

Date: August 17, 2009

To: Plan Commission

From: SDE Committee

Re: Recommendations for the Northeast Neighborhoods Plan

The Sustainable Design and Energy Committee approves this memo and forwards the following recommendations on to the Plan Commission for their consideration.

1. Emphasize that these neighborhoods will be: pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and will be made so through a variety of methods including: low residential speed limits, building bike paths early in neighborhood build out, traffic calming, pedestrian accommodations, etc.
2. Metro service to the area must begin when the neighborhoods are ready to live in – further modes of transit should be added as soon as possible.
3. Recommends that the planning department reconsider the commercial nodes/highest density residential development – and consider strongly relocating these areas to be at the potential commuter rail stops.
4. Make it very clear throughout the plan that any recommendations regarding energy efficiency or renewable energy to the developers, builders, and homeowners are suggestions. The City cannot require increased energy efficiency or renewable energy systems in areas where state law supersedes. The City should also consider providing incentives to get developers and builders to get them to build beyond state code.
5. Should include in the plan that the City already requires LEED silver for new construction of public buildings.
6. Reference the City's Dark Skies policy.
7. Consider adding language that would encourage and provide incentives to builders to build homes solar-ready.
8. Require having the city to track water transportation, and energy use annually and use that information to address future build out with developers and the City Council.
9. Require minimum densities and increase maximum densities for residential housing densities.
10. Consider stronger language about community gardens, urban agriculture, and organic farming and consider City ownership and/or Community Land Trust model in the Section Parks and Open Space.
11. Consider adding language to the plan calling on the City to invest and coordinate in district or larger-scale renewable energy systems in the planning area and reserve the land necessary to do it, with a goal of providing 10% of all energy needs through distributed renewable energy systems in the area.
12. Consider listing more types of storm water infiltration techniques including planting prairie grass and green roof practices and other practices.
13. Encourage a wide range of housing types including co-housing, clustered housing and other multi-density and alternative ownership structures.
14. Include systemic methods to calming auto traffic via land use planning such as spiegelstrasse, woonerf, etc. where possible.