

Westport High/Westport Middle

Saturday, April 16, 2011

9:00am -12:00pm

48+ attendees

BREAKOUT SESSION #1 (DC)

Strengths

- Close to transit
- Daylight/skylights
- Close to shopping
- Strong, vibrant neighborhoods (location)
- Close to Gillham Park (sync with reuses)
- Close to restaurants

Challenges

- Toxic/environmental issues? -- solutions: inspect buildings, work with EPA or other group to get grant, remediation, connect with Green Impact Zone educate for jobs to repair buildings, foundation support, seal off portions of buildings that are not satisfactory
- Grass not cut, trash not picked up (appearance) – solutions: vacancy st use (community garden?), involve Westport/MainCor CIDs, cut grass, Parks Dept. KCMO maintain the grounds
- Vandalism, graffiti-- solution: set up security cameras
- Not enough parking for large events? Would hate to lose green space

Community Needs

- Attract and retain young professionals and families, through starting families
- Engine to inspire investment in housing stock
- Public safety, personal and property
- Alternative activities for youngsters
- Access to healthier lifestyle choices
- Increased accessibility, especially for aging in place
- Jobs ranging from those requiring advanced degrees to limited skills, fits diversity of neighborhood
- Mix of needs

Reuse Options (that could address community needs)

- Physical fitness/recreation center, possibly upscale, use fields on site
- Bike/ped infrastructure facilities
- Grocery store
- Farmers market
- Community garden

- Urban agriculture center/sell local or regional produce, education and goods?
- Senior housing
- Housing for young professionals program, i.e. Teach for America
- School - neighborhood would be nice, but is that a thing of the past
- Adult education, such as a business school or incubator, trade school or training facility
- Community center – open place for the entire community...teens, seniors, etc... who runs it and how is it funded?, 501C3 non-profit action center offices, use as dance space
- Housing, expensive and seems too large
- Conservatory/community performances, such as a painting studio
- Culinary institute/community kitchen, goes with location in restaurant district...not good for neighborhood, restaurant ok but need possibly already served by St. James Place
- Center for transformational living
- Charter school, was at one time Edison School
- Multiple uses, multiple organizations...possibly with a theme such as dance or music
- Housing for different income levels
- Conservatory, opportunity for artists to draw nature, sculptures
- Enough parking for large events?
- Charter schools – no staying power?...just a good school, charter or not
- UMKC extension campus or other public or private university, such as KCAI
- Preserve building, do not demolish

Parking Lot (Technical or other questions to address at the next meeting)

- What will happen to WW II monument at the front of the school? (Recognizes students who served)
- Is the district in contact with alumni associations from Westport schools?
- What will happen to contributions from graduating classes?
- Is there a place to exhibit work or ex-students/memorialize closed schools?
- Support for ACE contract school model? How strong is support?
- How supportive is the district of charters? (Neighbors are interested in this option)
- Not enough parking for large events? Would hate to lose green space

BREAKOUT SESSION #2 (DB)

Site Significance

- Graduated from this high school, would not have gone on to get my license in Dentistry without a KCMO education
- Used to have a great school system with dedicated teachers
- Hyde Park is known for their historic preservation
- Gorgeous architecture
- Good bones, solid, gateway into Westport

- Don't want to lose the history of the building
- Not a strip mall or center for stores
- Symbol of neighborhood

Strengths

- Closed building gives a chance to reboot or start over
- Accessible to community by location
- Surrounded by stable, active neighborhood associations willing to participate
- Investment in nearby Armour Boulevard (housing, newly renovated)...could bring families back
- Parking garage at the middle school
- Easily remade to a city college because of the size, metro system
- Transportation line between major institutions, UMKC/Hospital Hill
- Size of open land
- Building is significant
- Solid – presence
- Beauty of site
- Gateway
- Building more than land
- Identification to Westport
- Historic buildings
- Symbol of area

Challenges

- Does the image of the school draw people back, such as young families
- Size of the building is daunting
- Because of the Southwest High School experience it would be hard to reopen any high school
- Gang activity to the east-- [solution: neighborhoods push back now, strong awareness, counseling if it is school, liaison with police department](#)
- Footprint size is challenge to maintain
- Tagging -- [solution: immediate removal](#)
- Long process to decision means more people hanging out and gathering/loitering...possible crime -- [solution: school district take responsibility and give point person to neighborhoods for response, city police substation on site...help district](#)

Community Needs

- Green space
- Close spot for child to get educated
- English language college prep, leadership to serve immigrant community
- Well kept piece of property
- Place for kids...organized athletic activities
- Summer sports clinics

- Active, used buildings to bolster image
- Maintain architectural integrity for neighborhood image and character
- Grocery store, restaurant, coffee shop – Brookside mix
- Place to congregate
- Health clinic

Reuse Options (that could address community needs)

- Safe house
- Community garden
- High School - neighborhood preference, but magnet ok
- Educational facility
- Sports fields
- Multiple use organizations
- University or community college
- Administrative offices for school district
- Community center - provide after school transportation, too big to be unchanged...community identified positives and negatives
- Housing, community says no because it is being done at Armour
- Conservatory, yes if it is UMKC
- Educational – Community theatre and arts programs serving all generations