Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #1
Cedar-Riverside Recreation Centers Predesign

07/16/19 5:30 – 8:00pm
Brian Coyle Community Center
[Oromo and Somali interpretation provided via headset]

CAC members present: Abdirizak Bihi (Chair), Abdul Sero, Aburazak (Sisco) Omar, Amber Wiebe, Amina Hanafi, Jamie Schumacher, Kwangja Kwon, Abdi Gurhan, Adam Ugas, Bosteya Jama, Furtune Del, Patrick Slaven, Fardowsa Osman Egal

CAC members absent: Khadra Fiqi, Mohamed Peters, Ali Saleh, Yusra Arab

CAC Alternate members present: Ahmed Mussa

Members of the Public: Approximately 35 members of the general public were present

Staff, consultants, and speakers present: Susan Olmsted (Perkins+Will); Gemechu Getachew (Oromo interpreter); Salah Warsame (Somali interpreter); Daniel Elias, Michael Schroeder, Siciid Ali, Radium Guess, Abdi Mukhtar, Paul Jaegar; Jamie Neldner (MPRB)

1. Welcome
   The first Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was called to order by Daniel Elias (MPRB). He said that at every future CAC meeting, staff from MPRB and Pillsbury United Community will be available in the Community Room beginning at 5:00pm to answer questions around short-term programming needs in the Community Center or Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. Abdirizak Bihi, the CAC Chair, welcomed everyone present and explained a little bit about the project, which is a long-term vision for Cedar-Riverside Recreation Centers.

2. Introduction to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
   CAC members and the general public in attendance were asked to introduce themselves, and share some information about their past experience and/or interest in serving on the CAC “Who are you and what brings you to this space?”:
   • Abdul Sero: Life-long resident of neighborhood; has insight and wants to provide input to create a better resource for community
   • Kwangja Kwon: Twenty-year employee of Korean Community Center; looking for ways to collaborate
   • Abdi Gurhan: Resident of neighborhood; passionate about community recreation and wants to add input
   • Furtune Del: Business owner and resident of the neighborhood who leads a group of Somali mothers; wants to see the space offer programming and wants to see a change
   • Bosteya Jama: Neighborhood association director; wants to see more recreation centers
   • Abdirizak Bihi: Lives in and works with community for more than twenty years; wants to help young people in the community by providing more resources and space for recreation
   • Amina Hanafi: Wants to contribute more to the community
• Fardowsa Osman Egal: Resident of community; first time involved in community activities
• Jamie Schumacher: West Bank Business Association Director; served on another MPRB CAC and enjoyed the process; sees role as connector and integrator between business and residential communities
• Amber Wiebe: Augsburg student; wants to connect with community and provide insight from student standpoint
• Patrick Slaven: Minneapolis resident; looking for opportunity to get involved with community involvement, especially parks
• Adam Ugas: Resident of neighborhood and soccer coach; wants to be part of the future of the parks
• Aburazak (Sisco) Omar: Resident and community organizer

Members of the general public in attendance introduced themselves and answered, “What brings you to this space.”

Siciid Ali (MPRB) provided an overview on how the CAC was selected [PPT 6], described the CAC resource binder [PPT 7] and project page on MPRB’s website [PPT 8], reviewed the CAC charge [PPT 9], and presented the CAC Group Agreement [PPT 10]. CAC members were invited to provide additional resources for the binder and website, and to add items to the Group Agreement now or in the future. [PPT 6-10] He added that anyone not comfortable being photographed during the meeting should add a sticker to their name tag.

3. Project Overview
Daniel explained that MPRB has a vision for two new recreation centers in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. C-R East will be hopefully on the surface parking lot at 25th and Riverside, the east side of the Augsburg University (Augsburg) campus. If MPRB is successful in funding and executing on that project, it will be integrated into a larger development that Augsburg is leading completely separate from this process. Augsburg is working on its own development plans, and this is one piece of that project. The location of the C-R West recreation center has not been determined. It could involve renovating and enhancing the existing Brian Coyle Community Center (Coyle Center) in its current location, tearing down and rebuilding it in its current location, or building a new Coyle Center in the West Cedar-Riverside/Riverside Plaza area.

