

Fairgrounds Advisory Committee Meeting

March 18, 2015

6:00pm

Cadillac Place – L150

Attendees: Magic Plus LLC (Joel Ferguson, Marvin Beatty, Josh Hovey, Chris Stralkowski, Tom G.); REDICO (Craig Willian, Ken Till); MDOT (Jim Schultz); DDOT (Dan Dirks); SMART (Robert Cramer, Jim Fetzer); RTA (Michael Ford, Tiffany Gunter); MEDC (Stacy Esbrook); DTMB (Zach Cooper); MSHDA (Edwin Harlin, Jim Tischler); Gabe Leland, City Of Detroit Council Member; Council Member George Cushionberry's office (Arthur Deveis (sp?), Richard Clement); Kim Tandy, District 2 Manager for the City Of Detroit; FAC (Craig Vanderburg, Greg O'Neal; media; and various residents.

Purpose: To look at renderings and proposals from the developers, Magic Plus LLC & REDICO

Meeting Format: 1. Presentation by Magic Plus & REDICO, 2. Questions/Feedback, 3. Public Comments

The meeting included approximately 75 people. The sign in sheets were signed by 59 people.

Craig Willian (REDICO) gave background information on the Gateway Market Place project. This project is using a transit oriented, mixed-use "village" style concept with retail on the 1st floor and housing on top. The plan is to create a futuristic project while also representing the State Fair and its history. The architect, smith Group and the developers are trying to keep and utilize 3 historic buildings on the site: 1. The Coliseum, 2. Dairy/Cattle Barn, 3. Joe Dumars Field House. It was stated that this is an early conceptual design.

Plans include:

1. 650 units of mixed-use multi-family units (apartments and town homes) are planned with a younger demographic being the core resident. The plan is to have an urban feel with suburban green space. The plan calls for the Poultry Building to be repurposed as housing
2. A 8-10 screen theater complex is planned for the current coliseum
3. An academic/office building, partnering with Wayne County Community College
4. 17 acres of skilled nursing, assisted living, and wellness for senior citizens
5. Town Center Retail
6. 12 "pocket" parks for kids
7. Residential gardens
8. A community park
9. Bike and walking trails
10. BRT (bus, route, transit) Station

The majority of the residents that made comments are not in support of this plan. There are great concerns over the transit location and making sure that it works for everyone (needs to be a central part of the project and not an afterthought). Currently, the plan calls for moving the transit center ½ mile south of the current transit center. The current transit center does not include restrooms or even a place to purchase items such as beverages and it is not heated or cooled. The station needs to be as close to 8 Mile/Woodward as possible. Marvin Beatty said that the transit center is on the table but they need to locate a spot first and then will discuss facilities.

Other residents noted that the plan looks like a 20th century project, even though we are in the 21st century; looks like a sea of concrete; not pretty; not exciting; has a dormitory, industrial look; doesn't serve the community; looks like a 1990's suburban model; likes the Future City Plan and would like this developer to follow it; asked where are the other partners (Kresge Foundation, Detroit Future City, Mayor Dugan, and Macomb and Oakland Counties) and do they agree with this plan? Residents voiced concerns about making sure that "livable wage" jobs for Detroiters are created and thus would like to see a CBA (Community Benefits Agreement) requirement tying a commitment to provide these jobs for Detroiters. Issues with security, walkability, and fences were mentioned. They were told that the plan calls for there to be no fences around the parks, and that there will be security, lighting, and landscaping added. One resident asked if the housing will be affordable for people in the community. More detail and information was requested by residents along with assurances that the project will include architectural designs that reflect the community and that the quality of life for the residents will be increased.

A resident of Hazel Park spoke and said that the development will affect the tri-county area, not just Detroiters. Folks from the suburbs should be invited to these meetings. She would like to see a central location with free parking for these meetings and would like for there to be more meetings. Several in attendance agreed with her.

Marvin Beatty thanked everyone for coming, wanted the residents to be assured that their comments were being heard, and said that the plan is a work in progress. He said that there will be ongoing dialogue with them and that their passion was recognized. Mr. Beatty said that there will be ongoing meetings with the various transportation entities.