Belknap Neighborhood

Area Specific Plan
September 2009

Table Of Contents

Table of Contents | 1

Letter to Neighbors of Belknap Lookout | 2

Belknap Planning Participants | 3

Recent History of the Belknap Area Specific Plan | 4

Project Time Line | 6

Guiding Principals | 7

Neighborhood Goals | 8

Description of Plan | 13

Belknap Area Specific Plan and the Grand Rapids Master Plan | 16

Belknap Area Specific Plan Context Districts | 20

Belknap Area Specific Plan Drawing | 30

Final Plan Summary | 31

Appendices

Appendix I: Steering Committee Meeting Minutes | 32

Dear Neighbors of Belknap Lookout,

The unprecedented revitalization movement sweeping through the City of Grand Rapids is now knocking on Belknap's door. This Area Specific Plan invites in responsible development projects that aspire to restore and enhance our community's character, prosperity and neighborliness.

Belknap is an extraordinarily distinct place in the City of Grand Rapids. Assets include sturdy housing stock, expansive public green space, a fully restored historic elementary school and unmatched views of both the city skyline and the Grand River valley.

The neighborhood also finds itself uniquely situated on the edge of the city's impressive renaissance. Civic leaders, for example, have invested approximately $1 billion during the past decade to transform Michigan Street on our southern boundary into a world-class center of medical education, research, employment and practice. The Monroe North district on our eastern edge continues to experience substantial investment in new condos, office space, entertainment destinations and riverfront amenities. And several transportation initiatives – reconstruction of the I196 corridor, the Silver Line rapid transit project and the proposed downtown streetcar circulator – promise to significantly enhance mobility for neighborhood residents, workers and visitors.

As a result of both the surrounding investments and our existing assets, Belknap now is attracting new attention from families in the market for a home, college students who need an apartment, entrepreneurs looking to locate a business and visitors who simply want to watch the sun set. The neighborhood is in fact remarkably well positioned to become the newest front in Grand Rapids' revitalization. Indeed, much of the work – and the speculation – already is underway.

This plan, based on extensive input from a diverse group of neighborhood stakeholders, provides residents, developers, city officials and other stakeholders with the tool necessary to make investment and development decisions consistent with the community's collective vision and goals. The ambition is to build a neighborhood – and ultimately a city – that is beautiful, prosperous and friendly.

Respectfully submitted by resident Andy Guy on behalf of the citizen steering committee that led the Belknap Area Specific Plan project.

Acknowledgements & References

Sources

Special thanks to Lott3Metz Architecture and Nederveld, the lead project consultants, whose deep understanding of and commitment to placemaking and revitalizing Grand Rapids' neighborhoods provided most of the planning and urban design expertise underpinning this Area Specific Plan. Additional background, data, ideas and policy information came from the following published materials:

- Master Plan, City of Grand Rapids, November 2002
- MOBL NOBL, O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, August 2006
- Belknap Neighborhood Draft Area Specific Plan Report, Concept Design Group, May 2008
- Area Specific Plan Alternatives, The Friends of Belknap, September 2008

Acknowledgements

The Neighbors of Belknap Lookout gratefully acknowledge the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, Robert Wisniewski, Artesian Group, Bob Rosenberg, the Beckett Family, Andy Guy, City of Grand Rapids and Clancy Street Ministries for making this project possible.

Recent History of the Belknap Area Specific Plan

The Belknap Neighborhood, bounded by Leonard Street to the North, College Avenue to the East, I-196 to the south and Division Avenue to the west is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Grand Rapids. The neighborhood has a rich history, unique geographic location, a distinct character with a diverse housing stock and because of its location, a certain amount of development pressure. Due to this potential for development, the Neighbors of Belknap Lookout initiated an Area Specific Process (referred to ASP 1.0) in January 2008 with two neighborhood-wide charrettes. These charrettes, which involved residents, property owners, developers, businesses and institutions, helped to create a baseline vision for the neighborhood. Upon completion of the ASP 1.0, the neighborhood conducted three neighborhood learning sessions, S.W.O.T. analysis and a residential housing stock survey in conjunction with the City of Grand Rapids Planning Department. This subsequent process (referred to as ASP 2.0) refined the ASP 1.0 vision by taking into account existing conditions and character while delineating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the neighborhood. ASP 2.0 also established guiding principles for the neighborhood and its future development pattern.

Upon completion of this extensive public input process, the citizens failed to reach a consensus for the final vision and conceptual plan. It was at this time that the citizens and steering committee began the third phase of their process (referred to as ASP 3.0) in an effort to create an Area Specific Plan which could utilize the previous public input and stakeholder efforts of the ASP 1.0 and ASP 2.0, while also building a strong neighborhood consensus for the resulting vision. The ASP 3.0 process, while building on previous public input, conducted in-depth interviews with major landowners and representative neighborhood groups and worked closely with the steering committee to maintain an inclusive and transparent process. During the ASP 3.0, a refined vision was created through the use of context districts within the neighborhood. This plan, which went through five iterations during the ASP 3.0 process, was informed through various feedback loops facilitated directly by the steering committee and its interface with various neighborhood groups and stakeholders.

The resulting vision, which was informed and ultimately created by the results and efforts of ASP 1.0, ASP 2.0 and ASP 3.0, is represented by a plan which is built on consensus and aspires to make the neighborhood more attractive to rehabilitation and development while preserving the overall traditional character of Belknap. The plan has support from the Steering Committee, the Friends of Belknap, the Belknap Beautification Committee, unanimous spport of the NOBL Board, various property owners and most importantly a majority of neighborhood citizens.

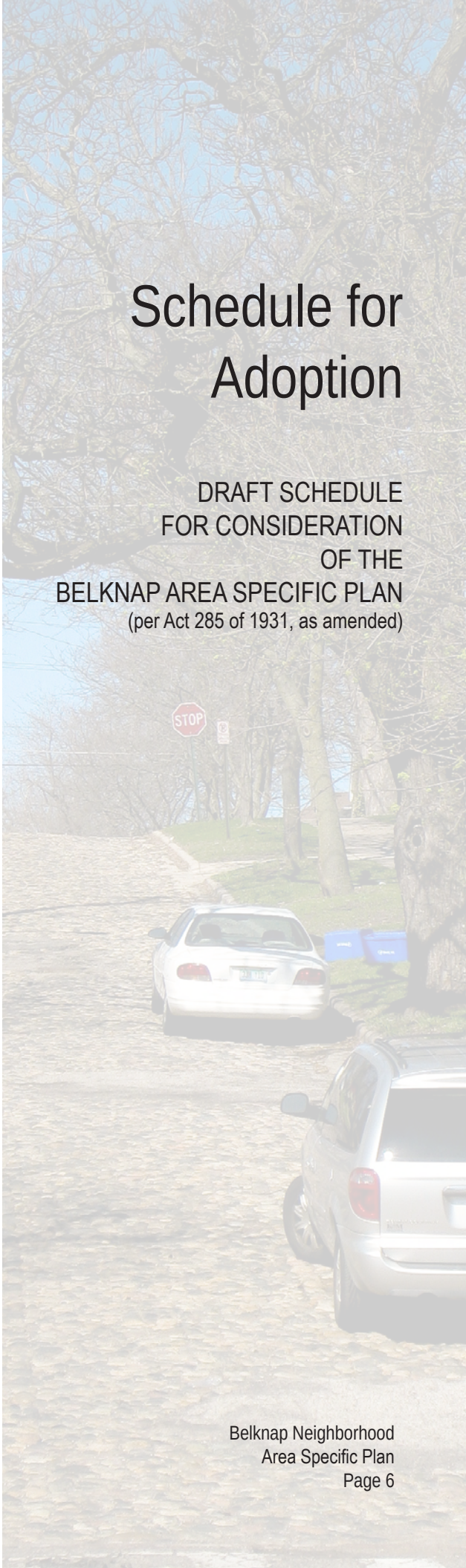
This final Area Specific Plan represents a vision of the neighbors and residents of this unique place. It is their vision, informed by their unique understanding of their neighborhood and refined by the detailed process, stakeholder involvement, and passionate work of dedicated citizens. It is a plan which is informed by the neighborhood wide charrettes conducted during ASP 1.0, the visioning sessions, surveys and S.W.O.T analysis of ASP 2.0 and the refined personal interviews, neighborhood meetings, steering committee-driven public input sessions and the context driven plan of ASP 3.0. This Belknap ASP, therefore is the culmination of all of the diligent work which came before and represents the neighborhood vision for the future – it should be considered as simply the Belknap Area Specific Plan.

Schedule for Adoption

DRAFT SCHEDULE FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE BELKNAP AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

(per Act 285 of 1931, as amended)

September 10, 2009	The proposed Belknap Area Specific Plan is presented to the Planning Commission.
October 6, 2009	The proposed plan is submitted to the City Commission for review and comment, and approval of its distribution to: • Planning Commission or legislative bodies of each city, village or township located within or contiguous to the City of Grand Rapids • Neighborhood and business associations located within or contiguous to the planning area • West Michigan Regional Planning Commission • Kent County Board of Commissioners • Each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the City, and any government entity that has registered its name and address for the purpose of receiving notification
October 7, 2009	Distribution of plan and notification of hearing mailed to parties listed above.
November 25, 2009	Public Hearing notice published in GR Press (11/18/09 NTC).
December 8, 2009	Deadline for comments on the proposed plan (63 days after City Commission approval of distribution on October 6, 2009).
December 10, 2009	Planning Commission holds a public hearing and votes on the proposed plan as an Area Specific Plan and Amendment to the 2002 Master Plan. Public notice sent to parties listed above.
January 12, 2010	The City Commission reviews the final Belknap Area Specific Plan considered by the Planning Commission. The City Commission may: 1) accept the plan, 2) approve the plan, or 3) reject the plan.



Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles
Guiding principles are general rules that will guide Belknap Lookout stakeholders in various circumstances; regardless of activity, leadership or goals. The principles are intended to guide neighborhood change; particularly what happens and how it happens.

Committed Community
We are interrelated with a strong sense of community. Our neighborhood is active, committed and passionate about what we do. We work in partnership with residents, businesses, property owners, investors, non-profits, institutions, schools, city government to improve the neighborhood.

Family-Friendly
We recognize the importance of a safe, healthy, attractive and walkable community. We strive to preserve and enhance our greenspaces. We monitor criminal activity, traffic speeds, trash and other issues that might put our neighborhood at risk. We support Coit School and other area schools.

Green
We believe that a green neighborhood has usable parks, opportunities for alternative energy sources and is energy efficient. We encourage walk-to-work opportunities and embrace a “village” concept that includes mixed-use opportunities. Our neighborhood is connected to the larger city by stairs, sidewalks, transit, bike lanes, alleys and streets.

Housing Stock
We are committed to Belknap Lookout being a residential neighborhood. We value the diversity of our neighborhood and are committed to maintaining a balance of rental, owner, low-income and mid/upper-income housing opportunities. We recognize the need to provide a broad range of housing types and price points to serve a variety of households (families, students, seniors, etc.).

Neighborhood Character
We value the characteristics that comprise our neighborhood: a pattern of small blocks, alleys and connected streets; pedestrian-scaled buildings made with quality materials; front doors and windows that face the street; parking areas located behind structures and varied building types and styles on the same block.

Quality
We believe that quality maintenance and design of private development makes a difference in the character of our neighborhood. We support change that honors the historical context, compatibility, authenticity and scale of existing structures within Belknap Lookout. We support efforts that will improve homeownership, tenant quality, public infrastructure, safety and neighborhood cleanliness.

