

Neighborhood Meeting
7/22/21
Lambert Woods Cooperative

Introductions

Liz Trice, Matt Peters, MCDP Principals

Amy Johnson - 20 Armstrong Heights - Wants a nicer place to walk dog

Dave Smith - 1771 Washington - looking to downsize with wife and interested in coop idea

Ruth Bettinger - 501 Summit Street - Wants transit to be improved

Seth Moore - Lives on Clark St - interested in continuing to live in Portland without being priced out

Clay Maker - Mayfield St - Penobscot - Construction Manager

Margo Barajas- Aceto Landscape Architects (ALA) - excited to see coop style of project

Sam Lebel - Acorn Civil Engineers - excited to see a new type of housing come to fruition

John Voltz - Cape Elizabeth - Interested in community and co-housing, and exploring it for adult son with living disabilities, and maybe for himself / wife later on

Ed Eggleston - 650 Auburn

Cynthia Grier - Lives in Stroudwater interested in living in coop, is interested in garden plots- preferably closer to home,, pottery studio, mushroom growing location

Linda Bennet - lives nearby

Richard Bennet - lives close to USM, interested in being a resident

Linda Halleran - Town and Country Federal Credit Union - Cooperative and partner and supportive and expanding

Presentation by Liz:

Mission - Guiding principles

Review of location

Review of timeline - Received approval from Council for 622 Auburn and just beginning Planning Board approval process

Review of Goals for the Development

Ed knows the owner of Lambert/Washington Falmouth lot

Ed - worried about parking and traffic. Street parking might be an issue. Eliminates the ability for bike and walking along street, Mentioned accommodating school bus for the site. The stream on the North side of Washington runs in a culvert under his yard. He's worried about stormwater. Thinks it's good that we are thinking 1:1 parking, but doesn't think on-street parking is a good idea; concerned that there is too much traffic on Washington. "The bike lanes aren't that wide, and will be a safety issue crossing the street." - concerned about safety. Thinks school busses should come through the development, not pick up kids on Washington.

Seth - likes public open space, enjoys playing music with friends in public parks, would like to see a coffee shop, appreciates the idea of using trees between parking spaces on Washington to slow traffic. Asks about sound attenuation for truck traffic noise

Liz - passive house standard helps with sounds, also desires to slow down traffic on Washington to reduce noise

Rachel - Nice to have a larger outdoor grill area to accommodate a bunch of people from other buildings; prefer to have garden all in one place (to meet more neighbors); definitely to have a playground. It's hard to envision plazas & patios without a rendering. A trail through a patio could be ok, but might be better to be to one side.

Ed - Please show the connection to the trail network north of Washington, also wants to know if he'll be welcome walking through the development, wants to feel welcome.

Seth: Can we have green roofs? Answer: not sure yet.

John Volk - Likes Plan B since the open space more central and on Washington, has nice vistas from Washington.

Amy - Road noise is substantial from Washington, Plan B is worse because it will be loud along Washington, show walking trails in the treed area (Ed agrees with the noise) Also wants to be able to walk through and not feel like an intruder.

Rachel - public open space further from the road would be better, likes version A.

Seth - design A makes more sense for someone living there and desires trails through woods

Ruth - Gardens, climate change and water may be an issue in the future (rain barrels). asked about basements (her house feels warmer with basement than other slabs). Since there's so many units, need to think about light pollution, softer lighting, pointed down, stagger buildings so the one apartment isn't looking into another or getting direct light from another.

Clay: from a structural perspective either slab or basement can work. Some modular construction has a crawl space. We can insulate well under slab so it's not cold.

Seth - We need to design stormwater system to handle all the water, but then can figure out good rainwater recapture.

Rachel: what is the plan for heating and cooling? Heat pumps would be cool.

Matt: Passive house reduces the need for heating and cooling dramatically. The goal is to have a ventilation system that provides excellent air quality year round. We've been talking about heat pumps. Another, less expensive option, is electric baseboard plus optional window AC.