This project is not a design and construction project. The intent is to create separate predesign reports for two recreation centers (East and West) that will allow MPRB to apply for State Bond Funds for actual design and construction. [PPT 13]

MPRB knows that there is a great community need for programming and services in Cedar-Riverside, and is committed to this project to envision two recreation centers in the long-term. Currently there is funding only for the predesign phase; additional funding will be sought from the State Bond Fund. A timetable for design and construction of one or both recreation centers has not been determined. [PPT 14]

MPRB will leverage its partnerships with several organizations (Partners) in order to meet the needs of the community. Fairview Health Services, Augsburg University, the YMCA and Pillsbury United Communities have all signed a Memorandum of Understanding to pursue this project. At
CAC Meeting #2 representatives from these organizations will engage in a panel discussion, giving CAC members an opportunity to ask questions to give them a better understanding of each Partner’s involvement.

4. Predesign Breakdown
Susan Olmsted (Perkins+Will) said that architects and landscape architects, in addition to design work, manage a project to ensure that it can be completed on-time and on-budget and that it incorporates the ideas and visions of the CAC. She explained the schedule and the process, and what is required in the predesign. Depending on what happens with the funding, construction could begin in 2024 with a grand opening in 2025.

The predesign process, which is fundamental to receiving State bonding, will take about one year. It will define the scope of the project, the cost, and an updated schedule. It will also involve a deeper dive into programs, activities and services, and an analysis and understanding of the neighborhood. A draft predesign will be developed by Spring of 2020. It will be reviewed by the CAC, MPRB, and Partners to create a final predesign. CAC meetings have been scheduled every two months beginning in July 2019. During alternate months Office Hours will be held in the Coyle Center Community Room to provide CAC members and the public an additional opportunity to participate in this process. Additionally, tours of the Coyle Center, the Augsburg site and two other MPRB facilities will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2:00-4:00pm. [PPT 18]

Predesign documentation will include a summary statement, basis for need–project background narrative, project description and neighborhood analysis. The CAC will directly inform these documents. It will also include agency and organization planning with help from the Partners, and financial and schedule information. A fair amount of project planning and information-gathering has already taken place, and ongoing community engagement will be done to inform program development and site/neighborhood analysis.

5. MPRB 101
Michael Schroeder (MPRB) provided a presentation to familiarize the CAC with the history and structure of MPRB, MPRB funding, the 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20), and equity metrics. He introduced a color-coded chart showing the status of Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, and offered to spend time individually with CAC members to explain the CIP chart and NPP20 in greater detail. [PPT 22-35]

- Daniel noted that the funding sources mentioned in Michael’s presentation go to outdoor park improvements in the regional and neighborhood systems. None of the funding sources are to build new recreation centers which is why we have a shortfall for this project.
- Question from CAC Chair Bihi: How many of the 35 projects in CIP are in neighborhoods with people of color or immigrants? Would like to see that broken out in the next meeting.
- MPRB is committed to completing 35 projects that existed before the NPP20 ordinance. By 2022 there will be zero projects to be completed that were funded prior to equity metrics and every project will have its implementation sequence determined by equity metrics.
- The NPP20 fund is the funding source for the improvements in Currie Park ($2.8 million).
6. **Racial Equity 101**

Radious Guess (MPRB) provided a presentation on the Racial Equity Plan. Key takeaways for the CAC are knowledge of MPRB’s Equity Change Initiatives, understanding of how MPRB’s culture and that of others unconsciously influences decisions we make, and recognizing how MPRB’s success as an organization depends on ensuring the inclusion of everyone. MPRB’s definition of Racial Equity is when race is no longer a predictor of access to parks and recreation, health, well-being, and quality of life. MPRB commits to racial equity through its actions and outcomes, and to become a local and national model for racial equity in parks and recreation. The strategy is to use the [Racial Equity Action Plan](#) to affect change in all levels of MPRB’s work. [PPT 40-48]

Following the presentation, Abdi invited CAC members to spend several minutes writing their hopes for and concerns about this project on Post-It notes.