Neighborhood Goals

Housing

a. Encourage housing reinvestment, renovation and new construction on vacant or blighted properties in a manner that strengthens the quality and character of the neighborhood.
b. Encourage the availability of housing at varying occupancy opportunities and price points (e.g., owner-occupied, rental, special needs populations, low- moderate- and upper-income households) to meet the diverse needs of existing residents and to attract new residents to the neighborhood.
c. Provide a variety of housing choices, for example, small-lot single family housing, upper story residences above mixed-use commercial, live-work units, apartments and rowhouses to allow residents the opportunity to progress through various lifecycle stages while being able to remain in the neighborhood.
d. Use principles of accessibility and Universal Design in building construction so that aging residents and persons with disabilities are able to live here.
e. Recognize that some incremental density increases may be needed to improve the feasibility of new investment or to provide affordable housing choices.
f. Ensure that adequate greenspace and parking is available, either on- or off-site, within the neighborhood.
g. Discourage the conversion of single-family homes to multifamily use.
h. Encourage the preservation and reuse of historically and architecturally significant structures either on-site or by moving the structures to a new location within the neighborhood.
i. Encourage area businesses and institutions to develop/participate in employer-assisted home ownership programs.
j. Advocate for a relocation plan that provides housing choice and opportunity to tenants who may be displaced by change.
k. Educate homeowners on State of Michigan tax rules regarding the Homestead Property Tax Exemption program and Mathieu-Gast Home Improvement Act.

Mixed-Use

a. New commercial development should create a “mini-village” that is retail in nature, small in scale and able to provide needed services to the neighborhood; such as a coffee shop or flower shop.
b. Commercial and office uses that do not compliment the residential character of the neighborhood or serve surrounding residences should not be permitted.
c. Locate higher-intensity mixed-use development on Lafayette in the existing commercial and industrial area near the railroad tracks; promote redevelopment in this location.
d. Consider mixed-use opportunities in measured amounts based upon local demand, parking availability and compatibility with adjacent structures.
e. Locate retail commercial with higher-density residential development adjacent to and/or within walking distance of existing and planned transit stops.
f. Orient mixed-use commercial areas in transitional areas along higher v volume streets and where sufficient parking is provided.
g. Locate higher intensity uses and densities at the center of new development.

Parking

a. Use alleyways to access on-site parking.
b. Place parking areas behind or adjacent to main structures so as to be hidden from the street; garage doors should not face the primary street frontage.
c. Provide sufficient off-street parking for new development wherever feasible.
d. Promote alternatives to vehicular use to reduce parking demand, such as walk to work programs and transit use.

Maintenance

a. Educate property owners on the importance of maintaining structures and property so that the neighborhood is clean.
b. Organize neighborhood clean-up days in partnership with the city’s Streets and Sanitation Department to reduce neighborhood trash on private property and alleyways.
c. Collaborate with the City’s Code Compliance Officers to encourage code compliance on housing, nuisance and zoning issues.
d. Coordinate with the city’s Neighborhood Improvement and Community Development Department on low interest maintenance and repair loans for housing rehabilitation.
e. Work with landlords to improve the maintenance and management of existing rental property.
f. Involve both landlords and tenants in improving rental housing quality.

Choice

a. Encourage a mix of affordable, mid-price and upper-end housing choices to attract a broad range of people into the neighborhood and avoid the displacement of existing residents.
b. Maintain a share of the neighborhood's housing as rental to provide for entry opportunities into the neighborhood.
c. Promote a diversity of housing types and price points within a single development project.

Investment

a. Support new development that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.
b. Support coordinated and targeted public, private and non-profit neighborhood revitalization efforts for maximum impact.
c. Use public and private investments strategically to promote neighborhood stabilization.

Infrastructure

a. Coordinate public infrastructure improvements with new development projects.
b. Continue to partner with the City of Grand Rapids and the State of Michigan to improve neighborhood bridges (Coit/Lafayette/College), stairs, streets, parkways, and utilities.
c. Improve the tree canopy of the neighborhood by reviewing potential locations for new trees, identifying maintenance issues and collaborating with the West Michigan Environmental Council (WMEAC) on an education campaign.

Collaboration

a. Support an active neighborhood association, as well as collaborative efforts with faith-based and non-profit organizations.
b. Work with Spectrum Health, Grand Valley State University and other institutions to provide services and resources to the neighborhood.
c. Coordinate with the City of Grand Rapids and MDOT on infrastructure improvement projects to ensure that public investments satisfy neighborhood goals.
d. Partner with The Rapid (transit) on location decisions for bus stops, station stops and transit routes for existing and future technologies, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and the proposed trolley.

Design

a. Incorporate sustainable development practices in existing development and new construction; such as building orientation for solar heat gain, energy efficient appliances, insulation, recycling, rain gardens and wind/ solar power.
b. Design new development projects, and the renovation of existing buildings, with reference to the surrounding built context.
c. Allow incremental transitions in housing density to maximize compatibility with existing neighborhood edges.
d. Blend the visual appearance of medium, medium-high and high-density residential development; step down building height where abutting existing structures would be impacted.
e. Maintain the existing grid pattern of existing streets and alleyways.
f. Achieve compatibility in areas of change by reflecting the positive design elements that give Belknap Lookout its special character such as building scale, placement and orientation; and the repeated use of similar design details such as building materials and the patterns of windows and doors.
g. Create incremental transitions in use intensity and building scale; where this is not possible the use of landscape buffers should be implemented.
h. Reduce air and light pollution by controlling light sources and improving the neighborhood tree canopy.

School Achievement

a. Capitalize on the potential of Coit School and other surrounding schools to serve as points of delivery for a range of family support and youth development services.
b. Develop partnerships between Grand Rapids Public Schools, Neighbors of Belknap Lookout, area business organizations and institutions of higher learning and health to enhance the quality of facilities and equipment and improve educational outcomes for all students.

Safety

a. Support the Neighbors of Belknap Lookout neighborhood association, effective community policing and neighborhood watch programs to ensure neighborhood safety.
b. Secure abandoned buildings; hold owners accountable for, and assist where appropriate in, their timely rehabilitation and re-use (or demolition).
c. Follow the principles (territoriality, surveillance and access control) of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to encourage the design of safer built environments.
d. Light streets and alleyways.

Parks

a. Enhance the parks, playgrounds, and other public lands to create safe and attractive gathering places.
b. Maintain City-school partnerships to provide neighborhood park and open space opportunities.
c. Design parks to optimize diverse use in response to neighborhood needs and preferences, including the potential for a neighborhood dog park.

Transit

a. Locate higher density housing on or within walking distance of transit routes.
b. Encourage transit-supportive development densities.
c. Ensure that major employment and activity centers are well served by transit.
d. Encourage the placement of buildings and the design of parking to facilitate access to transit stops.
e. Include transit-related improvements in the planning and design of street improvement projects.
f. Ensure that transit is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Walkable Streets

a. Encourage the development of more walkable streets by:
    - Cooperating in planting and maintaining street trees
    - Requiring safe and attractive sidewalk paving
    - Creating well-defined cross walks
    - Promoting the placement of buildings close to the sidewalk with entries, windows and storefronts oriented to the street.
b. Improve and rehabilitate neighborhood stairways, including the Newberry and Bradford stairs.
c. Identify important neighborhood gateways corridors (Coit/Hastings and Lafayette/Hastings); provide streetscape improvements to create a positive image for the neighborhood and attract re-investment.
d. Seek opportunities for improving pedestrian and bicycle access as highway improvements are planned.
e. Restore and maintain existing cobblestone streets; capitalize on their historic value to enhance neighborhood identity.
f. Increase the availability of pedestrian amenities such as lighting, landscaping and benches in the neighborhood.

Description of Plan

The Belknap Neighborhood Area Specific Plan (ASP Map) is divided into context districts which describe physical attributes within each color coordinated zone. These attributes, which are intended to reinforce and strengthen neighborhood character, are primarily conveyed through building typologies. Each district has specific building types assigned to it, which address scale, massing and building form. This deviation from a standard land-use map is the result of neighborhood input which universally desired maintaining the neighborhood character and in most cases concerned itself with "what the neighborhood looked like" rather than how many units were on a specific parcel or what kind of use was in a specific building. While the ASP Map generally utilizes a form-based approach to the various districts, it certainly does not intend that use requirements be completely removed from the districts and strongly recommends that use remain as a defining attribute of each district.

The ASP Map also envisions no modifications to the existing street or alley network, which contributes to maintaining a block structure that reinforces a compact and walkable urban fabric while also preserving the residential scale of the neighborhood.

In diagram form, the ASP Map defines the most intense context district, Belknap Neighborhood Center (Belknap NC), shown in dark purple, in the center of the neighborhood, so that it is accessible for a majority of the neighbors as well as to anyone using the central arterial, Lafayette Avenue. This district allows for all building types to occur at a forty-five foot height limitation with the intent that flexibility will allow for true mixed-use retail to occur where it will be most successful and not at a prescribed location.

The neighborhood is bracketed on the south by the next lower intensity context district, Belknap Neighborhood Transitional (Belknap NT), shown in light purple. This district, while similar to the Belknap NC, maintains a lower height for all buildings at a thirty-five foot maximum, with the intent to allow a diverse and flexible development pattern to occur along the neighborhood edge, transitioning from the highway and the intense medical presence on Michigan Street to a calmer more residentially-scaled neighborhood to the north. The Belknap NT also pushes east to College Avenue, where an anticipated high volume of traffic will provide opportunities for an eastern gateway into the community. This transition zone is a buffer to development patterns currently adjacent to Belknap and allows for these development patterns to gradually transition into the neighborhood.
ienvelope. This district lends itself to be closer in appearance to the Belknap TR district, while allowing slightly more intensive retail activities to occur in special circumstances and building forms.

These two mixed-use districts (Belknap NC and Belknap NT), while establishing a mixed-use pattern as a baseline; do not necessarily mandate that mixed-use retail buildings or activities fill the entire district or corridor. Rather these districts incorporate the entire range of building typologies, including all the residential building types, with the intent to allow the most flexibility for the creation of retail nodes where the market is most able to accommodate them. It is the inherent intent of these two districts to create a pattern that is economically feasible and consistent with the established goals of the neighborhood.

The bulk of the remaining neighborhood is primarily composed of two residentially calibrated context districts, in order for the neighborhood to maintain its overall scale, intensity and character. These two districts fill the remaining core of the neighborhood and provide a context and pattern which establishes the overall vision for the neighborhood. The Belknap Mixed Housing District (Belknap MH) shown in orange, allows for a variety of residential building types ranging from detached houses to rowhouses and apartment buildings, all maintaining a maximum overall height of thirty-five feet. This district acts as a transition to the northern edge of the neighborhood along the Lafayette Avenue corridor to Leonard Street. It also offers a transition to the less intense residential districts to the east at College Avenue.

The core of the Belknap MH occurs in the area just south of the neighborhood center, starting at Fairbanks Street and abutting the transitional zone to the south. This district also extends uniformly from Prospect Avenue west to Coit Avenue to provide multiple housing opportunities adjacent to the more intense districts flanking it to the north and south. Various other pockets of the Belknap MH occur throughout the neighborhood fabric, most notably at and around Newberry Place, directly north of Coit School, along the edge of Hastings from Livingston to Fairview and at two areas flanking the Fairbanks and Fairview intersection. All of these locations were thoroughly vetted during the extensive visioning process and are further discussed in the rationale portion of this narrative.

The other residential context district is the Belknap Traditional Family Housing (Belknap TR), shown in yellow. This district represents a majority of the western hill of Fairview, where insightful neighbors felt the best opportunities existed to maintain the character and scale of the neighborhood. It also defines the area directly west of the neighborhood center, extending all the way to Coit Park. The Belknap TR in this area essentially runs from the overlook to the neighborhood center and includes Coit Park, which will allow the single family character of the neighborhood to coalesce into a quiet and walkable family friendly urban fabric. The Belknap TR also picks back up on the east side of the neighborhood center and extends to the outer boundaries of the neighborhood along the northeast edge. This district when taken in full, represents the largest area of the ASP Map, and maintains the residential scale and character so desired by the residents.
circumstances and building forms.

