



The Conference Reporter

Special Issue

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

May 2006



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HPKCC MISSION

The purpose of the Conference is to attend to the civic needs of the community; work toward an attractive, secure, diverse, and caring community; and to promote participation of residents, businesses, institutions, and organizations in programs and activities that advance the interests and concerns of the community. It serves the community as a watchdog, independent voice, and clearing house in the community's ongoing conversation and decisions about those matters which affect and define community life.

The Conference in Action:

Actions of Board Endorse Original Harper Court Mission

On May 4, 2006, the Board of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference voted 12 to 1 (2 abstentions) to endorse the need to preserve, in some form or manner, the original mission of the Harper Court Foundation: *"the civic purposes of furthering the trade and economic development of the Hyde Park-Kenwood area in the City of Chicago and its environs, and promoting and assisting the growth and development of business concerns, including small-business concerns in said area"* with special emphasis for *"the continuation in the community of artisans, craftsmen, and educational, recreational and other services offered on a commercial basis, but of special cultural or community significance"* (paragraph 5, Harper Court Foundation Articles of Incorporation, April 17, 1963).

In its three public meetings since the March TIF meeting, the Conference has heard a variety of worthwhile opinions and ideas that deserve exploring. There have also been several constants: (1) The original mission should be retained. (2) The current tenants should be "helped" during any construction period. (3) Any development must be appropriate for Hyde Park, and should preferably be appealing to a broad spectrum of the neighborhood: a "gateway" to 53rd Street. (4) Any new development should be kept at a height consistent with 53rd Street. (5) Adequate parking must be provided. (6) Public space (including chess benches) is required.

Following lengthy discussions earlier this year with the Illinois Attorney General's Office of Charitable Trusts, the Conference raised seven questions it hoped would be answered by the Arts Council. Five remain unanswered:

1. What is the *Council's* idea of appropriate development for Harper Court?
2. How are the Arts Council bylaws being revised to fit its new role?
3. What is being done to make the Council board more representative of the community, especially the arts?
4. What steps are being taken to eliminate conflicts of interest?
5. What framework will be created to make decisions about the dissemination of funds from the sale?

Key Points

- Harper Court's original mission must be continued and included in Harper Court and what's done by the managers of the assets of a sale: To support small (especially local) businesses, including those related to artists and our neighborhood's cultural life.
- Current tenants must be provided for in Harper Court, including in a transition/construction period (should there be rehabilitation or new development).
- Whether the current Harper Court stays or is replaced, it must become more of a visible, vibrant, exciting place, a destination at the neighborhood center and a gateway. It must have a diverse mix of businesses, services, and cultural/entertainment uses, including such as are not currently found in the neighborhood and some that would not survive without help. The primary focus is on commercial space.
- Preferred scale is low, although certain areas offer possibilities for limited height.
- Active open space and provision for adequate parking must be included.

April 11:

Express Yourself: The Future of Harper Court

by Gary Ossewaarde

HPKCC President George Rumsey opened the forum, stating that special guests would set forth background and field questions, then the floor would be open to the public. Rumsey noted two issues, future of the property, and management of monies.

Introductory Comments

Mark Johnson, former board member and executive director of Harper Court, set forth history and experience and conditions of Harper Court.

Harper Court was built to replace businesses torn down in Urban Renewal, Johnson said. It was a planned unit development (PUD) that included what is now the Court, the city parking lot, and the site of McDonald's. Originally, police and fire stations were supposed to go there, but when that changed no buyer was interested until the Harper Court Foundation was set up and bought the land for a dollar. To build the center, \$100,000 worth of \$100 bonds were sold and the rest was borrowed in 26 loans from the Small Business Administration, one for each space. The University and the Archdiocese of Chicago bought over half the bonds. Harper Court is not tax exempt and does not have property tax exemption, but a modest reduction. The Scan building's arrangement is somewhat different, with 50-year leases that expire in 2016, after which it reverts to Harper Court. The bonds and loans were all paid off through a sinking fund about 1990.

The Center had 300,000 square feet (excluding the building built a little later by Scan Furniture and now housing the Checkboard). The lower spaces have 6,000 square feet, the upper 12,000. The upper stories have high ceilings with operating louvers for "air conditioning" (real conditioners had to be added later). The lower spaces have very low ceilings. Johnson said not to blame the architect, Hyde Parker John Black, for the perpetual drainage problem—the lower level is below the sewer lines.

