

## ATTENDEES

Christine Balsley, Eleanor Cotton, John Salisbury, Vanessa Walton, Will Benjamin, Beverly Conerton, Thomas, Andy Hestness, Trevor Born, Jennifer Anderson-Tuttle (LSE), Tunde (LSE), Mohammed (LSE), Barbara O'Brien (City), Alexander Kado (City), Nick Ngo (City), Artur Maia (City)

## MINUTES

### **Presentation: LSE Architects, 3000 Minnehaha (Democracy Center) project updates**

- [A copy of their presentation](#)

Barbara O'Brien, Director of Property Services, discussed the city's plans to restore functionality to the building by developing the Minneapolis Democracy Center, with LSE Architects presenting their team and experience in the community. The team reviewed plans for a new community-focused building development, including discussions about sustainability standards, design elements, and parking considerations, with various city staff and architects presenting their vision for the project. The conversation ended with discussions about public art integration, stormwater management requirements, and community engagement plans, with the team setting timelines for design development and construction documentation.

Jenni discussed plans to reposition entries along Lake Street and prioritizing pedestrian experience with sustainable design elements. The project will include both an addition and renovation, featuring space for election voter services and a community partner, though the partner has not yet been determined. The site plan includes a proposed staff entry, green space, and a highly visible early voting area at the corner of Snelling and Lake Street, with loading occurring in the middle of the site. Jenni noted that biweekly workshops with the city and election voter services team have been held to ensure the project meets both EVS and community needs.

### Timeline:

- Committee presentation in the fall
- Design development in winter

- Construction documents in spring. The team plans to reskin the building's facade and address community needs, with continued community engagement and collaboration with city planners.

Mohammed mentioned two community groups, Change Inc. and Mama Sheila's Restaurant, that presented their proposals.

Jenni discussed key priorities for the project, including energy efficiency, occupant wellness, daylighting, and the potential for an outdoor roof patio. Barbara mentioned plans to study the feasibility of using geothermal technology, and Jenni noted upcoming meetings to explore geothermal options and community resources.

The team discussed entrance locations for a building on Lake Street, with Jenni explaining there would be multiple entries including one for the community space, one for staff/administrative use, and one for early voting. Mohammed emphasized the importance of clear signage for the early voting entrance to avoid GPS confusion, while Lisa inquired about parking spaces, which Tunde confirmed would be around 72. The group discussed that while the building would have 20 employees, there would be enough parking for daily use and election periods, with Artur recommending public transportation use over parking prioritization. Jenni noted they would need to contact Solcana regarding their use of the alley and parking spaces.

The meeting focused on discussing parking and design plans for a new building project. Jenni emphasized the importance of maintaining existing parking for neighbors and improving the city-owned side of the alley. Beverly raised questions about seating and landscaping for the Lake Street front of the building, which Jenni and Mohammed addressed by explaining that design work for the community space is pending the selection of a partner. Mohammed assured that future design phases would involve input from the community and city to balance aesthetics and functionality. The group also discussed a district parking study underway and the total number of parking stalls, which was confirmed to be around 70.

The meeting discussed the public art component of the project, led by Mary Altman from the city, which will include a separate call for artists when construction starts. Thomas inquired about stormwater runoff requirements, and Jenni confirmed that strategies will be implemented to meet current requirements, including rainwater gardens and below-ground storage tanks. The group agreed to consider using impervious pavers as an option.

## **Next steps**

- LSE Architects to continue developing floor plans, site plans, and building massing for the Democracy Center project.

- LSE Architects to meet with city planner regarding the project development.
- LSE Architects to explore sustainability options including geothermal technology with Excel Energy.
- LSE Architects to connect with Solcana regarding their use of the alley and parking space.
- LSE Architects to consider connecting with Longfellow Rising and Redesign regarding the district parking study and district geothermal system.
- City of Minneapolis to potentially schedule a community meeting to share design progress before construction documents are developed.
- Mary Altman to lead the public art component of the project.