Finally, as part of the numerous public input sessions and meetings conducted during this process, it became apparent that the corner of Hastings and Coit was a special circumstance – a place where the context created by the Belknap NC, the Belknap NT and the Belknap MH Districts was too intense and the character of the Belknap TR District was too residentially scaled. It was also apparent that this important corner needed to maintain a certain level of flexibility while it goes through any future changes, and as such, a special context district was created in order to provide it with its own unique development pattern. The Belknap Cottage Retail District (Belknap CR), shown in pink, was created to help define this intersection. The Belknap CR is unique to only this area and essentially provides a significantly less intense district configuration than the Belknap NC, NT, or MH districts, with mixed-use still appropriate, but in a more residentially-scaled building envelope. This district lends itself to be closer in appearance to the Belknap TR district, while allowing slightly more intensive retail activities to occur in special circumstances and building forms.

Master Plan

The Belknap Area Specific Plan and the Grand Rapids Master Plan

Grand Rapids Master Plan

The City of Grand Rapids Master Plan, created in 2002, is a citizen driven document which goes beyond city-wide policies for land use to make quality and character of development a major planning consideration. Like the Master Plan, this Belknap Area Specific Plan makes quality and character of the neighborhood development pattern the cornerstone of its vision.

It is important to recognize that the current zoning ordinance establishes a majority of the Belknap Neighborhood as Traditional Low Density Residential and that the Future Land Use Plan of the City Master Plan establishes the entire neighborhood as Medium Density Residential. It is clear that the neighborhood is not wholly represented by either of these designations and as a result, the ASP refines the Future Land Use Map of the Master Plan while taking into consideration the current zoning and the neighbors' vision for Belknap.

It is the intent of the Belknap ASP, while making these necessary refinements, to remain consistent with the intent of the Grand Rapids Master Plan. The City of Grand Rapids Master Plan and the Belknap ASP contain many elements which are central and consistent, these are as follows:

Choice: It is the intent of the Belknap ASP to honor diversity by providing choices in housing, shopping, job opportunities and recreational and cultural offerings.

Economic Health: It is the intent of the Belknap ASP to provide economic and development opportunities throughout the neighborhood, which will foster not only neighborhood vitality and health, but also city-wide economic stability.

Balance: The Belknap ASP successfully balances the importance of economic growth with neighborhood preservation by carefully weaving together the flexible districts which, while allowing for context-sensitive redevelopment, also embrace rehabilitation of existing neighborhood fabric.

Quality: The neighborhood, throughout the entire ASP process maintained a strong desire to support design approaches that honor context, compatibility, authenticity and human scale. The Belknap ASP achieves and reinforces these goals of design quality through a unique building typology calibration rather than by trying to achieve them exclusively through land use or density regulations.

Access: The Belknap ASP is committed to creating and reinforcing a pedestrian-friendly pattern that is enhanced by a balanced transit and transportation system which provides connections within the neighborhood.

Sustainability: The Belknap ASP achieves and reinforces sustainability at many levels including the neighborhood's desire to keep intact the existing block structure while encouraging rehabilitation of existing housing stock. In addition, the ASP maintains all of the neighborhood's park land which is one of the premier attributes of Belknap.

While maintaining consistency with these guiding principles, the Belknap ASP additionally reinforces other features of the Grand Rapids Master Plan which include:

Great Neighborhoods: The Belknap ASP embraces the notion that great neighborhoods are the foundation of a great city and that the physical quality of the neighborhood, represented by the housing stock, the shopping district, the streets and the open spaces is central to this greatness.

Vital Business Districts: The Belknap ASP recognizes that a great neighborhood is reinforced by successful business districts, which complement the neighborhood. The neighborhood vision clearly desires business districts which are flexible through their location and building type.

Rationale

While a majority of the urban planning decisions regarding district formation and placement are consistent with the City of Grand Rapids Master Plan, there are a few instances that, due to many factors, deviate from the prescribed Master Plan vision. These planning decisions, while not completely consistent with the Master Plan, do follow fundamental urban design practices, adhere to the goals of creating great neighborhoods and most importantly are the result of consistent and focused public input from the neighborhood.

These slight deviations, which ultimately make the neighborhood far more unique and much less "cookie-cutter" in appearance, require a more descriptive rationale of how and why they were arrived at.

South of Fairbanks and west of Lafayette:

The area is indicated as Belknap MH (orange) on the ASP Map, which allows for a wide variety of residential housing and ultimately a great deal of choice for housing opportunities within the neighborhood. The decision to designate Belknap MH at this location is the result of many factors, including the condition of the existing housing stock, the potential for redevelopment of the existing fabric, the surrounding districts to the north and south, and the opportunity to provide flexible living arrangements and more housing opportunities close to Coit Elementary. A vast majority of neighborhood input indicated that the homes in this area are less likely to be preserved and rehabilitated to single-family owner occupied residences due to both their condition and their ownership.

Belknap MH on North and South edges of Coit Park (and not on East and West edges):
Obviously the area to the north (Newberry Place) is a new development with characteristics similar to Belknap MH (orange) which is almost universally embraced by the neighborhood as an asset. This district was slightly expanded adjacent to the open space to the north to allow for this block to maintain a consistent context. The area to the south of Coit Park was also determined to be a place where more intense residentially-scaled development could occur because of housing stock, ownership status and its adjacency to the Belknap MH to the east.

While the neighborhood embraced the notion of Belknap MH on the North and South edges of the park, it also almost universally wanted to maintain a single-family context (Belknap TR – yellow) on the East and West edges. This was primarily due to the neighborhood's perception that the housing stock on these two edges was optimal for both rehabilitation (because of its condition) and for conversion to single-family use (because of its quality). While typically urban planning principals suggest that higher density residential should surround open spaces such as parks, there are certainly examples of single and two-family homes framing parks throughout the nation, including both historic and new urban examples. These include new urban communities such as Kentlands, Celebration and the New Town of St. Charles as well as historic places such as Pasadena, California; Lancaster, Pennsylvania; and Mariemont, Ohio. This plan ultimately represents a mix of both theories, and the resulting two areas provide a balance around the Coit Park area for both traditional family housing and more intensive multi-family housing, which will allow for more opportunities and more flexibility.

Mixed-Use designation along Hastings:
The area of Hastings, from College Avenue to Clancy Avenue is designated as Belknap NT on the ASP Map. This context district allows for a variety of building types to occur, ranging from single family homes, rowhouses, apartments and mixed-use buildings. This stretch of the neighborhood, which is approximately a quarter-mile long, is indicated as a mixed-use district on the map. This designation is intended to allow the most flexibility for this neighborhood edge along the highway. While it is completely possible that at some future point, this district will essentially be a "commercial corridor" rather than a node, it is also possible that the flexible nature of the district will allow nodes to develop on their own – at locations where the market deems them financially possible, rather than at locations pre-ordained by planning and visioning. The very nature of the district, with its myriad of building types allows for a flexible (and forgiving) development pattern, which is anticipated to create nodal development - similar to Wealthy Street - as it ebb and flows from commercial street-car nodes to single-family homes.

Fairview Avenue:
The Fairview Avenue area, encompassing the blocks from the hill to Livingston Avenue and extending from just north of Hastings to the large open space to the north, is recognized by many in the neighborhood as an exceptional example of the residential character of Belknap. The residential fabric in this general area is perceived to be quite good and it is a general consensus amongst the stakeholders that this is where the best opportunities exist for rehabilitation and home-ownership to firmly establish itself. This is the rationale as to why a majority of this area is coded as Belknap TR (yellow), with a clear emphasis on rehabilitation rather than wholesale redevelopment.

It is also believed that in this area there are certain specific segments, which while similar to the adjacent building stock, are less integral to the overall concept of rehabilitation in the form of single-family owner occupied structures. This is apparent in the building stock and condition of select existing buildings clustered to the west of Fairview at Fairbanks. These buildings represent many structures which have been unsympathetically altered into multi-family dwelling units through decades of remodels. In addition to these often times ill-conceived remodels, the original structures are built in a fashion consistent more with shorter-life workforce housing than with the larger more elegant single-family homes adjacent to them. In short, the condition of this cluster of homes leads many neighbors to believe that they are beyond rehabilitation as envisioned for this stretch of the neighborhood.

Additionally the nature in which these homes and their lots were platted give rise to a hodge-podge arrangement of access drives, land-locked lots and difficult access conditions for essential services. This placement and the structures' condition led the neighborhood and consultant team to envision them in a different way, ultimately planning for more diverse housing opportunities within the detached single-family fabric. This will not only provide a mix of housing choices but will also provide a place for context sensitive infill to occur in a way that will least negatively impact the adjacent fabric. It is for these reasons that this cluster was coded as Belknap MH (orange).

Context Districts

Belknap Neighborhood ASP Context Districts

In an effort to meet the future needs of the Belknap Neighborhood, while also maintaining the neighborhood's unique character, enhancing its walkable scale and reinforcing its sense of place, five Context Districts have been developed. These Context Districts are intended to guide development through building form and character, while still adhering to the use requirements prescribed within the City Zoning Ordinance. Specific Building Types are allowed within each district, ultimately fostering a unique range of intensity, character and development opportunities throughout the neighborhood. Building type requirements are supplemented by height guidelines to maintain overall neighborhood scale. These Context Districts are described below beginning with the least intense (Belknap TR).

BELKNAP TR: Traditional Family Housing

This district is composed of primarily residentially scaled detached housing in the form of Single-Family, Duplex (two-family) and Triplex (three-family) Building Types. The underlying intent of this district is to maintain the overall scale and character of the residential fabric of the neighborhood, while encouraging the rehabilitation of existing structures. New infill construction is required to be compatible with surrounding buildings in terms of height, form, size, scale, massing, proportions and roof shape. Infill buildings shall not exceed 35 feet in height.

BELKNAP MH: Mixed Housing

This district is composed of diverse housing opportunities to meet a wide range of individual and income needs, while still maintaining a residentially scaled pattern of development. Belknap MH allows all of the building types that are allowed in Belknap TR in addition to the Rowhouse, Apartment House and Center Hall Apartment Building Types. The underlying intent of this district is to provide housing opportunities which address changing needs and different life stages while promoting neighborhood diversity. Infill buildings shall not exceed 35 feet in height. This district draws inspiration from the Fairmount Square townhouses and the Wealthy Street and Morris Avenue area.

BELKNAP CR: Cottage Retail

This district is intended to act as a residential gateway to the neighborhood, while also allowing opportunity for sensitively scaled retail activities. The district balances the future need for retail and the desire for a residentially scaled development pattern by introducing the Cottage Retail Building Type. In addition to the Cottage Retail Building, Belknap CR allows Single-Family, Duplex (two-family) and Triplex (three-family) Building Types, which will foster a variety of development opportunities while also maintaining the residential gateway qualities desired by the neighborhood. The Cottage Retail Building Type is a mixed-use building which follows residential patterns by incorporating a raised ground floor with front door access via a porch or stoop. The building type also typically incorporates a pitched roof and front windows which are proportioned and patterned similar to a single-family home. Often times, these front windows may include larger storefront or shopfront type windows for retail display. Infill buildings shall not exceed 35 feet in height. This district draws inspiration from the south side of Wealthy Street in Gaslight Village.

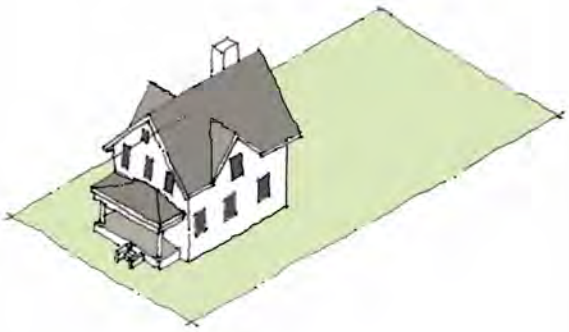
BELKNAP NT: Neighborhood Transitional

This district is intended to serve as a visible entrance for the neighborhood, while also providing strong connections to the large medical community and adjacent highway. Belknap NT allows all of the building types that are allowed in Belknap CR in addition to the Mixed-Use Building Type. The underlying intent of this district is to act as a transition between adjacent uses and fabric in terms of scale, noise, intensity and density. Infill buildings shall not exceed 35 feet in height. This district draws inspiration from the Cherry Street and College Avenue area as well as the East Fulton and Prospect Avenue area.

