

JOINT CITY PLAN COMMISSION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION / DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Thursday, March 3, 2011 – 6:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center – 1519 Water Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Ald. Jerry Moore, Tony Patton, Anna Haines, Shari Laskowski, Jack Curtis, Lee Beveridge, Ald. Tom Mallison, Tim Siebert, Norm Myers Sr., Hans Walther, Kathy Kruthoff, Karl Halsey and George Hanson

EXCUSED: Chairperson Mayor Halverson and Maurice Rice

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Michael Ostrowski, John Kneer (Rettler Corporation), Todd Grunwaldt (Grunwaldt and Associates), Ald. Mike Wiza, Ald. Mary Stroik, Ald. Marge Molski, City Assessor Jim Siebers, Bob Fisch, Barb Jacob, Bernie Coerper, Elbert Rackow, Tim Lecher, Kathy Hermann, Nancy Schultz, Dani Crinklaw, Matthew Brown, Cathy Dugan, Cindy Nebel, Armi Nebel, Ray Spielman, Dani Spielman, Mary Ann Laszewski, and Dan Menzel

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1. Opening remarks.

Ald. Moore called the meeting to order in place of Chairperson Halverson, as he was ill. Ald. Moore indicated that the purpose of the meeting is to gather concepts and suggestions on what is to become of the center area of the CenterPoint MarketPlace. We will not be debating other aspects of the project.

2. Discussion and possible action on redevelopment ideas/plans for the CenterPoint MarketPlace area.

John Kneer from Rettler Corporation shared a power point presentation that showed the aerial view of CenterPoint MarketPlace area as it currently exists, and then some preliminary layouts that showed ideas relating to traffic and pedestrian flow. Mr. Kneer indicated that these are just options, and nothing is set in stone with these concepts.

Concept one considers the removal of the building except for the J.C. Penney, Dunham's, and Shopko buildings. The thicker red dashed line is for the flow of vehicular circulation and the smaller red dashed line is for pedestrian circulation. The Mid-State building is the campus improvement area and we are not discussing any changes or suggestions to it. The first element is the connection between the square and the campus area, with the pedestrian linkage. Some of the new vehicular circulation shows Third Street going north-south up to Centerpoint Drive. The other north-south

connection that was identified is the Strongs Avenue connection. This could be a two-way north south connection to offer a drop down to the beginning of Main Street and a gateway to the downtown. There is also a one-way return between Centerpoint and Main, giving you an opportunity to get back to where you started from and increase development opportunity for the buildings on Main Street. This concept gives a large open space/parking area that is not defined, but open for input. There is the option for a parking expansion next to the old Dunham's building, or space for future development.

Concept two shows some of the building staying, mainly the atrium area. It would stay and make connections to the former Dunham's building and Shopko building. The concept plan shows a north south connection for traffic and pedestrian via Third Street. This plan also shows smaller open spaces for parking and/or greenspace.

Ald. Moore opened the meeting for public discussion.

Bernie Coerper, 1400 West River Drive: Mr. Coerper requests to keep the existing mall with the possibility of opening up Strongs Avenue. He suggests only taking down enough of the building to allow for the Fox Theater to expand. Mr. Coerper also believes that the City should run an access from the food court area all the way to the north. This area could be used for Children's Museum access. The area to the east of this could be used for an arts block area. He also feels there should be a pedestrian walkway instead of Third Street. The center court of the mall should be preserved for future development.

Elbert Rackow, 1824 Gilkay Street: Mr. Rackow recommends having a pedestrian passage, as opposed to opening up Third Street to vehicles. Mr. Rackow would be in favor of tearing down just enough of the mall area for the Fox Theater to expand. The remaining space should be left for other businesses without the restrictions on use. The corridor could then be available for walking and for events. The mall is too valuable to be demolished and there is no need to extend Strongs Avenue.

Sara Robinson, Association of Downtown Businesses: Ms. Robinson said that the Fox Theater is working on the agreement for the nonprofit organization to donate the building too. She also believes that if we look at leaving the center portion of the mall, then we run into the situation of the City paying for un-leased space. If we look at making a north south traffic flow, such as Third Street, it makes the Lullabye site all that more appealing for development.

Ald. Mike Wiza, Fourth District Alderperson: Ald. Wiza would like to see Third Street remain only as a pedestrian corridor. He also does not believe that the rest of the mall should be taken down until there is a development or developer looking to use the space.

