



City of Aurora

2nd Floor Council
Chambers
44 E. Downer Place
Aurora, IL 60505
www.aurora-il.org

FoxWalk Overlay District Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday
April 19, 2023
6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Zine called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following Committee members were present: Fernando Castrejon, Clara Diaz, Brian Failing, Seth Hoffman, Jeff Palmquist, and Charlie Zine.

Fawn Clarke-Peterson was absent.

OTHERS PRESENT

The following staff members were present: Ed Sieben, Jill Morgan, and Sharon Burden.

Others Present: Todd Vanadilok – Egret & Ox Planning

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

23-0282

Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2022 Design Review
Committee Meeting

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Mr. Failing

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Castrejon

Motion carried by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Failing , seconded by Mr. Castrejon, that the minutes be approved and filed. The motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Zine said if there is anybody in the audience who wants to speak on an issue that's not on the agenda, you can do so. You'll have three minutes. No one came forward.

AGENDA

23-0311

Discussion on FoxWalk Overlay District Design Guidelines Update

Mrs. Morgan said I was just going to introduce the consultant...well, introduce the project if you guys don't remember. So, the City hired Todd with Egret & Ox Planning to update the FoxWalk District Design guidelines. I think I mentioned this back at last years meeting that we were hoping to bring this project forward. So, the last time the guidelines were updated was 2006, so we hired a consultant to hopefully kind of clarify ambiguous language, expand areas to include more specific guidance, to update the Public Works improvements, to coordinate with our existing efforts, and to incorporate recent developments of best practices of preservation, building technology, and planning law. It's a complete update of all the guidelines and we kind of identify certain areas that we know we definitely might want to talk about: the storefronts that we brought up last year, signage to make sure that's up to date including some of the changes as well making sure it adheres to current case law for signage. That part, the law part, we'll be working with our Legal Department on. There's some...I think I sent you that email with the links of a website and a map, and Todd will go into that in more detail. So, if there's no questions for me on just kind of the project overview, I'll turn it over to Todd.

Mr. Vanadilok said good evening, everybody. My name is Todd Vanadilok, as Jill said. I'm a planning consultant with Egret & Ox Planning. I'm actually an independent consultant. Prior to being independent, I actually worked with Teska Associates. They're based in Plainfield and Evanston. I was there for 16 years and I was going to do just kind of general, for the agenda, we're going to do a brief introduction of myself and then a brief project overview and we'll go over some of the outreach activities that we'll be doing for this project, and then the bulk of our time together will just be a discussion on your thoughts and ideas about the FoxWalk District and then go over the next steps. And then, that's my part. Again, my name is Todd Vanadilok, I'm the principal planner for Egret & Ox Planning. I've been planning for about 21 years, since 2002. I actually have connections to Aurora; I was really involved when I was back...when I was at Teska, with the Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative, the ANPI, process. That actually started in 2000. I was brought in with Teska in about 2002, so that timeline you see on the screen. We created the handbook and then we, using the handbook, we created Working with the City. There were 20 neighborhoods that were identified and over that, over about 12...it looks like a 14-year process, we went through 7 of those 20 neighborhood plans. Actually, some of them touch upon the FoxWalk District area, you'll actually see in that map. It's a little small but it's McCarty, Burlington neighborhood to the east near West Galena to the north, Bardwell to the south, and then the University Neighbors a little bit further west, but not fairly close. So, you can see how they're all kind of touched upon or fairly close to this area. I served as the lead planner on all 7 of those planning initiatives through 2014. I also went to high school here. I went to the Illinois Math and Science Academy. I didn't live...I didn't grow up here. I grew up in Southern Illinois, but I have a deep affinity for Aurora just having gone to high school here. I actually graduated in the FoxWalk District at the Paramount Arts theatre so it kind of comes full circle for me. So, I have a project overview. I actually have a printout of this too, so I'll leave this behind. It's in your...you can actually see it on the screen but if you wanted a paper copy, I'll leave it behind plus I'll leave my business cards too if you need to contact me directly. I'll give those to Jill. Very quickly, it's a 4-phase process. Right now, we're in the project initiation phase. Last month, in late March, we did a project launch for City Staff and then we did a walking tour today. So, Jill and Ed and a few others on City Staff led a walking tour. Fernando was there too, so it was really very informative.

Mr. Castrejon said and Brian.