BELKNAP NC: Neighborhood Center

This district consists of the highest intensity of development which provides basic services and flexible living options to meet the existing and future needs of the neighborhood. The district allows the same building types as Belknap NT, but allows for an increase in building height which fosters more development opportunity and increases the potential for diversity and enhanced walkablity. The underlying intent of the district is to create a unique, walkable neighborhood center that reinforces a sense of place and allows for people throughout the neighborhood (and Grand Rapids) to dine, shop, work and enjoy unique district amenities. This district is supported by pedestrian activity from the surrounding neighborhood as well as high vehicular traffic counts and direct access to public transit. Infill buildings shall not exceed 45 feet in height. The district draws inspiration from other traditional business districts within the city, including Wealthy Street, Easttown and the Martha's Vineyard building.

SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE BUILDING TYPE

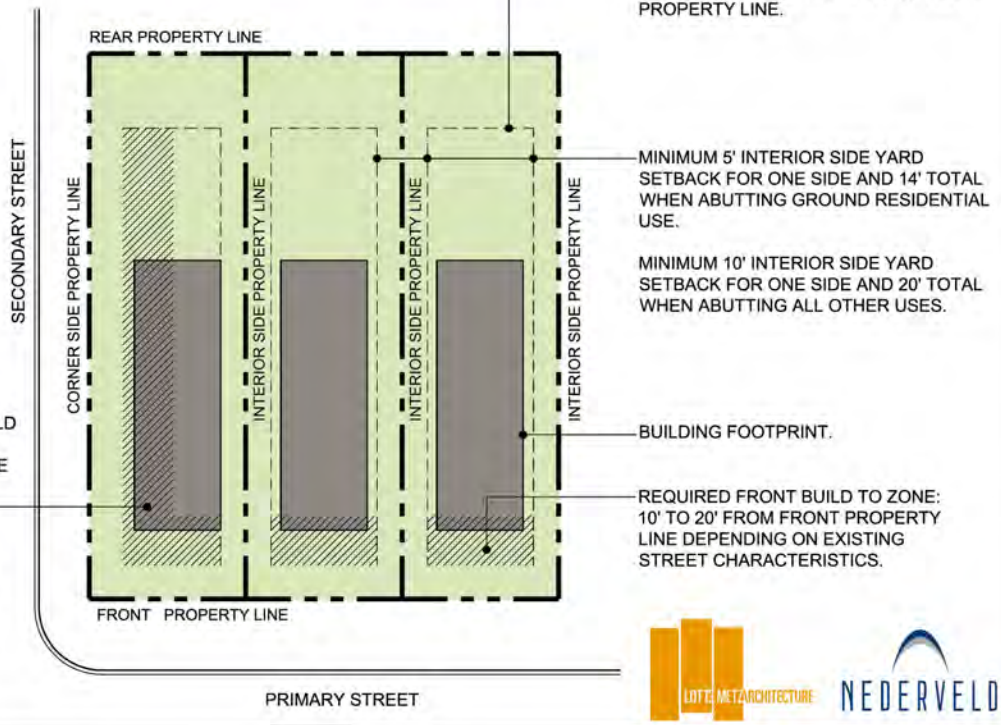


A single-family detached house on its own lot, with parking typically accommodated with a detached or attached garage located to the rear of the lot.

Typical lot sizes are 30' to 70' wide by 90' to 150' deep.

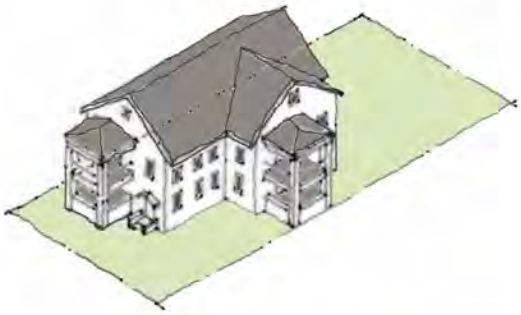
BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

- BELKNAP TR
- BELKNAP MH
- BELKNAP CR
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC



SITE DISPOSITION

DUPLEX / TRIPLEX BUILDING TYPE

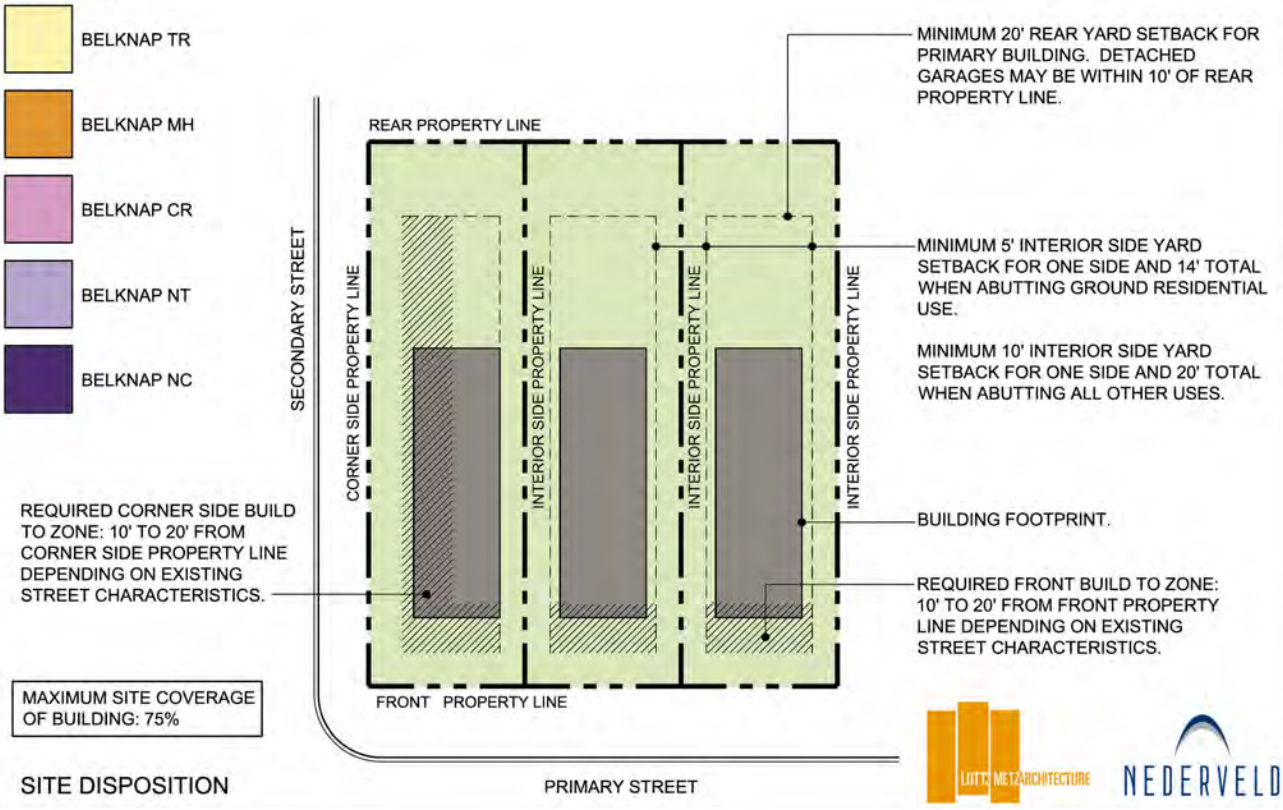


A building type with two or three single-family homes attached side by side or as a flat over flat configuration. Garages are located in the rear of the building and accessed from an alley or parking court. Garages may be detached or attached. This building type typically is consistent and compatible with the massing, scale and composition of large single-family homes.

Typical lot sizes are 40' to 70' wide by 60' to 120' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

- BELKNAP TR
- BELKNAP MH
- BELKNAP CR
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC



SITE DISPOSITION

LUTTY METZ ARCHITECTURE

NEDERVELD

ROWHOUSE BUILDING TYPE

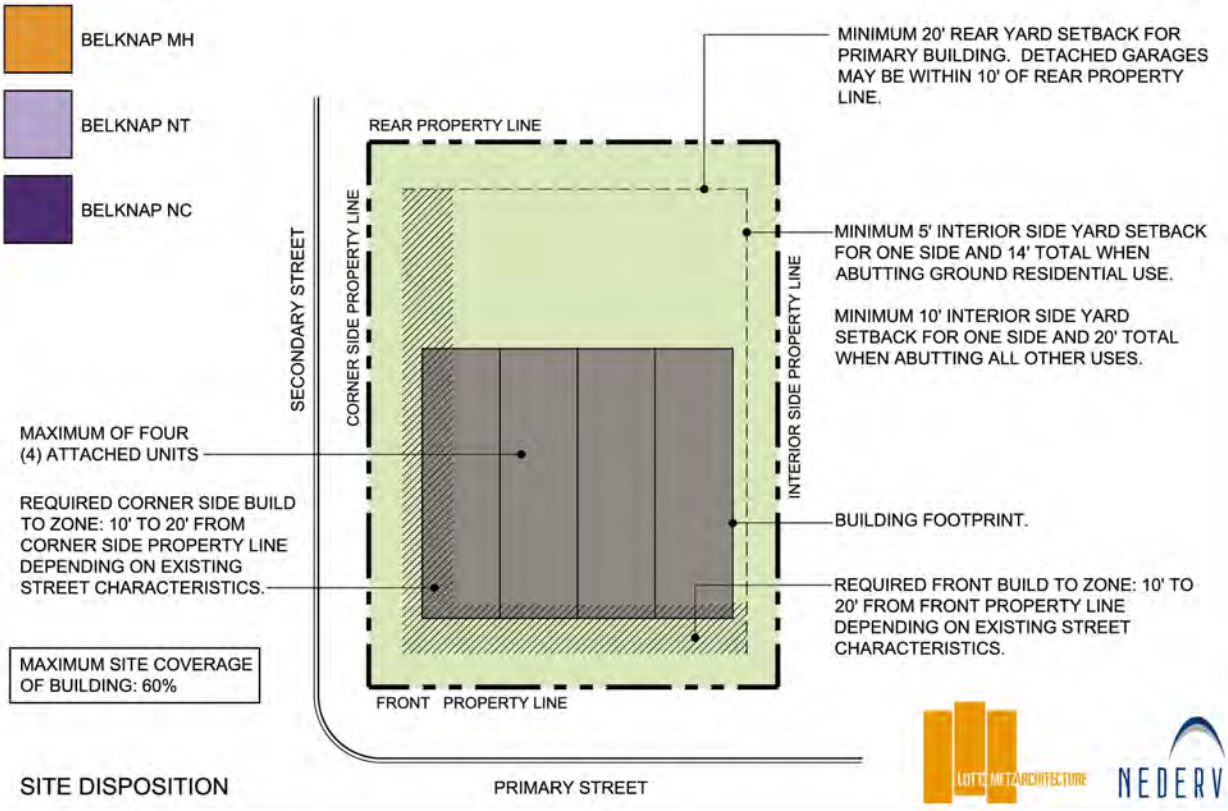
A building type which attaches multiple units of narrow, vertically oriented residential units together. Garages are in the rear of the lot and accessed from an alley or parking court. Garages may be either detached or attached. The Rowhouse Building Type conforms to the patterns of the street and typically has a shallow front yard setback or build to zone.

Maximum of four attached residential units are permitted.

