

Current Status

The former Army Reserve has been cleared and the 5+ acre site is ready for development. It is accessible from Bay St., Lincoln Ave., and Lake Parkway (WIS 794).

The proposed passenger station for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail extension is at the east end of Lincoln Ave. This new station would likely improve the success of new development, although the redevelopment of the parcel is not contingent upon the station.

To the east of the Army Reserve site lie several City assets. The Port of Milwaukee, an important economic asset, covers a large area with industrial and transportation uses. The Lake Express Ferry takes people and motor vehicles across Lake Michigan, bringing visitors into the City from the east. There is also a contained disposal facility which may ultimately become a natural resource. The rest of the surrounding area includes mostly built-out residential areas to the south and west, along with mainly industrial space to the north.

Objectives

The proposed options will:

- Fulfill needs identified by the market study and public meetings.
- Maintain the neighborhood context while improving the transition between residential neighborhoods and the industrial areas of the Port of Milwaukee.
- Create housing options to build the customer base for businesses in the area, especially along Kinnickinnic Ave.
- Facilitate transit-oriented development in the vicinity of the potential future KRM passenger rail station.
- Traditional urban design patterns are appropriate, but the project should add significantly to the architectural quality of the area.

Specific Recommendations

- Redevelop the former Army Reserve site with multi-family housing.
- Preserve the option to create mixed-use transit oriented development near a future commuter rail station.

Options for the overall Plan for this area include the following:

Transit Oriented Development

If the commuter rail plans go forward, the station east of Bay St. would serve the nearby community and would enhance opportunities for transit oriented development. This would be relatively high density, mixed use, and some green space.

Multi-family residential development should bring more housing options to the area, helping to increase the customer base for the revitalizing businesses along Kinnickinnic Ave. It should also improve the transition between the residential areas and the industrial areas of the Port of Milwaukee, while following guidelines that allow it to develop within the context of the existing neighborhoods.

Any mixed uses including office and retail should not detract from existing businesses, especially those along Kinnickinnic Ave.

In addition to the mixed-use development, a boutique-style inn/hotel should be explored in the area.

The term “transit” in TOD indicates that this option is contingent upon the commuter rail station’s implementation.

Elderly Housing

Public meetings and the market study indicate that there is need for senior housing in the study area and discussions indicate that this type of development is difficult to do in Bay View because of the lack of large developable sites. On-site services could also be included, adding amenities to the neighborhood.



A developer at one of the study focus groups indicated interest in developing senior housing on the site. Communities like Shorewood, Wauwatosa and West Allis have used this strategy to build tax base and density. According to a report in the February 15, 2008 Business Journal, a site about the same size in West Allis was purchased for \$1.7 million and will be home to a \$15 million senior housing complex. Three buildings will range from 2-4 stories with the two smaller buildings providing assisted living.

Other Issues

At a recent community meeting held by Alderman Zielinski to discuss the Army Reserve site a number of other ideas mentioned included enhanced access through the site, and perhaps common open space.

Extending Linus St. through the site could enhance access to the lake-front and a future commuter rail stop. One vision for the extension of Linus Street would be to create a “living street” or a “woonerf” as it is called

in the Netherlands. This would be an area where pedestrians and cyclists have priority over motorists. While auto traffic is accommodated, the needs of car drivers are secondary to the needs of users of the street as a whole. It is a space designed to be shared by pedestrians, playing children, bicyclists, and low-speed motor vehicles.

Neighbors expressed concern about new traffic and requested that most traffic and parking occur on streets other than Logan Ave. Resident parking should be placed within the block out of site of passers by on public streets.

There was much discussion of height. Neighbors preferred that new buildings along Logan Ave. be compatible with the height of existing buildings across the street. They agreed that on the remainder of the site buildings could be a bit taller (about three stories). A four story height is needed to take advantage of lake views.



Solar Village

This concept emerged late in the study process no doubt spurred by rising energy costs and a growing awareness of “Green Building”. This concept to build about 150 sustainable housing units with solar features can be consistent with reducing automobile dependency via Transit Oriented Development and with the idea of mixed use, i.e. providing some elderly housing. The US Green Building Council, (USGBC), has established a comprehensive program to measure a project’s commitment to building “green”.

Use of alternative energy sources, solar, wind and geothermal are credits toward winning the USGBC’s coveted Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) project certification.

Providing sustainable and energy-efficient housing can be accommodated on the site.

To emphasize solar features southern exposure, solar access, is critical. For some time, passive solar strategies have been successful in rural settings where unencumbered solar access is readily achieved.



Solar Village concept - Option 1

Note: Graphic illustrates Solar Village layout with single-family along Logan Ave., condominium multi-family along Bay St. and solar townhouses, between.

Now rising energy costs are driving rapid advances in active solar technologies like PV, photovoltaics, for urban areas. These, usually rooftop, PV panels turn sunlight into electricity which can be used directly by the occupant or pushed into the electrical utility grid, making the meter run backwards and crediting the property owner.

The economics of installing photovoltaic should improve significantly as energy costs climb and as new silicon wafer, the major component, production facilities anticipated to come online in the next few years drive down unit costs.

In the meantime incentives for solar and / or sustainable demonstration projects may be available from government or utility sponsored programs.

Responsible Parties

- Developers
- Port of Milwaukee (property owner)
- Department of City Development
- Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee

Timing/Next Steps

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee should issue a Request for Proposals for this site upon Plan adoption.

Note:
Graphic illustrates Solar Village layout with single-family along Logan Ave., condominium multi-family along Lincoln Ave. and Conway St. with solar townhouses, community gardens and greenspace between.



Solar Village concept - Option 2



Solar Village concept bird's-eye looking east to lake - Option 1



Solar Village concept bird's-eye looking east to lake - Option 2