Mr. Vanadilok said and...oh, and Brian, yes...there you are. So, it was really informative, I really enjoyed it. We actually had good sun before the rains came, so that was very good. And then, Project Outreach, it's called Phase 2 but it's actually pretty much, it flows throughout, weaves throughout the whole process so it's not really one phase, it's throughout. Phases 3 and 4 is...Phase 3 is drafting, doing an initial draft of the Design Guidelines update and then the last phase, Phase 4 is finalizing that as well. And we'll go through multiple iterations of that Design Guidelines presented to you as a Design Review Committee, presented to City Staff, so that kind of goes through your internal review processes. And if we need to involve any other Boards or Commissions, we can do that as well. And then we also are going to translate this document into Spanish as well, but we'll get that...get into that when we get to that point in Phase 3 or 4. This gives you a general sense of how all that fits into a project schedule. It's about a 7-month process. We started late last month, in March and then we'll finish it up in September, so early fall. You can actually see, this will be in the printout as well so you can take that home with you as well, but we'll be meeting with you periodically. Looks like we're going to meet with you at least 4 times, but we can definitely meet more often as necessary. We'll have bi-weekly check-ins. I actually email Jill pretty often, so I check in with Jill pretty often to kind of get things moving in terms of outreach and to answer questions. And I'm sure when we get into the drafting of the update, we'll be kind of interfacing a lot more when that goes along. Just wanted to show this how it visually shows in a 7-month process. And we also have...I'll go over some of the outreach elements on the next slide as well. In terms of outreach as Jill mentioned, we do have a project website. You're welcome to go to it and take a look. It just went up. Kind of the short version of the web address is tinyurl.com/foxwalkdg, "dg" stands for "design guidelines". But if you can't remember that we can send an email about that later. Another part of that...so the project website is kind of like where you can go to find more information, will keep you up to date on what's going on, we'll post job documents to that. If you want to have public review, they can do that as well. One neat feature about that project website is there's a comment map. It's an interactive...basically it's an aerial map of the study area. People can zoom in on it, they can go as deep into a specific parcel or intersection, and they can drop down a note and say "I like this intersection. I like this, I don't like this, I would like to change this, I want to keep this." So, it's a really interactive way so that we do have 2 public open houses scheduled. The first one is next month but for those people who can't attend those open houses or people who just want to comment because they had an idea late at night and they just want to post it, they can just go to that comment map. We'll keep it up for several weeks. That's a really great way to interact with it and post comments. It's very interactive because it's an aerial map and people...we just find people are very visual and then they know, like, certain intersections, certain streets, certain businesses. They can pinpoint that particular property or portion of the area and post their comments that way. We'll do stakeholder or focus groups later in May or maybe June depending on timing, but that'll get us a great way for us to talk to more people to get their thoughts on the FoxWalk District. Again, we'll have 2 open houses; 1 at the beginning of the process in May and another one near the end when we present the draft design guidelines, probably in late summer. Again, we'll meet with you as the Design Review Committee periodically and we'll meet with the boards and commissions as needed, particularly at the end for approvals at the approval stage, and then the check ins with these. So, this is basically the bulk of the process is our agenda for today to just get your thoughts and key issues or ideas that you had for what you want to see in the update to the design guidelines. Maybe just to jog...just to kind of get us started. I provided a bullet list, some of the thoughts that actually came up, most of the discussion that came through our walking tour today, but also when we did the staff kickoff in March. So, some of the things that came up, kind of the 3 biggest projects is like the Broadway Streetscape project will have a major influence,

the National Historic Register for the Broadway properties, and then the New York Street bridge work are 3 of the kind of like overarching larger projects will have...that will have an influence on the design guidelines. And then kind of more smaller specific pieces will be signs; we heard things about like blade signs, electronic message boards, non-conforming signs and so on so those are the things that we'll address in the update. Murals...somewhat related...those are murals on walls, but we also thought about...when talking to Public Works today about murals that can be stamped on like crosswalks or not crosswalks, but the intersections, especially along Broadway. I think there was one pilot project that was going up at Stolp and...I'm blanking on the name...

Mrs. Morgan said Downer.

Mr. Castrejon said Stolp and Downer.

Mr. Vanadilok said Downer, yeah, so not too far from here. And then lighting; that also came up. Also, another thing that Public Works came up, brought up was that it's more than just like general lighting like gooseneck lighting or historic lighting, but colored lighting. So, like, like you know when you go to Chicago and the Sears Tower they light up the tower, the antenna for to symbolize special events or special occasions and so on, so stuff like that is something that might be explored in a design guideline update. Outdoor dining and rooftop decks was also explored, ADA accessibility was also mentioned at various points, parking...both garage parking and on and off-street parking, particularly on Broadway especially when they're going to...the plan is to potentially reduce the amount of lanes and remove parking, where would that parking go? And how would you regulate that as well? So, we'll take a look at that. Dumpsters and utility enclosures were brought up. Landscaping and building materials, particularly like can you paint...what are the regulations about painting brick? Like, do you just want the brick as it is or is it okay to paint it, stuff like that that we'll cover. The BNSF viaduct was also brought up in terms of how to regulate how that's being used and so on and also coordinating with BNSF as a third-party partner. And then we just looked at potential redevelopment sites. Those may not come up in terms of what we want to see there but in terms of how would you...what design guidelines will impact what actually goes there. So, those are the main things that came up but I did definitely want to hear from you in terms of anything that resonates on the screen, those that you want to kind of highlight or any new thoughts that aren't up there that you want to make sure that we look at in terms of reviewing the design guidelines. So, I'll open it up for you all.

