

West Bank Community Coalition Land Use Committee Meeting

**Wednesday, November 7, 2007
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Fairview Hospital, 2450 Riverside
Executive Conference Room**

NOTES:

6:35 - Welcome and Introduction by Jim Ruiz, President, WBCC

All present introduced themselves. Sign in sheet partially completed.

Fairview Hospital presents plans for travel and traffic

Arvin with Wenck Associates provided handouts of Travel Demand Management Plan for proposed Fairview Children's Replacement Hospital, focusing on traffic. His company took traffic counts at critical intersections at 24th Avenue & Riverside, and 25th & Riverside. Proposal closes 7th Street so they looked at every traffic pattern and movement and also forecasted future traffic.

Parking lot between 24th & 25th will become underground parking.

Signal timing changes: could give more time to eastbound movement – will look into in 2011. Chart in handout rates traffic on a scale of A-F, A being favorable, C&D acceptable E&F poor. When 500-stall Red ramp comes down on 24th, there will be significantly less traffic. Parking will be replaced somewhere on campus to the West.

Timing of signal lights will be addressed. No plans to add turn arrows, just a turn lane, so length of time will not change.

Proposal does not fix current traffic problems, just deals with the changes in traffic the 7th Street closure would affect.

Discussion of effect of proposed changes.

Community member brought up possible bike lane additions on 24th. Arvin said they did consider bike lanes incorporated with the turn lanes, but it is planned to occur after 2011, which is beyond what they are planning so far and the Small Area Plan.

Marlyn Ervasti, Fairview Facilities Consultant, made a point that in 1973, the hospital placed a ramp back 20 feet due to proposed boulevard, and that boulevard addition never happened.

Community member asked if it was considered that 8th street dump onto Riverside, but those present agreed 7th Street is the issue of focus for this meeting.

- Riverside Park resident made the point that this road closure makes residents lose one of 3 exits out of the neighborhood. Other residents concurred that their main issue of concern also, plus parking. Residents all avoid 25th/Riverside intersection.

Community member suggested re-opening Svea Triangle to ease current congestion at 25th. Wenck & Assoc. doesn't address the current traffic problem. Arvin stated addition of left turn

lanes in the long run should address this in the future.

1. What are the concerns associated with the vacation of 7th St.?

Questions raised:

Q: Why does hospital have to be built where Fairview is proposing?

A: The location needs to be close to certain wings of the hospital for the particular urgent services patients (children) need. (Answered by Russ Williams with Fairview)

Q: Are all meters on 25th going away?

A: 5-7 meters will be lost on 25th where horseshoe loop for ramp entrance is. (Answered by Mike Anderson with City of Mpls.)

Q: Homeowners struggle to park in front of their own homes – will it be any less congested?

A: No parking issue expected as parking will be replaced. They are researching other surface lots for temporary fix until more underground parking added.

Q: Could street go underground?

A: No, some building facilities are located underground.

Q: Is underground parking being used to capacity? Resident heard that St. Catherine's lot has space. If it's not being utilized, could it be subsidized?

A: Russ Williams said they aren't aware of available parking – Rehab Center has even hired valets to stack park cars. Trying to reduce traffic regeneration and parking demand. They are introducing programs encouraging MetroPass and discourage single-occupied vehicles.

Q: How many additional parking spots?

A: Green surface lot is 172 stalls now, will be replaced with 192 underground spots. Planning to knock down older buildings (West building – ER) in future and move departments around. C Building from 1915 will be torn down. (Russ answered)

2. What actions can the hospital take in relation to the neighborhood to show good faith? Is there anything the hospital can do to relieve the residents concerns about the closure of the streets? Is there any redesign that could be accomplished that would reduce traffic congestion? City input into new ways of looking at traffic problems in the area? Traffic solutions and how the residents and hospital can work together.

- Homeowner recommended addition of pedestrian/bike lane in river bluff area behind hospital from Locust Street to West Bank of U of M to help alleviate traffic on Riverside. There was lots of agreement that this was a great idea.
 - Russ said it's not all hospital property, but yes that would be beneficial. Another Fairview representative said he will look into that.
- No stop sign at intersection of 26th & 8th, resident witnesses lots of near accidents, please look into this as traffic will surely increase there with this street closure.
- Svea Triangle could be extended (restored) from 26th Ave straight into Riverside so residents could turn left onto dedicated roadway. Please consider removing cul-de-sac.
- Make no parking between Riverside to 26th on 8th Street. Maybe stop sign should be on 26th as opposed to 8th street so traffic can get through.
- Why not make traffic exit somewhere besides into Riverside Park neighborhood?
 - Russ said they will look into turning it the other way. Maybe exiting could be divided - 1 level could exit at 26th, one at 25th, so traffic is reduced by half. 26th was closed in roughly 1988.

Russ provided handout of ideas (addressed by previous LUC meetings) of how Fairview is willing to work with the neighborhood.

- Resident addressed how Fairview representative stated hospital has no future plans to develop in neighborhood. Wants that in writing. Would like Fairview to contribute money for better street lighting and lighting in park area. It would be great timing to add nicer street lighting, plus it would be safer for employees, more welcoming if more people coming to neighborhood.
-Russ said someone with City Planning addressed this at last meeting. Debate if it was city saying they would decide on lighting.
Could Park Board budget cover some of it?
- Russ also said Fairview has no plans to develop further into the neighborhood whatsoever, but they are not comfortable putting in writing that they will NEVER develop, as 30-40 years down the road that could change.
- Marlyn said it is up to the City. It is already zoned.
- Resident brought up concern as there *were* houses where there now is hospital and U of M property now.
- Jim asked if WBCC needs to take action on anything. Russ said they need us to support the plan. Next WBCC BOD meeting not until December – is it too late? City Council meeting Dec. 3rd & 17th. Waiting on Travel Demand Management Plan document. Directors of Public Works need to sign it. City Council must approve it. Requirements: must notify neighborhood organization – doesn't require letter back from us since meeting timing doesn't always coincide. (per Hilary Dvorak with City of Mpls.)

Vote conducted: How many people who are members of WBCC – live in neighborhood, own a business, etc. – support the vacation of 7th Street? (None) Opposed: 10 (unanimous) no abstentions.

- If city council doesn't allow hospital to close 7th Street, what will hospital do.? Russ said there is nowhere else to put it and they would be out of luck.
- Resident stated this greatly inconveniences neighborhood and makes it less safe. Another resident requested check with fire department about any issues they would have with this.
- Hospital asked if they added more lights if it would be ore agreeable?
- Group answered no.
- A lot of the parking in residential area is St. Cate's students. Ask St. Catherine's to work with neighborhood. Students get ticket stamped for a lower rate right now, but they still try to park for free in front of the houses.
- Fairview Security could be more visible in neighborhood to help out with parking issues. Lots of vehicle break-ins along 8th also. Need more meter patrolling by police – since Fairview Security doesn't have authority to act on parking violations.

8:03 Adjourned