

SUMMARY OF MEETING

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

JEFFERSON PARK STATION AREA MASTER PLAN

October 16, 2017 | 6-7:30pm | Copernicus Center Annex

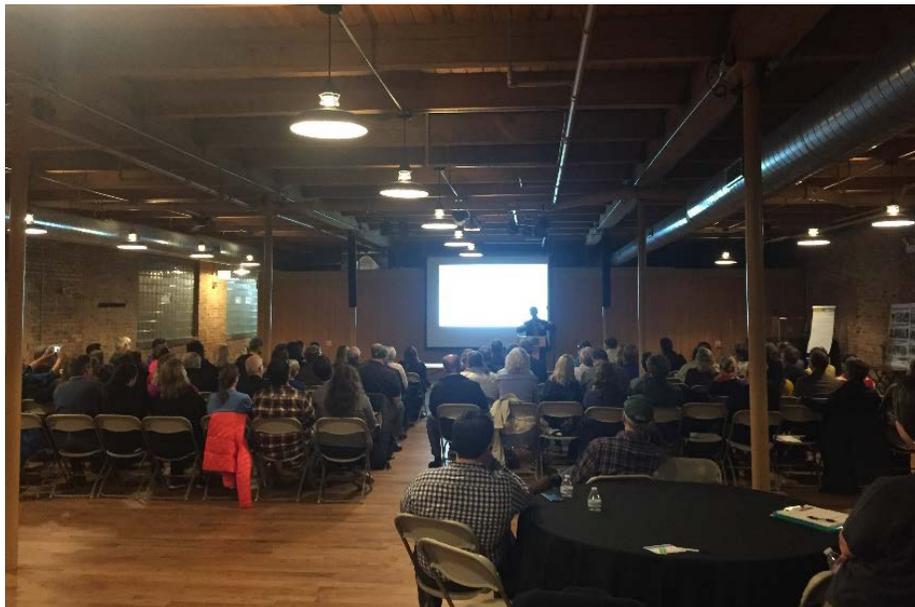
GENERAL OVERVIEW

The planning and community engagement process for the Jefferson Park Station Area Master Plan continued its momentum. Over 80 residents attended the second community meeting on Monday evening, October 16th at the Copernicus Center. While the first meeting focused on listening to residents and learning about their vision for the study area, this meeting presented preliminary goals and projects and asked participants for their input, hoping to better understand their preferences and priorities for the future of the Jeff Park Station Area.

The meeting began with opening remarks from Alderman John Arena who welcomed everyone, encouraged participation in the evening's interactive activities and highlighted the importance of working as a community to take advantage of the area's strengths to create a more walkable destination area with restaurants, businesses and places to spend time.

Laura Wilkison reviewed outreach activities over the past summer – from the first Community Meeting on June 19 to Jeff Park Master Plan booths at Jeff Fest and the Farmers Market, as well as attending local meetings to solicit input. She also presented the results of 967 people who had taken the survey - showing that 84% of respondents ranked transit access as being good or excellent, 67% of respondents indicating that pedestrian crossings are a high priority, and about half of respondents go out to eat and shop in Jeff Park each week.

After Scott Goldstein from Teska Associates reviewed the draft goals for the plan, everyone was encouraged to participate in break-out discussions around the room, organized by the three topics areas: Community Character, Economic Development and Transportation. Residents could participate in the conversation, write down comments and place dots on goals and projects they thought were worth pursuing. In addition, 42 people turned in comment cards and there were 983 dot votes cast in total.



TRANSPORTATION

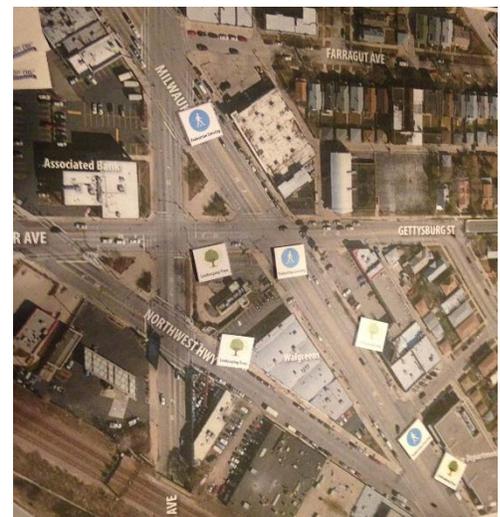
Draft goals included: improving walkability along key streets in the study area, improving access from the neighborhood to the Transit Center for all users, making the street network safer/more user-friendly, improving bike access, and strategically addressing parking.

