



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Draft DOWNTOWN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 19, 2015

5:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 108 (City-County Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Michael E. Verveer; Ledell Zellers; Gregory O. Frank; Mary C. Carbine;
Thomas E. Hirsch; Matthew J. Covert and Sandra J. Torkildson
Excused: 4 - Davy Mayer; Ted Crabb; Austin E. McClendon and Adam J. Plotkin

APPROVAL OF January 22, 2015 MINUTES

A motion was made by Frank, seconded by Carbine, to Approve the January 22, 2015 Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None

1. [36258](#) Report of Mall Maintenance and Special Events 2015

Lisa Laschinger, Parks Division, gave a brief update about mall maintenance activities. She noted that the Mall Crew has been focused on removing snow. She stated that they have also been spending some time on tree pruning and equipment maintenance. She stated that the new 2015 expanded mall maintenance area will take effect in September. The map reflecting the 2014 expansion will soon be on the City's website.
2. [36539](#) Philosophers Grove

Maria Milsted registered in support. She stated that she owns property next to the Philosophers' Grove. She said there is conflicting information on whether the stones can be removed. She suggested not spending a lot of money redoing the space since it will be changed anyway with the redevelopment of the Historical Society block. She said there is a lot of crime in this area and she favors opening it up and removing the stones.

Ken Saiki registered in support and available to answer questions.

Bill Fruhling, Planning Division, gave an overview of concepts that staff developed based on the direction of the Committee and input from the public and other City agencies. He also distributed a summary of the concepts listing some pros and cons, additional information and cost estimate for each concept. The three main concepts are:

 - Concept A: Provides a bikeway towards the southern side of the space and keeps a

more cohesive “grove” to the north of it.

- Concept B: Provides a bikeway through the middle of the space and creates two smaller, more linear “groves” on either side of it.
- Concept C: Does not provide a bikeway, but provides space for two foodcarts at the top of the cu-de-sac.

Fruhling noted that the packet included variations of Concepts A and B that could replace the trees near State Street and/or remove additional stones to reduce the size of groupings. He also noted that although Concepts A and B refer to a bikeway, the concepts would be the same if that space were designated for pedestrians only and bike continued to be prohibited. He stated that much of East Mifflin is a bike boulevard and the Downtown Plan shows this block as a proposed bicycle connection. He also noted that the Ambassador’s booth would have to be moved under Concept A, but could be moved across State Street under any scenario. Fruhling further noted that not making any physical changes to the space is still an option, but was not illustrated.

Hirsch felt that having an unmarked bikeway may cause confusion. Fruhling stated this is the situation for East Campus Mall and bikes and pedestrians comingle well. He stated the design of the 700-800 blocks of State Street also followed this philosophy.

Carbine noted challenges with programming the space with Concept B and how people would walk or bike through the space. Fruhling noted that the sidewalks would still be available and that bikes could be required to be walked if an activity is occurring in the space. Carbine stated that there are a number of issues with relocating the booth. Frank said he is reluctant to move the booth.

Covert asked whether we wanted a great public space or a pass through and noted that it is complicated by the prospect of redevelopment of the block.

Carbine stated that she didn’t see how Concept C would activate the space and it doesn’t create space for programming. Frank stated that those would be less desirable foodcart spaces.

Carbine stated that design matters given her experience with Peace Park and she feels that design and activation are both issues. Torkildson agreed, and stated that with Peace Park, making it comfortable for people to walk through was very important. Zellers thought that there might be more traffic through the space with the Library open, and thinks the space should be well marked.

Frank suggested that simply doing something, as opposed to nothing, makes sense. He said that activation of the space is critical.

Zellers stated that she is reluctant to remove any trees.

Frank thought that even under Concept A the booth could remain. Torkildson asked if the BID had considered moving the booth towards Teddywedgers. Carbine stated that the BID is willing to look at viable options to relocate the booth.

Saiki stated that he and Jill Sebastian are very sensitive to the issues with this space and have been talking to staff and want to be part of the solution. He stated that they have been thinking about this a lot and what can be done that doesn’t cost a lot.

Carbine stated that disbursing negative activity can help so there is not such a big concentration of people. Anne Monks noted that at a staff meeting, the Police suggested that opening up the middle of the space would most effectively disperse people.

Saiki noted that when this space was designed, the issue of accommodating people riding bikes through the space was raised but that the design team was against that. Verveer

noted that the State Street Design Project Oversight Committee was as well. Saiki said he believes introducing bikes will create other issues and questioned the wisdom of doing so. He stated that both he and Sebastian were disappointed that breaking up large groupings of stones is being discussed. He also suggested looking at ways to disrupt the traffic flow on the cul-de-sac.

