

**Notes from Minneapolis Downtown Council's 2025 Plan
East Downtown Development Committee Task Force
Small Group Meeting
Thursday, October 16, 2014, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
Minneapolis CPED, 105 5th Avenue South, 2nd Floor, Conference Room 3**

I. Introductions and Overview of Structure and Core Tasks of Small Group

Dan Collison explained that this dynamic group he's leading is the MDC's effort for implementing the 2025 Plan and it's his goal to make this meeting highly valuable to participants' organizations, the City as a whole, and CPED in particular when it comes to planning and implementation. Beginning next month he will send out a call for content regarding topics participants would like to discuss or present, what is important to their organizations, or what they consider a priority for East Downtown.

Then he gave an overview of the EDDCTF's three priorities, key perspectives, stakeholders represented, levels of engagement, and core tasks to be focused on that will need to be tracked on a grid basis (reference Overview page).

- a. **Action Plan Chart Review.** The Albina Community Action Plan is a good example of what this small group could use to track its core tasks. The public realm information that Ben Shardlow tracks for the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District and the residential information that the 2020 Plan Residential Task Force tracks both can be pulled into an action chart specific to the East Downtown area (reference Action Chart: Retail sample).

As a small group of the EDDCTF, Beth Elliott noted that there would be some expectations by the larger group about what we're doing more detailed than the larger group. She recommended a yearlong work plan. Figure out what are our main tasks and focus over the next 3, 6, 9 and 12 months because there's a lot happening in East Downtown that this group should influence. When she thinks about what decisions that are coming down the line in the next few months, she thought a lot about public realm and Lacey is here to be our voice on that, e.g., the Commons RFP is out and there's going to be a need for some community group that could be a sounding board. That is something CPED will also need to talk about internally regarding how they reach out to larger groups. Another topic this group may want to address is the DID expansion or elements like this that it may want to influence quickly so a work plan would be beneficial to take topical, task-based items in bite size pieces. Taking something that's manageable to try and impact then advise and send our input on processes back to the larger group is what she prefers instead of providing summaries of what's going on right now.

Lacy Shelby explained that she is working on the Downtown Public Realm Planning Framework which is to look at the amenities and what public and private investments have happened in the public realm. What she has been doing with interns over the past 6 months is an inventory of the entire downtown as ringed by the river and the highways looking at how many bike racks, location of benches, vegetation and whether it's maintained; she's collected over 3,000 data points. What has been interesting is looking at the distribution of these elements in East downtown. To Beth's point about being able to use this group, envisioning what it is we want to see and how we can do that, through public realm enhancements and know that you're in a community that has a specific character to it. At some point she'll bring the data collected so that we can envision what we'd like for the streetscape to become.

Beth commented that this is great agenda for understanding the base of what's going on in Elliot Park, Downtown East, what the City is doing, and figuring out what are some of the short-term decisions that will be made with or without us, and trying to track up to a year to make sure we're malleable and pointed in the way that we can help determine outcomes.

Dan stated that what this group does will be a communication tool to the entire business community, the residential community to a more intense degree, and connecting the parts of the government as a way to broadcast vision and messaging.

Michael Dwyer commented that what Beth mentioned about getting ahead of it is really important because what they've found in their business is that after things are getting settled the horse is already out of the barn, so to approach district energy now and early on so as the first development starts to come up of any size they can get plugged into it quickly. They have an advantage this time, different than in the North Loop,

having the stadium on the system and a huge part of the infrastructure will already be in.

In response to Dan's ask for content, Bruce Jacobson explained why he's at the table. With his Metropolitan Design Center hat — and this has been discussed a lot with Tom Fischer, Mic Johnson, Bob Close, John Carmody, et.al. — they are intensely interested in this part of the city; it's an incredible opportunity and what he would like to offer up as clarification is capacity and perspective in terms of research, precedence study, contacts, analysis function and getting into programming. Wherever this leads, he thinks they're very interested in bringing to the table the opportunity to really drill down where they need to, not just as an academic exercise, and offer up some perspective related to what other people have been doing successfully and the challenges they face elsewhere and how we may apply those things here. Very distinctly, he thinks that's an important piece they can bring to the table as needed. Tom Fischer is really lit up about this but one of the things that is not well known is that they can tap into a number of centers at the U of M that are geared and funded towards supporting these kinds of activities, e.g., sustainable building research, transportation, energy.