Johnson said the original vision to fill the lower sections with artisans was never realized. The restaurants basically footed the bill. Remodeling started from the beginning. Management continually wrestled with who to subsidize and how much—and how long with those that failed to pay their rent. The only remaining reduced rent artisan tenant is Artisans 21.

Johnson said the Harper Court Arts Council was formed in 1990 with bonds people turned in and said they wanted used to do nice or arts things in the neighborhood. The Council was also envisioned as the end point for the assets of Harper Court when the Court or Foundation someday ceased to function.

Johnson said the Court was built well and is still structurally sound and not settling. Almost all the windows are original, but single pane non-weatherproof. He said the plumbing and flooding are the most persistent problems. The buildings including electrical and plumbing would be very expensive to upgrade—the concrete was poured around the lines, and balconies did fail. Also, it would not be easy to bring it to ADA compliance (which he characterized as rigid). He said complete ramping would make the lower spaces completely hidden and useless. Some ramps were added in the 1990s. He added that retail has changed and left these spaces behind, and the present businesses are highly dependent on the city lot being in operation.

Alderman Preckwinkle answered questions on the Request For Proposals process and her general hopes for the area. She said that with the failure of the Arts Council's attempt to sell, she asked them to use a city RFP process and asked the city to prepare an RFP with the Council, hoping this and inclusion of the city lot would cast as wide a net as possible for developers. City staff meetings and initial meetings with the Council are in progress. While she has asked that a draft for public comment be ready for the May 8 TIF meeting, she was not sure that would happen.

She said in answer to a question about further expansion that the University already has its own RFP responses, although there would most likely be close coordination. The University is reviewing 7 responses and will report May 8.

Inclusion of the parking lot was logical, she said, because a buyer would likely want control over parking.

RFP language ranges from very vague to very specific language intended to steer. They all give the zoning or PUD and other legal restrictions. The University's maximum height is the bank building's. She appeared not to know what the Harper PUD restrictions are. She would not approve a proposal

with a 50 story building. The language with regard to density will probably determine how much a buyer will pay. The PUD will have to be changed through negotiation with the city. What would especially matter to her in language would be (as was in the Theater and Leal RFPs) keeping neighborhood scale, character, standards and that development help enhance a viable commercial district. Language would disqualify off the wall ideas. And the city will specify development that is compatible with 53rd Street.

Preckwinkle named among Hyde Park's assets that would draw developers its housing stock, the lakefront, and being 20 minutes from downtown. She said it's hard for us to persuade national brands to come here without deep subsidies, although when they come (e.g. Office Depot) the stores are highly productive. But we have a lot of competition now. She thought it best to have a mix of big and small, local and chains.

Some worried that the Council will have no incentive to accept minimalist proposals, those that are not dense or that keep the present center. George Davis suggested to the alderman also that the community may have interests that differ from those of both the Council and the city and therefore will not be reflected in the RFP.

Judy Roothan said it is important to specify that proposals promote and include diversity and variety. She said there should be a way to expand the process beyond just owners ready to proceed now—the affected area that has to be in play and considered goes well beyond the Court and city lot. Preckwinkle said the city would be compensated for the land and that the present lot won't necessarily have the parking.

Public Comments

Sam Ackerman proposed nearby owners and developers work together to achieve the best outcome and to leave space to carry on a portion of the original mission.

Nancy Stanek said she was exemplifying the needed transparent process by announcing she has a long-term lease and she with others was exploring a bid, if engineering studies showed restoration and upgrade are feasible—but they had no interest in seeing the present center torn down. She is for supporting locally owned businesses. She disputed that retail has changed so much as to make that obsolete. These businesses add to the character of the community. She said that a section set aside for subsidized businesses in a big new development is problematic—in her experience such businesses come and go as the center owner has no real interest in serving them.

Some noted that the Court currently seems dead with little traffic—more so since the chess benches were removed. The space is not inviting and convenient.

George Rumsey said redevelopment should be tied to a new gateway and open space at the northwest corner of Lake Park and 53rd.

Clairan Ferrono stressed the serious lack of trust in a Council with conflicts of interest and leaving too many questions about handling of funds after a sale.

Gabriel Piemonte said professionals should evaluate the matter and manage the sale. Also that support of small business is needed. What about the present Court has worked, what hasn't. Don't wipe out the whole space, especially without full input and consideration of community interests.

