

## Marlborough– Phase II Meeting

Tuesday, September 8, 2011  
 5:30 -7:30pm  
 South-Broadland Presbyterian Church  
 7 attendees

The following is a summary of the discussion/feedback from the Phase II meeting for the Marlborough school site.

### **RECAP OF SITE TOUR FEEDBACK**

During the site tour, the district received great feedback about community needs and reuses that could address community needs. Key things that the district has noted from the site tour discussion:

- *Strong desire to find a reuse that would retain people in the neighborhood AND bring residents back*
- *Challenges of water damage, lack of an elevator*
- *Variety of reuse options identified: school (ranging from elementary to technical school), community use of gym, auditorium (Troost YMCA too far away), church or institutional use, assisted living/senior center, health care providers*
- *Grounds offer open space opportunity for neighborhood*

The participants of the Phase II meeting did not attend the site tour for Marlborough, and therefore provided the following additional feedback:

- The Marlborough Community Coalition is comprised of four neighborhoods. Half of which are in the Center School District: Battleflood Heights, Marlborough Renaissance, Marlborough East, Marlborough Pride
- 80% of the area is rental; trying to increase home ownership in the area
- The existing Marlborough Community Center is landlocked and inadequate
- Need to make sure the reuse of the site is an asset for both the North and South sides of 75<sup>th</sup> St.
- Reuse of the site can help with the re-branding of the neighborhood
- Reuse of the site needs to serve as a catalyst for bringing development back to the area

### **REUSE FEEDBACK**

Based on the technical assessment and feedback from the site tour, several types of reuse have been identified as viable options for Marlborough. The following provides a summary of the community feedback received in discussing reuse options:

Community feedback for **Residential Use or Combination of Residential + Other Uses :**

- Participants were not supportive of any new residential development in the area. The only type of residential reuse that the community might consider is senior housing. The group felt that the community does not have enough amenities in the area to support the current population.

- The group felt that the area is a major food desert because there aren't enough places (grocery store/farmers market) to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables. They felt a residential reuse would bring more people to an area without the proper resources to support their needs. (note: by the generally accepted definition of food desert, the Marlborough area is not considered a food desert).

Community feedback for **Community Use:**

- The existing Marlborough Community Center is landlocked and inadequate; it is not easily accessible by community members. The space is run down and cannot support the events held by the Marlborough Community Coalition.
- Marlborough Community Coalition would like to be the main contact for any community use for the building. The Coalition would like to have access to the gym and auditorium for their neighborhood events.
- Participants felt renting the facility out or hosting non-community events at the site would attract negative attention to the area. All community uses would need to be programmatic: political or structured.
- Participants felt any mixed use for the building should be complimentary in nature. For example: Senior Center and Health Center.

Community feedback for **Major Organization/Institutional/Church Use:**

- Participants indicated that any organization would need to demonstrate they have the financial capacity to renovate and operate the building. They also indicated that the project would need to provide adequate parking and a willingness to partner with the Marlborough Community Coalition.
- Participants expressed concern whether a church would be able to finance the necessary renovations (there are already a lot of churches in the area). In addition, they did not feel there was a need for a health institution because Southtown Clinic, which is located within the neighborhood is adequate.

Community feedback for **Educational Reuse:**

- Educational reuse of the site was the preferred option of the participants. Community members would support an educational use for the Marlborough site. Reuse could be from an established charter school, private school, start-up charter school, or faith-based school. The prospective school entity would need to show financial stability and sustainability.

Community feedback for **Retail/Office:**

- Participants were open to several nonprofits working within the building, but understand they need to find an umbrella organization to oversee management/redevelopment of the site.
- The participants were supportive of urban farming and agriculture as a long-term use of the site. In addition, they were supportive of locating a farmers market at the site as a long-term use or as an interim use of the site until the urban agriculture can be established.
- The entity that has the building should work with the community and allow access to the Marlborough Community Coalition. Any retail offices would need to consider off-street parking and zoning.

**INTERIM USES/ACTIONS**

In the event the district doesn't receive viable proposals for Marlborough, or if it takes several years, the district solicited feedback from the community on interim actions/activities.

Community feedback on the **Interim Uses/Actions**:

- In addition to use of the grounds for a farmers market, the Marlborough Community Coalition would like to use the grounds for large outdoor events, community gatherings, and block parties.
- Betty Ost-Everly from the Marlborough Community Coalition would serve as the point of contact to coordinate this partnership with the District. Other community partners could be the KC Health Dept or Bridging the Gap.

**SOLICITATION PROCESS**

During the meeting, participants were asked to provide their feedback on the solicitation process. The following summarizes their feedback/comments.

Community feedback on the **Solicitation Process**:

- The participants requested that all groups interested in the site present their proposals to the Marlborough Community Coalition.
- The participants did not have a preference between a lease and sale of the site; however, the community members were strongly against the KCPS working through a broker or the formal bidding process to perform either option. The group would like the district to be selective in how they choose to market the Marlborough school site. They felt marketing with a broker would be too broad of a range for the selective process they are seeking.

**DEMOLITION**

For every site, the district is gathering community feedback on the possible demolition of the building.

Community feedback on **Demolition**:

- The participants acknowledged that demolition needs to be considered an option after a particular length of time if the district is unsuccessful in securing a lease/sale of the site. They are concerned the building will get vandalized and attract negative activities if it continues to remain vacant. As long as the community is informed/consulted during the decision-making process, then it will support this as an option.