Dan then asked participants to introduce themselves and explain their interest in being on this group. Starting with himself, he is Executive Director for the East Downtown Council, and associate staff with the Minneapolis Downtown Council where they're moving towards a title of Director of East Downtown Partnership, and pastor of First Covenant Church. This group represents a highly pragmatic interest in being a convener / connector. He will not pretend to know how to do your work; he'll be pleased to understand your work and he's a quick study as to how things can converge. He hopes this group will be very practical and have some substantial outcomes to take to the City.

John Slack, Senior Landscape Architect at Perkins+Will and City Planning Commissioner. His interest is fairly recent; he's been meeting and talking with Dan and following the work going on in East Downtown. He's been heavily engaged in sustainable growth in Minneapolis for 19 years starting in the North Loop. He was part of the first neighborhood board, started the planning and zoning committee there and sees a real similarity in with what's going on here to what happened in the North Loop. He's here due to his interest in the sustainable growth of East Downtown and his passion for public realm design.

Lacy Shelby explained that she's been working at CPED with Beth as Principal Urban Designer for the past 9 months. She was born and raised in the Twin Cities and was in New York for 10 years working for the NYC Department of Transportation as its Director of Green Infrastructure. She considers herself an expert in implementing green infrastructure and climate resilient designs. Her primary role at CPED is to look at the public realm citywide and determine what we're doing well and identify the missing links.

Marcela Sotela Odor, policy aide to 6th Ward Council Member Abdi Warsami. She's originally from Costa Rica so as a transplant what has always been in the work she's done and brings her to the table is community building. When we're talking about public realm, we're talking about the larger community with a capital C; businesses, residents, people who come and play and work here and what community means to us. As a Council Office, they talk about all these different neighborhoods within their Ward and there's a preconceived notion of what the area can and cannot offer especially with people who are not very familiar with downtown. They're here to help with the community building process and what unique spheres they can influence.

Carletta Sweet serves on the boards of the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association, East Downtown Council, and the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership. She echoed the community building aspect of why she's at the table. As a long time resident of this neighborhood (she lives just across the street), they've been needing to bring more people, commerce and vitality to the area and the various boards on which she serves are all concerned with achieving those goals.

Chris Fleck, Development Officer at North Central University. NCU has been privileged to be in the neighborhood for 84 years. It is a very thinly managed organization and he gets to raise funds for student scholarships and work on community projects like the Elliot Park soccer field that he needs to continue championing for the remaining funds. He loves people; they have over 1,000 students living on campus for three quarters of the year and they are able to harness volunteers from their great talent pool.

Charlie Owens for John Breitingger, Cushman & Wakefield/NorthMarq. They are working with Thrivent to assess alternative uses for a couple parking lots it owns near its downtown headquarters. He's here to listen

and to pass information onto John. Dan clarified that John will also wear several hats: Chair of the Urban Land Institute MN Chapter and Executive Director for Real Estate Advisory.

Bruce Jacobson explained that he is a landscape architect by profession and professionally has a deep history in Elliot Park and Downtown East. His other hat is that he's a Minneapolis resident and believes that a strong core city is good for his neighborhood as well. A rising tide raises all boats is something he subscribes to and he has a passionate interest in the success of downtown.

Alex Tittle, Equity Director, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority. His responsibility and role is to ensure minority-, women-, and veteran-owned small businesses have an equal footing and opportunities on the Vikings project. His role is starting to morph into being responsible for ensuring that global and particularly local East Downtown businesses have an opportunity to play a role for the next 30+ years at that facility and to provide diversity inclusion from all walks of life. It's appropriate that they're bringing a lot of designers, including landscape designers to the table to talk, to talk about the Commons and how to make that a playing space for local businesses and bring commerce to the area. This is what has driven him to the table as well as some of the discussions he's had with Dan over the past year regarding jobs and opportunities for the local labor force that will play out of these discussions.

Lynn Regnier, Executive Director, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc. She is also here as a connector; keeping Elliot Park connected to the broader community and vice versa. EPNI doesn't have the resources but at this table alone there's a wealth of resources and opportunities so she appreciates being at the same table.

