**Notes from Minneapolis Downtown Council’s 2025 Plan**

**East Town Development Group Meeting**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2017, 9:00-10:00 a.m.**

**Padilla, 1101 West River Parkway, Falls Conference Room**

**DOWNLOAD THE PRESENTATIONS HERE:**

[**https://www.dropbox.com/s/c1otwmxu5txj4nn/East%20Town%20Business%20Partnership%20June%2020%20Final.pdf?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/s/c1otwmxu5txj4nn/East%20Town%20Business%20Partnership%20June%2020%20Final.pdf?dl=0)

[**https://www.dropbox.com/s/bbinxf0bt9xijeh/Water%20Works%20Downtown%20East%206-19-17.pdf?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/s/bbinxf0bt9xijeh/Water%20Works%20Downtown%20East%206-19-17.pdf?dl=0)

1. **Welcome, Overview of Agenda, and Announcements**Dan Collison welcomed the audience to the June East Town Development Group meeting and thanked Tom Jollie, Senior Vice President at Padilla (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tomjollie>), for hosting. Collison has had the privilege of working with Jollie for 2 years to help the community find voice and create a sense of place for what is now called East Town.  
     
   Jollie has been with Padilla for 36 years and while driving here today listening to Minnesota Public Radio, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary (<https://www.mpr50.org/>), it reminded him of Padilla’s founders, Don Padilla and David Speer (<http://www.cavittproductions.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/PSB-50th-Anniversary-Book.pdf>), who were part of this keystone club of integrity, creativity, innovation, education, community stewardship, and professional leadership; it even had roots in MPR getting its start as a public radio station. Today he thinks we live on their legacy. East Town, downtown, and the riverfront are all important to them and they like to think of themselves as a hometown team even though they have become a national firm with seven offices around the country. A few weeks ago they announced another acquisition of a digital strategy and development firm in Virginia ([http://www.padillaco.com/  
   the-news/news-items/padilla-acquires-digital-strategy-and-development-firm-inm-united](http://www.padillaco.com/the-news/news-items/padilla-acquires-digital-strategy-and-development-firm-inm-united)) they’re adding to their army of communicators. But he’s thinking about how important Minneapolis is to them and this community in particular which is why they are on located the riverfront. As the leader of the Minnesota team, he gets to be involved in all the really cool things like the St. Paul Winter Carnival Ice Palace, helping Minneapolis position itself correctly here for the Super Bowl, going out to New York and introducing the city to media, and some new secret riverfront projects he’s unable to discuss. He’s glad to host the ETDG and it will always have a home at Padilla.  
     
   Collison then reviewed the agenda explaining it’s wonderful to dance across organizations as the Director of Downtown Partnerships for the Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for the East Town Business Partnership because he’s privileged to be wired into the conversations that impact all of downtown and spotlight East Town. Then he announced the following upcoming ETDG meetings (please note special dates and times):

* *Wednesday, July 26th, 7:30-9:00 a.m.* This is a special joint event with the Minneapolis Downtown Council, i.e., Morning with Steve Cramer: Demystifying Affordable Housing Leadership Panel with Minnesota Housing Partnership Executive Director Chip Halbach (<http://mhponline.org/blog/connect/751-chip-halbach-to-retire-after-40-years-of-leadership>) at the Aloft Minneapolis, 900 Washington Avenue South. Collison hopes this will help frame some of the policy conversations that state and municipal candidates are having.
* *No meeting in August* in deference to the many businesses that typically take this month off.
* *Thursday, September 28th, 4:30-6:00 p.m.* Happy Hour Networking Event featuring the Park & Portland Vision for Development with the BKV Group at The Depot Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel, 225 3rd Avenue South (<http://www.thedepotminneapolis.com/>).

Collison then spotlighted Jim Stanton, local developer who passed away this past Saturday, June 17th (<http://tcbmag.com/news/articles/2017/june/developer-jim-stanton-dies-at-81>). He believes it is important to understand Stanton’s contribution to the real estate industry overall and to East Town in particular, i.e.:

* In real estate business for 55+ years;
* Developed land for 40+ years;
* Developed more than 6,000 home sites in 28 different cities;
* Developed 9 projects in downtown Minneapolis including 4 marquee in East Town: The Bridgewater, Stonebridge Lofts, Portland Tower, and the Legacy Minneapolis which is under construction; and
* Developed affordable rent for 300 visual artists in Northrup King Building in Northeast Minneapolis.

