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Meeting Notes from the Cudahy Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 6:00 PM in Ladish Room of the Cudahy Family Library at 3500 Library Drive, Cudahy Wisconsin 53110

I. Cobalt Partners Discuss U.S. Postal Service Mail Processing and Distribution Center Oak Creek Development

Discussion of Development:

Cobalt Partners presented a PowerPoint introducing the USPS Oak Creek development.

- USPS, an independent agency of the Executive Branch of government, has a \$75 billion annual operating budget. USPS is a stable, recession-proof business and good corporate citizen, actively reducing waste and building green.
- USPS needs to increase efficiency and combine operations from several area facilities. Site selection was an on- and off- again, 10-year process. In the end, Oak Creek beat out Johnson Creek and Racine. Oak Creek site offers air and road accessibility, which are now more vital to USPS than rail accessibility. Oak Creek site also offers good size, topography, accessibility via local & interstate highways, proximity to service areas, etc.
- Cobalt's Cudahy Site, at 36.4 acres, was tried first for the facility but was too small. It remains the single largest contiguous parcel in Cudahy.
- Planned Oak Creek facility is a distribution facility. Retail is entirely separate from distribution. The USPS retail center on Howell Ave should not be affected.
- Status: USPS has approved Oak Creek site and funding. Cobalt has submitted plans to City. Public notice has been given. 24-30 months of construction are anticipated—to begin after application/permit review (projected for Q1 2009).
- The USPS development means 2,200 jobs—about 2,200 new people traveling to College & Pennsylvania daily, representing about \$176 million in annual wages and benefits. Most of these jobs will be transferred from existing facilities, not newly filled. It's estimated that 45-50% of employees will use STH 794. It is a 24-hour operation with off-peak shift changes.
- How can Cudahy capitalize on this development? Cobalt sees the opportunity for complimentary businesses and services to develop along Pennsylvania Ave. The corridor has needed infrastructure, vacant and underutilized sites, and the STH 794 extension is currently underutilized.
- Transit-oriented-development; KRM/rail; and smart growth are opportunities Cobalt sees in Cudahy. Cobalt provided a handout introducing the Aerotropolis concept which,

according to the handout is a new urban form with aviation-intensive development radiating outward along transportation corridors from major airports.

II. Review Updated Meeting Schedule and Agenda Items

The Meeting Schedule updated May 22, 2008 was reviewed. Agenda Items were reviewed and it was noted that the background materials will be distributed in digital format to the Committee within two weeks, following internal review. Vandewalle will provide nametags for Committee members at the next meeting.

III. Present and Discuss Draft Existing Conditions Report & Maps

Airport limitations on development were discussed; the Airport has height restriction zones and Runway Protection Zones which affect development in the City. A meeting between Vandewalle and the Airport is planned to further clarify how the Airport exercises its zoning authority.

IV. Present Downtown and Corridor Planning Areas Site Conditions and Context Analysis

Discussion of Layton/Pennsylvania Planning Area:

In light of the USPS development, the full Pennsylvania Ave Corridor (south to College) should be added to this planning area. However, the northern portion of Pennsylvania is more appropriate for commercial redevelopment and will be a greater focus than the southern portion.

Key here is that traffic counts are higher on Pennsylvania than on Packard—not counting the additional traffic anticipated from the planned USPS facility.

In all likelihood, STH 794 will not expand further (land in old ROW has been developed).

Challenges in this area include some small sites and access issues along Pennsylvania, where some parcel acquisition will be needed. Airport restrictions are also an issue.

St. Francis' plans for Layton's north side were discussed and additional information on their plans was requested. Redevelopment on the north side of Layton in St. Francis will likely begin first, and will increase pressure on the areas identified in orange on the corresponding map.

More information was also requested on the 128th Expansion and the auto auction owner's long-term plans.

Residential area west of the Iceport can probably be redeveloped. However, the community workshop results indicate there is interest in retaining residential parcels on Layton.

Redevelopment that does occur should not be strip mall/fast-food style.

The state of the College & Pennsylvania Ave intersection is currently bad. However, reconstruction is planned (with or without the USPS plans, though this may affect reconstruction.)

Discussion of where to allow SOB. Legally a community must permit them somewhere. The City has issued a moratorium on new SOB's which the advisory committee is now looking into issue. Antaramian suggested talking to Jeff Leban, DCD director in Kenosha, as they recently addressed SOB zoning.

Discussion of S. Packard Planning Area:

Issues here include aging buildings, very auto-oriented design, and decreasing viability of the three big sites—Packard Plaza, Pick n Save, K-Mart—as you travel south. The large number and limited depth of small parcels on the east side of Packard also challenges redevelopment.

Opportunities here include mixed-use zoning that is permissive of both business and residential uses. This corresponds well with the Community Vision Workshop results for this area. The grid could be recreated around Kingan Ave. Ladish Co. and the City could work to remediate underutilized properties if grants or other financing are obtained. Although the extent of contamination is unknown currently, it's likely these sites could be reused as parks or residential areas, but commercial or other uses are more feasible redevelopment options.

Discussion of Downtown Planning Area:

Challenges here include residential disinvestment, mainly west to Kirkwood, and the greater traffic counts now found along Pennsylvania—should the downtown vision for this area be modified in light of this?

Opportunities here include the fairly high traffic counts which remain, a feature not all downtowns have retained. There is also a high concentration of people in and around downtown given the adjacent neighborhoods to the east and north, and the 2,400 jobs in the planning area. KRM will bring additional people, but should not be a key feature of downtown redevelopment, yet should be foreseen as a potential force benefiting downtown. The downtown has a historic influence and is fairly walkable. Tools, including TIF, Redevelopment Area, and vacant sites, are in place for quick redevelopment.

Of existing businesses in this planning area “drinking/eating establishments” is the biggest category. Many of these are mom n’ pop enterprises that may close when their owners retire.

V. Present Market Overview and Economic Profile for Downtown and Corridor Planning Areas

Vandewalle & Associates presented the Market Overview and Economic Profile. It was noted that more attention must be given the Lake, and discussion followed:

- Working with the County and their desire to privatize, revenue-generating uses could be developed on County parkland, similar to the Alterra in Milwaukee.
- Suggestion made to fix the jetties and add a trail down to the Lake, or to create a road to the lake in conjunction with bluff stabilization.
- Mayor McCue noted the highest cliffs on all of Lake Michigan are found in Cudahy.
- Make a City legislative agenda for local, state, federal officials.

VI. Discuss and Plan for July 2nd Bus Tour

The Committee agreed that a Bus Tour should occur at the July 2nd Meeting. Details will be arranged in coming weeks, but members can anticipate the Tour will leave from the usual meeting location at the regular meeting time.