Ben Shardlow, Director of Public Realm Initiatives, Minneapolis Downtown Council / Downtown Improvement District. As the staff lead for the Greening and Public Realm Committee implementing the goals of the 2025 Plan, a big part of that is what happens in Downtown East. He has also been involved in the facilitation of conservancy capability that the MDC is helping to create.

Mike Dwyer, Director of Sales and Marketing, NRG Energy Center. NRG is the district energy center at the edge of East Downtown. It's almost 50 years and they heat and cool most of the downtown buildings primarily in the loop from the river to Loring Park and from the Twins Stadium to the new Vikings stadium. They have a large network and think district energy is a good thing. They're interested in figuring out what the need is in East Downtown besides the stadium. He's personally interested as an Elliot Park resident and is anxious to see what evolves over time.

Patrick Sadler, policy aide to 7th Ward Council Member Lisa Goodman. He's always had a passion for downtown and is very excited to see the activity that's happening here and thrilled to be at the table and part of helping shape the future of the area. He's here to offer a policy perspective. Working with their great staff they will come up with great ideas and direction and it's his job to go back and convince his boss and other Council Members to get their support. He's happy to be the liaison with the decision makers at the City. Dan noted that Heidi Ritchie, policy aide to 3rd Ward Council Member Jacob Frey, who could not attend is also committed to being in this group.

David Fields is contracted by CPED to build a communications network for East Downtown to track development, and according to Rose Lindsay, Marketing Specialist at CPED, a web page would go on the City's site next week providing a link to all developments and stakeholders. Dave's business is similar to Dan's, i.e., to monitor and provide connections. He's lived in Elliot Park for 15 years and worked for EPNI for 8 years and his expertise has been in the planning EPNI has been done.

Beth Elliott, CPED Long Range Planner for Downtown. She tends to focus on certain areas depending on what's going on. She's spent a lot of time on issues in the North Loop building the policy and implementing it, the results for which we're seeing right now. Now she has a particular focus in East Downtown because it's an area that is changing and having been through North Loop's growing pains and all the benefits resulting therefrom, like John she can be very helpful to this group. In addition to setting policies and implementing them, her job is also to be in a room like this and explain the long-term consequences of our short-term actions that sometimes make her the naysayer in the room. She likes the fact that Marcela and Patrick are in the room and Heidi will be because they put their trust in her to help guide processes like this. She can't make decisions on her own or have the ability to change policy, but they're all a team at the City and they can help us make some changes over here.

- b. **Sub-group leadership.** Dan explained that we need champions for the things the group is tasked to do and encouraged participants to think about what they'd like to take the lead on.

II. Market Trends Analysis

Beth Elliott explained that she has hired a consultant, Jay Demma, formerly of Stantec and currently at Perkins+Will, to do a market analysis that is more grounded in data and trends analysis to figure out what's going to happen in this area in the next 5 years (reference page 4 of 7 in the Work Plan dated September 2, 2014 she distributed).

Under Task 8, she has been thinking a lot about ground floor commercial space (first bullet point) because if we don't get it within upcoming developments, we're going to lose the opportunity completely. Developers have told her there's *not* a market here yet for it. In her gut she thinks there will be in 5 years because of the 5,000 new employees coming to the area, the stadium that will hopefully be used more than 10 days a year for a lot of other events, and a lot of other developments coming along. She worries about losing the opportunity and wants to be able to say to developers that we have done our analysis, looked at trends, and crunched the numbers to show that there is a market for ground floor commercial uses. She needs a toolkit to encourage or require developers to do this.

Where priority corridors should be (second bullet point), the Ryan project with Wells Fargo is basically setting up a new commercial corridor along South 4th Street / around the Commons, or perhaps it should be along Chicago Avenue where we would traditionally want it to be.

The types of office users and who will be attracted to East Downtown (third bullet point), she doesn't think this is the new office expansion area as she's heard people say over the last 2 years. If it is, we need to get it right and people like Lacy and Ben are trying to ensure we do it differently than in the office core because it is pretty dead on nights and weekends with the skyways being a contributing factor and they are expanding into East Downtown.