Stanton kept building condominiums when no one else would and in innovative spaces; had a creative way of addressing issues; paid attention to every dollar on a project; and tried to build value. Collison assumes the family will continue the legacy and that Shamrock Development will continue to invest in East Town. Stanton was an important voice in the community and he continued to work right up to when he peacefully passed away.  
  
Geoffrey Glueckstein, SVP at JE Dunn Construction, advised it was a privilege to build almost all of Stanton’s projects but for the past two; building condominiums became untenable for them. Stanton was regarded as a great client and smart guy, but unfortunately they were unable to build his last two projects because of broader national issues. The Minnesota legislature has gone a long way in trying to solve some of those issues and the lawsuits associated with them; it has some of the most onerous laws regarding condominium development and is one of the reasons they could not get into it. Stanton, however, had his own bank account. Collison then congratulated JE Dunn for being awarded the rebuild of the historic old Dayton’s building (formerly Macy’s, Marshall Field’s), which is considered a step toward reimagining the dramatically changing retail spaces in downtown.

1. **Introductions**Sara Barrow, Xcel Energy  
   Kathleen Boe, Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership  
   Tim Briggs, Padilla Board of Directors  
   Dave Burrill, Ryan Companies US, Inc., and landlord to Padilla  
   Mike Dwyer, NRG Energy  
   Tom Evers, Minneapolis Parks Foundation  
   Chris Fleck, North Central University  
   Geoffrey Glueckstein, JE Dunn Construction  
   Tom Hayes, Hennepin County Medical Center  
   Tom Jollie, Padilla  
   Michael Krantz, Metro Transit Office of Transit Oriented Development  
   Randy Manthey, Land Use Committee Member of Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association  
   Brian Maupin, Allied Parking  
   Robin Mooney, Boarman Kroos Vogel (BKV) Group  
   Karima Muse, City of Minneapolis  
   Patrick Sadler, policy aide to Ward 7 Council Member Lisa Goodman  
   Thomas Schmid, Land Use Committee Member of Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association   
   Cathy Schmidt, Surfacequest  
   Leda Schuster, policy aide to Ward 6 Council Member Abdi Warsame  
   Frank Sherwood, CBRE  
   Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
2. **All Things Riverfront**Collison introduced the guest presenters, Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership Executive Director Kathleen Boe (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kathleenkboe>), and Minneapolis Parks Foundation Executive Director Tom Evers (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tom-evers-b987447>), by providing a brief summary of their backgrounds.
3. **Economic Impact of the Riverfront.** Boe explained she would give an overview of two enterprises that have/will have an economic impact on the riverfront: (1) the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership; and (2) the Friends of the Lock and Dam.   
     
   The MRP was created by an act of legislation in 2008 to facilitate and support coordinated revitalization of the riverfront in the City of Minneapolis (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/about-mrp/>). What makes the organization unique is that it brings together people with diverse interests, i.e., elected officials, private industry, and neighborhood representatives (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/about-mrp/board-of-directors/>) to inform others, engage the public, and accelerate revitalization efforts, particularly in the Upper River (north of the Plymouth Avenue Bridge) where access to and enjoyment of the riverfront has been less equitable. MRP focuses on:
4. *Creating connections to the riverfront* through:
5. Placemaking events: annual Riverfront Fests (<https://www.everfest.com/e/minneapolis-riverfront-fest-minneapolis-mn>); and annual Mississippi Minute Film Festivals/Riverfront Summits ([www.mississippiminute.org](http://www.mississippiminute.org)).
6. Physical access projects: Great Northern Greenway to connect neighbors through the heart of Northeast and North Minneapolis (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/riverfront-initiatives/great-northern-greenway/>); protected bikeway on Marshall Street NE ([http://www.hennepin.us/residents/  
   transportation/marshallstne](http://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/marshallstne)); and Red River Oxcart Trail ([http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/  
   riverfront-initiatives/red-river-oxcart-trail/](http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/riverfront-initiatives/red-river-oxcart-trail/)).
7. *Championing the riverfront*. This begins with creating data (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/riverfront-vitality-project/>) on what is or is not happening on the riverfront, and holding events throughout the year on issues critical to riverfront matters, e.g., RiverMatters ([http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/  
   ?s=rivermatters](http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/?s=rivermatters)) held in downtown Minneapolis with the goal toward educating the business community on issues related to the Upper River because it’s the next area of development. The next RiverMatters will be in August 2017.

