

# HILLCREST REDEVELOPMENT URBAN DESIGN WORKGROUP

Meeting Minutes | Thursday, March 31, 2022

## Attendees

- Donna Peterson
- Frankie Torbor
- Julie Guzman
- Andrew Wise
- Rachel Finazzo Doll
- Monte Hilleman
- Andrea Novak
- Matthew Finn
- Tiffani Navatril
- Jess Vetrano



## MEETING SUMMARY

1. Discussed homework assignments. Attendees felt mixed about transitioning from drawing to writing and expressing themselves, but it is indicative of how both methods speak to different people's strengths and how helpful it is to explore both
2. Many similarities have emerged through homework regarding walkability, safety, activity/programming
  - a. Susan focused on defining the existing neighborhood character as it relates to the potential for the future character of the Heights.
    - i. Manipulating paving patterns and materials, while welcoming people who are mobility challenged
    - ii. Complimentary development types that are not in opposition to their neighbors
  - b. Julie looked at:
    - i. Pedestrian safety and how residents will be able to traverse Larpenteur Avenue (how to coordinate with county to ensure safe/well-placed crosswalks)
    - ii. Where the community can hold outdoor events within the community node (outside of just street uses) and can it be located adjacent to or within the planned park

- iii. Neighborhood co-ops or HOA that oversees maintenance/upkeep using association fees – fees that are also utilized to host events/programming that fosters community/gathering (“activation events”)
  - 1. Common area maintenance fee – could cover plowing fees for alleys, making alleys a very attractive solution for minimizing impervious surfacing and driveway conflicts with pedestrian sidewalks
- iv. Public access to McKnight/Larpenteur, permeability to buildings/buildings with midblock pedestrian amenities
- v. Access and safety in alleys – how to light?
- c. Donna paid a lot of attention to lighting, types of lighting, and how to incorporate monuments to Hillcrest’s history
  - i. Vandal prevention lighting – no strippable copper
  - ii. Lighting with light pollution controls
- d. Frankie incorporated place-based suggestions
  - i. Stormwater management plantings at all bump outs – would require a variance – could the height measurement start at the top-of-curb elevation in depressions?
  - ii. Tabling of crosswalks – particularly in the node, but also considered on residential streets. Would not be feasible on roads that anticipate truck traffic
- e. Andrew suggested:
  - i. Setbacks off roads that can facilitate plantings/pedestrian amenities
  - ii. Dedicating setback off Larpenteur
  - iii. Pedestrian/small scale woonerf that connects mid-block at the block on McKnight and Larpenteur
  - iv. Graphics incorporated within color crosswalks that tie into the history of the site – could coordinate with Donna’s suggestion of the inclusion of historical markers
  - v. Dictating that all resident parking should be below grade – might interfere with water table levels – what is the priority of parking regulations? Hiding cars or prioritizing pedestrians or what?
- f. Rachel wanted to prioritize local materials, particularly adjacent to wetlands. She also looked at:
  - i. Confirming that the current plans were just ideas, and that any of the wetlands could have the bigger boardwalk amenities
  - ii. Would like to see the covenants reflect any parameters that get the industrial buildings to look like how the residents look
  - iii. Outdoor storage is not allowed for industrial
  - iv. The largest entrance should prioritize the street, not the parking lot
  - v. Crosswalks along Howard should be extra highlighted as they will be the most multi-modal with truck traffic – especially the one containing the bike trail that connects to Furness
- 3. Today’s charrette will push the group members to think about the opposite topics that they have been drawn to so far – as an example, those that wanted to think about residential should focus on industrial
  - a. Andrew and Julie focused on the arrangement and design of Right-of-Way space and organized their thoughts around the breakdown of pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
    - i. Different types of cycle and pedestrian traffic would require different site amenities to support them

- ii. Site amenities would be needed at different frequencies based on the type of traffic
  - iii. Where many paths of traffic overlap, a “node” is created that requires its own treatment for design/site amenities
  - iv. Pedestrian crossing safety was a priority in this discussion, particularly thinking about how pedestrians cross the larger adjacent streets of Larpenteur and McKnight to access the Heights site from surrounding neighborhoods
  - v. Andrew was very interested in thinking more about the area where the pedestrian greenway, park, and connection to Furness Parkway converge
  - vi. Julie was interested in pedestrian safety first and foremost and wanted to think more about what amenities/streetscapes in her daily routine had elements that either promoted or discouraged her feeling of comfort as a pedestrian.
- b. Rachel, Frankie, and Donna focused on the Light Industrial areas and the character of those parcels as seen and experienced by passersby, and to a lesser extent by the people who work there.
- i. What does the section look like adjacent to a public sidewalk? 25' landscape buffer, 18' parking space, 22-24' parking aisle, 18' parking space, 12-20' landscape buffer, potentially another two rows of parking, 12' landscape perimeter around building, building façade
  - ii. What does the Arts and Employment District concept look like?
    - 1. Everyone liked the brick red panels, but we are going to explore more options at a later meeting
    - 2. We also need to review the Mural Density Study at a later meeting
    - 3. Discussion of vandalism prevention on light industrial buildings – rough surfaces, paintable surfaces, and/or replaceable surfaces
    - 4. Everyone really likes the black solar paneling in renderings that contribute to building heating
    - 5. Everyone likes the mural concept!! All wall materials should be able to accept future art installations
    - 6. What do the buildings look like at night? Employ light-based art installations as well as murals
    - 7. Prioritize art on buildings over murals
  - iii. Parking areas
    - 1. Green stormwater features – keep treatment on the surface as much as possible
    - 2. Use permeable paving where large parking areas cannot be avoided
  - iv. Public amenities around perimeter of light industrial parcels
    - 1. Amenity nodes – should include art/sculpture, seating, water fountain/water bottle filler
    - 2. Emphasize groovy, unusual seating over basic park benches

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