

October 19, 2015:

Best Interest Of Ann Arbor. Resolution for Public Use Development of the Library Lane Lot

Whereas, it is in the Best Interest of Ann Arbor to maximize the full public use potential of the Public Land of Library Lane Lot to become a “Downtown Destination” and focus as a “community commons” with Green Park, Plaza, Civic Center Building ...as part of an integrated block development including connection to Liberty Plaza, Kemp House, The Downtown District Library, and other neighbors.

Whereas it is in the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor to retain the Library Lot as public land and not sell any of the land or development rights, as long as this full Public Use Development policy is in place.

Whereas the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor is to designate a Center of the City Civic Place for community focus anticipating an evolution of spaces, beginning with a Green surface park, from 5th Avenue Eastward, adding an elevated Plaza over the parking ramp, bridging to Liberty Plaza, and finally, potentially, a Civic Center Building, bridging Library Lane. with facilities for all season functions, and possible connection with the Downtown Library Building.

Whereas the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor is best served by a public planning process and co-creative cooperative implementation, allowing the public to plan, design build and manage in an open democratic process, relatively independent of City Administration.

Whereas the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor, for Public Use Development of this unique space, anticipates a public cooperative corporation functioning as a Land Conservancy to be established to manage and maintain the land and development, in liaison with City Government.

Whereas the possibility of evolving public use is foreclosed by any sale for significant commercial development, the decision for full Public Use Development, preempts the sale listing and requires the property be withdrawn from the market, for the duration of public use commitment, and the offering memorandum suspended.

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Whereas the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor is for this special central space to “revenue neutral” in terms of the existing City Budget general fund, requiring funds for the development and implementation of a public use plan to be secured initially by private and other donations in money, goods and services.

Whereas the Best Interest of Ann Arbor recognizes the special character of Ann Arbor as place of avant garde education, art and innovation, and also a place in American social and political history, taught in the schools as an origin point for “participatory democracy” and “teach-in” in the general vocabulary, and concern and action against war and for peace and civil rights, and seeks to exemplify and build on our heritage.

Whereas the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor sees this place as a place for peace, exemplifying a culture of peace and non-violence, and the best of Ann Arbor

Therefore be it resolved, the City Council, considering the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor determines to receive and adopt in substance the “informal and irregular” proposal, submitted June 1, 2015, in response to the Offering Memorandum, for full Public Use Development of the Library Lot, and to establish the following Ann Arbor Community Commons Ordinance to guide public use development.

Ann Arbor Community Commons Ordinance

Section 1. Public Use Development for the entirety of the Library lot

Section 1.0 The City Council determines, in the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor, to undertake an experimental, collaborative Public Use Development plan, for the full public use of the Library Lot, for a provisional fixed term, after which the public use plan will be evaluated and if judged clearly successful, adopted in perpetuity, or if questions remain, continued for a further period, and then reevaluated, and if then judged successful, adopted as a “forever place” in the Center of the City, or if evaluated as unsuccessful, then terminated and the land be returned to the market.

Section 2. Public Use Development Timeline

2.0 Five (5) years is the period for the implementation and evaluation of the Public Use Development Plan for the full public use of the entirety of Library Lane Lot

2.1 During the period of this Public Use Development planning and implementation process, the City Council determines to withdraw the Library Lane land from the Market and withhold any decision to sell or further offer any of the property to commercial private development, suspending the “Offering Memorandum.”

2.1.2 This period will be used to acquire the private endowments and building capital, and agreements on the minute particulars, to build an elevated plaza and connection with Liberty Plaza, and to design and prepare for building a multifunction, civic center building.

2.2 At the end of 3 years the City Council can consider a resolution, summarizing the public development plan's state of realization, and affirming, or not, its continuation in perpetuity, in the best interest of Ann Arbor,

2.2.1 If the Council is not satisfied that the full public use plan has reached or is reaching its objectives, it will not vote to continue “in perpetuity,” but will allow another 2 years to evaluate the fulfillment of objectives.

