

**Meeting Notes for the TLNA Steering Committee Meeting for the Salvation Army and  
Commonwealth Development Proposal for 630 E. Washington  
26 Sept. 2016, Festival Foods Conference Room**

**Attendees:**

Salvation Army:

Greg Voeller, Karen Potnek, Brad Zeman, Dan Loichinger

Commonwealth Development Corp.:

Kevin McDonnell

City:

District 2 Alder Ledell Zellers

TLNA Council:

Patrick Heck, Patty Prime, Richard Linster

Neighbors and Interested Parties:

Pat Kelly, Ryan Moze, Torrin Bechtel, Senay Goitom, Nan Schlimgen, Kate Larson,  
Alex Surasky-Ysasi

After introductions, Patrick Heck mentioned the charge of Steering Committee – to conduct a collaborative process, expressing both positives and negatives from the neighborhood’s perspective, with an interactive discussion involving all stakeholders that will hopefully result in a win-win for all involved – the developer, the neighborhood and the City.

He added that eventually, the steering committee will issue summary findings to TLNA Council who will then vote on some level of support for the proposal. The Steering Committee can also choose to issue stronger findings rather than or in addition to issuing a summary, but that is often not the result of TLNA Steering Committee processes. It is difficult to establish who is a voting member of a steering committee due to variable attendance, etc., so oftentimes formal voting does not occur in committee. Typically, after TLNA Council receives a committee’s report, the Council does vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, register a neutral stance, or reject a proposal. He mentioned that anyone with a financial stake in the development proposal’s success or failure should identify themselves (other than the development team). Upon hearing of no conflicts of interest, Patrick then asked the Salvation Army and Commonwealth Development representatives to review the proposal and their timeline.

Kevin McDonnell presented the overhead view of the proposed redevelopment from the August 30 neighborhood meeting (available at <http://www.tenneylapham.org/web-data/development/salvationarmy.htm>). Other than their timeline, the proposal has not changed since the neighborhood meeting. They, however, have been discussing entry points with city staff and want the neighborhood’s input on that. City planning staff is suggesting they think about having the Salvation Army entrance for clients on the E. Washington front of the building with the apartments’ entrance in the rear. The clients’ entrance on E. Washington would be convenient for bus users. They would still likely have multiple entrances, but they are interested in how the neighborhood would prefer to see the flow go. They are exploring putting the client entrance near the west side of the E. Washington front, near the parking spots that will be under the apartment building there.

**New Timeline:**

Based on feedback from the City and their wanting to be successful with an application to the City’s Affordable Housing Fund, they want to slow down the redevelopment. They want to get

more feedback from the neighborhood, so that when they apply to the City and to WHEDA, they have dotted all their i's and crossed all their t's. The next round for WHEDA funding is in January 2017 with another November 2017 – the latter is when they plan to apply. The City's Affordable Housing Fund deadline is August 2017 with the award in October 2017, so they will apply for that cycle. Brad Zeman of the Salvation Army's Advisory Board added that a lot came out of the neighborhood meeting, which he thought was very positive, and the SA doesn't want to rush the neighborhood. The SA also wants the WHEDA application and other financing to be successful, so they don't want to rush.

Pat Kelly asked what would happen if they weren't successful with those two funding sources. She also asked if we are looking at 2 years from now for groundbreaking. Kevin McDonnell answered that if they apply in Nov. 2017 as planned and the WHEDA awards are given in Feb. 2018, they would break ground in perhaps summer of 2018. Alder Zellers added that the land use approval by the City is another part of the process and could impact the timeline, but those approvals can sometimes be done in advance. Kevin said that the timing is actually great for them because they can move forward with the City process in the coming months and wait to hear about the WHEDA funding later.

Richard Linster said that he found the option to move the client entrance to E. Washington most heartening. In a past meeting he attended with the SA, Steve Maertz (a neighbor across from the SA), and Ledell, the City did not desire that option – he is very curious that they are being pushed in that direction now. He also asked about where the exit would be. Kevin said that they have many masters pushing them in many directions, so maybe Ledell can provide some insight. Most city staff seem to want the entrance on E. Washington, but there are concerns about more traffic coming/going on E. Washington. Some also don't want SA clients crossing busy E. Washington. He reiterated that the entrance/exit discussion was ongoing and everything was preliminary.

Patty asked if they had the client entrance on E. Washington, would it be a barrier to the neighborhood? Would the clients feel like they weren't part of the neighborhood, not integrated? Brad Zeman said that it could create a bit of a barrier. Some clients, however, don't want to be in the limelight – they are socially uncomfortable with being seen at the SA. Ideally, there could be a courtyard or the like so that clients don't have to be in full view on E. Washington.