Aaron Cook, who said he has worked with developers, said mixed use including residential works best and can have very good outcomes. He suggested a public design charrette. Rumsey reminded the alderman that this was done for creation of the TIF and asked her if she would be interested in charrettes for Harper Court (not answered).

Charles O'Connell said we should

study the original PUD and look at stipulating inclusion of sustainability (social and environmental) into the project as well as maintaining the areas character.

Sally Martini said the residential part would be a chance to create housing for commuting students.

Judy Rootan distributed a paper setting forth ideas for a gateway mixed development that would preserve our community's diversity by making space that could be afforded by retirees, a broad middle class of professionals and workers and artists, and for small shops, perhaps with living space for owners—people who are in danger of being priced out of the community. This would be an ideal location to show our ideals while recognizing Hyde Park is becoming more "Gold Coast."

Members of Artisans 21 of Harper Court came in (after their own meeting) and announced they want to stay in Harper Court.

Rumsey asked how the current tenants are being cared for and asked people to be prepared at the Workgroups April 25 to say if and how we want to preserve a space for current tenants, including maybe first right

of refusal.

Charles Staples said that Harper Court has lost sight of its mission and just become commercial. The community is well served by the present center, and it's handsome although in need of fixing.

Dorri Ellis of Artisans 21 said On the Nile is also maintaining the original vision. Artisans allows many artists to move in and out and find their bearings and move on. They tend to be the folks whose works will sell. She said there are lots of artisans in Hyde Park. She warned that rents elsewhere in Hyde Park are too high for Artisans 21 to survive outside the Court.

Alan Dobry called the transfer of the Court to the Arts Council a swindle and called on the Council to resign. He suggested seeking a nonprofit buyer or a land trust.

Robin Kaufman said the uncertainty is making things hard for current tenants, and they will not survive or return to a new development if they have to vacate.

Stephanie Franklin warned about creating too much density and congestion. Also against something that tilts too much toward residential (as she said Urban Renewal did).

What would you like the Harper Court Arts Council to do with assets from the sale of Harper Court?

*Answers from the April 25 Evaluation
More questions on page 5.*

Use it to incubate & nurture small startup and independent businesses
Subsidize artisans shops/studios and funky small businesses
Support artisans
Give to community for community-led development; keep away from UC
No sale
Should give, not sell, property to a community group
To arts orgs? A theater?
They should not sell it to anyone except the community- a land trust which should be established- with leases given for buildings
Put into Hyde Park
Not waste them
Give grants & scholarships - artists in residence
Disperse slowly over years by means of grant proposals; form a larger HP Arts

Dispense profits only through grant proposal process
Scholarship funds for young artists
Support arts/small local business
Grant money for artists, artisans, musicians
Redistribute through open grant proposals
Please - no sale - that much money in the hands of one council is obscene
Invest in the community
Support arts/education
Reinvest
Support the arts in the community
Part to arts, some to retail
Support the artisans
Use original purpose-reconstitute the board with community/tenant reps
Other comments
Affordable housing (NFP develop, with retail downstairs)
Board transparency
Open/expand the board
Community land trust
Have a referendum

Combination of leased and owned businesses? Management company?
Parking lot should NOT be a part of the plan.

Mission of the Harper Court Arts Council:

The purposes for which the organization was formed and for which the contributions are to be used are:

1. To stimulate, encourage and enhance public appreciation of various art forms primarily in the Chicago metropolitan area, particularly in the Hyde Park/Kenwood community, including but not limited to, fine art, theatre, photography and music; and
2. To foster and develop the arts by sponsoring public art exhibits and theatrical performances of unknown, but promising, artists.

Attachment to Form CO-1, 1990

April 25, 2006

HPKCC Harper Court Forum: Ideas and Principles

Summary of the Forum on the development of Harper Court hosted by the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference
[Each table was assigned a color, then given 15-20 minutes per question to reach a consensus on three answers;
answers were then posted for clarification and discussion.]