2.2.2 One criterion in continuing the project is whether a design and funding has been agreed for the construction of the Civic Center Building

2.3 At the end of 5 years, the City Council will review the future of the Library Lot, to determine, “yes” or “no”

2.3.1 Yes: To accept the public space as it has developed as successful, to be continued in perpetuity, as a civic center and community commons extending the public use designation in perpetuity,

2.3.2 No: To terminate the full public use plan and consider it unsuccessful and return the property to market up for sale, including to all the current proposers

2.3.3 There will be public hearings on any motion to terminate public use

2.3.4 There will be opportunity to bring the question to a public vote in a City wide referendum, (as if this were “park land” whose sale was proposed.)

2.4 On acceptance of this resolution, the City Administrator will be tasked with working with DDA and Republic Parking, to remove surface parking from the surface lot, except for 5 spaces.

Section 3. Public Process of Public Use Development

Section 3.0 The Best Interest Of Ann Arbor public plan for full Public Use Development of the Library Lot and Lane will include, at least, the following elements

3.0.1 vision

3.0.2 design

3.0.3 programing active venue

3.0.4 culture of peace and non-violence/ security

3.0.5 park landscaping and planting

3.0.6 governance

3.0.7 operations management and timeline

3.0.8 economics and fundraising

3.0.9 energy system

3.0.10 water system

3.0.11 liaison with City of Ann Arbor Administration and Departments

3.0.12 liaison with Library and other neighbors for collaborative development

3.0.13 liaison with neighborhoods, and community groups

3.0.14 liaison with other places which have done similar things

3.0.15 architectural drawings

3.0.16 building and construction details

3.0.17 evaluation criteria and process

3.1 Public process will determine the content of each element, Collecting information at various public, governmental and social media receptors: public.annarbor@gmail.com, Facebook, a community commons web site, bulletin boards, and City sites for Parks, Environmental, Energy commissions.

3.1.1 Personal outreach: Asking everyone, and asking everyone to ask everyone, “What you would like to see developed for public use, and what competencies can you offer?” Crowd-sourcing creativity.

3.1.2 Asking ideas, etc, via mail and email to the Ann Arbor City Guide list of civic and neighborhood associations, and similar lists

3.1.3 Re-using the existing “out-reach data bases” of DDA, “Connecting William Street,” and the “Downtown Parks Subcommittee” of the Parks Advisory Commission

3.1.4 Convening regular [biweekly] open “Public Use Development team” meetings, inviting participation through local print and electronic media.

Section 4 Economics

Section 4.0 The full public use of the entirety of the Library Lane Lot is intended to be “revenue neutral” in relation to the City Budget General Fund.

4.0.1 The full public use proposal rests on the belief that there are sufficient resources of wealth, talent, caring, and love in Ann Arbor that the public could design build and operate our own Civic Center Park, Plaza and Public Building, [and do it better than some private out-sourced corporation or the City itself.]

4.1 Fundraising is expected to rely on private philanthropy, foundations, crowd funding from the public, benefits, bazaars and bake-sales, donations in-kind of labor, supplies, materials and services, r-credits and alternative currencies, possible available special purpose government funds not in the City budget .

4.2 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is encouraged / requested to assist the Public Use Development, in the best interest of Ann Arbor, as contributing to the creation of a focal multi-attraction “Downtown Destination,” beneficial to downtown atmosphere, ambiance, character and interest.

4.2.1 DDA support could be through direct financial support redirecting TIF funds, in the best interest of Downtown

4.2.2 DDA support could include sharing data from past outreach campaigns on residents, neighbors, owners and users around the Library Lot and about Liberty Plaza.

4.3 At such time, in 3 years or 5 years, as the City may determine to continue the public use plan, in perpetuity, then there can be discussion of other funding methods.

Section 5. Elements of the Commons

Section 5.0 The Civic Center Public Use Development plan has several focal parts

5.0.1 Green Park: Library Green

5.0.2 Elevated Plaza, over the parking entrance /exit ramp and approach

5.0.3 Civic Center Building, 2-3-4 floors, over and spanning Library Lane

5.0.4 connection with Liberty Plaza and Kemp House

5.0.5 Geographic Marker trail head to the Greenway

5.0.6 retained surface parking [“crazy lady” spaces requested for those who won't go underground.]

5.1 The “Ann Arbor Community Commons” name. The public, civic space “complex” can be called, provisionally and informally, the “Ann Arbor Community Commons,”

5.1.1 If the space is voted, in 3 years or 5 years, to be kept in public use in perpetuity, then the Council, at that time, can adopt a formal permanent name for the place.