Number of hotels that could be supported near the new stadium and market drivers (fourth bullet point), up until about a month ago she has received calls weekly from hotels that want to go into East Downtown or developers that want a hotel in their development, the types of hotels and where is the hotel market. You can't look at the hotel market in East Downtown in isolation, you have to look at all of downtown because more are coming to the core and are further along in the processes. A hotel just for the stadium does not seem viable to her, but she wants to know what is actually happening and to look at other parts of the country to see what impact stadiums have on the hospitality market.

Beth thinks there's a significant difference in the market bounded by South 5th Street (fifth bullet point); there are different dynamics, physical restraints and users to the north and south. To the north there's a lot more surface parking lots (some now being developed), the influences of the river, and the Washington Avenue commercial corridor. To the south there's HCMC with small infill sites surrounding it, and the more established Elliot Park residential component of the area. So what is the market likely to give us on the larger sites versus smaller sites versus close to the river versus near HCMC? This market trends analysis will answer those questions.

Beth would love to eventually do a much grander housing analysis of where the gaps are downtown (sixth bullet point), but this market trend analysis can't be that. At a minimum it will look at the inventory in East Downtown and identify where we're at a loss for certain types of housing.

Hopefully, this gives everyone a better sense of where she's focusing and to give the City enough meat to be able to make good policy, regulatory and procedural decisions.

III. District Identity and Branding with PadillaCRT

Dan explained that the EDC is applying for pro bono professional services from PadillaCRT in 2015 to develop questions that would lead to creating a sense of district identity and brand. They may even participate in this group to help them understand what it is we're trying to do.

He may try and couple that with CPED Great Streets Neighborhood Business District Program monies to keep them going throughout the year. Beth noted, however, that Mayor Hodges' proposed 2015 budget would eliminate this program.

IV. East Downtown LRT Station Design and Branding

While a MinneAtlas App was displayed of the area, Dan advised that this hub is really important to the entire district. He has a meeting with Steve Cramer and Brian Lamb, General Manager of Metro Transit, next Tuesday where Brian will lay out his perspectives on design, brand, corporate sponsorship possibilities, public funding and political issues.

Then he posed the question “If you were to ask the people who are responsible for doing the built part of the LRT, what are the things you want to understand and what do you think this group should be talking about?”

“What is the relationship of this station to the Twins Stadium station? Is it equal or secondary? My gut says it’s secondary by virtue of the all other connections but I think that starts to identify what scale it is and how important it is.” ~Michael Dwyer

“I’ve always thought ever since the coming of the Hiawatha Line [Metro Blue Line] and working on the design of these downtown stations that the North Loop transit station is much more elaborate. But we have to remember that people from out of town are coming directly from the airport and from the Union Depot in St. Paul to this station. It is probably encompassing the character of a portal into downtown for visitors to get off in the middle of a historic area, get oriented, and be able to look at the riverfront. I think that some sort of branding in terms of that theme would make it unique. It’s almost a true transit plaza where people come, perch for a while, have business at the U or downtown and maybe stay at a hotel nearby but you’re connected from that particular station.” ~David Fields

“We’ve had conversations, and maybe this is tinted by the Council Member being raised in London, about the community space that a station creates. We seem to have these stations in the place where the weather is not like Costa Rica; it’s very cold and we could be using it more as to what you’re saying. What about an ATM machine and a newsstand and a coffee shop where people could stay for a little bit longer and move around. It could be a meeting point or creating a different sensation for this station; not just a place where you pass by, you get off, get on.” ~Marcela Sotela Odor

Beth advised that this station’s platform will remain in the same spot and it is, in a sense, a secondary station to Target Field Station because the TFS is set up to have a lot more modes of transportation come into it. They learned a lot of lessons in its design, for the plaza and queuing space that can be applied here. And it goes to Marcela’s point, a lot of what you want near LRT stations are conveniences so when people get off the train they won’t necessarily need a car to shop.

Dan asked Title that since the MSFA technically has authority over it — it’s within the line of the legislative boundary — and his team has a lot of input in designing that space, what might we need to find out from his team regarding his leadership?

