 24, 2016
- Meeting 2: Identify Vision and Goals, September 27, 2016
- Meeting 3: Review Redevelopment Scenarios, January 25, 2017
- Meeting 4: Refine Strategies and Redevelopment Scenarios, March 21, 2017
- Meeting 5: Review Draft Plan, April 26, 2017

Meeting 1

Meeting one served as a kick off to the project. Stantec and City staff educated the steering committee about the project, shared background information about brownfield redevelopment, and presented information about Velp Avenue's physical and demographic characteristics. Members also shared their ideas about redevelopment goals. This included their perceptions about Velp Avenue today and how it should evolve in the future. In addition, steering committee members identified locations on Velp Avenue that they want to continue support and areas they hope to see redevelop in the future. These same activities were repeated with the general public at an open house following the steering committee meeting. Results were similar for both the general public and the steering committee and are discussed in the summary of the August open house.

Meeting 2

At the second steering committee meeting, steering committee members confirmed transformative opportunity sites for further investigation in this planning process and discussed preferred redevelopment scenarios for these sites. Stantec presented market analysis and input from the first public open house to help the steering committee identify sites where redevelopment is both feasible and desirable to the community. In addition, Stantec presented market research findings regarding the market potential for different land use options on each transformative opportunity site (commercial, industrial, residential) and steering committee members weighed in on preferred land

uses for these sites. Stantec presented draft vision and goals statements describing a desired future for Velp Avenue to the steering committee for refinement and discussion.

Meeting 3

At the third steering committee meeting, Stantec presented concept drawings showing potential redevelopment scenarios for each of the four transformative opportunity sites prioritized by the steering committee. These redevelopment scenarios were based on market analysis of the economic feasibility of different land uses and the steering committee's preferred land uses for each site. Steering committee members reviewed concept plans and discussed modifications to the redevelopment concepts that could enhance their compatibility with desired goals and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Steering committee members reviewed the draft vision and goal statements and provided detailed feedback for final versions of these narratives.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

Open House 1 (August 24, 2016)

Thirty-seven people attended the first open house including representatives from local businesses, neighborhood associations, the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the redevelopment authority. Many local residents and neighbors attended as well. Open House participants shared their perceptions of Velp Avenue and ideas regarding future development along the corridor. At three different activity stations, participants shared words describing Velp Avenue today and in their desired future, they identified sites on an aerial map that they value or that should be considered redevelopment opportunities, and they submitted written comments. The findings from these activities are summarized on the following pages.

Velp Avenue Today and in the Future:

Participants at the open house and the steering committee meeting were asked to list words that they would use to describe Velp Avenue today and words they would like to describe the corridor in the future. Open house attendees and steering committee members all had similar ideas about how Velp Avenue is perceived today and their ideas for the future.

Some of the most common words describing Velp Avenue today were "empty," "blighted" and "rundown." Meeting participants almost universally agreed that aesthetics and facades of properties along the corridor need improvement. Some noted that the reconstruction of the Velp Avenue roadway had been a positive step in improving the overall image of the corridor. These words are depicted in the word cloud below (Figure 1). The larger the word, the more often it was used by participants.

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Figure 1: How participants describe Velp Avenue today

In the future, attendees and steering committee members hope to describe Velp Avenue as "safe," "a gateway," and with "many restaurants." Many participants expressed a desire for basic goods and services, such as groceries, which are not available on Velp Avenue or in close proximity to the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, many saw potential in Velp's position close to Interstate 43 and as a major east-west thoroughfare into downtown, and believed that travelers would be enticed to stop on Velp if it had more destinations. These words are depicted in the word cloud below (Figure 2). The larger the word, the more often it was used by participants.

Figure 2: How participants hope to describe Velp Avenue in the future

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Stay and Change:

Participants were asked to identify places along the corridor they viewed as community assets, and places along the corridor they hoped would redevelop in the future. Participants placed dots on a large aerial map of the corridor to show their preferences. Red dots symbolized things to be redeveloped and green dots symbolized things participants hoped would stay into the future. This activity is depicted in Figure 3. Despite negative perceptions of the corridor, there are many things that participants want to continue to support such as:

- Existing retail and services that cater to neighborhood residents, such as restaurants, convenience stores, and liquor stores
- Some existing auto oriented businesses that have well-maintained exteriors, such as the Shell Gas Station and Auto Haus
- Mather Heights Park
- Islamic Society of Wisconsin

Participants at the open house noted that even though some areas of the corridor may be blighted or rundown, they felt that "no existing businesses should be kicked out." Instead, redevelopment should be prioritized in the vacant buildings along the corridor.

Based on feedback from both the steering committee and members of the public, six general sites emerged as areas with high opportunity for redevelopment. Five sites are located on the north side of Velp Avenue; many of these are used car lots and automobile salvage yards. One site is south of Velp Avenue and is currently vacant. The six sites include:

- Velp Avenue and Military Avenue: Currently home to Accurate Auto Parts and Recycling
- Velp Avenue, north of Fort Howard Cemetery: Currently home to auto salvage yard
- Velp Avenue and Wilson Avenue: Currently includes the partially vacant Alwin Building
- Velp Avenue and Winford Avenue: Currently home to many industrial businesses
- Velp Avenue and Atkinson Avenue: Currently home to We Finance Used Car Dealer
- Velp Avenue and Locust St: Currently vacant and formerly used as a greenhouse

Figure 3: What should stay and what should change?