Chairman Zine said I have a question for Jill. We created the Middle Avenue Historic District sometime in the not too distant past, but I'm not really sure what the boundaries are of that.

Mrs. Morgan said so the Middle Avenue is a National Register District and it's really just almost a block. It's not very big.

Chairman Zine said so is it outside of the...

Mrs. Morgan said it is outside of the Downtown guidelines, yeah.

Chairman Zine said I wasn't for sure how far north it came.

Mrs. Morgan said not that far north. It kind of ends almost below the library, like the library parking lot...from the library below that.

Chairman Zine said okay, got it, okay.

Mr. Palmquist said I have one question too. Where...Jill or Ed...where does the...we've had discussions over the last few years regarding pavers and paver material and detailing; where does that fit into this process? Will that be addressed and kind of revisited as well and new details...?

Mr. Sieben said yeah, absolutely. We were showing Todd some of that today, the mix and the match and what do we do, so that is huge. I'm not sure if he had it up there but that's huge.

Mr. Palmquist said right I don't see that specifically, but I think there's one thing that we've talking about more than anything, windows and pavement.

Mr. Sieben said right, the brick ribbon strips, right...yes.

Mr. Vanadilok said yeah, that was generally covered under that first bullet point; the Broadway Streetscape, but we did have...that was one of the first things we talked about on our tour was about the pavers and...

Mr. Sieben said the first thing we got on Broadway.

Mr. Vanadilok said the double ribbon, whether it stays a double ribbon.

Mr. Sieben said and then you had to double ribbon the old ones where right on the building the new ones are a foot across. So, we were right down from our office, and it was along the building and the new piece was this...so, it was like jogged, you know.

Mr. Vanadilok said and then like tree grades, trees that just won't grow. How do you...replacing those with bricks that don't match.

Mr. Palmquist said and some railing details too and those kinds of things so...yeah. Streetscape elements I guess, you know, you can be on the Broadway context.

Chairman Zine said I have a question then. So, regarding the parking situation on Broadway; is there...is the look at parking just restricted that one block of Broadway between Galena and New York?

Mr. Vanadilok said it'll be for the whole district. It'll just look at...I guess from a design guidelines, like, how if you were to create new...new lots, or even like existing lots. I know during the tour we talked about how there's interest about repainting some of the existing parking structures, replacing the lighting, what is appropriate, particularly you don't want to do a one-off and just do it for one property and then do something different for another. You want to have some consistency so we're going to look at in terms of how do you codify that in your design guidelines so that if you do it for one project and then 10 years later you have a new parking garage going up that'll have...it doesn't have to look 100% the same but it should have some consistency in terms of design.

Chairman Zine said are we looking at the idea of this parking enforcement in general? I mean, that's the complaint I hear all the time downtown. And I just read a recent article in a planning online thing about how you shouldn't be charging for...charging for parking or ticketing for parking in downtown. I know that the few times that I hang out too long at the coffee house, I get a ticket. And it's only a couple of bucks but it just really irks me, you know. I mean, and I hear that all the time. So, are we looking at that at all or are we pretty happy with the current approach that

we're taking on that? Maybe that's more directed to you, Ed.

Mr. Sieben said well if you remember we used to charge for parking, we don't anymore. You know, you just gotta follow the timeframes.

Chairman Zine said but it's the time thing. I mean...

Mr. Sieben said right...

Chairman Zine said you're chasing people out, you know, because you can't even move the car anymore.

Mr. Sieben said that's something we'll look at.

Chairman Zine said okay, good. Good.

Mr. Hoffman said I think kind of leaving a map...my thoughts on parking is, that's a really common complaint from people who aren't familiar with downtown, like "I can never find somewhere to park"...well, you actually look at and I was just looking at it now because there's a decent interactive map on the City website. There's a ton of parking here. It's...and I'm looking at it and I don't even realize, oh, some of those are open public lots. So, I think...and I'm...I think the City has done some parking...I don't know if...done some parking studies for sure over time, looking at the volume of spaces and then demand over time. I don't think there's as much a shortage of actual parking spaces as there is awareness and ease to find them. So, I don't know if it falls into purview of this effort but a more holistic wayfinding mapping. I think the lots all have their own weird names. I don't remember which one it is, but just the one over just east of Broadway...is it between New York and Galena? Maybe it's the other side of New York, that was redone a couple of years ago with the lighted signs, like...

Mr. Sieben said Lot E.

Mr. Hoffman said I didn't even notice that lot was there until I had the snazzy new retro style signs. I don't know if that came out of some design...

Mrs. Morgan said no, but that's what we did. We pointed those out to Todd and mentioned like maybe trying to have consistent...more those type of signage...consistency with it. Some wayfinding...talk about wayfinding signage to try to make it be more aware of...

