

UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

Recommendations and comments from Kennedy Square Town Hall Meeting Held at the Upstate Medical University Institute for Human Performance November 13, 2008

Below is a summary of thematic comments and suggestions from participants, along with responses from Upstate Medical University. A copy of the actual transcript and written submissions from the hearing are attached.

1. Any development plan should include ways to preserve the history of this community, similar to what was done in the Dartmouth Plan.

Upstate Medical University agrees that steps should be taken to acknowledge, preserve and celebrate the rich history of the 15th ward. As we proceed with development, we will ensure that concrete and tangible strategies are implemented to honor the history of this community, including but not limited to works of art that highlight events and people.

As it relates to the Dartmouth Plan, we believe that this is a laudable plan. However, there are several differences between Syracuse and Hanover, New Hampshire that limit the utility of the plan for this development. The RFP will include some of the recommendations contained in the Dartmouth report including a focus on sustainability and green technology, promotion of mass-transit use, and the need to respect a neighborhood's historic characteristics.

2. Any development plan should address opportunities for adults and youth in education, access to jobs, public safety—for example, sidewalks big enough for more than two or three people to walk on, and lighting, and affordable housing.

Upstate Medical University will facilitate discussions with community representatives, University College, and OCC to explore how our institutions can provide a pathway to greater job opportunities.

The RFP will have requirements for sidewalks, lighting and other safety provisions.

3. Future development plans must make sure not to recreate any semblance of failed planning decisions, such as putting a concentration of the wrong types of units on the site, having the site disconnected from the neighborhood and neighborhood services, on this site again.

To ensure that development of this site will represent the best use of this valuable location, we are adopting the planning documents prepared in the early part of this decade by a collaboration of SUNY ESF and a number of community groups. These planning documents provide the basis for guiding development on both the Kennedy Square campus and also the larger Near East Side. We have called upon the resources of Syracuse University's School of Architecture to assist us in preparing an RFP that employs best urban development practices. We envision that proposed development will include market rate housing, as well as, the creation of office and retail development. We intend the developer to work with other

development, such as the Syracuse University's Connective Corridor to ensure that they compliment one another.

4. The developer needs to bring in things that will be a draw to people who work on University Hill, like a grocery store and a daycare center that would serve everybody. It should be a mix of both residential and commercial development because that's what people tend to gravitate toward.

We will provide copies of the suggestions we received from the community as part of the information given to interested parties. It is our expectation that the successful developer will provide a plan for mix use development of the site.

5. It is important for the selected developer to hold public forums so they can understand the needs of the community.

There will be a requirement in the RFP for the successful developer to hold at least one community forum to give the public an opportunity to be heard on the pace, scale and scope of the proposed plan.

6. This project needs to be inclusive—that we look at progressive minority contractors as being a real partnership so there's development of the laborer pool, suppliers, etc.

The five acres developed by Upstate Medical University will require the same level of minority/women-owned businesses participation as all other state contracts. In addition, the RFP for private development will also include goals for subcontractors, laborer pool, suppliers, etc.

7. There is a need for more dollars in this community for affordable rental units.

We agree that the availability of high quality, affordable housing is a must for this community. A vibrant neighborhood includes a mix of housing, including owner-occupied and rental units. While Upstate Medical University is not a provider of housing or resources for the development of housing in the community, we are committed to working with appropriate federal, state and local agencies to ensure the availability of quality housing for all neighbors.

8. Any developer needs to respect the community.

See response to #1 above.

9. Opposition to putting a supermarket at this location because of the competition it creates for the current neighborhood grocery store.

We will review the entire development proposal to ensure that it is a good fit for this community.

10. Suggests that a youth center, daycare center and low to moderate income housing, as well as a financial institution should be a part of the development.

Please see response to #4 above.

11. The developer needs to show how the community will benefit from this economic development project—what type of jobs will be created? Will community residents be given priority for hiring in these jobs? Will these workers have a living wage and benefits? Believe that SUNY Upstate should incorporate a community benefits agreement into the development.

The five acres that will be developed by SUNY Upstate for the Biotechnology Research Center will be developed in accordance with state policies that govern this type of project, just like the construction work that is currently under way on campus. The remaining nine acres will be developed privately and those discussions will take place between the developer and the contractor. We would encourage the community to dialogue with the successful developer regarding community concerns and how best to address them.

12. Standards for assessing the cost and benefits for development for communities need to be applied on a consistent basis. The developer should be held accountable for providing economic and community benefits in exchange for public investment.

We believe that the planned mixed-use development of the site's 9-acre eastern end will, in itself, provide a significant economic and community benefit. In addition, we intend to incorporate into the RFP requirements that the proposed development include best urban design practices, open space and accommodations to ensure accessibility and safety.

13. Nearly 1,000 vacant houses are located in the area they should be transformed in to affordable ownership and rental housing.

We believe that the development of the Kennedy Square site, with a mix of academic, commercial and residential uses will spur the development of affordable owned and rental housing within this neighborhood.

14. Hope the University can offer the opportunity for people who live in the neighborhood to become students, to become people who are trained and ready for the kinds of jobs that our economy is going to be offering us in the future. There should be opportunities for job training in plumbing, in construction, etc.

Upstate Medical University is committed to facilitating discussions among local colleges and universities around job training and career development. This will be an initiative that takes place outside of the development RFP and will include representatives from the community and business. Also see response #2 above.

