

SPCNA Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2019

- Introductions
 - Bonita Lahey presiding over the meeting

- Denver Police Department Update
 - Officer Ruiz providing an update
 - Higher rates of thefts – motor vehicles, garages
 - Have been distributing report cards on cars when owners do things like leave their cell phones out. Encourage behavior change.
 - Question asked about a disturbance on St Paul. Officer Ruiz indicated it could have been a homeless person and discussed the new outreach teams related to getting folks into shelter.
 - Question asked about resources available to folks who are about to be displaced. Officer Ruiz discussed a new program where officers are riding with clinicians to help these folks connect with resources. New program where they are trying to bring resources to people. Call non-emergency number for dispatch. Clinicians can also help with mental health problems.
 - Question about what to do when you encounter homeless folks. You can call the non-emergency number to dispatch an officer.

- NPI Update
 - Update from Scott Robinson, Senior City Planner on Neighborhood Planning Initiative: East Central Area Plan
 - Plan covers 6 neighborhoods along the Colfax corridor.
 - There is a draft of the plan released 1.5 weeks ago – **available on their website denvergov.org/eastcentralplan. You will be able to review and comment on the plan through the end of this year.**
 - The plan aims to create a share long-term vision for the neighborhoods.
 - Citywide plans were implemented this year – policies for the entire city. This plan will discuss how these citywide plans relate to our smaller area.
 - Blueprint Denver – integrated land use and transportation plan. Integrating idea of “complete neighborhoods” – a range of housing options with access to transit, shopping and jobs. Directs most of the growth in the city to centers and corridors. Also addresses equity – want to make sure Denver grows inclusively.
 - Colfax Bus Rapid Transit – this is a separate effort that will be planned in conjunction with our neighborhood plan. Find information at Colfaxcorridorconnections.com
 - The plan has gone through several iterations of community feedback and this will be the final opportunity for feedback. From there it goes to a steering committee for approval and then will go through the adoption process with City Council. The plan will likely be adopted in Spring 2020.

- First draft of recommendations were given in May 2019 – Changes that were made were:
 - Height restrictions scaled back to 2.5 stories.
 - People who preserve their house will be able to add an extra unit onto their house – this is now a criteria based system instead of a mapping system.
 - There will be no future public transit on 7th ave.
 - There will be intersection improvements on Detroit to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- 2040 Central Area Vision
 - 6 vision statements detailed in the plan
 - 4 topic areas detailed in the plan
 - Specific Neighborhood sections detailed in the plan – there is a section that details specific recommendations for SCP.
- Question about affordability. Is the upzoning proposed for growth or for affordability?
 - Difficult to achieve affordability goals – need every tool in the toolbox to achieve affordability goals
 - Current zoning on Colfax can accommodate growth projections for the next 20 years, so that upzoning is more about achieving community benefits.
- Question: How do we encourage developers to pursue affordable housing over affordable commercial space
 - The details of the affordable housing plan or affordable commercial space are not in this plan and need more study, modeling and projections.
 - Opportunity for further exploration after the plan is adopted.
- Question: Will community be given the opportunity to weigh in at that phase about affordability?
 - This plan will not get into those details, but there will be public input in those. There will be more meetings at that point.
- Question: Can there be a policy about reducing the use of the automobile, making greenways, or walkability?
 - There are climate goals in this plan and transportation load goals in this plan.
 - There are opportunities to limit traffic on 16th street. Focus on greening and creating a contemporary parkways. Improve storm water management, permeability, slowing down cars.
- Question: What is the city policy now on infill?
 - One of the things that came out of blueprint Denver is the allowance for accessory dwelling unit. Now allowed city wide.
- Question: Concerned about water use and this plan. Are you working with Colorado water?
 - Blueprint Denver and the comprehensive plan address the water plan. It's a citywide issue addressed in those plans and nuanced in this plan.