Mr. Hoffman said especially when you're in the high traffic areas or if you're coming to Paramount or something, or you're driving down Broadway or Galena and maybe there are some, they're just hidden, you know, or behind street poles or something but you find the restaurants you want to stop at, if there's some clear wayfinding then...oh "parking, turn right here"...

Mr. Sieben said yeah, I would agree with you. Like on Broadway...

Mr. Hoffman said it's a half a block away...

Mr. Sieben said a directional that hey, a half a block away, like behind Clara's building in Lot E there for people to know right there, there's a ton of parking, you know what I mean?

Mr. Hoffman said yeah.

Mr. Sieben said absolutely, you know; directional, informational, that kind of thing.

Mr. Vanadilok said yeah, those new public parking signs that look like Las Vegas signs.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, yeah.

Mr. Vanadilok said that caught my eye instantly and I, like, I know that's parking right there. I usually take the train, the Metra, here but when I drove here, I was like...I could general easily find parking, but I'm a planner. I gravitate towards parking pretty easily. But yeah, in terms of policy, we may not get into like the overarching City policy about what parking enforcement should be but things like signage, wayfinding we can definitely look at that.

Mr. Hoffman said I think having more guidance to these...some have relatively large lots that have, they're maybe already classified pretty well in terms of time periods, will make it easier for people to find somewhere that they can...that they be there for 3 hours because the 15 minute spaces I think are valuable for those quick stops but they're the most obvious and if you had...didn't have those time restrictions, they'd...you'd lose that value of them being past turnover to the businesses in front. I guess to piggyback off that and part of the reason I don't know as much about parking is I walk or bike here because I live in a neighborhood near there, and bike racks are kind of hit and miss finding around here. I try...I don't...

Mr. Sieben said that's a good point.

Mr. Hoffman said I don't like to lock my bike under trees or to lamp posts, but sometimes that's all I can find within a block.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, I don't remember...did we see any bike racks today, walking?

Mr. Castrejon said there was one and I think Todd made a point...

Mr. Sieben said one...yeah, there's not many. That's a good point.

Mr. Vanadilok said yeah, the parking lot just a half a block from here has some nice parking...bike parking, nicer I should say, relative, but some that were actually, like, shaped like bikes so that's stuff that you can play with from a design standpoint. It's very visual, but yeah...something that's becoming more and more prevalent in zoning and design guidelines is parking beyond just cars. It's bike parking and you're even seeing for scooter parking and so on, so yeah. Yes, something we'll look at.

Chairman Zine said also on parking; I think I've driven my car to RiverEdge Park 1 time out of the 15 or so times I've been there, and I really think it's time to start thinking about a bike corral over at RiverEdge Park. I think I've heard someplace that only 15% of the people come to the concert there are from the City, but nonetheless, 15% of 8000 people is a few bikes, and if we don't provide a place...a safe place...to put the bikes, people aren't going to ride. And I had...my son had one of my good bikes stolen from the Roundhouse which was locked up, and it turns out...because I checked over there...that that was a hot spot for stealing. People would come in on the train, they'd have wire cutters or bolt cutters and so, if we did have a big corral, I think we'd need to consider whether or not it makes sense to put some kind of video camera there because I won't ride my bike to the Roundhouse anymore, period, ever...you know?

Mr. Hoffman said my very first week in Aurora, my bike was stolen from the Roundhouse there (inaudible). I go to file a police report and they said "oh, that happens a lot. The camera that points over there is broken, though."

Mr. Sieben said wow!

Mr. Hoffman said that was...that hurt a little bit.

Chairman Zine said so, that's just a point.

Mr. Hoffman said yeah, very good points about parking.

Chairman Zine said I see dumpsters are up on the list, and this is a pet peeve of mine. I've written emails to the City on this but we only have 1 section of the FoxWalk that's truly along the original plan which was 2 levels. The lower level by the river and the upper level which is right behind Waubonsee and right there at the...where the lower level comes up and meets the street level, there's a dumpster that belongs to the ABC Building that is on the FoxWalk and sometimes there's piles of garbage next to the dumpster. Now, there isn't a good spot existing right now for a dumpster there but behind it on the north side, you could put a little landfill and make a little bit of a concrete pad big enough...

Mr. Sieben said I believe we've approved that for them to do that.

Chairman Zine said oh, good.

Mr. Sieben said so, that's been approved. I'm not...I failed to ask today what the timing of that was, but that's been approved. So, they'll be a concrete pad on the north side of the building, lease on the City property...you know, just a little bit, and it's for the ABC Building, so, yes that I think, God willing, that will occur this year.

Chairman Zine said excellent. Thank you for...

Mr. Sieben said yeah...no, that bugged every time I walked by there.

Chairman Zine said I go by it a lot, on bike and running and just...every time I see it, it's just a thorn in my side.

