

I-70 Shift – School & Recreational Center Workgroup

December 14th, 2011 meeting

Those present:

See sign in sheet

This was the first meeting of the school/rec center workgroup. Our goal was to discuss issues and concerns from a big-picture perspective. Below is a brief summary of the conversation.

- I. Concerns expressed regarding the proposed location for a new school; including,
 - a. Proximity to the railroad from a hazardous spill perspective. It was noted that RR cars full of unknown or hazardous material will often park on the rails in close proximity to where the new school might be located.
 - b. Proximity to the railroad from a noise perspective. There is the constant noise of train horns, bells and general train traffic.
 - c. Access issues. Because of the railroad there is difficulty accessing this site. There is the unpredictability of train crossings. There is no pedestrian and bike access.
 - d. Concerns regarding air quality and being too close to I-70. There was discussion that a school needed to be located more than 2-3 blocks from a major highway.

- II. Locating a new school.
 - a. It was agreed that a new school should be within a ten year old child's ability to walk from the present location.
 - b. There was discussion about ensuring walkability and bikeability to any new location. This may involve a grade separation of the railroad along either 47th or 48th. The specifics weren't defined. Once we get a bit further, it might be nice to have some very preliminary sketches on how the walkability and bikeability might be achieved.
 - c. Is there the necessary space at the proposed location? We'll need to lay it out on the site and come back with a drawing at our next meeting.
 - d. How do we know DPS will keep a school in this neighborhood? DPS promised they will. Do we need a letter or something?
 - e. The new school must be completed before the old school is closed. We don't want an interruption of schooling for our children in our neighborhood.
 - f. There were comments about locating a school at a spot different than the proposed location. What about northside park, by the armory?
 - g. Will locating the school at the proposed site reduce our park area for the neighborhood? We need space for kids to play outside.

- III. Functional issues.
 - a. How would a rec center be accessed on the proposed site?
 - b. How will we ensure the safety of the children, being close to a rec center which is accessed by many people?
 - c. Our current school has many functional problems with the physical structure. It is old and the parts don't work well together. How can we ensure that a new school will correct these old problems? (DPS said they have standards which are adhered to in the building of all new schools and this proposed new school will be built to these same standards.)

- IV. Neighborhood(s) plan.
 - a. We'd like to see a coordinated plan for the neighborhood. It seems like there are some plans which have been done and some which are promised. Please identify what neighborhood plans are in place, fully or partially. Also, when will a full plan which takes into consideration the needs of the neighborhood be in place?
 - b. It is important to see how the school / rec center fits into a larger plan.

- V. Housing issues. While this isn't the housing workgroup, there were concerns regarding housing.
 - a. Can we build or move houses within the neighborhood so we don't lose any housing stock or families?

- VI. Next steps
 - a. It might be helpful to list out the challenges as we understand them to moving the school; and the benefits of a new school.
 - b. We need specifics on a neighborhood plan, even if this means identifying what we have, what is possible and where we can't make any promises at this time.
 - c. Drawing of how a school / rec center might be located on the proposed site.
 - d. Next meeting – January 3rd or 4th?
 - i. Will the school host and invite?
 - ii. Spanish translator (check with Focus Points *Family Resource Center*)
 - e. What else?