15. Create an opportunity for people to move back to this neighborhood and become part of a vibrant community.

See response to #12 above

16. Provide higher level of education and address financial literacy.

See response to #14 above.

17. There needs to be an expansion of affordable housing within our neighborhoods. Revitalize those vacant houses and create mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhoods.

There is a healthy discussion taking place on affordable housing within the city and county with some other agencies and there seems to be strong support for increasing the stock of affordable housing. While the issue of affordable housing is not something that Upstate Medical University can provide on its own, we will continue to participate in this discussion and keep it in the forefront.

18. Propose building a black box community theater in a space about 60 feet wide by 100 feet long for theater, music, dance, lectures, meetings, and the like. This would allow the community a way to express itself.

Please see response to #4 above.

19. This project should help achieve the vision of “interdependent neighborhoods where all people will live, work, and grow in an atmosphere that celebrates diversity. Families, businesses and institutions will value possibilities of local youth and will work together to create a vibrant, safe and well-maintained environment rich with opportunities in education, employment, and recreation for all residents”.

Please see responses to #12 and #14 above.

20. The next time there is a relocation of housing community those in charge need to be sensitive to the needs of those being displaced, so that they won't go through what the residents of Kennedy Square went through. Let them know well in advance that something is going to take place.

We truly empathize with those affected by the closing of Kennedy Square housing development. We will work diligently to ensure a smooth transition for any future endeavor in which Upstate Medical University may be a participant.

21. Project should

- a. Create a safe and secure environment through physical design of the site, best practices in contemporary urban design that create open space that's visible and accessible for people.
- b. Improve access to employment and neighborhood services by utilizing minority and women-owned businesses; create a hiring agreement that ensures that local people are employed in construction and the new businesses.
- c. Promote positive community identity and image by acknowledging the culture and diversity of the neighborhood through design and art and programming and engaging the community in decisions regarding such.
- d. Provide a variety of housing options that encourage responsible and stable neighborhood residency.
- e. Return underutilized spaces (parking lots, vacant buildings) to productive neighborhood uses, such as parks. Create a pedestrian-oriented environment that allows people to move safely between the Near Eastside neighborhood and adjacent areas.

Please see response to #4 above.

22. Upstate Medical University needs to provide programs for our youth, such as workshops, training, or education.

Please see responses to #2 and #14 above.

23. This project should utilize local contractors from Syracuse area as prime and sub-contractors. Should put together a task force to talk about how to get these local businesses and contractors involved in the project. Should look at breaking out smaller bid packages to give them more opportunity to work.

These are all steps that Upstate Medical University will take as it relates to the five acres that we develop. We will also encourage the successful developer to use similar methods.

24. Supports a mixed-use development with new residential housing mix. Wants to stress the more diverse options are in the center the better. Need to make the project one that attracts the most racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse residential and private sector population, the better for the community and downtown.

Please see responses to #4 and #12 above.

25. The Chamber of Commerce pledges to help in any way they can. They have a range of programs both directly and through affiliates that can help start up small businesses. They have a technology garden that can help with some of the technology start ups.

Please see response to #14 above.

26. Need to rebuild Kennedy Square and provide affordable homes, so that those who want to come back can return.

Please see response to #13 above.

27. Dr. Smith pledges to try and see if there are ways that we can develop some jobs, get diversity in those jobs. We will help rejuvenate this community that has meant so much and show respect to the community. We will advocate for the community as it relates to affordable housing. He also promises to have other forums like this as we go forward to get community input and know how things are progressing. Upstate Medical University will continue to be part of this community and push to find solutions.

28. Upstate Medical University should require the developer include low-income housing be part of the mix of development on the site. Would like to see the whole 10 acres redeveloped as a low & moderate income rental development. Would like to see the return of 300 units of new totally accessible rental apartments of the quality of the housing being constructed by Housing Visions. On the site could be Project Connection for the youth, Senior Services, and a day-care center. This would allow people to live within walking distance to work, hospital services, and downtown.

Please see responses to # 4 and 9 above.

29. Encourages a mixed-use (commercial/residential) development, with a 20% inclusion of affordable housing in the mix. Encourages homeownership in the area through the development of condos/townhouses and student housing. Should not have big box stores or bland dorm buildings. The site should integrate into the existing and future transportation network, including bike lanes/racks, sidewalks, buffering street trees and the like. Hooking into the intermodal transportation plans at the Center of Excellence and the Connective Corridor transportation route would make sense. Must make sure environment is a safe commuter route for pedestrians. Stakeholders in Hawley-Green could provide input based upon that neighborhood's success.

Please see response to #4 above.

30. Would like to recommend a development idea for an energy efficient and furnished luxury one floor condominium complex of 2,500 to 3000 sq. ft. On the site should be a dry cleaners/laundry facility, a bank, a full line grocery store/pharmacy like Wegmans or Price Choppers, a car wash, and a small Post Office/FedEx/UPS store.

Please see response to #4 above.

31. The redevelopment of Kennedy Square should be an Eco-Village, which would incorporate every kind of sustainable energy from solar to wind, geothermal, etc. Building materials, construction practices should incorporate the latest "green" best practices. Transportation to and from should represent best practices of sustainable, clean energy. Many potential partners to pursue the "greening" of Kennedy Square—Syracuse University, ESF, Department of Energy, etc.

The RFP will include requirements to meet LEED standards.