Mr. Failing said I mean the big thing for me is very much the signage and the wayfinding. We've talked about wayfinding in this group and Aurora Downtown, everyone talks about wayfinding and how we do want to improve that, so I think having some good guidance in terms of what could be done and make it all consistent across the downtown through the FoxWalk, 1 and then 2, with the signage, building signage...you know, we...as we're walking down Downer just on 1 building that has 4 or 5 storefronts, every sign was different material, different look, different paint job for the storefront...everything...so having some consistency in the guidelines I think will be huge.

Mr. Vanadilok said yeah, that's a really good point, Brian. And even Jill pointed out a lot of the signs should have like a sign...what's it called...a sign board. Like a...

Mr. Sieben said a frame.

Mr. Vanadilok said a frame, a rectangle. It's just to make sure that your sign is in there but also if you can fill it out, you can do that. Consistency...like we saw, like we saw a few times there, there's some people like fabricated signs, some had the kind

of like the flag signs that are just kind of like stapled to the...so, yeah consistency's definitely key, so good point.

Mr. Hoffman said perhaps window or sign illumination and window lighting...

Mr. Sieben said the LED...the LED borders...

Mr. Hoffman said those pop up everywhere and then...

Mrs. Morgan said yeah...

Mr. Hoffman said and it's...

Mrs. Morgan said yeah, we saw that too and yeah, we were saying we needed to discuss what should be allowed, what shouldn't. I can't recall what the sign.... the sign ordinance for the rest of the City...

Mr. Sieben said we just re-did it in December of '21 and I can't remember what we did. Tracey worked on that with Trevor.

Mrs. Morgan said and then even...maybe allowing a little slightly larger signs based on maybe wall size. Some places it doesn't...just sometimes...make sense to just to be 12 square feet for every building in the Downtown.

Mr. Sieben said right....right.

Mrs. Diaz said I have a concern. In so many times, some kids come to the downtown for skateboards and it's very dangerous because we don't have any sign in the parking lot about it's not good place for play like they do. And especially next to my building, Yolanda's Jewelry, in the back she has a big door like behind to her building and those kids start to play up to this door and turn to the other sidewalk. It's very dangerous because they come in where this is the trash cans to the buildings faster. And sometimes coming so faster and it's just very dangerous in this area. I don't know if it's part of the guidelines we can do something because it's very dangerous. It's coming summer and last weekend we had a problem with one of the boys. He's broken his leg.

Mr. Sieben said so one of the skate...one of the skateboarders?

Mrs. Diaz said the skateboards, yeah.

Mr. Sieben said oh, I guess he won't be skateboarding much.

(Laughs)

Mrs. Morgan said isn't there a...

Mrs. Diaz said and they coming one in the 12 pm in the night, 1-2..they are playing in the parking lot.

Mr. Sieben said might be a good idea to maybe look at a designated area or a park or...

Mrs. Morgan said I thought we talked...I thought there were plans for a skate park.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, but that kind of dropped away but that's a good point, Clara.

Mrs. Diaz said yeah, just mention to you guys what happened in parking area. I don't know if it happened in another parking...I don't know.

Mr. Castrejon said it has happened. I think that was one of the reasons why the concrete (inaudible) bag was removed from Tiny Park.

Mr. Sieben said skinny?

Mr. Castrejon said Skinny Park...Skinny. So, question for Todd; as far the re...possible redirecting for Galena and New York, has a conversation been started with IDOT?

Mr. Vanadilok oh, Public Works did mention that they're doing Engineering this year and then it's a multi-year process. They had...then they'll do public engagement starting this year as well, I believe. So, it's still in the early phases.

Mr. Castrejon said okay.

Mr. Sieben said I think it's still a moving target with IDOT too from what I heard today, right?

Mr. Vanadilok said yeah, I think so.

Mr. Sieben said yes, so it'll get fine tuned and then meet with everyone and....

Mr. Hoffman said you're talking about 2-way conversion on...

Mr. Sieben said no, no....we're talking about Broadway. Yeah...first was Broadway, then New York and Galena.

Mr. Hoffman said oh...oh...okay...okay...okay. Is there...is there plans to convert those to 2-way, both...

Mr. Sieben said yes, yes...they've been ongoing...

Mr. Hoffman said okay.

Mr. Sieben said (to Mrs. Morgan) do you know the timing might be? Next year...I think they wanted, I think they want to get Broadway done and then...and then Broadway and Galena.

Mrs. Morgan said I think they were trying coordinate New York with...

Mr. Sieben said with the Casino, yeah.

Mrs. Morgan said with the Casino and bridge work.

Mr. Sieben said and the bridge, bridge work. So, within a couple of years, yes.

