

March 12, 2004

To the Honorable Common Council
Zoning and Neighborhoods and
Development Committee
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members:

Attached is File No. 031371, being a resolution approving the Near West Side Area Comprehensive Plan as an element of the Milwaukee's Overall Comprehensive Plan.

The Near West Side Area Comprehensive Plan resulted from 21 months of analysis and public involvement. The plan addresses concerns and opportunities in a 360-block area extending from US 41 to I-94 on the western edge of downtown, and Galena St. to I-94 on the northern edge of the Menomonee River Valley.

Comprehensive plans, as approved, will provide guidance for the City regarding the use and development of the area, encourage common understanding and coordination among different levels of government and private interests, and will facilitate implementation of catalytic projects as well as other elements of the plan.

A public hearing was held at the same City Plan Commission meeting at which time several public comments were received. A representative of a social service providing agency expressed concern that the plan discouraged concentration in number and intensity of social service providers in the neighborhood in proportion to the county/region. He felt that this might impact his ability to locate and expand service sites that his agency would like to operate. Two major non-profit organizations represented on the study's contract management supported the plan. One neighbor praised the public participation and urged adoption.

At its regular meeting on Monday, March 8, 2004 the City Plan Commission recommended approval of the plan as corrected since January 2004. Those corrections are attached to this letter as Attachment A.

Sincerely,

Patricia S. Algiers
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

file

Attachment A

Corrections to the Final Draft

Department of City Development
City of Milwaukee
Friday, March 12, 2004

This list included additions, deletions, changes, and error corrections to the Final Draft of the Near West Side Comprehensive Plan

MAJOR CHANGES

Ch. 4, District 1, add “Recommendations from the Valley Park / Piggsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan of March 2001.”

Ch. 4, end of chapter – append:

National Register Eligible Properties

Based on a field inspection on January 5, 2004 that included the Division of Historic Preservation at the Wisconsin Historical Society, the plan identified the following areas are eligible for listing in the National Register. Actual designation would need to follow the normal process.

- 1) Vliet Street commercial district between 12th and 14th Streets
- 2) W. Martin Drive Apartment Buildings District (4100-4300 blocks)
- 3) Cold Spring Repair Shops at 4212 W. Highland Blvd.
- 4) 27th St. Commercial District from the Tower Theater Building at 743 N. 27th Street to 820-26 N. 27th Street.
- 5) Expanded Coldspring Park / McKinley Boulevard Historic District by adding in residential properties to the south to Juneau Avenue and to the north to Vliet Street. The intervening streets, 28th through 34th are eligible as well.

P. 64, para 1, change “The Vliet Street commercial nodes at 35th and at 27th Street provide opportunities...” to “The W. Vliet Street commercial node at 27th Street provides an opportunity...”

P. 65, remove the 27th and Vliet node from the map.

MINOR CHANGES

Ch. 5 - Move the 27th Street “Main Street” catalytic project so that it comes first in the chapter. Change the southern boundary from Wisconsin Avenue to Michigan Avenue. Change the graphic accordingly.

Ch. 5 - Move the 35th Street Area Redevelopment Catalytic Project, so that it follows 27th Street. Change the graphic so that the area extending east extends north to Wells Street. From the heading, remove the words, “Contingent catalytic Project.”

Ch. 5, City on the Hill – From the heading, remove the words, “Contingent catalytic Project.” Change “City on the Hill” to “City on a Hill”. Change drawing to remove eastern building and property from the project area.

Ch. 5, Indian Community School heading - remove the words, “Contingent catalytic project” and change “Indian Community School” to “Indian Community School property”. Rationale section – change “Once” to “If and when.”

Ch. 5, Norris Playground Conversion – replace the existing description with the following text. This amended text improves clarity of intent to the existing:

Catalytic Project Boundaries:

State Street to the North; Kilbourn Street to the South; 19th Street to the West; and 18th Street to the East

Rationale:

Norris Playground currently occupies almost an entire city block and consists almost entirely of deteriorating asphalt. The project proposes to remove the unattractive existing surface and rehabilitate the parcel into appealing green space. By doing so, the project will optimize the use of this land by converting an underutilized and virtually vacant plot into the highly utilized multi-purpose asset to the community.

This is a unique opportunity for the city to develop a sustained relationship with a local agency or institution eager to make substantial improvements to the community. The community will gain open space from an area that currently houses only potential. The institution, situated in a dense urban environment where space is always at a premium, will gain the valuable and rare asset of developable space. The community and the institution would each profoundly benefit from a shared use of the space. Their collective needs would generate substantial use for an area currently finding minimal use.

Also, the green space would significantly add value to surrounding occupied parcels and to future occupied parcels.

Goal:

Develop community green space to meet the needs of diverse groups of people including those of nearby institutions through an innovative financing agreement. Increase the value of surrounding properties.

