

STADIUM IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Monday October 15, 2012

4 – 6 p.m.

319 City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Committee members present; *Chairs:* Tom Fisher, David Wilson. *Members:* Hussein Ahmed, Judy Yates Borger, Sandra Colvin Roy, Rolf Engh, David Fields, Sarah Harris, Clint Hewitt, Diane Hofstede, Wade Luneburg, Cory Merrifield, Tom Meyer, James Norkosky, Kevin Reich, R.T. Rybak, Cathy Rydell, Craig Taylor, Jesse Winkler

Committee members excused: Russ Adams, Tim Baylor, Chris Ferguson, Betsy Hodges, Barbara Johnson, Peggy Lucas, Peter McLaughlin

Guests: Kristin Anderson (Augsburg College); Lynn Regnier (Elliot Park); Nick Koch (HGA); Mark Williams (HKS); Bill McCarthy, Michele Kelm-Helgen, Julie Millikan, Amy Quaintance, Barbara Butts Williams (MSFA); Lester Bagley, Jim Cima, Larry Redmond (Mn Vikings); Lynn Littlejohn, Ken Sorensen (Mortenson); Margo Imdieke Cross, Ted Griffith, Rep. Morrie Lanning, Max Musicant, Robert Woods

Staff/consultants present: Peter Brown, Lisa Cerney, Hilary Dvorak, Jeff Handeland, Chuck Lutz, Jennifer O'Rourke, Sally Westby (City)

1.0 Call to order – the meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by chair David Wilson.

2.0 Approval of Minutes of 9/17/12 meeting - It was MOVED and SEONDED that the minutes of the 8/6/12 Committee meeting be approved. The motion CARRIED.

3.0 Introduction of HKS Design Team - Michele Kelm-Helgen of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) updated the committee on the stadium architect selection process. The MSFA went through a rigorous selection process and has chosen HKS to design the stadium. HKS has extensive experience in designing sports venues including both the Dallas Cowboys' and the Indianapolis Colts' football stadiums. Both of these are innovative and multipurpose facilities.

The MSFA is very interested in hearing from the public about the stadium. The first of a series of public forums will be held the evening Oct. 15 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Other forums will be held around the state.

Kelm-Helgen introduced Mark Williams a principle at HKS. Also introduced was State Rep. Morrie Lanning, one of the chief authors of the stadium legislation. Mayor Rybak noted that without Rep. Lanning's assistance, the project would not have come to fruition.

4.0 Presentation by Mark Williams – HKS - Williams said the goal of HKS is to listen, innovate, and then deliver. He reviewed a power point presentation with the committee. HKS is a global company experienced in sports venues, educational facilities, retail and other areas all of which will be important in a multipurpose facility such as the Vikings stadium. Sustainability is important to the firm, which is one of the top "green" designers of sports and entertainment facilities in the world. The firm has designed many major and minor league stadiums including facilities for football, basketball and soccer.

The design of the Cowboys' stadium in Dallas reflects the team, the region and the state. It is extremely flexible and versatile. The building can be turned into a soccer, rodeo or music facility as well as serving as a football stadium.

Lucas Oil stadium in Indianapolis has a very different design and reflects that team, city and state. In developing the design, the architects looked at old city plans to understand how the city was established. A view of the city skyline is visible through the building. The team store at Lucas is open year round, seven days a week.

For the Vikings "people's" stadium, HKS has initially reviewed four themes: 1) Vikings; 2) responsiveness to the climate; 3) patterns found in the region; and 4) form. Williams reviewed several quick sketches with the committee of a facility that would look to the business district, take advantage of sun angles and allow views of the sky. Where doors are will be very important. It should be possible to bring part of the building into the ground to make loading and related facilities less visible. The building should convey a message about who the Minnesota Vikings are – an image that people will see and recognize on Monday Night Football.

In response to questions from committee members, Williams said that HKS would be in Minnesota weekly for the next 3 –5 years. The process has begun to find local partners in architecture and engineering.

The facility can be permeable and have multiple doors so there would be no obvious front and back to the building. The key is to be able to easily bring things into and out of the building while concealing loading areas as much as possible.

Sandra Colvin Roy asked what was driving the round shape for the building shown in some of the sketches? Williams said that good site lines dictate an arena set up on the inside but that the exterior of the stadium would not need to follow that form.

In response to a question from Clint Hewitt, Williams said that one of the things that would make this building the "best" stadium in the country would be connectivity to nearby assets (neighborhoods, Hiawatha LRT line, central business district etc). Many stadiums do not take advantage of the assets around them. Lucas Oil Stadium set the tone for what an NFL stadium could be and how it could affect the landscape and leverage assets around it.