Hirsch stated that design does matter and that changing the configuration of the space can change people's perception of it. He favors Concept B with the option of removing more stones to deconcentrate the number of people, noting that it is less costly. He stated that programming is a very important piece and that it should be supported by services if the people there are in need of them.

Monks noted that Traffic Engineering staff suggested the space would not be designed as a marked bike lane.

Verveer asked about the cost of removing stones. Fruhling responded that Engineering staff provided just a ballpark cost of about \$5,000 each. He stated that this estimate was to provide a conservative magnitude of cost to compare the different concepts and at this point could cover either the removal or the removal and relocation. He stated that the current thinking is that any stones removed would be placed in storage until the entire space is resolved. Saiki suggested they might be placed next to benches along State Street.

Verveer stated that he feels bikes should not be accommodated. He said that Traffic Engineering has been exploring bike lanes on the Square and that a solution has not been found yet. He said he didn't remember anyone asking for bikes in this area and would rather show pedestrian ways in the concepts, although it would be acceptable to suggest a bike way in one concept. Carbine stated that the big issue would be managing the bikes and suggested the planter tubs could be placed to demarcate the bikeway and activity areas. Covert stated that the big conflict is at the corner of the Historical Museum and maybe there is a lighter, quicker, cheaper way to draw attention to that area. Verveer said he was also concerned that having a bike lane may promote riding on the sidewalks. Zellers stated that is a problem now.

Torkildson asked if the Committee should recommend something now or wait until more information is available about the redevelopment of the Historical Museum block. Carbine suggested that it is worth doing something even if it is only for one year, noting the negative economic impact this space can have on nearby businesses if it is perceived as unsafe.

Saiki asked about moving forward with a version of Concept B that leaves a couple single stones in the middle and maybe near the museum corner so bicyclists slow down and are more cautious. He noted that seemed like a relatively light touch. He suggested programming could happen in the cul-de-sac. Verveer asked if Saiki thought Sebastian could live with Concept B. Saiki speculated that she would be disappointed that the composition is being disrupted, but thinks she could live with it since she is sensitive to the situation. Saiki said he would not remove any trees.

Carbine questioned whether removing one on-street parking space seasonally to accommodate a bike corral would be viewed by businesses as an acceptable tradeoff to address the issues. Verveer noted that the King Street businesses don't object to the bike corral on that street.

Saiki suggested also looking at leaving the middle bike rack, but pushing the two outer racks deeper into the space and maybe removing some stones to accommodate that.

Hirsch stated that it sounds like the Committee is agreeing on Concept B with some programming. Fruhling agreed and stated that the next step should be to hold a public meeting focusing on Concept B, and the various iterations of that discussed at this meeting.

He noted that an option of not making any physical changes and focusing solely on programming would be part of that meeting as well.

Carbine noted that foodcarts should not be the vending focus, but that craft vending and other activities should be the focus of activating the space. She stated that clustering craft vendors in a deliberate and predicable manner could be successful and have the support of nearby businesses.

The Committee agreed to schedule the next public meeting for March 16 at 4:30 pm at the Library.

3. [36697](#)

SUBSTITUTE-Directing the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development to conduct a one or two year collaborative effort to implement many of the recommendations in the 2012 adopted Downtown Plan, and to take an expanded and more detailed look at a number of issues associated with State Street, the Capitol Square, and adjacent areas

Dan Milsted registered in neither support nor opposition. He stated that brick and mortar establishments must be considered over temporary vendors. He described the example of a popcorn wagon near the top of State Street who vends on Farmer's Market Saturdays and during special events and how that notably reduces the income of other popcorn stores in the block. He stated that coffee carts pose similar challenges to nearby coffee shops. He thinks that something needs to be done to spread out vendors from brick and mortar establishments of similar uses.

Ken Klary registered, not indicating a position, but left before this item was discussed.

Fruhling stated that the other referral bodies have recommended approval of the resolution, noting that the Landmarks Commission and Transit and Parking Commission recommended amendments.

Verveer and Fruhling clarified that a resolution forwarded by Downtown Madison, Inc. reflected the action of their board and was not intended to be a substitute for the resolution being discussed.

Torkildson stated that she feels language should be added about having a downtown environment that is highly walkable and where people don't have to travel far to meet their needs.

A motion was made by Zellers, seconded by Frank, to accept the amendments offered by the Landmarks Commission and Transit and Parking Commission. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Carbine, seconded by Verveer, to amend the 5th WHEREAS clause to read: "...ensure a quality urban environment and enhance livability with needed goods and services available downtown..." The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Verveer, seconded by Zellers, to add: "BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Downtown Coordinating Committee shall serve as the lead working committee for this effort until another entity is so designated by the Mayor and Common Council." The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Carbine, seconded by Hirsch, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. [33826](#) Committee Member & Staff Updates
None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Verveer, seconded by Covert, to Adjourn at 7:55 p.m.
The motion passed by voice vote/other.