**Hopes**
- Expand recreation opportunities for seniors and youth (ages 18-24) by relocating Coyle Center to Lot A
- Access for all residents to needed programs and facilities
- Expand green space in Currie Park by relocating Coyle Center to Lot A
- My hope is to see community voices are heard and the desire for the type of rec center is met
- To see the project ends with two rec centers that respond to community aspirations
- To see enough space for everyone in neighborhood
- To see indoor play area for younger kids like Eagles Nest
- All-season availability and programming
- I hope the project will be funded full and I am excited [about] the final outcome
- Include music, film, non-sports activities in new building design
- Gender equity for youth in access to facilities
- Place that people want to be – especially youth
- Environmentally friendly design: rain gardens, bee/butterfly friendly
- Public art by local artists
- Indoor gardens: aquaponics, hydroponics, indoor all-season, green space
- I hope to have a new recreation center that benefits my neighborhood completely. I also hope to have this/these new centers help the youth of my community as well
- Two coordinated Cedar-Riverside rec centers that meet/exceed the needs and desires of the neighborhood
- Build our park better and beautiful
- A place with active, creative programming
- Positive programming for kids and adults
- Access and welcoming park
- My hope is that this project brings resources and programs to the community and that the project brings together everyone in the community (residents, students, business owners, etc.)
- Making this project more known to the youth that live around the area
- My hope is that equitable resources come to this project prioritized and delivered
- Rec Centers help build a stronger community
I hope the project adequately and accurately records and represents the needs of the community and is able to make a convincing and compelling case for funding.

My hopes are for this project to bring more resources for Cedar-Riverside youth, elderly, women and children.

To see recreation center at Cedar-Riverside develop and done successfully.

For the park in my neighborhood to get the same opportunity as most of the other communities I’ve been to.

Kids engaged in healthy, productive and inclusive recreation activities and programs.

Recreation centers that allow Cedar-Riverside to be the best neighborhood in Minneapolis.

That the needs of the community are achieved.

**Concerns**

I’m really concerned if the project doesn’t get funded, how the community will feel or react.

I hope there is an opportunity for youth employment and youth leadership.

I hope community is brought together and not divided as a result of this.

We have one example of a CAC report. Was it successful? What does a successful or unsuccessful report look like?

That Brian Coyle project is not prioritized.

The funding will go elsewhere.

The process may take too many years to get it done.

Timeline is too long.

Funding.

Financial feasibility of ongoing operations of two rec centers.

$ does not come through.

Community voice will not be listened to.

Buildings never built.

Buildings built but not adequately funded for staffing and/or equipment.

This process may fail to secure funding to build the rec centers.

My concern is that there are ifs in the actualization of this project.

Location.

Dateline.

Programs.

Community involvement.

Management.

What happens if the project doesn’t go through?

Some voices in community are left out of decision-making process.

Private interests will supersede the will of the community.

Community’s voice and needs being met and not just a design and renovation that doesn’t fulfill the needs.

The measurements of community needs/wants are accurate and meaningful.

Role of non-MPRB organizations is unclear.

Why is the Cedar-Riverside connected to University of Minnesota regarding racial equity?

None now, need to know more about the project.

My concern is you guys made your mind already.
7. Public Comments

Members of the General Public were invited to provide questions and comments.

- Question: Is MPRB involved with community gardens? Interested in teaching how to garden and for the community to learn about gardening and eating healthy food.
  
  Answer: Daniel (MPRB) – Yes. A new community garden policy was approved last year.
  
  Abdi (MPRB) – MPRB’s agriculture policy allows access within the park system. Specifically for the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood the Coyle Center has a garden in the back and this year increased the space and number of people who can access it including the K-5 summer program and ESL groups. Check website for more information.
  
  Siciid (MPRB) – In the recently-approved Mississippi Gorge Regional Park Master Plan, some areas of Riverside Park were designated as urban agriculture. The Phillips Community Neighborhood also has community gardens.
  
