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MEMORANDUM

Date: 9-2-2014

To: Paul Hetland, Cold Spring Downtown Streetscape Committee

From: Geoff Martin

Re: Summary of Cold Spring Streetscape Work to Date

Following is a summary of the work that has been accomplished to date for the Downtown Cold Spring Streetscape. This memo includes written documentation of the following initial tasks outlined in our scope of services:

- 100: Refine Base Information
- 101: Committee Meeting 1 brainstorm, refine vision
- 102: Review of Existing Conditions
- 103: Optional Task: Property Owners Meeting
- 104: Review Engineering Objectives
- 105: Synthesize Issues, Opportunities, Goals and Objectives
- 106: Preliminary Streetscape Framework Plan
- 107: Red River Avenue Street Streetscape Design Alternatives
- 108: Main Street Geometric Streetscape Design Alternatives
- 109: Committee Meeting No.2: Workshop to Review Design Alternatives

A. TASK 100 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION/REVIEW/BASE MAPPING

With the help of Stantec, all the pertinent planning studies, background information and base maps have been assembled for review and use throughout the project including: GIS topographic and parcel data, copies of infrastructure construction drawings and as-builts, aerial photography, the comprehensive plan and zoning code.

Consistent drawings for the project area suitable for preliminary design purposes do not exist. The plan view base drawings used for this initial phase have been generated by tracing over aerial photos and integrating more accurate parcel and right of way information from GIS data. These drawings should be considered for preliminary design only with an accuracy within two to five feet.

The base maps are included in the PowerPoint presentation and summary graphics prepared for the August 25th Downtown Development Committee meeting.

B. TASK 101 – STREETScape COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 1: KICK-OFF WORKSHOP, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

The process was initiated with a kick-off meeting on July 7, 2014 with the Streetscape Committee, city staff, and consulting engineers to review objectives, resolve any questions regarding the contract, assign responsibilities, and establish a firm schedule and basis for collaboration to complete the process in an orderly manner.

Following are summary notes of the meeting were prepared by the Committee:

Schedule

The streetscape schematic design phase will be completed this Fall of 2014. The feasibility study will be prepared between November 2014-April 2015. The Final Design for the street reconstruction and streetscape will begin in June with a completion date in the Fall of 2015. Bidding and construction of Red River Avenue will occur throughout 2016. Final design for Main Avenue will be in 2016 with bidding and construction occurring throughout 2017.

Discussion

The scope of services for the preliminary design phase were discussed. It was decided that optional services such as Task 103: Property Owner's Meeting, will be conducted by the committee. The objective is to gather as much information as possible from property owners about their current property, their wants for future development and design, their ability and interest to support these designs with funding either via assessments or otherwise. This task was completed by the Downtown Development Committee and the summarized by Geoff Martin at the August 25th meeting.

The Committee will also help plan and implement Task 114: Community Open House to share the vision, plan, and strategy as well as, to garner support and excitement for the presentation to the City Council.

Follow up Items:

The Marketing Subcommittee will meet to finalize a marketing budget, strategy, and funding opportunities. They will present to the committee at the next meeting. The Committee will be thinking about final presentation to the City Council and what role Geoff Martin will be taking in the process.

- Ann Harren and Rick Bohannon will find out if a city-wide parking study currently exists (up-to-date).
- Downtown Development Committee will complete Property Owners Survey and present to Geoff Martin.
- Committee will brainstorm regional artists/artistry to possibly include in Downtown Development plan.
- Bob Thelen of Planning Commission and City Council has asked this group to contribute brainstorming ideas for possible use of former Granite City Bank building.

C. TASK 102 – INVENTORY OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

Overall base maps suitable for design services, a photo inventory of project area, graphic and written summary of issues, opportunities and objectives have been prepared and are

summarized below and included with the powerpoint and design graphics presented at the August 25, 2014 Downtown Development Committee Meeting

D. OPTIONAL TASK 103 –PROPERTY OWNER INTERVIEWS

This task was completed by the Downtown Development Committee and entailed meeting with individual property owners in the project area to gain an understanding of their issues, concerns and design considerations for the streetscape. The interviews were conducted in July and August, 2014. Each property owner was asked to answer 5 questions. Following is a summary of their responses:

How does the current streetscape help or hinder your business?