Using a slide presentation, Boe explained the riverfront in Minneapolis encompasses: the 3.4 square miles in the Upper River, the remaining industrial area where a lot of transformation is occurring; the 2.0 square miles in the Central Riverfront where we are meeting today; and the 2.8 square miles in the Lower Gorge which has spectacular views along the riverfront. Then she described the three plans that guide MRP’s work:

1. Minneapolis Parks Foundation’s 2012 RiverFirst Vision (<http://riverfirst.com/vision/>), a park design proposal and implementation framework for the Upper Riverfront. This was a visioning exercise that informed both the City’s Above the Falls Master Plan Update and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s Above the Falls Regional Park Plan Update, but it has no official standing as an approved policy plan;
2. City’s 2013 Above the Falls Master Plan Update ([http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/  
   @cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-110826.pdf](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-110826.pdf)), a renewed vision of the original ATFMP for the Upper River, but not yet approved by the Metropolitan Council; and
3. MPRB’s 2013 Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan Update ([https://www.minneapolisparks.org/  
   \_asset/pxm4rh/atf\_masterplan\_draft.pdf](https://www.minneapolisparks.org/_asset/pxm4rh/atf_masterplan_draft.pdf)), developed in parallel to the City’s ATF Master Plan Update with content intended to fulfill the Metropolitan Council’s requirements for regional park master plans (<https://metrocouncil.org/METC/files/25/256a3ab3-55bc-49b1-8c84-6a5c341c1aa4.pdf>).

Boe then highlighted a few of the developments which have brought new investments and economic vitality to the Upper River over the past decade:

1. Meyer Borgman Johnson’s $22 million renovation of historic Grain Belt Brewery in 2002 at 1215 Marshall Street NE (<http://www.mbjeng.com/home/projects/renovation-adaptive-reuse/grain-belt-brewery-renovation/>) where RSP Architects is headquartered;
2. Coloplast’s new North American Headquarters at 1601 West River Road North built in 2009 for $37 million, $4 million of which came from various public sources ([http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/projects/  
   cped\_coloplast\_corp](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/projects/cped_coloplast_corp));
3. Restaurateur Leslie Bock’s conversion of an old car wash and original Psycho Suzi’s Motor Lodge into Betty Danger’s Country Club restaurant and bar with a 65 foot Ferris wheel (<http://bettydangers.com/>) at 2501 Marshall Street NE in 2014 for $2 million;
4. LifeSource’s new headquarters at 2225 West River Road North completed in 2015 for $11 million (<https://www.life-source.org/2013/07/lifesource-riverview-facility-connecting-our-communities/>) and (<https://braunintertec.com/project/lifesource/>); and
5. DC Group’s expansion and renovation of its headquarters at 1977 West River Road North completed in 2016 (<http://www.startribune.com/new-headquarters-brings-attention-to-dc-group-s-success/382426911/>) for $7.3 million, some of which came from public sources ([http://www.minneapolismn.gov/newsroom/  
   WCMS1P-124493](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/newsroom/WCMS1P-124493)).

Not shown, but in the planning phase is the 48+ acre, mile-long riverfront shoreline Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment project, the largest remaining single-owner development opportunity. At its June 7th meeting, the MPRB approved the execution of the three-party exclusive rights agreement between the City, MPRB, and the master development team (United Properties, THOR Development and First Avenue Productions). For more information about the project, community engagement during the planning process, and timeline, visit <http://upperharbormpls.com/>.

Then turning to the other enterprise whose activities will have an economic impact on the riverfront, Boe explained the initiative of the Friends of the [Upper St. Anthony Falls] Lock and Dam, i.e., to repurpose the now closed Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam into a world-class 7,500 square-foot visitor and 50,000 square-foot interpretive center, an estimated $45 million project (<http://www.journalmpls.com/news/parks/2016/11/upper-st-anthony-falls-visitor-center-proposed/>).   
  