- Question: Will 16th be set up as a neighborhood bikeway?
 - No, it will be a contemporary parkway.
- Question: Could you go into the height increases on Colfax?
 - Height increases are not needed to meet goals, but what is heard in community is that the desire for growth is to have the city grow along Colfax. If we allow additional height along the corridor near transit stations, then we can direct growth to those areas and achieve community benefits.
 - Zoning is set at 3, 5, 8, 12 stories. In areas where these restrictions are in place, they will be allowed to go one level up (e.g. in areas where it's 3, then it goes up to 5).
- Question: What will happen with parking?
 - There are no recommendations in this plan to address parking. Not looking to prohibit parking, but recommendations around transportation demand. Provide people with more options to not drive to work and plan discusses curbside management.
- Question: Are there considerations around giving eco-passes, encouraging electric cars, recycling, etc.?
 - Yes, recommendations around that and opportunities for material recycling or upcycling.
- Question: How can we influence these citywide plans?
 - When this plan is adopted, it can influence what is in blueprint Denver.
- Question: How are you recruiting folks for giving feedback?
 - Mailed houses in the east area at the request of their city council person. The postcards were found to not be particularly effective or cost effective, but if they get that direction from the city council person, they will do it.
 - Encourage everyone to take the time to review the plan. Tell your friends, and tell your neighbors
- Questions: How is the sidewalk repair being managed in conjunction with this plan or with the city forester?
 - The sidewalk repair plan is a separate plan.
- Climate Action Committee Update
 - Update given by Jim Slotta
 - Committee came out of a day long forum suggesting projects for the neighborhood
 - Leaf collection project – encourage people to bag their leaves and get them to the Denver Compost Collective and given to an urban farm dedicated to having their food consumed locally by folks in need. Collected about 240 bags so far.
 - Last collection day is on December 7th.
 - Email Jim if you would like to donate your leaves.
 - The Denver Compost Collective is an organization that provides compost service to people in multi-family or secured buildings.

- Recommendations on what can we do as individuals:
 - Don't purchase Styrofoam
 - Don't purchase single use plastics
 - Don't put food into the landfill
 - Don't idle your car
- If you would like to participate in the climate action committee, email Jim Slotta
- Neighborhood Project Updates
 - Bonita giving updates
 - All in Motel
 - Neighborhood association approved of the plan
 - Will end residential housing in Feb and will demolish March 1
 - Gas station at Colorado and Colfax (NE Side)
 - Gas station trying to rezone to a CMS8 which will be 8 stories. New designation will allow them to build something higher. This will allow for a building of 110 feet, however building setbacks are more restrictive – 25 feet.
 - May plan to demo the gas station and build something new.
 - Plan to demo a smaller National Jewish Building in Congress Park
 - Developers pulled application to demo building across from the Pinnacle Condos
 - The Royal Palace
 - Alex, the daughter of the owner, says the project on hold for the immediate future.
- Need for new Inter-Neighborhood Cooperative Rep
 - Bonita Lahey has been our INC Rep and can no longer continue the position
 - Reach out to Bonita if you are interested in representing the neighborhood.
 - Eleni Sarris expressed interested.
- Treasurer's Report
 - Brian Friel giving update
 - 128 paying members in 2019
 - -23 dollars in 2019
 - Some big expenditures
 - 363 dollars to survey monkey
 - 300 to teller elementary
 - We can use INC survey money if we would like.
- Mention of our Local CNN Hero of the Year Nominee
 - Woody Faircloth was named a CNN hero earlier this year and is now in the top 10 for the CNN hero of the year!
 - Woody and his daughter were inspired by the wildfires that left several thousand people homeless. Drove an RV to California to give to a family who had lost their home. Started a non-profit to give RVs to people who have lost their homes.
 - If you would like to support him, go to cnnheroes.com before December 3rd and vote.
 - The winner will be announced on December 8th at a gala.

- Voting
 - Ballots were distributed and dues members who were not present will be sent a survey monkey
- Other updates
 - Question on parking for East High Students on Detroit Street. Emily will follow up with our liaison at East High.
 - In March we will have a garden guide at the meeting that can answer questions.
 - Tara Bardine – starting a French Charter School through Denver Public Schools. French-American School of Denver will open this next fall. Tentative location is 16th and York. Allows increased access to immersion schools and allows more children the change to grow up bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Next goal is to meet enrollment target so they can open this fall.
 - There is a revision statute that the East Colfax Neighborhood Association is putting forward to the City to have the elected officials of Registered Neighborhood organizations mirror the diversity of their residents.
 - Recommendation to create a newsletter or email promoting the comment period for the east central plan. Copy South City Park and Candi CdeBaca if you send an email to the city. Jess Clark – who is on the steering committee – has been passing along our neighborhood comments. They have heard our comments and applied changes based on them. He would love for more people to participate in the planning process.
 - If you have dead batteries, please bring them to the next meeting!

NEXT MEETING: January 15th at 7PM at Montview Manor