- More space for sidewalk tables and chairs, more trees for shade
- Walk-ins are part of business so business exposure from street is key.
- Good, have 2 spot to enter parking lot
- sidewalks are cracked
- no issues
- Does not hinder
- With current street parking it is okay, but its difficult when spaces fill up then people don't use business
- Uncertain

How could streetscape be improved?

- More parking, More parking, More parking, More parking
- Better access
- My sidewalks are wide enough, Parking is fine, so is access. Landscaping is my own.
- More parking, better access
- Wider walks for more outside use i.e. benches, tables/charis, displays
- Uncertain

Special Needs?

- Operate 24 hours/6 days/week, not enough employee parking
- need more handicap and employee parking
- need handicap accessible parking, employees usually park in Country Store lot
- 4am-11pm
- 24/7 business, need more handicap parking access b/c of rehab patients using facility for therapy, and senior citizens. Biggest issue is during a.m. and has been ongoing issue.
- Desired elements
- bike racks, trees
- bike parking, designated parking for this business
- Ok as is
- Remove overhead wires, More benches, light poles with flower pots/flags/banners
- The streetscaping East of Teal's (Granite Landing) looks wonderful. IT would be nice to incorporate that look into downtown area

What are your 3 Greatest Concerns?

- affecting business during construction, customer parking during construction
- worried about customer access
- traffic flow/accessibility
- it will cost me but not do me any good
- how long will the project take, will parking still be available in front of store, what is the cost of the project
- parking 2. Access to parking lot 3. Sales going down
- Loss of Business, Loss of Business, Loss of Business
- Will unifying take away character from downtown? Parking and access.

What are your 3 Greatest Hopes ?

- It will brighten up and refresh downtown
- More parking, convenience, looks beautiful
- Better parking, traffic flow smoother especially by schools, more appealing for people to sit and stay in downtown area
- More inviting access to town
- Slower traffic for crosswalks
- Bicycle parking 2. a way to exit parking lot from East 3. wider entrance to parking lot
- Wider Sidewalks, More inviting look, flowers/trees, benches/bike racks
- Keep business coming to downtown area 2. a good marriage of old and new to compliment what we have already 3. during construction=proper routes to still have downtown access with clear signage and plenty of public notification beforehand
- A unified downtown with an appearance that identifies it as a downtown.

E. TASK 104 – REVIEW PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

A meeting was held at City Hall with Stearns County Engineer Jodi Teich, assistant engineer Jeff Miller along with Paul Hoeschen, Dan Kron, and Brian Lintgen to discuss the county’s design criteria for Red River Avenue and Main Street.

The design of the streets will have to be in keeping with the guidelines established in the 2013 Minnesota State Aid for Local Transportation Division Rules. The county representatives clarified that Red River Ave. will be a 2 lane, 44ft. wide street with potential turn lanes at Hwy. 23, 1st. North and South as well as Main Street. In general this would mean that Red River Avenue could narrow and sidewalk and boulevard space could increase to 16 ft. to 18 ft. in areas with 80ft row and 11 ft. in the north segment with 66ft. right of way. The 44 ft. width includes 12 ft. thru lanes and 10 ft. parking lanes. The county mentioned the former dimensions are required because the street is classified as an arterial with a lot of truck traffic and a 20 year projected average daily traffic (ADT) load of 14,400 vehicles.

If the community would like bike facilities along Red River Avenue, then approximately 6 more feet in each direction will need to be taken from the boulevard/walk space.

Design options for the intersection of County Road 50 and Red River Avenue are still being explored. Options may include realigning Co. Road 50 or a roundabout.

Main Street is projected to have an average daily traffic of 4, 750 vehicles. Lane widths may be more flexible on Main Street than Red river Avenue because of the lower ADTs and classification as a local collector street.

F. TASK 105 – SYNTHESIS OF ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The findings from the previous tasks are listed below and provide an outline of the issues, opportunities and challenges within the project area as defined by the stakeholders.