On June 2, 2016, various riverfront stakeholder organizations (e.g., City, MPRB, MPF, Meet Minneapolis, Mill City Museum, DMNA, ETBP) convened to build a coalition around repurposing the Lock and Dam for a public purpose, draft a coalition statement, and form working committees. FL&D is seeking endorsement by the ETBP and permission to use its logo on the approved coalition statement, i.e.:

“We support the St. Anthony Falls Upper Lock as the centerpiece of an iconic civic and cultural destination, reflective of our shared history, for the use and enjoyment of all.”

Boe then provided data on the economic health of the riverfront taken from the MRP’s 2015 Riverfront Vitality Report (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/riverfront-vitality-project/>):

1. *Property tax revenue*. Approximately 18% of the revenue derived comes from riverfront properties and that has gone up by 5% over the last 10 years, and 11% comes from the Central Riverfront which has gone up by 20% over the last 10 years.
2. *Investment in the Upper River*. $49 million public investment leveraged $117 million in private funds, a return on each public dollar invested of $3.46.
3. *Riverfront access*. The vision is for the Mississippi riverfront to be lined by parkland. In the Lower Gorge, 91% of the riverfront is adjacent to parkland, 70% of the Central Riverfront is if you include the Lock and Dam, but only 47% is in the Upper River. This lower percentage in the Upper River becomes a matter of equity. Today, the MPRB has purchased over 70% of the land in the Upper River but will need bonding bills being passed to be able to turn them into parkland. The Upper Harbor Terminal project will also have a major impact on riverfront access and parkland.

Thereafter, Boe responded to questions from the audience during which Collison advised the ETBP and the Minneapolis Downtown Council will be pleased to endorse the FL&D and provide their logos; he’ll follow up with Kjersti Monson to do so. Boe also shared that the MRP constantly works on its funding but receives generous support from the McKnight Foundation, significant funding from the fall Mississippi Minute Film Festival, contracts with the city and state, and individual donations from corporations, neighborhood organizations and individuals.

1. **RiverFirst and Water Works.** Evers explained the Minneapolis Parks Foundation is a donor-supported nonprofit organization founded in 2003 whose mission is to transforms human lives through parks and public spaces by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision.   
     
   Minneapolis is a unique city in that 140 years ago the business community saw what was happening in other cities’ parks (e.g., American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted’s Central Park in New York City), and being frustrated with Minneapolis’ city government, they went to the state legislature to create an independently elected body to run and envision a park system within Minneapolis which resulted in the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (<https://www.minneapolisparks.org/about_us/history/>). Unlike most cities in the country, the MPRB is an independently elected, semi-autonomous body responsible for governing, maintaining and developing the Minneapolis Park System, and when financial decisions are being made by the City, the MPRB is always there to protect parks as a key investment, e.g., now have almost all waterways in the city as public parkland with the exception being in the Upper River.  
     
   The MPF was developed to be the primary philanthropic partner to the MPRB and one of its core strategies is envisioning and advancing the Next Generation of Parks™ through RiverFirst ([https://mplsparksfoundation.org/  
   riverfirst/](https://mplsparksfoundation.org/riverfirst/)), a transformative vision for the Upper River, and one of its signature projects, Water Works (<https://mplsparksfoundation.org/projects/water-works/>).  
     
   RF is an interagency partnership of the MPRB, City and MPF, and the RF initiative was adopted by the MPRB in 2012 to develop riverfront parks and trails on both sides of the Mississippi River from downtown Minneapolis to the northern city limits. A big reason people come and live in Minneapolis is the Chain of Lakes that are accessible via the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Rounds_Scenic_Byway>) from the southeast at Lake Harriet stretching into north and northeast Minneapolis. What’s left to be done are the trail connections in the Upper River; the west bank trail on West River Road North dead-ends at Orvin “Ole” Olson Park, and the new east bank trail stretches almost a mile from Boom Island Park before turning off onto the 1600 block of Marshall Street NE. When completed there will be trails to seamlessly connect North and Northeast Minneapolis via improvements to 26th Avenue North from Theodore Wirth Parkway to the Mississippi River, improvements to 18th Avenue NE between Monroe and Johnson Street NE, and along the riverfront.  
     
   RF’s other signature projects, besides completing Upper River trails, are: Scherer Park and [recreation of] Hall’s Island (<https://vimeo.com/65180024>); redevelopment of the Upper Harbor Terminal that Boe discussed earlier; and Water Works.  
     