Amy - the woonerf, having cars parked far away, seems like a lifestyle, a "high commitment design"... interesting to see who is attracted to and ok with not having a car right by their front door. More german to ask potential residents than existing neighbors would like.

Cynthia: gardening is important to her, she wants to grow vegetables, would love to have a pottery studio, grow mushrooms. "The closer a garden is to your home, the easier it is to manage"

Ed - Would like to see a next revision since so many details haven't been worked out yet.

Asking about Neighborhood Center on Washington

Ed - thinks traffic is too heavy on Washington, and it's impractical. (Can we count cars together?)

Ruth - many neighbors would like place to walk to.

Dave Smith - tie connection together like Site plan B, though prefers site plan A. Transition to electric cars may happen quickly, so concern about parking on Washington Ave and adding EV charging on site. Agrees that school buses should go into the loop.

Amy - connection between two developments is important to think about, think about how much community amenity space will be needed. Will need a hefty crosswalk across Washington with a flashing light. Likes the idea of a coffee shop. Maybe the Northern side could be less dense. A coworking space would be nice.

Ruth: need to think about how pedestrians get from one side of Washington to the other.

Sam: would like to align curb cuts on either side of Washington.

John - Final design will be impacted by whether people are convinced that traffic mitigation will work. Would like to see a rendering of Washington that shows traffic mitigation.

Ruth - Will there be a transportation center?

Liz: The idea is to have one of the neighborhood center spaces be near the bus stop so that people can wait in there (There will also be a bus shelter), and the bus driver can use the bathroom.

Matt: we are working on an idea to increase bus usage by giving all residents free passes to Metro for 10 years, and paying metro up front to improve service. Right now only 3.5% of total trips in the region are by bus.

Ruth would like to see a fitness trail. Will there be elevators?

Matt: elevators are really expensive, so typically shifts design towards very large buildings so that many, many units can share one elevator. In this case, we are leaning towards having smaller buildings, and having 1-2 units on the first floor of each building.

Liz: should we be thinking about deer passage across Washington?

Amy/Ed: They see deer in backyards daily; deer don't read the signs, they'll find their way.

Ed: all the homes between Washington and highway on Auburn are on septic; sewer stops at Washington and goes up Garsoe

Amy - maybe Habitat could put a few single homes off Garsoe or Ray.

DM From Dave Smith - I was formerly a public transit manager and consultant. Feel free to call me before your meeting with Metro. 207.615.3036

Sam: Traffic counts from 2010 are 3,500/day; about 10% are busses or trucks. Peak hours are 7am (200 vehicles heading west) and 4pm (2019 vehicles heading East); most of the day is 100 vehicles/hour, drops to 40/hour by 8pm, and 18/hour by 10pm.

https://mainedottrafficdata.drakewell.com/sitedashboard.asp?node=MAINE_DOT_SDC&cosit=230517021807

Takeaways & questions.

- Need to show that we can make traffic on Washington slower, less noisy, less dangerous through narrowing, on street parking, trees, and crosswalks. Will we need a flashing light?
- Research rain capture for gardening etc
- Preference is for common green to be farther from Washington (version A) due to traffic concerns
- Need to think about relationship between North and South side of Washington. EG, do we want neighborhood center building on both sides? Line up curb cuts on both sides of Washington? Do we put most central neighborhood amenities on one side, or split them up?
- Can we create a corridor for wildlife to cross Washington on east side of developments?
- What are best practices (and cost) for fitness trail?
- Create detail sketch and sample renderings for hardscape patio (residential) and plaza (neighborhood center) areas.
- Develop plan with Metro for free bus passes
- Develop trails map that shows both sides of Washington
- Consider how to cluster garden beds, provide water and sun, preferably multiple clusters close to buildings.
- Important to maintain some semi-privacy on patios, but also make sure the campus in general is welcoming to people from the surrounding neighborhood out walking.

- Thumbs up on coffee shop and “places to walk to”
- Can we use the two sides of Washington as a way to test hypotheses (for example about car distance from units)
- Many details are not figured out yet, can we give the neighborhood an update before sending to Civil to nail it down?