Typical lot sizes are 16' to 30' wide by 60' to 120' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

- BELKNAP MH
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC

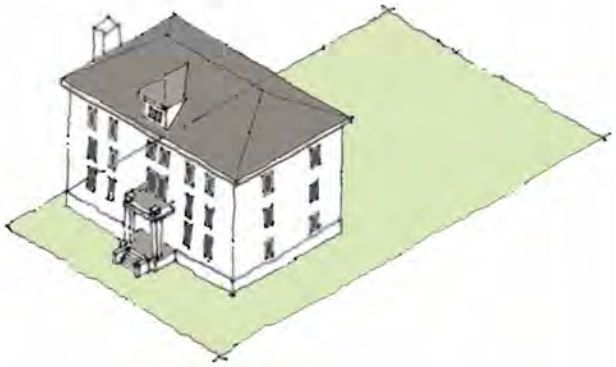


SITE DISPOSITION

LOTUS METZ ARCHITECTURE

NEDERVELD

APARTMENT HOUSE BUILDING TYPE

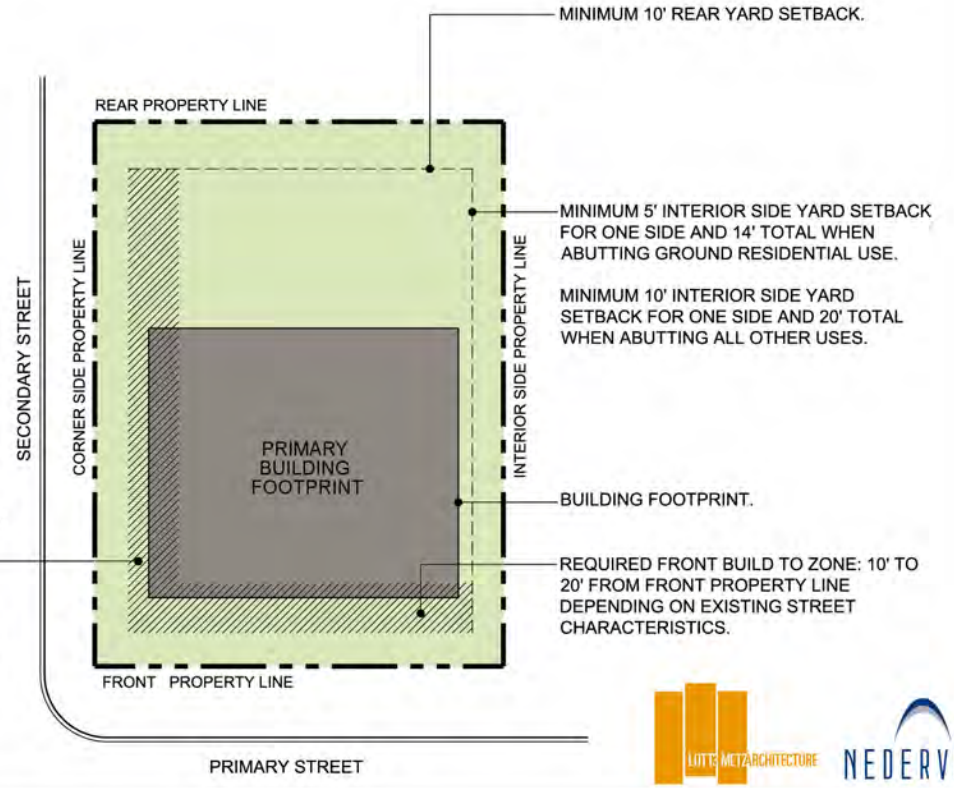


A residential building with size regulated according to that which can accommodate its parking need. The street facade typically resembles a large detached house, which can fit into the context of surrounding single family homes - particularly on corner sites. Parking shall be screened from the public realm.

Typical lot sizes are 50' to 80' wide by 90' to 120' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

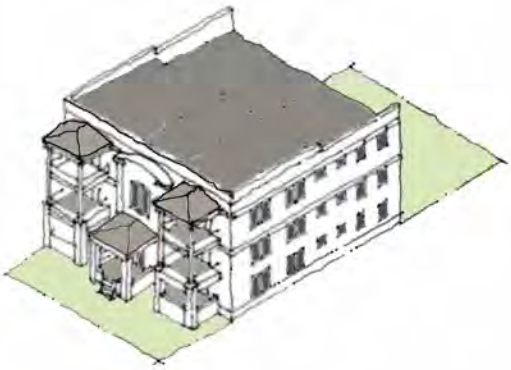
- BELKNAP MH
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC



SITE DISPOSITION

LUTTS MEYARCHITECTURE NEDERVELD

CENTER HALL APARTMENT BUILDING TYPE

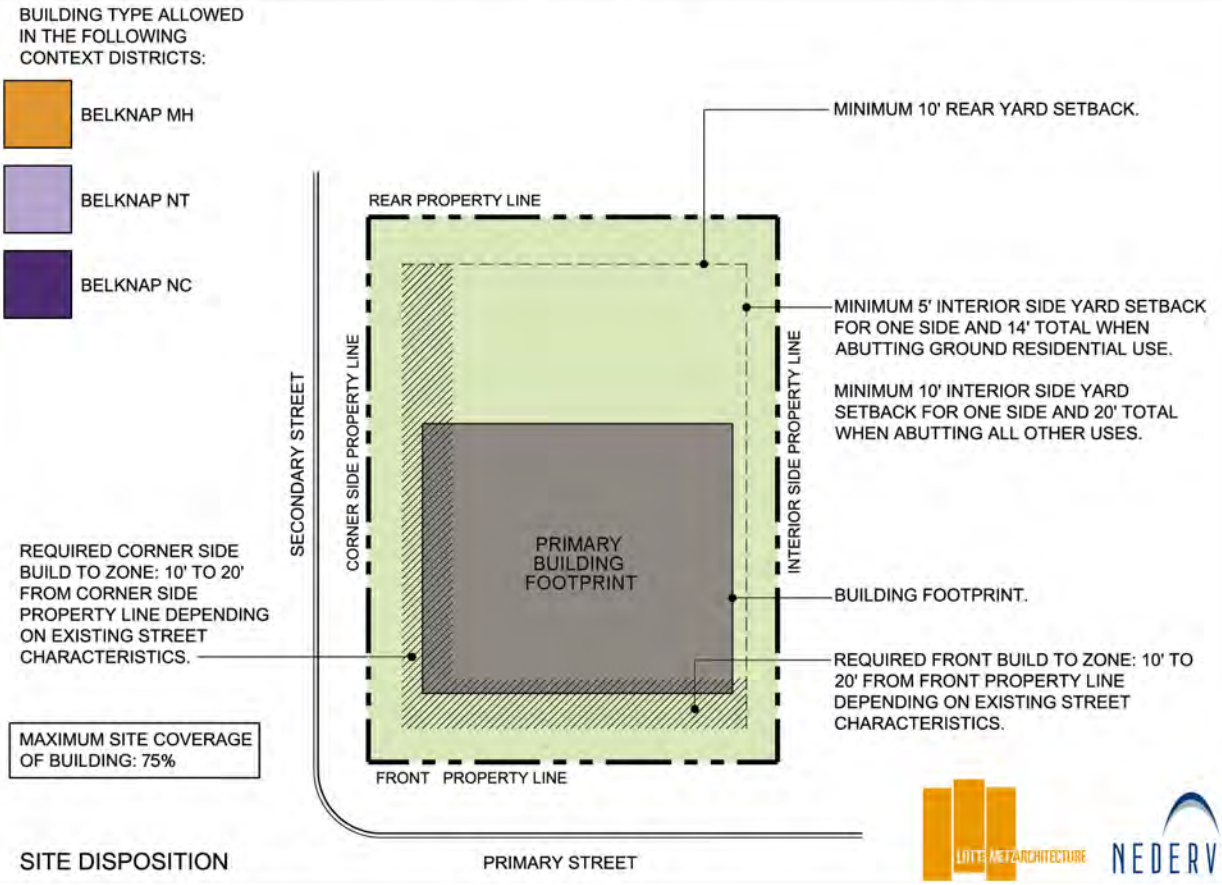


A residential building with size regulated to that which can accommodate its parking need. The street facade may resemble a large detached house or any variety of traditional apartment typologies. The Center Hall Apartment Type is typically accommodated on corners of residential districts. This type has a center hall with a main entry door. Parking shall be screened from the public realm.

Typical lot sizes are 50' to 80' wide by 90' to 120' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

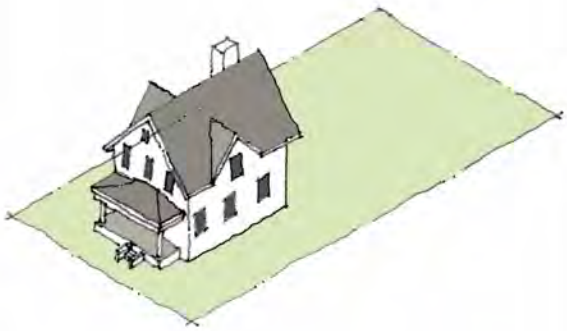
- BELKNAP MH
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC



SITE DISPOSITION

LOTTE METZ ARCHITECTURE NEDERVELD

COTTAGE RETAIL BUILDING TYPE

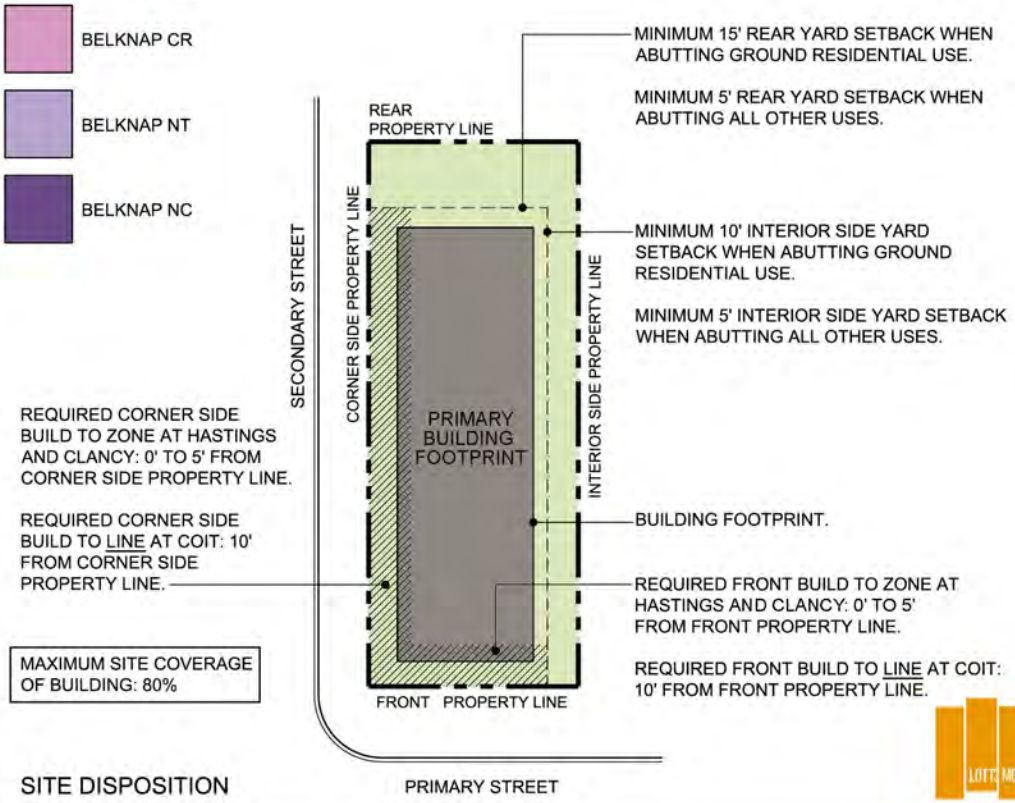


A mixed-use building which is typically represented in the form of a free-standing building. The Cottage Retail Building Type is consistent in mass, scale and composition to a single family home. Front yard setbacks / build to zones are similar to single family home setbacks and build to zones and are dependant on existing street characteristics. Parking shall be screened from the public realm.