Sarah Harris mentioned the importance of the building being transparent and open to views of the Mississippi River and the University of Minnesota. It will be crucial that the building allows people to see through it and see what is around it. Diane Hofstede suggested that the building "cantilever out" to the surrounding communities rather than being round which could make it appear to be closed.

In response to a question from Tom Meyer, Williams said that he did not see any barriers to achieving a successful building. What is needed from the committee is the kind of open conversation that is currently occurring. Williams said that HKS would design an incredible facility for the state.

In response to a question from Judith Yates Borger, Williams said that one lesson from the Twins Stadium is how much a sports facility can elevate a city and a sport. The rest of the country looks at the Twins Stadium and sees how great it is.

David Wilson asked how the stadium might help “re-weave” the surrounding area? Williams said the firm would look at what is currently around the stadium. Stadiums can positively affect surrounding areas although many of them do not.

Tom Fisher asked about HKS’s ideas in regard to parking in an urban area. Williams talked about the importance of leveraging the proximity to LRT. It will be important to look at how this proximity affects the design and what it means for the facility to have LRT close by. It will also be important to use existing parking assets well and not just develop a sea of parking.

The Mayor reinforced the comments about “re-weaving” the area and good use of existing parking lots. He expressed the hope that HKS would help redefine the urban football experience. He encouraged the design team to bring forth concepts that have not been seen before and that challenge existing ideas.

David Fields suggested that HKS look at the site from many vantage points – not just from above but also from all sides and from varying distances.

Colvin Roy noted the proximity to the Mississippi River and suggested that the stadium facility be constructed and operate in a way that assists in the cleanup of the river.

Hussein Ahmed said it was important to reach out to the neighborhoods. He also noted the importance of using lighting effectively. Williams agreed that lighting and openness would be a large positive factor.

In response to a question from Hewitt, Williams said there would be a landscape architect involved with the project.

Hofstede suggested further dialogue between the committee and the architects. Staff will follow up.

5.0 Updates – Chuck Lutz reported on the purple path experiment being held before games. Food trucks are being stationed on several blocks of 5th Street. So far the experiment has been quite successful. There have been some concerns from businesses in the Warehouse District about how the trucks might be affecting their businesses. These concerns will continue to be evaluated with an eye to making things work better next season.

The Mayor said the goal of the purple path is to enhance the connections between the stadium and the rest of downtown. A limited number of food trucks are part of the plan. Beer will not be served this year. In the future, the City is looking at closing 1st Av N and perhaps allowing people to move around with their drinks (State law would need to be changed for this to occur). There needs to be enough going on to get people to come downtown without taking people from existing bars and restaurants. It is also important to encourage people to stay downtown and have dinner afterward.

6.0 Subcommittee Progress Reports

- **Design Principles** (Appendix A p. 1 –3) - Tom Fisher reviewed the Design Principles proposed by the Design Subcommittee. **It was MOVED by Sarah Harris and SECONDED by James Norkosky that the principles as submitted by approved.** In response to a question from Harris, Fisher said that the principles could be modified as the process continues. **Motion CARRIED.**

The principles have already been submitted to the architects for their use as the design process begins.

- **Planning principles** (appendix A p. 4 –7) – David Wilson said that the draft Planning Principles address how the stadium will affect the broader district. The Planning Subcommittee has taken a “more is better” approach and included all relevant principles without prioritizing them yet.

Mayor Rybeck said that the principles were excellent and suggested there be additional focus on programming of activities for the plaza. He proposed that the plaza be an active rather than monumental space. Other committee members noted the importance of determining how to pay for plaza programming and having a flexible space that could be programmed in many ways without a lot of extra work.

There was discussion about whether or not to discourage skyways from/to the core of downtown in order to build a more vibrant street life. While some committee members were in favor of limiting skyways, others noted that skyways enhanced the value of buildings and were an asset to employees and downtown residents. Regardless of members’ views of skyways, there was strong agreement about investing in the street level of buildings in order to build a vibrant street life in the area.

Other suggested changes to the planning principles included:

- Wording the principles to be less proscriptive
- Removing the emphasis on water features
- Adding a sentence regarding the scale of development in the area – encouraging a mix of scales as opposed to single large buildings.
- More emphasis on reconnecting to the Mill District and the Mississippi
- More emphasis on “walk able” streets (e.g. a pedestrian corridor on Chicago Avenue, traffic calming, a green pedestrian loop between the Mississippi and the Stadium)
- Recognition of the importance of all modes of transportation – pedestrian, bicycle, transit and private vehicles

Staff will revise the planning principles to incorporate the suggestions above.

7.0 Adjourn – 6 p.m.

8.0 Next Meeting – Monday Nov.19 @ 4 p.m. Room 319 City Hall.