“The biggest thing we’re talking about is volume; how much volume can we anticipate. As Beth mentioned, there’s going to be a lot of other events happening besides the 10 games a year so we’re expecting a ton of people coming through. One of the biggest things associated with that is safety implications; putting a lot of shops and all those other things, bringing in a lot of people. Because of the way the LRT is set up, it opens the door to challenges around safety. We don’t want to have fatalities or injuries associated with it. Another area of significant discussion is connectability. We want to try and improve some type of connectability via the WiFi network we have inside the stadium and other venues along the rail line, e.g., like the situation at Target Field Stadium. We want people on the rail system to be connected in lock step with that so those are some of the things that probably haven’t been talked about. In groups we’ve been talking about branding and things like that but we haven’t considered that most of us are walking around with this [smartphones] and we’re talking and looking at advertisements and those types of things are connected via technology as well. But the biggest conversations are around volume; we want it to bigger but safer.” ~ Alex Tittle

Lacy advised that she has been peripherally involved in some meetings with other City stakeholders so this intersection [South 5th Street and Chicago Avenue] proved to be the crux of the whole stadium and pedestrian volume and movement, especially getting folks into the transit station. As Alex pointed out, safety is a huge concern. There was a significant in-depth study on pedestrian volumes about crossing. It was determined that a pedestrian bridge will cross from the station onto the transit platform to accommodate that movement. When you’re trying to move 70,000 people out of a close game scenario in a matter of 15 minutes into the larger city

whether it's parking ramps or LRT, they are expecting queuing will happen over the bridge and that speaks to the volume issues. The MSFA owns the parcel where the public art feature is, but Metro Transit will maintain control and branding will happen at the station itself. MSFA and Metro Transit are in negotiations over an MOU as well as project timeline, schedule and delivery. Currently, MT will be responsible for the pedestrian bridge and the MSFA will be responsible for any plaza improvements.

Beth added that the reason volume is going to be such a problem (currently it already is after games) is because once the Southwest LRT and Bottineau LRT are online a lot of people will be queuing up to go west where they don't necessarily do so now. Lessons learned from the Target Field Station's design would be used to design a nice but functional plaza that connects to the Commons. Further, she'll be looking at the design of the bridge so that it doesn't disrupt other goals. It is a huge piece of infrastructure that needs to be designed well because it's something we're going to have to live with for a long time. Mostly it will not be used on non-volume days and there's a wonderful view looking down Chicago Avenue of the A Mill across the river that will probably be obstructed.

As a side bar, Dan mentioned that some of the creative thinking being advocated from the private sector is large percussion instruments as public realm enhancements. Jim Vos from Cresa is part of a local rotary that has done installations that have been tested in some parks. It's an interactive space that draws people to come and play. They find it to be an attractive yet sustainable way to have people do things on flat hard surfaces and they're willing to invest \$100,000 in something like this. This idea will be presented to the MSFA and Jacob Frey's office in a couple weeks.

Lacy advised that they have a rich breadth of information she'll share at a later date. But to speak specifically to Bruce's outcome and results, the goal of the document is to define some primary corridors and performance guidelines. It is to guide how enhancements can happen and what tools we have to enable both public and private entities to make investments in the public realm.

V. Metropolitan Design Center

Bruce advised that Mic Johnson works each semester with his graduate architecture studio and picks a unique geography within the city, usually in the downtown core. Before he was ever involved in this, he had selected the crossroads of Chicago, Park and Portland Avenues, and 9th, 10th and 14th Streets, i.e., Centennial Commons and its surrounds. The value added to that is they picked where the I-35W lid initiative was fleshed out. They have the capacity to do this really deep dive that includes a great deal of analysis, context, evaluation and precedent study, concept alternative, and physical modeling and that's what they're in the midst of right now for this semester. So we have the advantage of providing some critique and input but from the other direction, a very detailed exploration with context, not just an academic study. That is the beauty of what he's doing. It is also framed by urban principles and the relationship to public realm at the outset and traces them all the way through to doing detailed building design. There're usually 10-12 students who are asked to understand the district they're working within, relate buildings within specific blocks to each other, and design great buildings. To Beth's point, how they land on the ground and what the first floor uses are and how it relates to the public space are much more in the architecture vernacular than it ever has been before.

The opportunity for this group to have Mic sitting here is when the time comes to invite the group over to review their work and provide critique, and coming back in the other direction, there's a deliverable we can use that is timely and give us an opportunity to explore what might be possible.