Objectives:

- Provide the resource of appealing public green space in intensely developed areas.
- Use open space to create and add value to the adjacent residential properties, including the undeveloped empty parcels of land.

Recommendations:

- Convert Norris Playground from asphalt to grass and provide additional landscaping.
- Seek an agency or institution interested in financing improvements to the underutilized land. Costs will include excavation, renovation, possible architectural additions, and extensive landscaping.
- Establish an arrangement with an agency or institution for the sustained costs of administration and maintenance of the publicly accessible open space and its facilities.
- Formulate a financial agreement reserving the agency or institution certain and specific rights to the space in exchange for the contribution to both the initial and the sustained project costs.
- Install amenities in and around the perimeter of the park. Possible ideas include a walking path, a rope course, a small playground, or other similar facilities.
- Replace the extensive chain link fencing with a higher quality and design of fencing and landscaping.
- Encourage and support infill single-family and duplex homes surrounding the community space.

Ch. 5 - At the beginning of the chapter add the following text that didn't get added from a previous round of edits:

“Catalytic projects implement key aspects of the plan and spur activity, investment, and redevelopment. Because these projects are expected to produce these effects in the area surrounding the projects as well as the in the projects themselves, they are called catalytic. This chapter describes eight catalytic projects. Some of them may already be underway, in which case, the plan supports their continuation. Some can and should begin immediately. Other projects require a longer view and are contingent on decisions regarding privately owned land; these projects require land that may become available in the next few years. The plan suggests redevelopment concepts for these sites that promote the goals of the overall plan.”

P. 60, table, Use Policies, District 4 – add “Maintain existing land use patterns except where otherwise recommended by the Valley Park / Piggsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan of March 2001.

P. 75 Recommendations, 4th bullet – remove “Harley/Miller museum/restaurant/etc)”

Add some graphics that illustrate suggested possible designs that will help the reader visualize the projects, programs, and policies recommended in the plan. These graphics could include renderings, architectural sketches, and photos of similar developments. These graphics would not redefine the substance of the recommendations.

TYPOS, GRAMMER, CLARITY

P. 4 - History section, para 2, change “peeked” to “peaked”

P. 3, para. 3 - change “sub-areas” to “areas” wherever they occur.

P. 30, para 1 – change “North 35th Street and Wisconsin site” to “N. 35th Street and W. Wisconsin Avenue area”

P. 44, Charrette overall policies/administration issues section, 8th bullet – Change “road changes” to “existing street restrictions”

P. 47, Appropriate types/mix, first bullet – change “(such as day care, storefront church, etc.)” to “such as day care centers, community living arrangements, etc.”

P. 50 location section, 1st bullet – change “Corner commercial” to “Existing corner commercial”

P. 50 location section, 3rd bullet – change “Permit commercial uses compatible” to “Permit limited commercial expansions if the uses are compatible”

P. 60, table, Form Policies, District 1 – remove “along _ and _ streets”

P. 60, table, Redevelopment strategy, District 4 – change “recourses” to “resources”

P. 60, table, Action items for specific locations, District 3 – add “Extend W. Juneau Avenue between N. 16th and N. 17th Streets.”

P. 60, table, Action items for specific locations, District 4 – add “and the Hank Aaron Trail” to “Continue the pedestrian access path from 42nd street under the freeway to Miler parking lot.”

P. 60, table, Action items for specific locations, District 6 – change “fields for community green space” to “fields and community green space.”

P. 61 table, Use Policies, District 5, change “Zoning” to “zoning”.

P. 63, para 3 – change “but are” to “but they are”. Change “these area” to “these areas”. Change “one at 35th Street and Wisconsin and the other at 35th Street” to “one at Wisconsin Avenue and the other at Vliet Street”

P. 63, para 1, 1st sentence – Replace whole sentence with “Corridors are streets and frontages that merit special attention.”

P. 63, last para, remove the sentence beginning with “The Repairers of the ...”

P. 63, para 2, change “liner” to “linier”

P.66 table, Redevelopment Strategy, Corridor 2, 3rd bullet – change “share” to “shared”

P.66 table column headings - move all references "(See Map 16, page 65)" to the first paragraph of Ch. 4.

P. 66 table, change all references to "nodes", "areas" and "centers" to "nodes and areas"

P. 66 table, Current uses, Corridor 4 – change "Landmark street.." to "Landmark Street with well known architectural buildings."

P. 66 table, Use policies, Corridor 2 – change "Discourage new auto-oriented, drive thru facilities, North of Wisconsin Avenue" to "Discourage new auto-oriented uses, drive through businesses, and gas stations north of N. Wisconsin Avenue."

P. 66 table redevelopment strategies, Corridor 4 – change "require" to "encourage"

P. 71 9th bullet – change "grade the berms" to "remove the berms"

P. 77 Recommendations, 1st bullet – change "thru" to "through"

Throughout: Consistent street naming convention, such as "W. Wisconsin Avenue."