Rich Sommer, 4224 Janick Circle North: Mr. Sommer has a copy of a document with restrictive covenants for the area and that nothing can be done until it makes the city the default buyer.

Andrew Beveridge, 316 Union Street: Mr. Beveridge likes the idea of an arts block, but if there are live shows and a theater there, there should be a backdoor access to that area. Guu's would really benefit from an outdoor seating space, considering the new smoking ban and the amount of people that already go out the back door area and smoke. Mr. Beveridge also thinks that if you have Strongs Avenue and Third Street go all the way through, you will get traffic and pedestrians to come to the area, and from that, other good things can come.

Nancy Schultz, 925 Smith Street: Ms. Schultz likes both concepts, and believes that having Third Street come all the way through is critical to the area. Having just a pedestrian path is a waste of time. If concept plan two is used with the art's block, then that wipes out the atrium walk area, so she does not see that as a viable option. She is in favor of the greenspace that was shown in the concept one. She would like to keep the road behind the Children's Museum and the Theater, with a bus drop off area for maximum safety and traffic flow.

Bill Yudchitz, 1301 Dubay Avenue: Mr. Yudchitz would like to keep a majority of the mall. He believes that the area between the mall and Mid-State (the Third Street area) should be open to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The back sides of the Main Street buildings should be landscaped with trees as a buffer area. The center portion of the mall should be broken into smaller shops as a co-op or condominium type development with the city selling them for \$20-40 per square foot. He also suggests an enclosed pedestrian walkway through the food court area, and have a drop off area for the Children's Museum east of the former Dunham's building. Mr. Yudchitz is in favor of having an indoor park similar to the "KASH PARK". Mr. Yudchitz suggested the area previously known as Figi's, could be carved out and landscaped for an outdoor patio and the expansion of the Fox Theater. He also suggested that the east-west walk area in the existing mall should be retained for walking. His final suggestion is to move the bus terminal closer to the Strongs and Main Street corner leaving a larger pedestrian area.

Cathy Dugan, 615 Sommers Street: Ms. Dugan believes that the area should be maintained for the mall walkers and to be used as a public gathering space. Her suggestion is for an indoor farmers market, and to have more green areas both inside and outside of the building.

Bob Ficsh, 2009 A Division Street: Mr. Ficsh would like to see the Third Street corridor go through with a promenade in the area. He believes that the area should have bike and pedestrian access.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street: Ms. Laszewski would like to see the area used for monthly flea markets and antique sales. The City could then charge a rental fee.

Barb Jacob, 1616 Depot Street: Ms. Jacob would like to see a bike lane and sidewalk area on the Third Street side of the building, but does not believe that the road is necessary for one block. She does like the idea of several smaller spaces inside of the mall, and she also believes that the food court area should remain and have the cut out for the Fox Theater. She believes that the Children's Museum should have access, but there is no need for a road on the south side of the building or a bus drop off area. Lastly, Ms. Jacob believes that we should do all we can to keep costs down.

Jim Seibers, 446 West Wilson Avenue: Mr. Seibers likes the idea of the Strongs Avenue cut through the mall. His suggestion is to have Centerpoint Drive changed to a two-way road, and have a two-way intersection from Main Street on to Centerpoint Drive.

Bill Yudchitz, 1301 Dubay Avenue: Mr. Yudchitz would like to add to his earlier concept. He believes that trees and bike paths to and from the river should be incorporated. He also likes the two-way traffic idea that Mr. Seibers suggested.

3. Other business.

Director Ostrowski indicated that the tentative March 10, 2011 date will likely not give enough time for the architect and site planner to develop the new concepts. He suggested that March 16, 2011 would be more optimal, and would give enough time for the ideas presented here tonight to be incorporated into some new concept drawings.

Mr. Kneer indicated that he was going to take the ideas discussed here tonight and create three new concept plans. The next meeting we could then discuss the likeability of the three plans.

Bill Yudchitz, 1301 Dubai Avenue: Mr. Yudchitz would like to see a 3-D rendering of the plans for the best view of ideas and a more visual concept.

Mr. Kneer stated that we would first need to come up with a preferred plan and then with Mr. Grunwaldt, he would work together on the 3-D rendering.

Todd Grunwaldt, Grunwaldt and Associates: Mr. Grunwaldt explained that there is a lot of ground work needed to be done before we get to the design of the 3-D model.

The next public input session would be scheduled for March 16, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

4. Adjourn 7:35pm