Typical lot sizes are 20' to 70' wide by 90' to 150' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

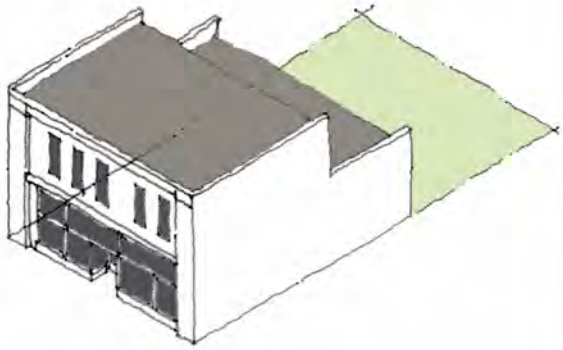
- BELKNAP CR
- BELKNAP NT
- BELKNAP NC



SITE DISPOSITION

LOTT | METZ ARCHITECTURE NEDERVELD

MIXED-USE BUILDING TYPE



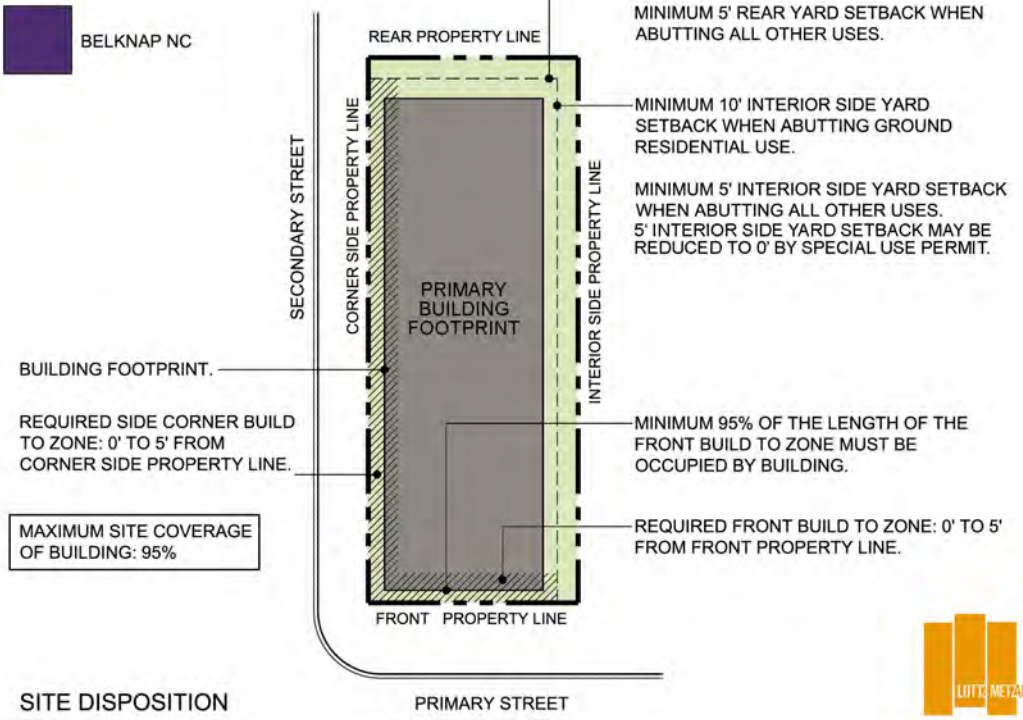
A pedestrian oriented building with retail on the street level and residential or office uses on the upper floor(s). A Mixed-Use Building Type is at least two stories, with parking integral to the building or in an open lot to the rear. Mixed-Use Building Types typically have shallow build-to zones at the street frontage. Parking shall be screened from the public realm.

Typical lot sizes are 30' to 120' wide by 40' to 150' deep.

BUILDING TYPE ALLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING CONTEXT DISTRICTS:

BELKNAP NT

BELKNAP NC

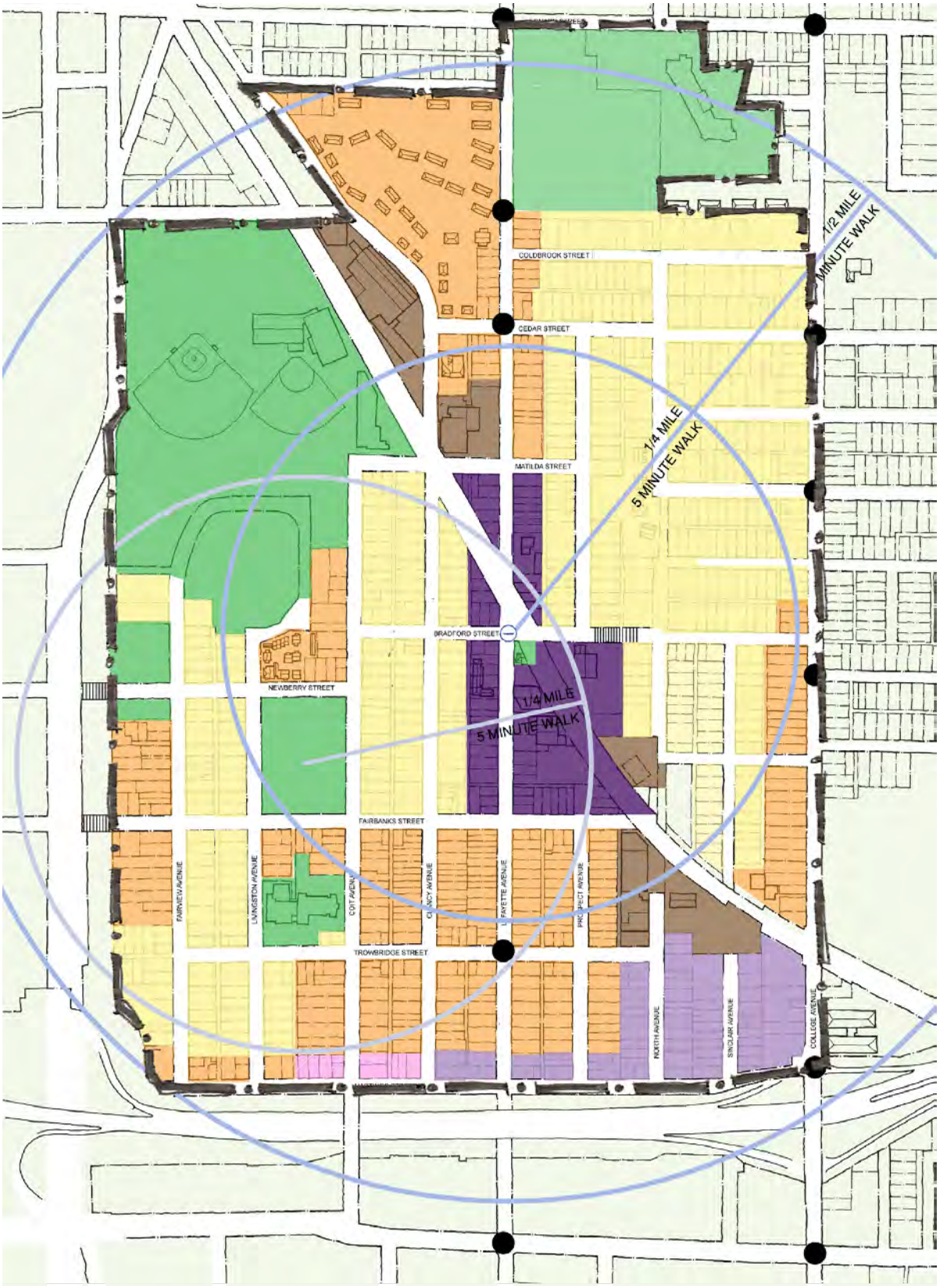


SITE DISPOSITION

BELKNAP AREA SPECIFIC PLAN
CONTEXT DISTRICT SUMMARY

	BELKNAP TR Traditional Family Housing	BELKNAP MH Mixed Housing District	BELKNAP CR Cottage Retail District	BELKNAP NT Neighborhood Transitional	BELNAP NC Neighborhood Center District
BUILDING TYPE					
Single-Family House	■■■	■■■	■■■	■■■	■■■
Duplex / Triplex	■■■	■■■	■■■	■■■	■■■
Rowhouse		■■■		■■■	■■■
Apartment House		■■■		■■■	■■■
Apartment Center Hall		■■■		■■■	■■■
Cottage Retail Building			■■■	■■■	■■■
Mixed-Use Building				■■■	■■■
BUILDING HEIGHT (max.)	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	45 feet

■■■ Denotes that Building Type is permitted in District by right.
(Building Types not indicated as permitted by right are NOT allowed within the District.)



Belknap MH
Belknap TR
Outside ASP Boundary
Greenspace
Belknap CR
Belknap NT
Belknap NC
Industrial

Bus Stop
Proposed Bus Stop

Belknap Lookout Neighborhood ASP

Scheme F

September 3 2009

LOTT | METZ ARCHITECTURE

NEDERVELD

Appendices

Appendix I

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

LOTT3 METZ ARCHITECTURE, LLC
645 CHERRY SE GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
616 / 454-5175
616 / 454-5176
WWW.LOTT3METZ.COM

Belknap

Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting — Lott3Metz Project No. 124.09.01

Date Held: May 26, 2009

Those in Attendance:

Name:	Phone#:	E-mail:
Josh Beckett	862.4716	Josh-Beckett@Live.com
Brian Bremer	292.5392	
Kristi DeKraker	454.8413	nobl@choiceonemail.com
Elizabeth Zeller	456.3798	ezeller@grcity.us
Helen Lehman	361.7500	helen@newdevelopmentcorp.org
David Swartwout	916.3223	plan@planbelknap.org
Andy Guy	308-6250	andy@wondergem.com
Sharon Music	819.6748	sharonmusic@kentssn.org
Steve Faas	235.2195	steve.clancystreet@onecommail.com
Angel Gonzalez	308.6173	Angelg514@hotmail.com
Gretchen Warnimont		gretchenwarnimont@rocketmail.com

Old Business:

None Reported

New Business:

1.1 Introduction of consultants: Ted Lott - Lott3 Metz Architecture, Kathi Brown - Lott3 Metz Architecture, and Mark Miller - Nederveld. Consultants to re-evaluate past work to determine what is valuable for future use and provide schedule for further project development. Purpose of meeting to get committee members feedback and an understanding of the current situation before further work is started.

1.2 Mark Miller began the discussion by asking if the vision presented by the previous work remained relevant. Committee members agreed that there is valid information, such as the existing group visioning data and SWOT Analysis, which should be applied. Andy Guy clarified that the neighborhood visions and goals had been decided with the help of the City of Grand Rapids. Two points to further pursue are the correlation between the neighborhood vision with the final zoning map and also the use of information gathered from the discussion guide.

1.3 Committee members voiced concern over the lack of communication and education between the former project process and the neighbors. Steve Faas said the neighborhood

has become polarized on issues, such as density and change. Committee members agreed that neighbors need an explanation of process and reasoning behind decisions.

1.4 Ted Lott asked for input on commercial use within the neighborhood stating the boundaries of the study are important. Committee members suggested possible areas of interest for commercial zoning including existing commercial space along Lafayette and new development related to the Hastings corridor. Members agreed that Hastings is a critical piece for consideration. Further exploration is needed to determine which location for commercial is the most appropriate based on current and future changes to the area.

1.5 As a result of discussion, committee members agree that the map boundaries need to be expanded to include the Hastings/Railroad area. Angel Gonzalez requested that the committee gather relevant information from the City of Grand Rapids similar to what was shown for the initial area, including existing land use. Committee consensus is that existing information in hand is sufficient for work to continue. Angel expressed reservations about expanding the boundary.