Written Comments:

Participants in the open house were also given the option to submit written comments; six comments were received. Generally, attendees at the open house were supportive of redeveloping the Velp Avenue corridor. Many written comments addressed the desire to improve the aesthetics of the community and increased retail and restaurants along the corridor. Additionally, many comments at the open house addressed the opportunity for improved bicycle infrastructure. Written comments are included here:

> "Velp Ave is a corridor that connects 20,000-25,000 people in Howard to Downtown Green Bay and Broadway District. What we need is a bike and pedestrian friendly corridor which we do not have today as I used to bike to and from work at Georgia Pacific from Howard and would minimize my biking stretches on Velp due to congestion, un-bike-friendly lanes. We need a bike friendly corridor, either bike lanes or a separate path to connect east and west in the city."
>
> "As a bike advocate, there aren't bike lanes or adequate sidewalks on this portion of Velp. If there is any possibility of constructing a multi-use path from Military to Downtown, the bike community would support it. This would create a much needed connection between Military and Downtown."
>
> "Need a draw to the area: a store or restaurant that's not currently in the area"
>
> "I'm glad to see redevelopment take place in the area. Definitely focus more on businesses, shopping/retail development, pedestrian friendliness, and redevelopment. Definitely very informative. Good luck!"
>
> "Disappointed I had to go to church for a public hearing – Hope whatever happens is for the better for everyone"
>
> "Rename Velp to???"

Open House 2 (January 25, 2017)

Approximately 32 people attended the second house, held January 25, 2017. Attendees included representatives from local businesses, property owners, neighborhood associations, the Planning Commission, the City Council, the redevelopment authority, and neighborhood residents. Stantec reviewed project progress to date, described how public feedback had been used to identify four transformative opportunity sites along Velp, and presented concept drawings depicting redevelopment scenarios of the four opportunity sites. Public open house attendees were asked to provide feedback on the concept drawings and to review draft vision and goals statements. Written comments received at the open house are transcribed and summarized below.

Transformative Opportunity Site 1: Retail Gateway

Three concepts were presented for Transformative Opportunity Site 1, depicting different scenarios for gateway retail at the northeast corner of Velp Ave. And Military Ave.

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Stand-Alone Retail

Convenience Retail

Commercial Strip

Feedback Summary:

Meeting participants are generally supportive of adding more retail to Velp at the northwest corner of Velp and Military. Participants expressed a desire to see high quality building design and a site design that includes sidewalks and creates a sense of welcome at this gateway to Green Bay.

Reference: **Steering Committee and Open House Summary**

Written Feedback:

Does Retail Gateway development take Velp in the right direction? Why?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Meeting participant responses	1	9	0	0

- Retail attracts more people
- But need sidewalks on north side of Velp. Pedestrian friendly requirement needed.
- Mid-size grocery?
- There seems to be very little retail to draw people in.

What do you like most about these scenarios?

- Beautification of neighborhood
- More options of retail and restaurant and general store and grocery
- Site which draws the corner. Creates scale which brings more sense of plan to mode
- I like the retail opportunity.
- Good intro to city. Like corner.
- Inclusion of restaurant. Green space.

What would you change about these scenarios?

- Large parking abutting Velp; retail too far back. Need sidewalks on north side of Velp.
- Need grocery in that area- good price and easy access.
- Hide/limit parking
- In what ways could these scenarios address a need you see in the neighborhood?
- Restaurant. Retail.
- Not a particular need for convenience stores, particularly in auto future. Well designed retail is lacking. Storefronts show age. New business at liquor store and Shell mini mall lack design character. Poorly designed strip centers may be a welcome use at its beginning of life, but lack shelf life.

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Transformative Opportunity Site 2: Neighborhood Housing Choices

Two concepts were presented for Transformative Opportunity Site 2, depicting multi-family housing choices at the southwest corner of Velp Ave. and Locust Street.

Townhomes

Apartments

Feedback Summary:

Meeting participants expressed mixed opinions about additional housing at this site. Participants who disagreed with these concepts expressed concerns about traffic on Velp Ave. and the visual quality of buildings. Participants who agreed with these concepts expressed that housing is an appropriate choice for the site given its proximity to other residential uses.

Written Feedback:

Does Neighborhood Housing redevelopment take Velp in the right direction? Why?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Meeting participant responses	2	2	3	4

- Not such a big apartment complex on Locust.
- We already have the apartments on Winford/Buchanan St. I feel these have brought an eyesore in the neighborhood and have affected property value.
- Site is adjacent to housing. This is best use of site.
- Great size parcel, location and transition to Velp. Housing choices matter.
- Unless very high quality and better traffic flow will be more challenging then what it's worth.
- 70-90 unit apartment complexes detrimental to neighbors on Locust.
- Traffic would be very bad. Doesn't fit in neighborhood.
- Too much traffic! Value of property?