Opportunities

Maintain Downtown as the cultural heart of the city

Improve connections to neighborhoods, the river, trails and open space system

Improve Gateways into the city

Promote sustainable redevelopment of the downtown

Provide a framework for public and private investment

Bolster existing businesses

Support start-up businesses

Provide central public parking

Incorporate bicycle facilities

Provide a Hierarchy of Streets and Open Spaces to shape a Redevelopment Framework

Reinforce a genuine identity and Legacy through Streetscape Design

Strengthen Core Downtown by Integrating Granite Landing

Improve Traffic flow. Make it more manageable Business Friendly

Pedestrian friendly

Highlight the river in all phases of the redevelopment

Get the walkways planned that connects the old and new downtown

Highlight the Bike Trail

Create themes around the 3 historical strengths of the town.

Granite, Baseball, Beer.

Highlight these three areas and create destination tributes.

Use public art & tributes to define these three areas.

Clean up the sight lines of both Red River and also Main Street.

Work with Golden Plump on their expansion and how can we make that a gateway business.

Develop 3 distinct gateways, east, south and north.

Make them all unique and different.

Play off the strength of the school.

Create a fountain and green space at the old bank site.

Use the ideas developed in Granite Landing

Tie in the new granite landing walkway with Frogtown Park and the River Oaks Golf Course.

Start a tree, shrub, flower society.

Use greenery or green space to enhance the downtown...trees, shrubs, flowers.

Challenges

What should it look like?

Where is the Parking?

How will improvements be financed?

Who will be the Champions?

How to access businesses and parking during construction?

How will improvements be maintained?

How can Downtown attract investment?

Getting Excel Energy to agree with relocating and burying all power lines

The Opera House

The Cold Spring Co-Op

Blending the old with the new.

The idea of gateway entrances

Physical improvement of old downtown businesses

Getting the city to agree to cover the cost of all these great ideas.

Financial considerations that balance old redevelopment with new redevelopment

Blending single family houses into the business redevelopment

Being able to look at building size and is bigger better.

How does the idea of Granite, Baseball and Beer blend with new age thinking?

Don't try to compete with St. Cloud, but be unique in your development scope.

Sell or lease the empty buildings. Get everything filled.

Sell the empty lots.

Improve the business climate in Cold Spring, especially retail so non-core businesses can also make money ie. clothing, coffee shop, specialty stores.

Find a way to get all delivery trucks off of the main road in front of buildings.

What Physical Improvements Should be Included?

Get rid of all telephone and electrical lines.

Narrow the main street

Put in sidewalk push outs at the end of Main Street.

More parking lots.

Widen the sidewalks

More bike paths and walking trails.

Finish the overlooks and tie them into the community.

Lighting should be the same throughout the town

Develop pedestrian and tourist sites

Use the bike trail amenity as a positive for downtown.

Trees shrubs, flowers, granite raised flower gardens.

Goals and Objectives

The issues, opportunities and challenges from the previous tasks have been distilled into the following DRAFT broad goals and supportive objectives which will drive the creation of the framework Plan and streetscape design solutions. The Downtown Development committee should review and edit these goals and objectives as needed.

a. Goal:

Maintain Downtown as the cultural heart of the City

Objectives

- Provide a hierarchy of streets and open spaces to attract and retain businesses and residents, and to set the stage for cultural activities.
- Reinforce a genuine identity and legacy through streetscape design.
- Maintain City Hall, the Library and other public uses downtown.
- Express Colds Springs rich history through an interpretive system of pocket parks, wayfinding and public art elements.
- Create themes around the 3 historical strengths of the City: Granite, Baseball and Beer
- Use greenery or green space to enhance the downtown...trees, shrubs, flowers.
- Start a tree, shrub, flower society to maintain the landscape.

b. Goal:

Improve connections to neighborhoods, the river, trails and open space system

Objectives

- Highlight the ROCORI Bike Trail as an amenity to draw users downtown.
- Improve Traffic flow. Make it more manageable Business Friendly
- Create a more pedestrian friendly downtown by narrowing streets and widening walks where feasible.
- Incorporate sidewalk bump outs on downtown streets where possible to create shorter and safer crosswalks, calm traffic and provide space for seating, landscape, stormwater and public art elements.
- Incorporate bicycle facilities within more streets where feasible.
- Provide more walkways that connect the old and new downtown

c. Goal:

