

TLNA Steering Committee Report
For the Salvation Army Proposal for the 600 Block of E. Washington
October 8th, 2019

This report presents the findings of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association's (TLNA) Steering Committee on the proposal by the Salvation Army of their current site at 630 E. Washington and the three adjacent parcels at 648 E. Washington (a used car lot), a building at 12 N. Blount St, and a parking lot at 655 E. Mifflin. These findings reflect committee work and input on the proposal version that was last presented on Sept. 26, 2019.

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1. Purpose:

The report is provided to the TLNA Council as they prepare to consider the Council's position on the proposal. Prior to any Council Member forming a stance on the proposal the Committee encourages Council Members to carefully read this report and all materials on the TLNA Development Committee's website for the project which can be found here:

<http://www.tenneylapham.org/development.html>

2. Committee Membership:

The Committee has considered its members to be any neighbor who has come to one of its meetings, hence does not have fixed membership. We prefer not to hinder input from the community and recognize that other commitments can prevent perfect attendance, so agreed not to further limit membership.

Note that other neighbors have provided valuable input via email and other channels. Their opinions are reflected here, in meeting notes and in a separate Comments/Emails link on the [TLNA website](#) for the proposal.

The Committee formed after the June 6, 2019, neighborhood meeting called by Alder Heck and Rummel. As is typical, attendees were given the opportunity to join the soon-to-form TLNA Steering Committee and other neighbors were invited via the TLNA listserv in all meeting announcements. Alder Heck sent postcard invitations for the neighborhood meeting to nearby Tenney-Lapham (T-L) residences and some nearby residents in the James Madison, Marquette, and First Settlement neighborhoods, as well to businesses nearest to the proposal site.

3. Committee and TLNA Process:

In recent years TLNA Development Steering Committees have not voted on a final committee position, but have instead issued summary findings, such as contained herein, to the full TLNA Council. Given the fluid nature of committee membership, a vote would likely not be representative, therefore, throughout the process TLNA leadership aimed towards the issuance of this report rather than voting on a level of support for the proposal.

Depending on the desires and actions of TLNA Council, as well as the further input from neighbors, the City, and the Salvation Army team, the Committee is prepared to hold additional meetings and provide additional feedback to the developer regardless of where they are in the proposal approval process.

4. TLNA Council Process:

After the broader neighborhood meeting of June 1, the Steering Committee met on July 1 and September 26. Typically, there are more steering committee meetings for a proposal of this scope and relative controversy. Note also that there was a lengthy time gap of almost 3 months between the two steering committee meetings. The SA team was refining the proposal based on input from the June 6 neighborhood meeting and from city staff, but TLNA was concerned about the large time gap between meetings. TLNA leadership and Alder Heck advised the SA that more neighborhood interaction was warranted, but the SA was reportedly not ready to present again until September because the site plan and other aspects of the proposal had not yet evolved.

The developer is pursuing Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) low income housing tax credits, so they are moving forward in the city process sooner rather than later. Their city land use application, which is likely the most important step in gaining city approvals, is expected to be on Oct. 28. Obtaining their financing is equally as important and they are pursuing WHEDA Section 42 tax credits which typically has an applications deadline in mid-December. WHEDA applications are stronger if they have already received land use approval from the municipality in question, as well as funds from local affordable housing funds, hence the SA's pursuing land use approval in October. This schedule is not ideal for maximizing neighborhood input on the proposal.

A Unique Steering Committee

A number of vocal neighbors and stakeholders who oppose the SA's current presence and/or any expansion at their current site created a unique situation for this TLNA Steering Committee. While the steering committee was able to conduct some evaluation of the details of the proposal, the majority of the steering committee meeting time was devoted to hearing and responding to the input of those attendees who oppose the SA's presence and/or expansion on the site.

Despite efforts to frame the steering committee meetings as a way to provide specific feedback on the proposal, many of the topics that have been discussed in TLNA steering committee meetings for other developments were not extensively discussed in this process. For this reason, this report includes some relatively standard suggestions for conditions of approval that did not rise from the committee process. TLNA has evaluated many development proposals in the recent past, so this report is using some suggested conditions of approval adapted from past steering committee reports even though these items were not necessarily discussed at SA steering committee meetings.

5. Summary Findings:

The Steering Committee appreciates the developer's willingness to meet with the neighborhood and to listen to concerns. As mentioned above, more meetings may have helped address some neighborhood concerns, but given the confrontational dynamic of the steering committee meetings, it was likely to continue to be challenging to engage in any detailed discussion.

Initial Neighborhood Meeting: June 6

The SA team's proposal concepts were first presented at the June 6, 2019 neighborhood meeting at Lapham Elementary. The meeting included a presentation from SA staff on the current services provided in the existing facility, issues with the existing building and additional services the organization would like to provide in a new facility.