VI. Making Sense of Elliot Park

Lynn Regnier reported on the following projects:

- **Soccer Field.** This is NCAA-regulation size field that is under construction. It's a collaboration between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and North Central University, which stepped up to help fund it. Many people were extremely excited but some others were not because of the removal of mature trees around the edge of it. Weather permitting the goal is to finish by this year if temperatures allow for installation of the turf.
- **Development projects**
 - a. Hennepin County Medical Clinic's plan to build a clinic south of their main campus on South 8th Street. They are finishing up on the internal needs, uses and functions and have set November 3rd as a date to

start working on overall design and putting all the pieces together. They have already selected a design consultant for this project.

- b. Kraus-Anderson is planning to build a new headquarters on its current site. The Planning Commission sent K-A back to the drawing board and to EPNI because Ted Tucker, chair of the commission, wanted them to design an urban street front worthy of downtown. It has been continued until November 10th.
 - c. Jim Stanton of Shamrock Development proposed 17-story Portland Tower condos on the empty lot south of the Sexton Building at Portland Avenue and South 8th Street. Stanton met with the EPNI's task force last night and will be at their community meeting tonight. It is slated to go before the Planning Commission on November 10th. Overall, the task force is pleased with the design — it will have ground floor commercial space — and excited about having ownership in the neighborhood.
- **Master Plan Review.** David Fields reminded the group that there's a 14-year history of neighborhood-based planning that EPNI has undertaken for all of East Downtown, primarily thanks to the previous executive director, Susan Braun, who had a degree in urban design and felt the neighborhood should do a Master Plan. The Master Plan is only one element; it was the beginning. If you go to the EPNI website, still a remarkable resource, under Community Planning you can access the Master Plan and everything that was done since. The major document for him is Centennial Commons and the most relevant document he considers for what we want to do is the Urban Design Guidelines they worked on with Lunning Wende Associates and is currently not available on the asset library jump drive for this committee.

Centennial Commons is called that because the one block Centennial Place is the very heart of the neighborhood. There are existing storefronts but they're not used as such; there is vacant space and NCU offices and classrooms. One of the goals was to restore that heart of the neighborhood; it came out of a concept of the Master Plan called the *Neighbor Commons* and Bruce and Close Landscape Architecture worked on that. The Master Plan is unusual; it more like a series of paintings and drawings and not very prescriptive and that's its great asset. David emphasized that the introduction to the plan is a series of brochures and is not on the website but comes inside the hard copy. Then he quoted from it:

“EPNI has adopted the philosophy that Elliot Park's Master Plan be viewed not as a series of commandments etched in stone, but rather as a “game board” upon which many pieces of strategic importance are put into play. This analogy recognizes that the physical and social characteristics of an urban neighborhood are constantly in flux, and therefore wise planning strategies retain a flexibility that acknowledges the vagaries and complexities of change.”

David stated that this game board analogy is wonderful and has proved to be the most important idea for Elliot Park because it is very difficult to be prescriptive. Lynn has described several current developments that have all started within the last year and almost each one of them defies what the Master Plan would recommend. On the other hand, the Master Plan says we have to change with the trends in markets and social changes and that's what makes it useful in its precept. But everything that has come after that is what's important and they did a series of multi-block small area studies, one of which was Centennial Commons. The neighborhood commons idea posited an east/west axis of connections, district or zones of activity from East Village Apartments to Elliot Park Commons to Centennial Commons to what they call the Park Avenue cultural commons, the block where the Hinkle-Murphy House is located, because there were two art galleries and a coffee house. The art galleries are gone but the coffee house remains. What they have realized from looking at that block is essentially they have to become acquainted with economies of development and they didn't take that into consideration in the Master Plan. In the series of multi-block studies, they were introduced to a simple reality that any developer would know for a pro-forma, i.e., land costs, use, design and construction. And any good developer if you give them a block and tell them what the zoning is and how much it's going to cost to get it, in 30 seconds he can tell you if he can do anything with it.

What they discovered in Elliot Park is that this small scale historical neighborhood, although very appealing, can't be achieved. In Centennial Commons it would have required nothing higher than 4 or 5 stories and to have that you'd need million dollar condominiums and no one is going to buy a million dollar condominium in the heart of Elliot Park. So it introduced this whole notion of density and height in our buildings and everything we learned between 2002 after the construction boom was incorporated into the urban design guidelines. There were eight development proposals but only five of them came online. The ones that didn't take off were the 30-story Sexton Phase II (now the Portland Tower project) and the 450-unit 1010 Park project with a density more downtown oriented.