Mr. Hoffman said I'm not sure how...how much it (inaudible) to update the guidelines to fix that, but having more...and actually, I went on to look at that interactive commenting site and I saw somebody made some good comments about activity from Riverfront Park on the east side of the river to downtown, there's great separation like in New York Street over on the other side to the trail and along the river but on the east side here, you have crossed streets at grade. That one is a little

bit of a frogger kind of crossing with traffic and I think with 2-way on both of those, I think it's going to be an improvement for just traffic (inaudible) but it's going to make pedestrian crossing a little bit more important to have designated....

Mr. Sieben said right, are you talking about crossing New York right in the east side of the river there?

Mr. Hoffman said yeah, right at like La Quinta.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, and I brought that up like why isn't there a crosswalk there when that's the thing? And it doesn't...I think I was told it doesn't meet qualifications, so they don't want to encourage it even though there's 2 pieces like this, you know what I mean?

Mr. Hoffman said yeah...it's crazy.

Mr. Sieben said it's crazy...

Mr. Hoffman said it's pretty close to a private corner...

Mr. Sieben said but that's where everyone...

Mr. Hoffman said so if you take and you measure out to the crosswalk...

Mr. Sieben said I mean it's where everyone crosses...

Mr. Hoffman said but you come up there and you look down, you're like "I'm not going to go walk there and there and then back, I'm just gonna..."

Mr. Sieben said right, you gotta make sure you kind of get the red over there and go fast.

Mrs. Morgan said yeah, I mentioned that to the Public Works guys....

Mr. Sieben said yeah, I've mentioned it and it doesn't meet qualifications even though they butt up there, you know what I mean? So, no...you're absolutely right.

Mr. Hoffman said the one at Waubensee, at grade, I feel like that works pretty well and one way, it is a little easier to cross when it's one way because you only gotta check one direction and so you have some bigger gaps. I think when they go to 2-way, it's going to make those at grade more...I don't know, again, how much of it's restrained by the other traffic guidelines and requirements, but even the...the little activated signs like Illinois, the trail across Illinois, that at least gets the attention of those cars going by.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, Farnsworth has one too, right?

Chairman Zine said that was actually my comment that I wrote on that map.

Mr. Hoffman said that was a good one.

Mr. Sieben said what was that?

Chairman Zine said about connecting the east Fox River trail to the FoxWalk by going underneath the New York Street bridge where the stairs are that go up to New York Street. I run that route all the time and run up the stairs without a problem and

jay-walking across the street is not a problem, but when there's 8000 people at RiverEdge Park, not to mention hundreds of more people moving into the new apartments, I think we need a more efficient way to get people to the downtown without crossing traffic and that first arch between the East Bank and the bridge, the first on...whatever you call it, pier...has got a square opening and not an arched one. We learned from the bike trail on the West Bank that with the arch opening, you have to move the trail out further away from the shoreline in order to get the required headroom. We don't have that problem on the east side. We do have the FoxWalk right there, so if we go under the New York Street bridge in the river then we can connect again where we took out that continental bridge, kind of behind Tavern on the Fox. When we designed the Riverwalk...and I was on that committee for years... we originally designed a 2-level Riverwalk and then when it came to renew that after 10 years, they eliminated the lower level. They said that you couldn't put concrete in the river and then I went to the grand opening of the St. Charles Riverwalk and it's all concrete in the river, and I was talking to...what's his name...Pat from WBK Engineering and he told me "Oh yeah, they changed the rules. You can do that now." So, we have a Riverwalk system, parts of it, and there's a couple of parts that need to be considered to build right now. Whether it's...whether we complete the whole thing or not, that is a very...

Mr. Sieben said so did you add that comment, Charlie?

Chairman Zine said I did put that comment on the map today.

Mr. Sieben said good, good.

Chairman Zine said I think it was today. The other one, as long as we're talking about that is I know the City is talking about redeveloping the old Sci-Tech/post office building. There is an existing driveway on the west side of that building in that huge area out back which used to have all the Sci-Tech displays; that is one of the best spots for a Riverwalk in the entire Downtown. It's got tremendous views to the south downstream and if it goes around that building and around 1 East Benton, the old public library, it would connect right up to the Riverwalk on the island over by Fountain Plaza, which was the very first section of Riverwalk that got built. With these 2 big apartment buildings coming and hundreds of new people, you don't need to make it difficult to get to Downtown. You need to make it easier to get to downtown and safer to get to Downtown. So, I didn't mention the other project behind Sci-Tech because I was just testing out your little map and it works very well.

Mr. Vanadilok said I'm glad you're using it.

(Laughs)

Chairman Zine said so anyway, those are my comments on that. But I want to add one more thing on the parking too. We started these parklets during Covid and I think they were a good idea. I'm wondering do we have any data to know that proves whether they were viable?

Mr. Sieben said well, I think they were very helpful during Covid. I'm not sure what the status is this year. Trevor was the lead on that with MOED. I don't know what the plan is this year, you know.

Chairman Zine said well, then that's...we don't have to have an answer but I do think that that's worth studying...

Mr. Sieben said yeah, it is...