JLA Architects presented a draft site plan that consisted of:

- Small cluster of buildings around interior court yard
- 4 to 5 story building on East Washington with services
- Gymnasium/community space
- 3 story apartment building (with the short end toward Mifflin St)
- Main points of entry through courtyard on East Mifflin or off East Washington
- Visitor parking on surface
- Underground parking for residents and staff with controlled entry

JLA Architects and SA staff then took questions, feedback and comments from neighbors in attendance. Some neighbors had specific questions about the proposals, but many of the comments were related to issues at the current SA facility and concerns about expanding homeless services in the neighborhood.

Initial Steering Committee Meeting: July 1

Following the neighborhood meeting, interested neighbors were invited to a steering committee meeting on July 1 at the American Family Dream Bank. JLA Architects and SA staff presented some changes and additional detail to the previous proposal. The largest change was that the orientation of the site plan was turned 90 degrees on the lot so that the main vehicle entrance was now on Blount St. instead of Mifflin St. The apartments were moved to Mifflin St to keep a "residential feel". Further detail about programming and services provided in the facility was presented as well.

After the presentation, neighbors asked questions and gave feedback. There were several questions about SA's plan to improve safety and manage activity in the area immediately surrounding their site. SA responded that they have started working with a safety and security consultant, but did not have specifics on the security plan yet. There were also several questions about the operations plan for the proposed facility, which SA said they would be able to provide at a future meeting. Like at the initial neighbor meeting, however, most of the neighbors who spoke at the meeting were voicing either their support or (more often) opposition to the idea of a Salvation Army expansion generally, not discussing the details of the proposal.

Last Steering Committee Meeting: September 26

The final steering committee meeting was held on September 26 at Christ Presbyterian Church. TLNA sent out an agenda that was designed counter the confrontational dynamic from previous meetings and give neighbors an opportunity to provide specific feedback or recommendations about the details of the proposal (beyond just support or opposition). Alder Heck also provided comment cards at the meeting in an effort to gather feedback from some neighbors or stakeholders who may have been uncomfortable providing feedback out loud. JLA Architects and SA did an extensive presentation on building exteriors and interiors as well as providing a detailed programming plan.

The neighbor question and comment section of this meeting was divided in to four topic areas, site layout & orientation, exterior design, facility operations and security plan. However, several vocal

neighbors and stakeholders did not agree with the meeting's format, so questions or feedback on those specific topics was limited. Most of the verbal comments given at this meeting were strongly opposed to any type of expanded homeless services on this site, and many were opposed to the current shelter remaining on the existing site.

Much more information about the steering committee meetings including presentation slides, meeting minutes and details of specific neighbor feedback are on the TLNA website for the proposal:

<http://www.tenneylapham.org/web-data/development/salvationarmy2019.htm>

Opinions at the steering committee meetings seemed to fall in these camps:

- (A) A **majority** of committee members is **opposed** to the SA expansion, including both the shelter and affordable housing component. Many of those are also opposed to the current shelter remaining on its current site.

The remaining **minority** is split between three groups:

- (B) Those **strongly in support** of the proposal as is, with some minor concerns, and
- (C) Those **somewhat in support** of the proposal, but have some major concerns remaining.
- (D) Those whose opinions are unknown since the committee was unable to conduct its typical business of a give and take discussion amongst themselves and the development team.

It is important to note that many emails that were sent to TLNA and/or Alder Heck registering opinions on the proposal. The emails of those who agreed to have their input published on TLNA's website for the proposal can be found here:

<http://www.tenneylapham.org/web-data/development/salvationarmy2019.htm>

If those communications are folded into the summary of opinions gathered at steering committee meetings, the results above change a bit and could be summarized as below:

- (A) A small **majority** of those who gave input is **opposed** to the SA expansion, including both the shelter and affordable housing component. That majority tends to have large concerns about the Salvation Army's current operations.

The remaining **minority** is split between two groups:

- (B) A larger number **strongly in support** of the proposal as is, with some minor concerns, and
- (C) A smaller number **somewhat in support** of the proposal but have some major concerns remaining.

Most of Group A were either neighbors living within a block or two of the Salvation Army, owners of small rental properties within a block or two of the Salvation Army, or representatives of developers and larger property owners nearby and further away. All of Group A indicated that the impacts of the current shelter operations impacted their businesses and/or quality of life, primarily

due to concerns about security and safety. Nearest neighbors registered concerns about illegal or asocial behaviors both on the SA site and offsite in the surrounding area. Those Group A folks who lived more than a block or so from the SA site, objected mostly to the “spill over” effects of having the SA, The Beacon, and other social service providers all in this area. They maintain that the presence of the SA and the Beacon, in particular, draw a criminal element to the SA area and the SA has a history of not addressing security/safety concerns of the neighborhood. Property owners were also concerned about possible devaluation of their properties and development community members thought that using these parcels for a non-profit usage and for a smaller scale project did not maximize its potential and potential tax revenue.