Comments include: current signal timing is problematic when ongoing traffic has a longer green light, sidewalks should be wider and include trees, more shared parking is needed, streetscaping and signage should be improved, there are too many driveways and need better access management, could there be a walkable street similar to Lincoln Avenue in Lincoln Square, and more left turn arrows are needed.

The following are the more general transportation ideas that received the most dot votes:

- Shared parking
- Make railroad crossings more welcoming
- Drop-off area outside the Jeff Park Station
- Safer crossings
- Simpler road network
- Bicycle parking
- Streetscape improvements to enhance walkability

In addition to the boards which presented transportation goals and ideas for projects for the entire neighborhood, the transportation group also had an interactive mapping activity which focused on the intersection of Milwaukee Avenue/Foster Avenue/Central Avenue/Northwest Highway with the idea of reducing the number of crashes in the area.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Draft economic goals included: providing assistance to retain local and small businesses, attracting a range of businesses to serve residents, employees and visitors, supporting entertainment and cultural destinations in Jeff Park, and building on the range of housing options for residents of all ages in Jeff Park.

The economic development group discussed the desire to attract restaurants and entertainment to Jeff Park. Residents also shared ideas to adapt vacant spaces to modern uses, like converting the former Woolworth's building into a space that could be rented by artists or those needing a temporary office. Participants agreed that curb appeal is important, and that currently the post office annex represents a dead space on Milwaukee Avenue. Below are the ideas that received the most dot votes:

- Fill vacant storefronts
- Build on existing business clusters
- Live-work space
- Existing multi-family housing
- Theater / venue space

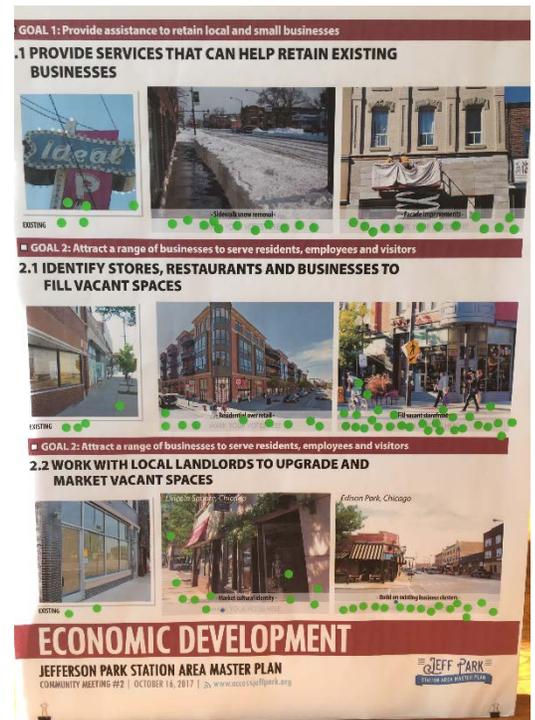
"It is important to present a positive image of the area to attract business."

-Meeting Participant

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character draft goals included improving the sense of place and building on the identity of Jefferson Park, improving public space, improving streetscapes to foster walkability, developing design guidelines to enhance the character of the community and improving community safety through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

In this station, residents talked about a need to emphasize local history, through preserving and improving the facades on buildings like the old firehouse, adding plaques around the neighborhood, and potentially having some signs in Polish. They also discussed ways to promote the area, including creating a cohesive theme for Jeff Park and establishing a marketing campaign for local businesses.



When voting on the ideas for projects relating to each goal, the items that received the highest number of dots included:

- Street landscaping
- Pedestrian-oriented lighting
- Public outdoor space
- Public winter garden
- Clear sense of ownership for every site

“I would love to see more green space with small businesses nearby.”

-Meeting Participant

There was also an opportunity for people to lay out their vision for the future on interactive maps that focused on what types of uses made sense on the vacant land between Milwaukee Avenue, Lawrence Avenue and Lipps. Photos showing some of the participants' ideas are below.



The next step for the process will be to compile all of the information gathered through the outreach efforts and begin to layout specific recommendations and project ideas. In early 2018, the draft recommendations and projects will be presented back for public comment at the third Community Meeting.

PRESENTATION SLIDES

The presentation slides and exhibits can be found on the project website:

www.accessjeffpark.org/documents

NEXT STEPS

- Develop set of recommended projects to meet the goals and strategies discussed at Community Meeting #2
- Continue outreach efforts in Jefferson Park
- Plan Open House in early 2018