Chairman Zine said for design guidelines because, you know, Tredwell Coffee is closed down.

Mr. Sieben said and how many other communities have outdoor dining along the streets like that, you know?

Chairman Zine said exactly, and this is...

Mr. Sieben said most of them do.

Chairman Zine said it's a very old downtown. It was designed...

Mr. Sieben said yeah, you have limited room outside.

Chairman Zine said exactly, but if we do continue them, and I hope that we do, you know it might be time to think about some minimum design standards. I love the...the thing that Tredwell had out there because not only was it more comfortable, but it was safer. I mean cars are not going to miss that thing. They're not going to drive into that. Some of them...well, I just think that it makes sense to look at that whole thing. I would like to see them stay but maybe even make it a little bit better. But again, I don't know any of that data, if it's proved. But I do know that in Tredwell, especially in the evening, there's just not enough seats there for people to come in and they just went out of business, unfortunately. And I think that's always been a part of the problem there.

Mr. Sieben said yeah, good point.

Chairman Zine said oh, I see the ADA accessibility. The pedestrian bridge that goes from the parking deck over to just north of New York Street. It goes to the Casino, that one.

Mr. Sieben said yes...yes.

Chairman Zine said that's got all kinds of steps on it on the East Bank.

Mr. Sieben said correct, right by North Island Center, you've got to go down the steps...

Chairman Zine said yes...yes.

Mr. Sieben said to get on Stolp.

Chairman Zine said yeah, and again, originally when we designed the Riverwalk, there's that section of the Aurora Hotel that juts out over the river.

Mr. Sieben said yup.

Chairman Zine said it's physically separated from the interior of the building. You can't get there, and the idea always was to make that part of the Riverwalk.

Mr. Sieben said yup.

Chairman Zine said so, I think I'd like to see some, some...you know...looking into the possibilities of both making that bridge ADA accessible and also since you're going to be changing the level, can we hook it up to that section of the Aurora Hotel

and then bring it up to New York Street?

Mr. Sieben said yup. You might have some future plans for that building. It'll take several years, but we have some future plans.

Chairman Zine said you know, I don't put timetables on these things...

Mr. Sieben said right, right...hopefully we'll be around, Charlie.

Chairman Zine said I just want to get them out there, you know, and make sure we're talking about it and when we're doing planning, especially...

Mr. Sieben said right, yes...we are planning...

Chairman Zine said you know, and we're hiring professionals...

Mr. Sieben said we are...we are communicating with the building owners of that building.

Chairman Zine said excellent, excellent. I did read that; they're going to upgrade that.

Mr. Sieben said yeah...yeah.

Chairman Zine said that's good because I think that's a great building.

Mr. Sieben said that's the Aurora Hotel, the senior...the low-income senior...

Mrs. Morgan said we also have plans to update the Riverwalk.

Mr. Sieben said we have in the budget...it'll probably be next year...the Riverwalk Master Plan, which Karen was involved with in '07, 8ish. You know, and that's where you get a consultant, you look at what permitting you have to do, blah...blah...blah. So, we are looking at updating that because, I mean, look at it; it's been '07-'08.

Chairman Zine said yeah...yeah. Come to think of that ADA, it's actually both sides of that bridge too, because the sidewalks between the parking deck on Galena and the river, those also have a bunch of steps which are nice, I don't mind, but they are problems for accessibility.

Mr. Sieben said right...right...right.

Mr. Failing said so, for the stakeholder focus groups, do we have a plan for how to attack those? Like, who's the intended that you're going to invite?

Mr. Vanadilok said so we do have a...we started a list when we met in March and we're going to finalize that and then once we have a good list in terms of pairings of topical areas and so on, we'll plan those out and some of those...if some people can't make those, I can definitely make individual one-on-one calls as well.

Mr. Failing said this will probably be a question for Jill and Ed: would it be beneficial to bring this to Aurora Downtown at one of their board meetings? Whether it is, you know, specific kind of like focus group or just kind of an overview, kind of like what we got.

Mr. Sieben said yup, makes sense.

Chairman Zine said any other questions?

Mr. Vanadilok said I appreciate all the input. This was really good. Definitely use that comment map if you drive home tonight, think of something. Or I left my business card, you can always email me directly as well.

Chairman Zine said thank you for coming out here.

Mr. Vanadilok said I appreciate it, yeah. Thanks for having me.

This Information/Discussion Only was (INFORMATION ONLY)

23-0313 FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness Report (COA's Approved by Staff -October 1, 2022 to December 31,2022)

This COA Report was discussed and filed

23-0314 FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness Report (COA's Approved by Staff -January 1, 2023 to May 31, 2023)

Mrs. Morgan said and the only other thing we have on the agenda is the COA reports. Does anyone have any questions or comments?

Chairman Zine said has everyone looked at those and are we good with those?

Mr. Hoffman said what was the vinyl window replacement on the 80 South River? Isn't that the building that was just rehabbed? The old school admin building?