1.6 Andy Guy asked about the potential for corridor improvement. In response, Ted Lott explained that it is much harder to achieve for commercial use. He went on to say it must be proven that there is a need and market, which makes density key. Mark Miller explained that commercial success is hard to guarantee by a use district. He further explained the importance of uses that can evolve as the market shifts, such as a live/work use. Committee members agreed that in order for commercial uses to succeed certain criteria are necessary, such as traffic density.

1.7 Helen Lehman stated that she is hesitant with too much flexibility within the plan. Ted Lott replied that there will need to be a balance between rigidity and flexibility which will be reached from the input of neighbors. He explained that the area specific plan will serve as a record for future discussions between neighbors and developers.

1.8 Andy Guy suggested that the neighborhood should reaffirm demolition standards. Elizabeth Zeller confirmed that the city does have general demolition standards. At which point it was decided that the neighborhood will use the City of Grand Rapids Demolition Standards as a starting point and basis for any further changes.

1.9 Angel Gonzalez asked if it will be possible to review development ideas before finalizing and submitting the area specific plan. David Swartwout stated that the area specific plan needs to be the priority at this point, but that it is important to incorporate ideas into the plan. It is decided that the consultants and selected committee members will meet on a more one-on-one basis with neighborhood stakeholders to gather input rather than involving the entire committee. Committee members agree it is important to see how stakeholder input mixes with the neighborhood vision.

1.10 Ted Lott discussed the project schedule. He explained that consultants will meet with stakeholders and after synthesizing the gathered information the committee will be given a few plans that reflect information gathered to that point. Committee members will share information with neighbors for feedback.

1.11 Committee members suggested a number of stakeholders to be invited for meetings, including: Artesian Group, Beckett, residents of the 500-700 blocks of Lafayette, Doctor Bob, Rob Wisniewski, Concept Design Group, L&L Party Store, and Jim Loft(sp?). Andy Guy to confirm list and aid in scheduling meetings with stakeholders and design team.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled as follows:

Thursday July 2, 2009. Time and location TBD.

LOTT3 METZ ARCHITECTURE, LLC
645 CHERRY SE GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
616 / 454-5175
616 / 454-5176
WWW.LOTT3METZ.COM

Belknap

Steering Committee Meeting #2 Lott3Metz Project No. 124.09.01

Date Held: July 2, 2009

Those in Attendance:

Name:	Phone#:	E-mail:
Elizabeth Zeller	456.3798	
Helen Lehman	361.7500	
Gretchen Warnimont	378.0969	
Ted Lott		
Marty Morgan	245.4965	mmorga84@yahoo.com
Kristi DeKraker	454.8413	nobl@choiceonemail.com
Josh Beckett	862.4716	josh-beckett@live.com
Andy Guy	308.6250	
Steve Faas	235.2195	
Angel Gonzalez	308.6173	
Rod Horlings	776.9955	
John Gaylord	949.7379	jmg52@ameritech.net
Brian Bremer	292.5392	

Old Business:

None Reported

New Business:

1.1 Andy Guy began the meeting by discussing the project budget and asking if the city had received all of the necessary paperwork to begin the payment process. Consultants and Kristi DeKraker agreed that all paperwork had been signed and turned into the city.

1.2 Ted Lott briefly described the stakeholder meetings. He specifically stated that the Lafayette Corridor group seemed to be only focused on their street and that they did not seem to have any major issues with the rest of the neighborhood. The consultants distributed the new 'use group' definitions. In the meantime, Ted Lott explained that after meeting with Stakeholders the consultants developed a new, unique set of use groups to specifically address the Belknap Neighborhood. He read through the definitions and explained that there are a series of pictures attached which relate to each use group. Gretchen Warnimont asked if there would be medical offices in houses – in response to the picture showing medical offices along Cherry St. The consultants replied that is a possibility. Mark Miller explained that the use districts are a 'vision' for the neighborhood which need to be further developed. Marty Morgan asked how they would be developed for zoning. Mark Miller replied that a possible overlay would be appropriate.

1.3 Steering Committee members agreed that 'traditional housing' in Belknap is not just 1-2 family housing. Ted Lott replied that committee members should focus on size, setbacks, etc. rather than the number of families. Committee members mentioned a possible criteria for such housing could involve lot coverage.

1.4 Consultants shared two maps for the area specific plan with the committee. Mark Miller reviewed the first map explaining that it focused on high development at certain nodes with spread out lower density. Ted Lott

described the second map as being more aggressive than the first with more potential for commercial. Helen Lehman added that Thireca should be included in the existing industrial district due to it's relationship with the neighborhood.

1.5 Andy Guy discussed the importance of green space to Belknap. He suggested converting green space near Mary Waters Park to commercial and 'relocating' the green space along Lafayette to inject more green into the center of the neighborhood.

1.6 Helen Lehman agreed that some green should be moved the the Lafayette/Bradford area. She also stated that she would like to see the Creston Plaza area defined as green due to the initial condition as a swamp. If not, her limit for the area would be Mixed Housing. Angel agreed that this was a good idea, but expressed concern about losing focus of the original asp boundary.

1.7 Helen Lehman brought up the work done by MOBL NOBL – specifically creating linear greenspace along Hastings. Gretchen Warnimont questioned the idea behind the Development District in this area. Ted Lott referred her to the Use Group definitions.

1.8 Angel Gonzalez suggested merging the two maps. Helen Lehman said she would like to address green area of Scheme A to be more like Scheme B. Ted Lott agreed that pieces from both maps are valid and suggested another meeting in 10 days.

1.9 Elizabeth Zeller asked the steering committee if anyone had any feelings about the amount of commercial. Andy Guy replied that flexibility is better, but Scheme B may be too much. He feels that greenspace would lighten up the amount of proposed commercial along Lafayette. Helen Lehman suggested a park similar to the one at Cherry St./Eastern Ave.

1.10 Ted Lott asked for any additional input from the committee. Josh Beckett said he thought the idea for commercial near the Leonard/Lafayette area was a good idea. Angel Gonzalez pointed out that the 500 block of Coit has been traditionally multi-family. Rod Horlings added that the 500/600 block of Clancy should be Mixed Housing.

1.11 Ted Lott asked for additional input about the Hastings Corridor. Committee members were concerned with the definition of the Development District being too open ended. Gretchen Warnimont said she does not want any commercial. Helen Lehman said that it should be purple (NC) at most. Mark Miller agreed that the Development District is too open ended at this point and it will need further clarification. Angel Gonzalez stated that the Artesian Group have talked with several different developers. From these discussions, he believes that Coit/Hastings should be the start of commercial with it expanding to the east and wrapping up Lafayette. Andy Guy reminded the committee that Michigan St. is rapidly changing and will continue to do so. Helen Lehman said that Michigan development has turned it's back to Belknap therefore Hastings should reflect Belknap qualities.

1.12 Mark Miller pointed out that the two commercial districts will need better description and he suggested merging the blue (DD) and the purple (NC).

1.13 Ted Lott suggested another meeting to review ASP progress within the next 10 days. Committee members agreed to meet and the date was confirmed.

The next Steering Committee Member meeting is scheduled as follows:
Tuesday July 14, 2009. 8:00 am at Clancy Street Ministries.

LOTT3 METZ ARCHITECTURE, LLC
645 CHERRY SE GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
616 / 454-5175
616 / 454-5176
WWW.LOTT3METZ.COM

Belknap

Steering Committee Meeting Follow-Up — Lott3Metz Project No. 124.09.01

Date Held: July 14, 2009

Those in Attendance:

Name:	Phone#:	E-mail:
Marty Morgan	245.4965	martymorgan@gmail.com
David Swartwout	916.3223	planbelknap@yahoo.com
Rod Horlings	291.5824	Horlings@grar.com
Gretchen Warnimont	378.0969	
Sharon Music	819.6748	sharonmusic@kentssn.org
Elizabeth Zeller	456.3798	ezeller@grcity.us
Steve Faas	235.2195	steve.clancystreet@onecommail.com
Andy Guy	308.6250	andy@wondergem.com
Helen Lehman	361.7500	
John Gaylord	949.7379	jmg52@ameritech.et
Brian Bremer	292.5392	
Mark Miller	Nederveld	
Ted Lott	Lott3 Metz	
Kathi Brown	Lott3 Metz	

Old Business:

None Reported

New Business:

1.1 Ted Lott and Mark Miller described the revised map ('Scheme C') and the use group adjustment.

1.2 Marty Morgan asked why the the strip along North Avenue is designated as Mixed Housing instead of Traditional Family Housing. Ted Lott replied that it is a reference to the existing condition and reminded the committee that the use groups are cumulative (i.e. Mixed Housing could be single family housing).

1.3 Committee members expressed concern over the amount of commercial shown in a linear pattern rather than centralized at nodes. Mark Miller cited other locations in Grand Rapids, including Wealthy St., which have a shifting pattern of development from commercial to residential to commercial. He said that a transit stop would allow for a development core. He explained that the amount of designated commercial shown is to allow for flexibility along the Lafayette corridor and along the two edges (Hastings and Leonard).

1.4 Ted Lott brought up an earlier e-mail sent to committee members by Angel Gonzalez referencing the North/Sinclair area as Mixed Housing rather than commercial. Ted explained that residential development at this area was unlikely due to a number of obstacles (including the new College Ave. off ramp, railroad, topography and industrial area). Angel Gonzalez expressed his fear that making that area Commercial oversimplifies the amount of work that has been done in regards to other areas of the neighborhood. Mark Miller added that the intensity allows for greater flexibility.

1.5 Rod Horlings asked about the density shown for Fairview. He stated that the current zoning would allow for higher density in this area and he did not want new zoning to restrict higher density development. Gretchen Warnimont responded that 1-2 family housing is what makes Fairview what it is. Elizabeth Zeller pointed out that multi-family housing is allowed in TN-LDR, but it must be reviewed under a Special Land Use. Angel Gonzalez said he felt as though changing that area to traditional family would be going backwards based on the current allowance. Helen Lehman pointed out it depends on your perspective .

1.6 David Swartwout asked committee members how much of Belknap should be preserved. From his perspective, neighbors want to leave Fairview 'traditional'. Gretchen Warnimont added that she believes that the hill will not support large development. Helen Lehman reminded committee members that the intention of the ASP is to promote the neighborhood vision.

1.7 Andy Guy asked the consultants if Special Land Use designations could be included in the new Belknap ASP. Ted Lott replied that it is up to the Steering Committee to decide. Elizabeth Zeller said that the committee members should focus on the map and figure out what they want first before getting to far into zoning details. Gretchen Warnimont added that the Beckett Family is looking at developing 1-2 family housing along Fairview. Angel Gonzalez questioned the reality of that type of development based on their investment.

1.8 David Swartwout asked about the change in use along Lafayette (south of Fairbanks) from all commercial to residential. Ted Lott replied that the changes were made in response to resident input. Ted added that the commercial along Hastings would act as a buffer for residential on Lafayette.

1.9 Ted Lott asked for more thoughts about the map from committee members. David Swartwout said that he thinks there is too much purple. Angel Gonzalez expressed concern that there has been no public outreach to people on the East side of the railroad tracks.

1.10 Andy Guy said that he believes that map is getting closer to the neighborhood vision. He asked if the amount of orange was consistent with initial goal to promote home ownership. Mark Miller replied that all of the housing types mentioned in Mixed Housing could be owned. Angel Gonzalez noted that the high number of existing rentals does not lend itself to ownership. Brian Bremer added that he thinks the amount of orange should be toned down. He is afraid developers will need to re-coup loses on initial investments and he does not want that to negatively effect Belknap. Mark Miller added that the yellow districts are the most limiting for future development. Andy Guy pointed out that Newberry Place worked due to it's unique location which is similar to along the hillside.

1.11 Ted Lott asked David Swartwout what he thought about the information presented at the previous meeting. David said that he liked 'Scheme A' with a few tweaks. Helen Lehman said it is important to remember the current conditions. Steve Faas added that he would like to see more yellow (Traditional Family Housing) throughout the neighborhood. Committee members suggested a number of locations which could be residential including traditional family, at the 700-800 blocks of Clancy and Coit Ave. along Coit Park, and mixed housing, along the corner of Fairview and Hastings.

