

NEW COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

PARK MORTON COMMUNITY DIALOGUE – NOVEMBER 16, 2015

SUMMARY NOTES

In moderated discussion groups, participants were asked three questions. The following is a summary of the responses.

1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

DIVERSITY – People come together across different backgrounds/ethnicities. There is a good mix of different types of families/households, and a mix of ages and groups. There is great support in the neighborhood for raising a family. It makes Georgia Avenue feel like a “village,” like home.

OPEN SPACE – Bruce Monroe, programmed (garden, dog park, etc.) and un-programmed, are valued open spaces. The park is gathering place for the neighborhood. The park personifies the neighborhood’s diversity.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER – The neighborhood has a rich history. There is a community of people who know and care about each other; neighbors are connected. There is a high level of community involvement and activism, with strong community and civic organizations. The neighborhood has gotten safer over the years. It is peaceful and familiar, a good mix of tranquil and urban. The neighborhood has a good architectural character, with small/medium scale buildings.

CONVENIENCE – The neighborhood is walkable, with good access to reliable public transportation. Many neighbors have a short commute to work and other destinations.

MIX OF USES – There is a dynamic mix of housing, retail and green space that is busy, but not too busy. There are stores, restaurants and activities, all within walking distance (on Georgia and nearby on 11th and 14th), and places are open late. There are cultural opportunities in walking distance. There are small businesses that are also owned by people from the neighborhood. There is a diverse set of community amenities, aimed at serving both children and adults. There is still potential for growth on Georgia Avenue.

2. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?

IMPROVED AMENITIES – This includes: preservation and better maintenance of existing amenities (park/landscaping; community uses for ground floor retail; Increased park space, including un-programmed (open) space and spaces for younger children; improved schools and aftercare programs for children; more services, including workforce development, job training, and literacy programs; and a bigger community center.

PRESERVATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD’S CHARACTER – This includes: new buildings that blend with existing density and surroundings, including matching the quality of surrounding buildings; and maintaining the existing diversity.

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IMPROVED STREETS, PARKING, AND PUBLIC SAFETY – This includes: decreased crime, aided by more police on foot patrols; more/better parking; cleaner streets, including during winter; addition of a pedestrian median on Georgia Avenue; and more bike lanes.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING – This includes: successful redevelopment of Park Morton, and safeguards to ensure developers deliver on promises made during the development process.

MORE ACTIVATION OF THE GEORGIA AVENUE CORRIDOR – This includes: better use of currently vacant lots/storefronts; more small business development along Georgia Avenue; and more retail, including kid-friendly retail.

3. BASED ON THE PRESENTATION YOU HEARD TONIGHT, WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST QUESTION, CONCERN, OR AREA YOU'D LIKE TO FOCUS ON? BE SPECIFIC.

- Will the density of new development be out of proportion with existing surroundings?
- Will the proposed development be done in a timely manner, or will it be grossly extended?
- Will the development process for Park Morton be transparent, and can it facilitate compromise between a diversity of interests? How have decisions been made thus far about the redevelopment plan? What decisions have been made already, and what is open for discussion?
- Will the neighborhood have access to what the Park Morton developer proposed, and have adequate input on the plans to be developed?
- Will the redevelopment achieve a desirable income mix so that none of the neighborhood's diversity will be lost?
- Will there be more focus on crime prevention in the corridor, and will new spaces be designed to discourage/prevent crime?
- Will open space – programmed and un-programmed – be preserved and/or increased, and at what points in the redevelopment process will it be available?
- How much help will Park Morton residents have transitioning through the redevelopment?
- Will the city fulfill its promise to Park Morton residents?

RELATED LINKS:

New Communities Initiative: www.dcnewcommunities.org
Park View ENGAGE: www.parkviewENGAGE.com