   Water Works is an extension of Mill Ruins Park ([https://www.minneapolisparks.org/parks\_\_destinations/  
   parks\_\_lakes/mill\_ruins\_park/#group\_3\_16241](https://www.minneapolisparks.org/parks__destinations/parks__lakes/mill_ruins_park/#group_3_16241)), a slice of land that includes where the former Fuji Ya restaurant building stands that has remained dormant for approximately 30 years. To realize the vision for WW will require an estimated $400 million, 20-30% of which will need to come from private philanthropy. It’s too much to do all at once so they sat down with the MPRB to determine what’s ready to move ahead with now, thus the Mezzanine Phase of the new design that will connect into North Minneapolis via Ole Olson Park and into the city via the woonerf under South 1st Street.  
     
   There has been a lot of community work on this project on what it needs to be and do (<https://www.minneapolisparks.org/_asset/b7tge6/water_works_open_houses_concept_design.pdf>). Based on feedback, it needs to be a place: for all weather, seasons, and times of day; for all to arrive and be on the riverfront; that integrates ecological systems; of surprise and wonder where history is revered and revealed; for diverse interests, extended stays, and regular visits; that is financially self-supportive; and well cared for that accommodates basic needs.   
     
   WW is also one of the most complex, historic sites in Minneapolis and arguably in the state. There are layers and layers of history that have evolved because of the Falls going back to pre-settlement, Ojibwe and Dakota people, early millers to General Mills to the current rebirth of the city and it continues to be where Minneapolis’ history unfolds. WW is not where they want to lock history in place, but rather where stories can be told and, as a consequence, they have been working with the MPRB to reach out to different communities (e.g., Native American elders) to include their historical as well as current perspectives.  
     
   Much in-depth analysis has been done regarding this area that guided the planning and design, i.e.: December 1, 2016 Water Works Interpretive Planning by 106 Group ([https://www.minneapolisparks.org/\_asset/y7dkra/  
   water\_works\_interpretive\_plan.pdf](https://www.minneapolisparks.org/_asset/y7dkra/water_works_interpretive_plan.pdf)); December 2014 Interpretive Vision for the West Bank of St. Anthony Falls (<http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/pdf/West_Bank_Vision.pdf>); the November 2013 Interpretive Vision for the East Bank of St. Anthony Falls (<http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/pdf/East_Bank_Vision.pdf>); and the 2009 Interpretive Plan for St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone ([http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/pdf/2009interpplan/  
   Report\_small\_12\_23\_09.pdf](http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/pdf/2009interpplan/Report_small_12_23_09.pdf)).  
     
   Evers then described the area displaying a historic view and the current site plan, concept view from the 3rd Avenue Bridge, concept view of the Park Pavilion, exploded axonometric of Pavilion, green roof and plaza, and café interior. Then he described what has transpired in the past 13 months:

* Design / cultural resource team selected (Damon Farber, HGA, 106 Group, MacDonald & Mack)
* Deep historic / archeological analysis conducted
* Park and pavilion program analysis completed
* Precedents analyzed
* Former Fuji Ya building documented and deconstruction plans prepared
* Under-represented communities consulted
* Rainwater reuse strategy completed and $900,000 granted by MWMO to implement
* Raising $18 million for this and another one down the road for a total cost of $34 million between the two. General Mills gave $3 million, MPF gave $3 million, and $12.5 million from other individual supporters.

And the timeline for the next 12 months:

* April-June Community reengaged around evolved concept
* May 1 & 2 Public Open Houses
* June 7 MPRB Planning Committee considering evolved concept (6:30 public hearing)
* June 28 MPRB full Board approval (<https://mplsparksfoundation.org/2017/06/29/news-release-water-works-design-concept-adopted-by-minneapolis-park-board/>)
* July Fuji Ya deconstruction permit finalized
* August Deconstruction of former Fuji Ya building begins, food vendor selected, archeological dig begins
* July-March Schematic design and construction docs
* December Finish out fundraising campaign
* 2018 Park construction begins

Thereafter, Evers responded to questions during which he announced MPF’s annual Sunrise on the Mississippi fundraising event on Thursday, September 7, 2017 featuring journalist James Edward Mills who will discuss The Adventure Gap (<http://jamesedwardmills.com/>). More details to follow.

1. **Closing Remarks**

Collison thanked Boe and Evers for their presentations, Padilla for hosting, Cathy Schmidt for her assistance in organizing, and the audience for attending.