Pat Kelly again asked what would happen if they didn't get their funding. She asked if evaluating their proposal was premature if they might not get funding. Kevin said that the funding is a key piece, but Commonwealth always scores highly on WHEDA's criteria. They have submitted 12 WHEDA applications since he's been with Commonwealth and they have all succeeded; they are WHEDA's top-ranked developer. Brad added that, on behalf of the Advisory Board, they are also hoping to have a capitol campaign for the project; tax credits are not their only hope. They plan to be very proactive. United Way selects which of their participating organizations can have a capitol campaign though, so they still have a lot to do to make that happen.

### **City Process:**

Patrick then summarized the city process that the proposal is expected to follow.

As is required, after they formally submit their plans to the City, there is a 30-day pause, after which the appropriate city committees can consider it. The Urban Design Commission (UDC) and the Plan Commission will consider the proposal. UDC will address the proposal's adherence to Urban Design District-8 requirements and aesthetics. Plan Commission will consider any

Conditional Uses and also make sure that UDD-8 requirements are met. Ledell added that Plan Commission approval would be required for the demolition of the existing building. The Conditional Uses will be for having dwelling units in a Traditional Employment zoning area. Ledell added that if they should seek a zoning change or build higher than 5 stories, the Plan Commission would be involved in those issues too. The Board of Estimates and Common Council approval will be required for any usage of the City's Affordable Housing Fund.

### **Review of Input from Neighborhood Meeting:**

Patrick then went over a bulleted list of input from the neighborhood meeting. He separated it into three categories:

#### **Client Services**

- What will be the maximum capacity of the redeveloped SA, what are current client numbers, and what do they expect after Nov. 1?
- Will services really be uninterrupted during demolition and construction? (Answer - that is still their plan).
- How will they coordinate with the day resource center across the street?
- Which income levels will get services from the SA? Who will coordinate the services and who gets them? What will those services be?
- How will SA clients be waitlisted for the apartments? Which income level will the apartments have a waitlist for? Will veterans get preference? Who will coordinate that?

#### **Miscellaneous**

- Who will own which parts of the project? What happens later when ownership transfers to the SA? Who will manage the apartments if the SA takes ownership? What is that timetable for transferring to the SA?
- Will the apartments be marketable given that some tenants could be recently homeless and due to the shelter's proximity?
- What is a similar facility in a similar location that they have learned from? What were the problems there? (Answer? – Higher Ground in Twin Cities)
- Permanent residents should be given tasks to create a sense of ownership and create a safe environment.

#### **Safety/Neighbor Relationships**

- Neighborhood feels it hasn't been engaged by the SA.
- Many neighbors believe the SA has not acted on problems in the past; therefore it is difficult to trust what they say about the redeveloped shelter. (Possible Answer – establish a joint committee to address issues).
- The cost to the City and neighbors is too great – neighbors have to deal with all the problems outside the SA's property, calling police, drug use/deals, trash, bad language, etc. (Partial Answer? - more greenspace and more windows to view property)
- Some neighbors believe the clients are great neighbors – good conversations, no problems.
- Offsite is where most problems occur: how will that be addressed? How will security problems with non-clients and clients be addressed when offsite?
- What are the security plans for (a) the shelter, (b) the remained of the development site, (c) off the SA's property? (Answer - SA is working on this).
- The SA needs to be more accessible – need one phone number and email for all contacts 24/7 and they need to respond.

**Discussion:**

Kevin clarified that initially the Salvation Army would own the 2 floors of their operation and that Commonwealth the SA would jointly own the apartments. It is not yet certain what the ownership split would be and how it would evolve over time. Typically, WHEDA regulations require a 15-year commitment for the affordable housing component and there is usually as much as another 15-year commitment added on to that.

Patrick suggested that at this meeting we should focus on the safety/security issues since neighbors at the Aug. 30 neighborhood meeting stressed those. Even though the developers are planning to move forward with the city approval process in the coming months, there is enough time to discuss neighborhood relations without shortchanging input on the infrastructure. Additionally, the building is still evolving, so this meeting is a good opportunity to discuss safety/security. All agreed.

Senay Goitom, who lives next to the proposal site at The Colony condos, said that on balance he has no concerns for his personal safety due to the SA and there are not significant issues impinging on his quality of life, but he knows the parking lot and the adjacent parking lot/spillover are a broader concern. He asked what the SA has done for lessons learned from data on incidents. Do they have data that tracks incidents? He wants to get a sense of where the SA stands in terms of being able to minimize 911 calls, etc. Their clients are a distressed population and we can't eliminate the issues entirely, but tracking incidents and using data would tell us what is going on and if solutions are working or not.