Group B was made up primarily of neighbors who lived further away from the Salvation Army site, although a few live within the same block as the Salvation Army or within a block or two.. This group seemed to feel that the SA’s mission is important enough to the city’s most needy residents that the purpose-built shelter expansion and affordable housing component should be built. Most of Group B recognized that there are ongoing safety and security concerns on the SA site and offsite, but that the expanded shelter and multi-tiered housing options would provide much more stability than the current SA shelter and keep more people from congregating on the streets.

Group C was made up primarily of neighbors who lived further away from the Salvation Army site, although some live within the same block as the Salvation Army or within a block or two. While they are supportive of the SA remaining on its current site, there was hesitance expressed about the ability of the SA to address security and safety concerns in the neighborhood even though most understood that the SA is directly responsible only for issues on their site. Greater concerns about the lack of city involvement in addressing the safety concerns on the nearby street, parks, and businesses was also a concern. Group C generally expressed a desire to work with the SA, the city, and the neighborhood to explore methods for alleviating some of the problems, but remained somewhat skeptical of those entities’ ability to address offsite issues.

6. Additional Findings and Suggested Conditions:

Compliance with Zoning and Plans

As mentioned earlier, this steering committee did not address many issues that are typically discussed in evaluating development proposals, including its compliance with:

- City zoning code,
- The Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan,
- Imagine Madison (the city’s comprehensive plan),
- The Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan, and
- Urban Design District-8

Generally though, it is believed that the proposal follows these plans, particularly given exceptions to the plans for other developments. There are some deviations from the Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan and the T-L Neighborhood Plan, but since the Salvation Army owns their current larger parcel and will be redeveloping that parcel and adjacent parcels, the variations from the Plans’ visions is not thought to be substantial.

The current version of the redevelopment proposal seems to meet all requirements and guidelines for Urban Design District-8, although a careful consideration of its compliance was not conducted.

The Plan Commission will consider a demolition permit for the current SA building, which the Landmarks Commission has found not to be historically significant.

Several Conditional Uses will presumably need to be granted by the Plan Commission for the proposal to move forward. The required CUs are not known for certain, but could include Conditional Uses for

1. The operation of a daytime shelter in Traditional Employment zoning district
2. A building with more than 8 housing units in the TE zoning district
3. Dwelling units in mixed-use buildings (C),
4. Multi-family dwelling
5. The operation of a Mission House
6. Operation of counseling or community services organization

Suggested Conditions of Approval

We encourage TLNA Council to ask Plan Commission to include the following suggestions as conditions of approval whenever possible and/or for City staff to evaluate their applicability. As noted earlier, many more conditions of approval were not discussed by the steering committee (nor were these somewhat standard conditions), so it is expected that TLNA Council will need to craft additional pertinent conditions.

- The developer should install electric car charging stations in the two sub-grade parking lots.
- Indoor and outdoor bicycle parking for both proposal components should greatly exceed City requirements.
- The developer should underground all utility wiring.
- Retain any street trees and any yard trees if possible. Canopy-sized trees should be used for the street terrace and interior spaces whenever allowed by the Fire Department, since utility undergrounding will allow the planting of larger tree species. Wherever possible, the development should include canopy trees in side and/or rear yard areas to provide shade and a visual buffer for neighbors.
- The committee should have input on landscaping plans.
- Additional green features, including solar panels, rain barrels to decrease runoff, etc., should be considered whenever possible in all of the buildings.
- Gardening opportunities and green space for tenants should be maximized on rooftops and any green areas at grade, and on any patios and decks.
- Assure proper drainage away from adjacent properties on all sides of the development.
- Residents of the proposed new apartment buildings should not have access to City residential parking permits should the program be in existence or established on nearby streets. The committee realizes that this is currently City policy for new developments, but

wants to reiterate our concern.

- HVAC systems with exterior components should create minimal noise and be aesthetically unobtrusive for neighboring properties on all sides. Exterior venting/input for living and commercial units should be flush mounted if not on roofs. Usage of wall packs should be discouraged, but if used they should not face neighboring buildings on adjacent properties or across streets. Wall packs that are mounted on balconies should be mounted perpendicular to or towards the building's facade and face away from all neighboring properties.
- Any noise from rooftop HVAC systems and other exhaust systems should not impact neighboring residential structures.
- TLNA Council should be made aware of the plan for residential and commercial garbage, as well as any deliveries.
- Should dogs be allowed in the apartment building, a station for the collection of dog waste should be included in the project so as to discourage dog waste from collecting on nearby streets.