  Kwangja Kwon (CAC member) – The Korean Service Center has a community peace garden at Cedar Avenue and I-94 with many vacant plots and interested neighbors are welcome to join the garden project.

- Question: Will this project incorporate community gardens in the two recreation sites?
  
  Answer: Daniel – This group will be working mostly with the built environment, utilizing most of the available land for an actual facility, but food education incorporated through a commercial kitchen or partnering with an existing community garden that provides food for education within one of the recreation centers is an option to be explored. If that is important advocate to the CAC.

- Question: There has been recent talk about Lot A being developed as a mall and housing. How would that potentially impact the proposal to relocate the Coyle Center to that site, and also expand greenspace at Currie Park? There is already a lot of support for that proposal within the community. How can we influence the City’s proposal that is about to go out for an RFP?
  
  Answer: Daniel – The proposal on the table for C-R West is currently a location-less exercise. We do not know if the Coyle center will be rebuilt in this location, if it will become incorporated into something at Lot A, or if there is another redevelopment on the west side of Cedar-Riverside. There is no current proposal for MPRB to be involved, but MPRB staff are in contact with City staff about that redevelopment project. Currently MPRB is not involved in the redevelopment of Lot A, but they are looking at programming and space needs.
  
  Jamie Schumacher (CAC member) said that anyone interested in the conversation about Lot A is invited to attend meetings of the business community and NRP on this topic.
  
  Michael (MPRB) added that at a recent meeting of the Cedar-Riverside Partnership, Council Member Gordon introduced a resolution to slow down the process on Lot A, because of the lack of community engagement on the Lot A development.
  
  Concerned people were encouraged to get involved, stay connected with the business community and NRP, and make their voices heard.

- Question: Since MPRB does not have funds itself to put a recreation center on Lot A, the City has no other choice than to put a mall on the site because it would be developed by contractors. How can we get the message to MPRB and make them understand that the community wants a recreation center there?
  
  Answer: [off microphone; mostly inaudible but mentioned “community engagement”]
  
  Siciid noted that the Lot A site could contain all three: a Somali mall, a recreation center and a residential area.
• Question: Is it possible to speed up the process to seek funding from the State or other sources?
   Answer: Daniel – As shown in the timeline previously laid out as it relates to State bonding, the earliest opportunity will be the beginning of 2021 which is the conclusion of the off-year bonding cycle. There is no other earlier bonding cycle. The project team is hoping to provide the right answers to the City if and when their process does include this recreation center. Daniel said he does not know if a developer would include a recreation center that they lease to MPRB or if there is some other model that allows a project to move forward and include a recreation center that does not include MPRB State bond dollars.

• Question: How can the residents of Cedar-Riverside help MPRB with Lot A?
   Answer: Bihi – Because Lot A is not the focus of this group, it was suggested that people interested in that project attend other meetings and not engage in that discussion here. Daniel – If the City opens up a public comment period or hosts a meeting about Lot A, people could engage by attending and lending their voice. They can also contact the Mayor and City Council Members.
   Jamie invited people to attend meetings of the West Bank Business Association (including one held on Thursday, July 18, at 2:00pm at the Red Sea).

• Furtune Del (CAC Member) Comment: It is not a good idea to have a mall and recreation center in the same place.

Bihi closed the discussion by saying that the CAC should focus on this beautiful project. His concern is about the fruition of these two projects because there are a lot of “ifs.” In the future he wants to have a conversation about how the CAC can make sure that all the good work that has preceded it for two years, and also the next one year or so, gets this on the list of projects.

8. Wrap-up & Next Steps
   Daniel said periodic updates on Lot A will be provided to CAC members. The hope for the CAC is to focus on the program and space needs for a recreation center, regardless of how it relates to Lot A. He gave a reminder about the site tour on August 17, and the bi-monthly Office Hours that will be staffed by design team members beginning Tuesday, August 20, at 3:00. The next CAC meeting is September 17.

9. Adjourn
   The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Handouts: Agenda, CAC Meeting Dates/Times, CAC project binders, Meeting evaluations