1.12 Angel Gonzalez discussed the amount of research he has done in regards to the future location of commercial development. He said that commercial should extend north of Hastings at Coit and Lafayette to allow for more flexibility. He added that the Neighborhood Center should not extend to the south side of Fairbanks. David Swartwout asked why development had to stretch North rather than East/West along Hastings.

1.13 Helen Lehman brought up the idea of a linear park along Hastings. Adding that it would be an asset to Belknap and provide a transition for people at Spectrum. Angel Gonzalez said that Suzanne Schulz, City of G.R. Planning Director, had previously said that a long stretch of commercial development along Hastings would not make sense. Andy Guy asked Angel if the comment was made before or after MDOT decisions had been made. Helen Lehman asked Elizabeth Zeller to check with Suzanne about her comments on Hastings St.

1.14 Mark Miller asked committee members to define their vision of traditional family housing. Angel Gonzalez said that it looks like single family housing, but could actually be 1-3 family housing. Committee members agreed.

1.15 Andy Guy asked how committee members will present the information to the neighborhood. A number of committee members suggested different events, including Coit School Open House, TFOB Summer Event, and the National Night Out – all in August. Marty Morgan said that he will suggest NOBL become more active in sharing information with neighbors due to their number of volunteers and access to a large number of neighbors. Steve Faas suggested revisiting Stakeholders to gain their input.

1.16 Helen Lehman asked consultants if 8.5 x 11 copies could be provided at the next meeting so committee members could begin to share information. Ted Lott said that hand-outs will be provided at the next meeting.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled as follows:

Thursday July 23, 2009. 8:00 am at Clancy Street Ministries.

Please see 'The Friends of Belknap' blog for further information and to share your thoughts:

http://planbelknap.org/blog1/

LOTT3 METZ ARCHITECTURE, LLC
645 CHERRY SE GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
616 / 454-5175
616 / 454-5176
WWW.LOTT3METZ.COM

Belknap

Steering Committee Meeting Follow-Up Lott3Metz Project No. 124.09.01

Date Held: July 23, 2009

Those in Attendance:

Name:	Phone#:	E-mail:
Kristi DeKraker	454.8413	nobl@choiceonemail.com
Gretchen Warnimont	378.0969	
Josh Beckett	862.4716	
Steve Faas	235.2195	
David Swartwout	916.3223	
Angel Gonzalez	308.6173	
Mark Miller		
Ted Lott		
Brian Bremer		
Andy Guy		
Helen Lehman		
Rod Horlings		
Kathi Brown		

Old Business:

None Reported

New Business:

1.1 Ted Lott began the meeting by going over the revised map and language. He also stated that site coverage for the row house and apartment types needs to be revised.

1.2 Kristi DeKraker asked if the 'orange (Belknap-MH)' use would be allowed along Fairview under current zoning. Ted Lott replied it was not allowed by right. He then explained that there is a difference in scale, but with neighborhood support the city planning office will be more accepting of changes.

1.3 Andy Guy explained that he thinks the latest map is close at this point. He encouraged the steering committee to begin organizing future neighborhood communication. Helen Lehman and Brian Bremer agreed. Kristi DeKraker asked if Angel Gonzalez was comfortable with the map. Angel replied that he agrees in general, but had two points of confusion. He explained his confusion over the orange shown on Fairview, specifically the lack of orange along the east side of the street near Hastings. Also, he was concerned about the potential level of development that could occur along the hillside. Andy Guy mentioned that he thought, in previous meetings, the Artesian Group expressed interest in orange along the hill. Rod Horlings agreed with Andy. Angel Gonzalez said he does not want 60-80 units developed along the hill. Brian Bremer added that other factors would limit development, such as the amount of required parking. Brian said it is important to allow some leeway in the plan. Brian explained that co-housing worked in it's current location due to factors not present along the hill, such as the minimal demolition of existing houses and the road around the property. Angel Gonzalez said that the housing

along the east side of Fairview (near Hastings) is the most blighted and should be changed to the higher use group, Orange (Belknap-MH).

1.4 Josh Beckett was asked by the Steering Committee how he felt about the latest map. He replied that he thinks that orange along Fairview is good. He further explained that flexibility will allow for improvement of the neighborhood. He emphasized that people need to look beyond their individual interests to what is best for the neighborhood.

1.5 Kristi DeKraker asked the committee if neighbors will support orange along Fairview. Andy Guy said he believes they will be supportive but it depends on the message from the Steering Committee. Steve Faas agreed with Andy. He added that the Steering Committee must go to the neighborhood with one message to gain support.

1.6 Steering Committees were asked for any further input on the latest map. Gretchen Warnimont said her only concern is Hastings between Lafayette and Coit. She then added there will always be a need to compromise. Andy Guy said it is important to present the latest map as a draft. The steering committee agreed. Brian Bremer said that the language in the orange description should emphasize home ownership. Helen Lehman added that quality rental is important and good for the neighborhood. Ted Lott suggested using the term multi-family instead of apartments, etc. then suggested moving on to discuss distribution of information to neighbors.

1.7 Rod Horlings said he would like to continue to talk about some of the uses and asked if anyone else had input. David Swartwout said he is comfortable with the map. Andy Guy agreed. Ted Lott asked David if T.F.O.B. Would support the map. David said that he thinks that they will, especially since it is being presented as a draft rather than final map. Ted Lott asked committee members if they were in support of the map. Brian Bremer, David Swartwout, Angel Gonzalez, and Josh Beckett all said they were in support. Rod Horlings said he thinks there should be more commercial along Lafayette (near Hastings). He went on to say that there is a high rental rate along Hastings and that due to his past discussions with outside developers there should be more flexibility in this area. He said that the Belknap-MH should be changed to Belknap-NC, the greater height should be allowed in this area due to the lower elevation. Angel Gonzalez said he supported Rod. Angel said that development in the Hastings area will encourage development near Lafayette and Bradford. Andy Guy pointed out that the map was to encourage the neighborhood vision. He added that it cannot be used as a way to make up for investment losses. Kristi DeKraker added that the map could be revised in 5-10 years based on development patterns. Mark Miller said that having Lafayette as more of a commercial corridor is a valid point, but that many neighbors disagree. Helen Lehman and Andy Guy pointed out that there already is a lot of change for neighbors to react to on the map.

1.8 Andy Guy suggested showing neighbors previous maps to show the evolution. Ted Lott said that decision is up to the steering committee. He added that old maps should be shown in smaller groups, or the whole idea of evolution will be lost.

1.9 Helen Lehman suggested showing bus stops on college and down the hill.

1.10 Kristi DeKraker said that it is important that a public meeting occur to reach neighbors that may not be included in other discussions. Helen Lehman added that the stakeholders should review the map first then it should be shared with the rest of the neighborhood.

1.11 Ted Lott asked committee members about the remaining project schedule. He summarized the existing schedule and asked if any changes were necessary. Andy Guy added that the final ASP can be presented to the city on September 10. Gretchen Warnimont said she will present the map Saturday, August 25 to neighbors at her organized event. Committee members agreed on a number of dates to share information with neighbors, including:

August 4: National Night Out
August 6: Coit School Event
August 8: T.F.O.B. Event
August 11: NOBL Meeting at 6pm

Committee members decided to distribute flyers, showing dates and the TFOB blog address, throughout the neighborhood to notify the neighbors. Steve Faas said that he will organize the distribution of flyers. The steering committee and consultants agreed upon another meeting to discuss neighborhood input.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled as follows:
Tuesday August, 25 2009. 8:00 am at Clancy Street Ministries.

Please see 'The Friends of Belknap' blog for further information and to share your thoughts:
http://planbelknap.org/blog1/

LOTT3 METZ ARCHITECTURE, LLC
645 CHERRY SE GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
616 / 454-5175
616 / 454-5176
WWW.LOTT3METZ.COM

Belknap

Steering Committee Meeting Follow-Up Lott3Metz Project No. 124.09.01

Date Held: August 25, 2009

Those in Attendance:
Name:

Mark Miller
Andy Guy
Kristi DeKraker
Sharon Music
Elizabeth Zeller
Josh Beckett
Gretchen Warnimont
David Swartwout
Marty Morgan
Brian Bremer
Kathi Brown
Ted Lott
Rod Horlings

New Business:

1.1 Ted Lott began the meeting with a summary of received neighborhood input. He suggested each of the steering committee members share their neighborhood input and personal opinions regarding the latest ASP Map.

1.2 Brian Bremer expressed concern of emphasizing rental units over ownership. He said he is ok with the density shown on the current map. Personally, he did not care about commercial at Coit/Hastings.

1.3 Marty Morgan suggested changing the language for development along Fairview to encourage street frontage of building rather than parking. Neighborhood input focused on Coit/Hastings – with 2/3 of people supporting mixed use and 1/3 of people wanting to scale back commercial. Personally, he stated that he would support the current map.

1.4 David Swartwout said that most neighbors he talked with were ok with the current plan. He added that he had talked with neighbors east of Lafayette and they supported the map.

1.5 Gretchen Warnimont does not want commercial at Coit/Hastings. She would be ok with commercial to Clancy.

1.6 Steve Faas supported Brian's comment on emphasizing ownership. He is ok with the current plan.

1.7 Josh Beckett said it is important to get the final ASP passed. He is open to mixed use along Hastings.

1.8 Rod Horlings said that the neighborhood as a whole supported the idea of commercial at Coit/Hastings. He expressed concern over letting a minority of neighbors dictate the final plan. He supports mixed use at Coit/Hastings. He supports the current plan.

1.9 Sharon Music said she is ok with the current plan.

1.10 Kristi DeKraker added that some neighbors were concerned with mixed use at Coit/Hastings. She is ok with current map. She suggested modifying the rowhouse language.

1.11 Andy Guy said he is ok with the flexibility of the current map, but need to get the final ASP passed. He suggested that dialing the plan back could gain support.

1.12 Ted Lott suggested a modification of light purple (Belknap NT) language to better define aesthetics. He asked the steering committee is neighbors would be more comfortable with commercial if it resembled a house. Brian Bremer and Gretchen Warnimont said many people would agree with commercial if it looked like a house.

1.13 Mark Miller brought up introducing a new use district/color at Coit/Hastings. He mentioned 'Cottage Retail' as a good blend of commercial use with a single family house aesthetic. Andy Guy added that the ASP language could be revisited in 5-10 years to recognize the changing needs of the neighborhood.

1.14 Rod Horlings expressed concern over the new use type placing too many limits on future development. He also discussed increasing the allowable heights for mixed use near Lafayette/Hastings due to the lower elevation. Ted Lott replied that the allowable height must be based on a pedestrian scale versus the height of buildings in the surrounding area.

1.15 Steering Committee members suggesting modifying the rowhouse language in order to get neighborhood approval. A limit of the number of attached units was suggested. A majority of steering committee members agreed that four units would be an acceptable limit. Rod Horlings expressed concern on the limit making future development not feasible.

1.16 Ted Lott asked steering committee members if they would support the ASP if suggested changes were made. Steering Committee members agreed that they would be in support of the final ASP.

1.17 Andy Guy asked Steering Committee members to start focusing on the presentation to the Planning Commission. Elizabeth Zeller added that she had the final schedule for the Belknap ASP process. Andy asked the Steering Committee who should will be responsible for the presentation. Ted Lott suggested Andy present to the Planning Commission based on his communication with the Planning Dept. throughout the ASP process. Marty Morgan was also mentioned as a possible presenter based on his success with development in the neighborhood. Andy then suggested that all steering committee members should be present at the Planning Commission meeting to show support.

The Planning Commission meeting is scheduled as follows:

Thursday September 10, 2009. 3:15 pm at the Development Center (1120 Monroe NW) in Public Meeting Rm. 201.