Mrs. Morgan said yes, and they just replaced some of the windows they just restored with vinyl windows.

Mr. Sieben said was that the upstairs?

Mrs. Morgan said it was the upstairs, yeah, the second story.

Mr. Sieben said which façade? Which direction?

Mrs. Morgan said both sides, both the ones that face River and the ones that face...

Mr. Sieben said Benton.

Mrs. Morgan said Benton.

Mr. Sieben said was that after they opened?

Mrs. Morgan said yes. Quite a bit after they opened.

Mr. Sieben said hmmm...

Mr. Hoffman said because that's on the river side (inaudible) some of the openings that had that...

Mrs. Morgan said yes, and that was... I think that was...pre..

Mr. Hoffman said sloppy looking...

Mrs. Morgan said before you... yeah, we approved that. It was a little bit of a miss. We thought it was glass and it just....but it did note it on the detail of the plans if you got into them that that's what the plan was, so that was a miss.

Mr. Hoffman said okay.

Chairman Zine said we missed that too though, Jill.

Mrs. Morgan (laughs) said every time I see it...I'm like (grits teeth.) We will have a meeting next month as well. Somebody wants to come forward with a...requesting to appeal Staff's decision (inaudible).

Mr. Hoffman said what's the...what's the status of the window replacements, I think to correct violations in (inaudible) building and the boutique hotel (inaudible).

Mrs. Morgan said so the La Quinta building, we have a re-review for June. We did kind of push it out to give them ample time to kind of coordinate what they're doing on the patio and if we don't see movement forward, we'll send notice and possibly Admin Hearings so...and then the windows, I haven't heard any more. It's not a requirement but as long as they're...once they change it, they have to...

Mr. Hoffman said right, yeah.

Mrs. Morgan said so, I don't know where their project is.

Mr. Hoffman said okay, okay...when I came in here I saw there's plastic behind and one of the windows upstairs was open, so it looked like they're still working. I don't know if they...if this one is stalled out (inaudible).

This COA Report was discussed and filed

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Failing said do we want to pick a date before we leave or are you going to email us?

Mrs. Morgan said I was...is the 3rd Wednesday for next month good?

Mr. Failing said that does not work for me.

Mr. Sieben said is that the...no...3rd Wednesday...

Mr. Failing said that would be the 17th.

Mr. Sieben said no, that's a...oh, be 6 pm before Planning Commission, yes. You're correct, the 17th.

Mrs. Morgan said that doesn't work for you?

Mr. Failing said I won't be here then.

Chairman Zine said oh, I'm not going to be here then either.

Mrs. Morgan said how about...1st Wednesday? Let me look it up before I said that...what day is that?

Mr. Hoffman said that's the 3rd...

Mr. Failing said I won't be here the 3rd either.

Mr. Sieben said Brian...

(Laughs)

Mr. Failing said it's my daughter's first birthday!

Mr. Sieben said both days? (laughs)

Mr. Failing said the 3rd.

Mr. Hoffman said bring her!

(Laughs)

Mr. Failing said please sing Happy Birthday and provide cake (laughs).

Mr. Sieben said how old is she?

Mr. Failing said 1.

Mr. Sieben said oh, cool.

Chairman Zine said we'll sing, you bring the cake.

Mr. Failing said okay.

Mrs. Morgan said how about the 11th...a Thursday? I know that's off of our...

Mr. Sieben said I'm not sure about me but...can we...

Mrs. Morgan said before Preservation Commission?

Mr. Sieben said can we maybe send some dates?

Mrs. Morgan said maybe we'll just...yeah.

Mr. Hoffman said what about the 10th or ...

Mr. Sieben said now that's my birthday.

Mr. Hoffman (laughs) said how about the 24th?

Mr. Castrejon said do you want cake?

Mr. Sieben said yeah, bring cake.

Mrs. Morgan said I feel like there's something...

Mr. Hoffman said the 10th or the 24th would work for me. The 11th would not.

Mrs. Morgan said okay.

Chairman Zine said either would work for me, the 10th or 24th.

Mr. Sieben said Jill, what is it we have going?

Mrs. Morgan said I feel like there's something...I think that might be the 25th is the...we're going to have an open house.

Mr. Sieben said no, the open house is the 18th.

Mrs. Morgan said for the FoxWalk.

Mr. Sieben said oh, for the FoxWalk...FoxWalk, okay.

Mrs. Morgan said I think that's the 25th.

Mr. Hoffman said yeah.

Mrs. Morgan said okay, so maybe the 10th or 24th. I'll throw an email out there.

Chairman Zine said okay. Any other announcements?

Mr. Sieben said no.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Zine said no...if there's no other business, do I have a motion to adjourn?

MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY: Brian Failing

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Castrejon

Carried by voice vote.

Chairman Zine adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Failing, seconded by Mr. Castrejon, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote.

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