Karen Potnek, the SA's Services Coordinator, says that they do get data on calls to the police, but calling the police is a last resort because they try to problem solve and not escalate. They often use the non-emergency police number. Most 911 calls are from clients themselves. They are okay with the police parking in their lot to monitor things.

Senay reiterated that a more comprehensive approach to tracking would be good when planning ways for reducing problems and calls. Karen agreed – she thinks it is a good idea. Pat Kelly said that the people who you are not serving are the bigger issue (hangers-on). Karen said that the offsite people who are not clients are a concern for them too, but there isn't a lot the SA can do. When the police come - they scatter and the staff is not there 24/7. They have been talking about using rent-a-cop type security services, but they aren't sure it will help with offsite problems. Pat Kelly said that much of what we have heard are just anecdotes, but we need data. She understands though that the offsite issue is tough.

Richard Linster suggested that a formal structure be put in place, so that when neighbors feel they are being ignored there is a method to address their issues. A body that meets quarterly is probably not enough; it might need to be monthly and include representatives from the SA, the SA's clients, law enforcement, neighbors, etc.

Patty Prime asked about the shelter's hours. Are there people there all the time? Do clients only come in the evening? Karen said that the family and women's shelters open at 5pm. All their hours are on the SA's website. When the temporary homeless day shelter was on E. Washington, they coordinated hours with them.

Torrin Bechtel, a nearby neighbor, said that Melissa Sorensen from the SA said at the neighborhood meeting that they would send out SA contact info to the neighborhood. Has that

happened? There seems to be a continuing communication problem. Pat Kelly agreed. Ledell asked if the SA is on the neighborhood listserv. If so, they can post on the listserv to send out information. Kevin McDonnell agreed that it should have been sent out right away. Greg Voeller said they have a meeting tomorrow and will send it after that if it hasn't been sent out. Patty Prime asked if they wanted to send out everyone's contact number – wouldn't that be a scattergun approach? Karen Potnek said that during the day there is a receptionist who knows what is going on and they will send out her number. After hours (4pm to 8am and all day Sunday), there will be a supervisor's cell phone number made available. Patrick Heck suggested that they also list an email address for issues that don't require immediate attention.

Nan Schlimgen, whose family owns the adjacent parking lot and properties, said she likes the idea of an E. Washington entrance for clients, but they have to also be able to accommodate the fact that guests need to interact with the clients, e.g., picking them up, meeting them. Nan's family owns the next-door parking lot where people can disappear and the SA doesn't have eyes on it. Nan apologizes because a lot happens in their property next door, but they (including the SA) need city input and police supervision – they need to cast a wider net when looking at security and how the Schlimgens can help. Ledell asked Nan if they had posted no trespassing signs on their parking lot. Nan said she didn't think so, but there was signage about it being a private lot. Ledell said that she would like to talk later with Nan about getting official no trespassing signs so the police can do more. There was then a discussion of needing a courtyard for clients to wait outside and perhaps meet their friends/families when leaving. Patrick asked about the current policy with respect to non-clients. Karen said that they are not allowed onsite, but the sidewalks are Madison property so they sometimes are on the surrounding sidewalks. Nan said that after 5pm, their parking area is an open space because their parking space renters leave. Karen agrees that this is a concern – she is also concerned for the safety of the SA's residents.

Dan Loichinger of the SA Advisory Board said that their board has already approved a series of investments for cameras and updated security for the current building, but with a new facility they will deliberate where and which security choices are best. Ledell suggested that the SA collaborate with the Schlimgens to cover their property too. Kevin McDonnell pointed out that there is about a 10-15' strip between the SA building and the Schlimgen buildings, so they need to plan for that area too. Kevin added that the new apartments will help with that area and safety on the entire site. Tenants will be looking out windows. The interior of the SA will be much better for safety too – currently there are long corridors with dark spaces, but the new building will be modern and designed for its purpose. Nan asked if there will be access to the playground area from the inside. Yes.

It was mentioned that the SA staff has cleaned up vegetation/trash from the adjacent lot – it is good for security. They didn't say anything when doing it, but wanted to help neighborhood. They do more than some neighbors realize.

Pat Kelly said that she hears about drug deals in the parking lot, prostitution solicitation from neighbors walking by - are the SA clients involved? She wants to understand the source of the problems. Patty Prime added that reports from nearby neighbors are more concerns about trespassing and trash and concern for the clients. Ledell said that the neighbors' concerns included loud arguments, fights and profanity when children are around. Pat asked how does the SA problem solve? Have you done it yet? If you have, inform the neighborhood so we know or the neighborhood will think they have to do it. Patrick suggested to Karen that the SA should use the TLNA newsletter and listserv to tell the neighborhood of positive or proactive steps they are

taking.