Promote sustainable redevelopment of the downtown

Objectives

- Strengthen the core Downtown by integrating Granite Landing
- Reinforce the Main Street character and downtown vitality through a compact, mixed use, urban redevelopment pattern.
- Bolster existing businesses
- Support start-up businesses
- Provide more central, accessible public parking
- Incorporate more angled on- street parking where feasible.
- Relocate and/or bury all power lines and phone lines.
- Provide more bicycle parking within downtown.
- Explore adaptive reuse of the Opera House and Cold Spring Co-Op
- Blend surrounding single family houses into the business redevelopment

d. Goal:

Provide a framework for public and private investment

Objectives

- Provide a hierarchy of streets and open spaces to shape the redevelopment framework
- Reinforce a genuine identity and legacy through streetscape, site design, and architectural treatments.
- Highlight the Sauk River in all phases of the redevelopment
- Improve east, south and north gateways into the city through streetscape, site design, and architectural treatments.
- Improve sight lines along both Red River Avenue and Main Street by buffering views to parking areas.
- Work with Golden Plump on their expansion to improve it as a gateway business.
- Create stronger bicycle, pedestrian and cultural connections with the school.
- Create a fountain and green space at the old bank site.
- Tie in the new granite landing walkway with Frogtown Park and the River Oaks Golf Course.

G. TASK 106 – PRELIMINARY STREETScape FRAMEWORK PLAN

A Master/Framework Plan has been prepared to ensure the improvements for the first phase of construction will fit within the overall context of the downtown. The framework plan illustrates the intent of the design goals and objectives, a hierarchy of streetscape and other public realm improvements, as well as potential development consistent with the vision of the community. This plan should be used as a framework to guide future decisions regarding public and private improvements in Downtown Cold Spring.

The Framework Plan is included in the PowerPoint presentation and summary graphics prepared for the August 25th Downtown Development Committee meeting.

H. TASK 107: RED RIVER AVENUE STREET AND STREETScape DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Design alternatives for Red River Avenue have been created and presented to the Downtown Development Committee. The alternatives I demonstrate geometric and streetscape design options that meet the criteria established by Stearns County and respond to the changing site conditions, role and function of the street. The alternative plans are included in the PowerPoint presentation and summary graphics prepared for the August 25th Downtown Development Committee meeting.

I. TASK 108: MAIN STREET GEOMETRIC AND STREETScape DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Design alternatives for Main Street have been created and presented to the Downtown Development Committee. The alternatives demonstrate geometric and streetscape design options that meet the criteria established by Stearns County and respond to the changing site conditions, role and function of the street. The alternative plans are included in the PowerPoint presentation and summary graphics prepared for the August 25th Downtown Development Committee meeting.

J. TASK 109: STREETScape COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 2: WORKSHOP TO REVIEW DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

This meeting was held on August 25, 2014 at the City Hall. The focus of the meeting was to review and discuss: engineering criteria, the outcomes of the property owners surveys, a summary of issues, opportunities, and objectives; the preliminary downtown framework plan, as well as, design alternatives for Red River Avenue and Main Street. The summary PowerPoint presentation and graphics are available online through an ftp site established by Stantec, the consulting engineers. Below is a list of items the Committee will be discussing and making recommendations for a preferred plan at a separate upcoming meeting:

- Should bike lanes be incorporated on Red River Avenue though the entire project area?

- For the segment with a 66ft. ROW fronting of the Brewery, should parking be removed on the east side to provide space for a bike lane?
- Should parking lot buffers be included in the streetscape plan for Red River Avenue? If so, should the buffers be completely on private property or split with the ROW?
- Should parking lot buffers be included in the streetscape plan for Main Street? If so, should the buffers be completely on private property or split with the ROW?
- Should sidewalk bump outs be incorporated on 1st Street South and 1st Street North to define future parking bays, shorten the cross walks, provide space for streetscape elements and visual cues to motorists to slow down in this special downtown district?
- Should sidewalk bump outs be incorporated on Main Street to define parking bays, shorten the cross walks, provide space for streetscape elements and visual cues to motorists to slow down in this special downtown district?
- Should sidewalk bump outs be incorporated on other downtown streets?
- If space allows, should angled parking be incorporated on 1st Street South?