Along with that, they had a \$50,000 Great Streets Business District Support grant from CPED funneled through the EDC to conduct a market study that revealed two things: (1) an abundance of surface parking lots that Beth followed up with the East Downtown Parking Lot Study; and (2) B4N rezoning to develop higher density neighborhoods surrounding the downtown office core with a variety of goods and services. These are important precedents to understand when we talk about building a district and what Elliot Park eventually realized they're going to have to do district, not just neighborhood, planning.

Bruce commented that first everything we're doing relates so much to Lacy and how we're looking at East Downtown. Getting the game board right, if we keep that analogy, that we understand the platform for all of this and the public realm has such a powerful place at the table. If we can define the frame correctly, then we have flexibility about how the pieces populate that frame. That is crucial because it's a really big deal. Second, when the Master Plan was done, shortly thereafter Skyscape came along and Grant Park was already done so it created this really interesting discussion about, not so much about building height and density as the major question, what we are contributing to the public realm/human scale of this district. In both of those cases the building plinth is 3 or 4 stories and the tower can rise off of that. That's what the guidelines talk a lot about and what Beth has been talking about in terms of how do we attract the kinds of quality development we want, the scale and so forth. The debate in Elliot Park suddenly became less about fighting height or density; it was more about assuring that we get the quality of the public place we want.

David stated that the irony was when conducting research, it revealed that Elliot Park could accommodate twice the population it had around 7,000. That meant density but the Master Plan was advocating lower scale so we had to figure out a way to have height and density and maintain the character of the street. That is why these design principles can be applied district wide as we go ahead to create an East Downtown neighborhood.

Lastly, another initiative EPNI had during the reconstruction of Chicago Avenue was the Chicago Avenue Redesign with Mayor Rybak's great city design team to transform the streetscape into a more pedestrian friendly environment. This led to the DEEP (Downtown East/Elliot Park) Initiative, a vision of East Downtown along the spine of Chicago Avenue. And when HCMC first proposed its community clinic some 4 or 5 years ago, he, Susan Braun and Chris Naumann, an architect who was on EPNI's board at that time, presented to HCMC three candidate blocks on which they could build and one of them was the Smith block which they have now chosen. Lynn noted that the same PowerPoint presentation was sent to HCMC last fall to refresh their memory and was instrumental in helping them make a decision.

VII. Next Steps for Larger Group Engagement

Wrapping up, Dan said what he heard today was deep interest in the stadium, Commons and LRT station as it affects everything from the transit-oriented pieces, engagement pieces of human scale so if there's something we want to get right because it's going to be here for the next 25 years or longer, that's really important and it's all those pieces.

He also heard public realm inventory. This sounds really important for us to understand particularly because Lacy's work is charging ahead with that. And the greening conservancy as it ties especially into the park; I hope you've all read a favorable op-ed about that a couple days ago.

Beth and CPED is looking at hotel performance and housing analysis as being a couple critical pieces as a means to help developers do meaningful projects.

Finally, maybe the guidelines of Elliot Park could be a good foundation to begin to establish a framework and principles to influence the type of designs that will happen throughout the district/already happening as well as become a toolkit for developers when they come to the area.

Bruce noted that we've been talking about these issues for decades, but of late within the last 8 to 10 years social equity has risen to the top as a huge priority and would like to suggest we devote fairly soon a better part of an hour and a half talking about the implications of that because it permeates everything we're doing right now. The gap is widening, we're starting to term it as more universal access related to jobs, public spaces, transit and quality of life. The Mayor has talked about this and I think it's pretty crucial as we think about East Downtown as a beacon, strikingly progressive, innovative way to look at city building.

Dan thinks this is something we should do in the next quarter and asked Bruce, Alex and anyone else to meet separately and design a presentation to help the small group work on it. He will also take what he's heard as initial starting points and begin to set goals.

VIII. Monthly Meeting Pattern

Dan will send out a doodle poll to schedule the next meeting. It was agreed it would take place at the same location and time, date TBD.