Patty Prime refocused on the forming of a representative group to deal with problems – included should be representatives from the SA, clients, law enforcement and the neighborhood – they should look at the numbers. Karen said that the SA staff handles things onsite well – they are good at talking people down, but when the police are called, by the time the cops come, the incident is usually over. Karen added they have 110 people at same time and some are angry. They always try to talk them down, but when something does happen they have to witness an incident to report it.

Kevin McDonnell said that a key point is where this project is going – it is going a big improvement on the current situation. The parking lot is bad now, but with the apartments it will be much better. Senay said that to the SA's credit, it is fairly quiet, but there are a few issues. The issues being discussed are anecdotes only, so data will help understand the problem. Torrin Bechtel reiterated that most of the problems are not on the SA property.

Patrick said that volunteers from the neighborhood working at the SA would help with client-neighbor relationships. He hopes that the SA will cultivate volunteers from Tenney-Lapham so that they too are vested in the SA's success. He asked if there are now any volunteers from the neighborhood. Karen said no, but she did send out an invitation to the listserv in an attempt to engage the neighborhood. She asked that neighbors come and check out the SA and its programs. Only Linster showed up – no other neighbors. Senay said that a lack of engagement by both the neighborhood and the SA is a problem.

Patty suggested that two things would be helpful – (1) A regular meeting as we've discussed and if that group is not solving problems, it would at least improve communications, and 2. Try for an opportunity for a social event/component that would not impinge on client privacy – it could be a volunteer project, e.g., a garden project or something like that.

Alex Surasky-Ysasi said that she'd been in the neighborhood for only 9 months. She wonders about when the clients are trying to get into the SA. With the Day Resource Center just across the street, will there be someone around at intake for safety? Women getting there safely can be part of the battle - can we support them getting there? Karen Potnek said that currently Hospitality House runs a van to bring clients directly to the shelter. Security is on the SA's radar. Greg Voeller added that the SA is doing their Oct. 1 annual budget and have put security funds in the budget; it is under review now. Pat Kelly asked what the security budget was for. Greg said they were exploring hiring private security for Friday and Saturday nights. If the budget item is approved, then an RFP would eventually go out. There is the possibility of actual police officers. Ledell said that it has to be private security because police officers couldn't do this. She asked if they would provide security in a broader area. Gregg answered that their initial thoughts were that they would patrol the back parking lot area and could help clients get in/out as well as encourage hangers-on to keep moving along. Ledell suggested that they coordinate with Nan Schlimgen on this so that they could possibly do the adjacent lot. Brad Zeman said that security in the neighborhood is a more complicated problem – the SA's legal council is looking into it, but there a lot of issues related to people potentially suing the SA based on a private security company's actions, etc. Patty Prime said that she gets that it is a complex issue, but that it will be good to know what the scope of the security will be.

Talking again about forming a representative group to discuss issues, Karen said that the neighborhood building relationships with the clients will help too – there will be more mutual

respect. Patty and Karen agreed to work out the concept. Karen will ask an SA resident if it is possible for she/he to participate. They will discuss the frequency of meetings, recruit people who will be involved, and develop a regular agenda. Dan Loichinger said that one of his roles is to facilitate the SA's strategic plan. At their next planning committee meeting they can add something about this effort. Karen noted that there is huge improvement in the SA advisory board – they are getting a lot done.

Dan Loichinger mentioned that next Thursday the SA has a big fundraiser/lip sync battle at Burgamont in Oregon, WI. He hopes neighbors will support it. It was suggested that the fundraiser info be sent to TLNA.

When to have the next meeting? Richard Linster suggested before Thanksgiving and all agreed.

Pat Kelly asked if other SA locations around the country have struggled with similar issues. She would like to hear from the SA about successful approaches. Karen agreed that they need to get information about this and added that when problem solving, we can't just push the problem down the street.

Ryan Moze said there could be other people in the community that might have expertise in this who could help. The police may also have experience elsewhere that could help. He does think that the adjacent open lot is a problem and in some ways it is up to the property owner there to address the issues there.

#### **Next Meeting:**

Patrick suggested Monday, Nov. 7 for the next steering committee meeting. Almost all could make it, so that is tentatively set as the next meeting. He will email committee members with confirmation and encourages email communication amongst committee members using that list. The previous meeting notifications used "bcc", so email addresses were hidden. His next communication will be to the committee only, so email addresses will be shown.