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

What do you like most about these scenarios?

- Keeping buildings closer to right-of-way
- 70-90 apartments is way too busy; too much traffic already too hard to get out on Velp. Apartments if low-income will take away from the fixing up of Velp Ave. Nelson Tactical has residential homes behind it and is doing ery well. I would like to see retail.
- Multiple homes for sale in neighborhood now- will be direct competition.
- Town houses are the lesser of the two evils.

What would you change about these scenarios?

- I don't like either one. We can't get out on Velp from Locust since they put in the roundabouts. This will cause enormous problems with the traffic leaving. No housing or apartments on this corner. We live on North Locust and the other side of the park is all apartments. There are police calls all the time over there.
- Better traffic flow:! Or will go down Locust the other way and further ignore Velp.
- I don't like the idea of more rental properties.
- Townhomes: Buildings lack integration to neighborhood. Parking in front of homes creates suburban atmosphere.
- Apartments: Illustration shows 60 percent surface parking as sue. First floor parking in rear?
- Eliminate apartment complex entirely. Too dense. Exist to Locus should not be allowed.

In what ways could these scenarios address a need you see in the neighborhood?

- Neighborhood needs influx of good design. Clariity from the NINBYS if needs more development which is well designed and source of price
- Must be high quality housing. Townhouses must also be high quality.
- There is no need for more housing in our area. We are zoned "one family residential." We deal with apartments across the park. We don't need any more apartments or more traffic on N. Locust. What are you people thinking with an outlet on a residential street with at least 90 cars coming and going? You will find good people leaving the area. If the city can't choose the type of complex coming in, then don't risk it. No other street into Velp is being proposed this massive housing. Why us?

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Transformative Opportunity Site 3: Creative Reuse

Stantec presented one concept for creative reuse of the Alwin Building, which shows both preservation of existing site structures and demolition/new construction on the site.

Creative Reuse

Feedback Summary:

Meeting participants supported the concept of creative reuse of the Alwin Building, noting the opportunity to enhance neighborhood character, maintain green space behind the building, and invite creative uses to the neighborhood.

Written Feedback:

Does Creative Reuse redevelopment take Velp in the right direction? Why?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Meeting participant responses	2	7	0	0

- Reuse demonstrates creativity.
- Great idea with busway and using the space that is probably full of character.
- Good site for larger scale creative reuse.
- I like the idea of tap room/restaurant.
- Good idea. Need better traffic flow. Like redeveloping historic building.
- But not in favor of another brewery. Why not restaurant with patio to rear?

What do you like most about these scenarios?

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

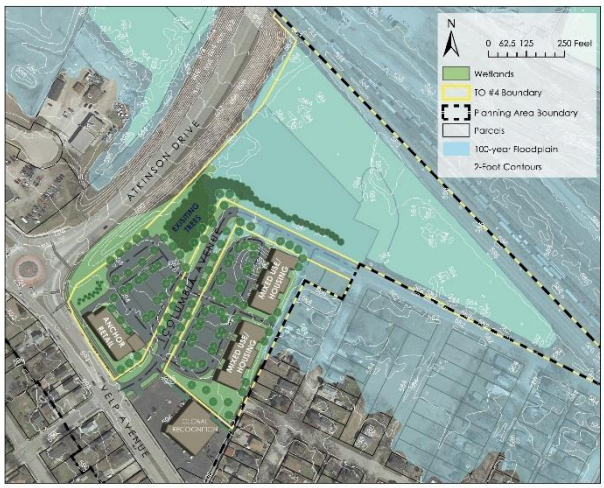
- A draw due to historic value of building/restaurant
- Historic building redevelopment
- Green space included. Patio to back.

What would you change about these scenarios?

- Better access to green space, wetlands, recreation area in back?!
- Not sure
- No brewery/tap room.
- Elimination of unsightly building- Alwin.

Transformative Opportunity Site 4: Retail Center

Mixed Use Node



Destination Retail

Feedback Summary:

Meeting participants had mixed opinions regarding retail options at Transformative Site 4, at the northeast corner of Velp Ave. and Atkinson Drive. Those who supported the idea were generally in favor of more retail. Those who disagreed suggested that the northwest corner of Velp and Atkinson may be a more appropriate site. Meeting participants expressed a desire to see large-scale retail such as a grocery store on Velp Ave.

Reference: Steering Committee and Open House Summary

Written Feedback:

Does Retail Center development take Velp in the right direction? Why?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Meeting participant responses	3	4	2	1

- Not a big enough site
- Retail attracts people, serves a broad area of city.
- Southbound on other side of Atkinson. Big chain restaurant with access and acvertising from 143 and 141.
- Hug corner. Make Columbia a useable north-south connection
- KwikTrip has grocery for surrounding neighbors.
- Concentrate on area to west of Atkinson.

What do you like most about these scenarios?

- Green space

What would you change about these scenarios?

- Add sidewalk on north side. More retail needed. Need grocery.

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