5.1.2 The “commons” identifies the place with the historic traditional “commons” in the Magna Carta, and since, representing a culture of shared responsibility and shared benefit, open access to all, and affirmation of common wealth, and a foundation of democracy and our liberties.

5.2 This Ann Arbor Public Civic Space is intended to contribute to the creation of a culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world, and of Ann Arbor: safe, accessible and respectful for everyone.

5.2.1 The designation of purpose is intended as a City of Ann Arbor contribution to the global mission outlined in United Nations General Assembly Resolution, 53/25, for the “Creation of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence, for the children of the World,” ..as a common task of everyone where ever we are, that the next generations should not have to live through the wars and horrors that have been our heritage...

5.2.2 Security in the public space depends on a culture of peace and non-violence, and mutual enforcement of respectful standards deriving from the shared responsibility of shared ownership.

5.3 The place in intended as a public venue for periodic public events, such as Independence Day, International Day of Peace, Earth Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, etc, and other holidays and celebrations planed with City sponsorship,

Section 6. Components of the Public Use Development Plan

6.0 List illustrative of elements, suggested to be included in the commons mix:

green grass

garden and flowers

chess tables

playground, sandbox

winter ice skating ...roosted chestnuts

carousel...cotton candy

benches for reading and conversations

outdoor performance spaces

“Rose Arbor” for Ann Arbor

veterans' memorial/monument

grieving place,

peace pole: “may peace prevail on earth”

public art from “Sister Cities,” and local artists

internet hot spot and recharging station,

information kiosk

bulletin board

light projections

film showings

cafe

water fountain

accessible toilets,

indoor community theater, appropriate for comic opera

Celebration Room, weddings, fundraisers...

City art and artists Gallery

Visitors Center for Ann Arbor, like for a National Park

Museum of the City and “panorama rooms,” of our communities, historical markers

topographic-map display of Ann Arbor area watershed and neighborhoods

Classroom: history of Ann Arbor and our communities

Classroom: sustainable living, green technology, permaculture, climate

an office information point (Embassy for Ambassadors)

demonstration places for innovative technology, tiny houses, yurts,

Meeting rooms for community groups

Green energy generation, appropriate technology demonstrations

solar water purifiers

peace making place—come to the table to talk

donors plaque, pillars of the community

free speech place: Hyde Park corner

trail head for the Greenway, geological marker and map

book carts and book exchange

geothermal energy from under the parking structure

healing place: meditation, body movement

UM social work field placement

the central park flag pole and flags from all the countries of people who live in Ann Arbor, welcoming immigrants.

Section 7. Governance.

Section 7.0 A non-profit public cooperative corporation /foundation,/land conservancy shall be designed and created to manage the development plan, using models including the Gateway Foundation in Saint Louis, and the New York Central Park Conservancy, developing an endowment for long term stability, and a management team for daily operations, with an ideal of participatory democracy.

7.1 an open Working Group will be established to develop a governance structure, referencing Elinor Ostrom's Nobel Prize winning work on the "Governance of the Commons," illustrations from other localities, e.g. St. Louis, New York City, Berkeley, Chautauqua, Bologna, and historical knowledge, etc.

7.1.1 every resident of Ann Arbor is eligible to participate in the working group

7.1.2 the working group will function by consensus, modified to allow voting on a final governance documents.

7.1.3 the working group will meet on line in an open ongoing session,

7.1.4. the working group will meet bi-weekly in an accessible public place.

7.2 an Advisory Committee will be opened for membership, inviting knowledgeable people to keep an eye on what's happening and offer opinions when Advisors, singly or collectively, consider appropriate.

7.2.1 Advisors will be invited, and can volunteer themselves, from the professional experience of urban planning, public places, place-making, landscaping, building, social research, conflict resolution, cultural programming, intergroup relations, peace culture, banking, public service, security, etc

7.2.2 Advisors will help determine evaluation criteria, data collection, and guidelines in preparing annual reports to the City and to "the public" on the state of step-by-step development of the full public use plan.

7.3 Except as provided otherwise by the to-be-formed non-profit public cooperative corporation, all service in behalf of the full public use development proposal and its implementation is "pro bono," a good will donation, in the best interest of Ann Arbor.

7.4 The date of the First meeting of public process to establish an open Working Group shall be within 30 days of adoption of this Resolution and Ordinance