1. What should an improved Harper Court do for the neighborhood?

Blue

Provide a multiplex theater complex to revitalize the area, as in Evanston
Provide a multilevel parking garage, available day and night
Provide a haven for small non-franchise businesses

Green

Maintain low rise
Mixed-use low rise small businesses
ADA Accessibility

Gray

Connect and interact with 53rd Street to create a seamless retail/activity core
Be a draw-through for retail, programming, arts, and entertainment
Attract community residents, including students, to shop in Hyde Park

Pink

Nurture small business and artisans
It should be a happening place, host art festivals and community events etc.
Provide needed goods and services, such as a vet, and should be flexible in response to the times (i.e. should change with the times)
More imaginative management

Black

Subsidize artisans and small businesses
Accessible public spaces for gatherings, both planned and impromptu, such as chess, concerts, and farmers markets
Local retail needed and owned by the community

Purple

Provide a magnet such as theater, small business restaurants, to draw both community residents and outsiders
Provide subsidized space for small business and artists
Provide open space for community events

Orange

An agora, not a mall
Subsidized art experiences and venues
Business incubator

2. What should an improved Harper Court look like?

Pink

A walking arcade with teen, kid-friendly skateboard park in parking lot
Environmentally friendly rooftop garden and responsible green technology
Esthetically pleasing low-rise low density height restrictions

Orange

Public open space (more than now)
Pedestrian-oriented to encourage foot traffic
All structural perimeters have retail or public use (no blank walls)
Assume internal parking structure

Gray

Buildings with character and esthetic interest making cars invisible
Provide significant central open space for gathering and greenery
Clear image including signs directions, and attractions to pedestrians and for pedestrian flow

Blue

Hospitable, modern, dramatic, like the new Hyde Park Art Center
Build up vertically for additional shops, restaurants, housing, movies, and theaters
Accessible (ADA as well as easy to walk through) and easy to navigate

Purple

Live-in studios and workshops
Look at models throughout the country, examples: the Torpedo Factory and the Shriners Temple
Keep the Harper Court structure

Green

Enhance outdoor ambiance, more color, more flowers, more chess
Welcoming entrance arches
Every space filled

Black

Visibility to main avenues through signs, banners, directory
Same but improved low rise design and accessible
Open, friendly, with vibrant activity

3. How should our community influence this project so that the improvement benefits both the neighborhood and the mission of the Harper Court Foundation and Arts Council?

Gray

Actively oppose, through the city planning department, any plan unsatisfactory to the community. (We can stop them if we get the Alderman's help, when it comes to the city process.)

Design multi-use structure, retail, office, restaurants, residential, etc. with space for parking structure and below-grade truck service, allow height on the east half of site to provide maximum money to meet the arts council objective of money for the arts; and subsidize limited number of small businesses and artisans shops. [The east end of the site is what will border on Lake Park that could have more height, even if it casts a shadow on McDonald's. On the other hand, Nancy Stanek says that if it were a blank slate, you wouldn't think of doing that because it would block the rest of buildings.]

Initiate input in the Harper Court foundation/arts council by questioning their ethics through legal action

Black

Use the Alderman's zoning leverage, and petition the state Attorney General for community/tenant reps on the Harper Court board.

Educate, publicize, flyers in Harper Court to diverse residents

Have a festival celebrating Harper Court, publicizing the issue

Orange

Profits from Harper Court sale to be dispersed by arts council only through grant proposals

Broaden arts council board to include many other constituents

Advisory council for private developer to provide community input for public uses [developer would want to get in good with the community and would want the community's idea, creating a public-private partnership]

Green

A referendum on high rises and density
 Expand community base to be more
 inclusive
 Get citywide media coverage

Pink

Development reflects community input and
 continues the original mission of Harper
 Court [subsidized spaces for retail,
 affordable spaces, arts and artisans]
 Community ownership of land, not
 necessarily property/buildings [Hyde
 Park land trust]
 Private enterprise [as an entrepreneur,

Nancy Stanek says there's a lot to be said
 for private enterprise. When you own
 and operate it and have something real at
 stake, then you care about it.]

Purple

Call Main Street National Trust; get that
 group to help us
 Work with Alderman and TIF, but hold
 their feet to the fire to represent the
 community
 Accountability process and rewrite the
 bylaws and reconstitute the foundation/
 ac board

Blue

Pursue legal basis of Harper Court
 Ownership [find out what the legal basis
 of the ownership of the real estate is, act
 accordingly]
 Demand attendance by Foundation and
 Council members
 Pressure Alderman to be responsive to
 community wishes
 Other comments: Almost everyone present
 says a first priority is to give businesses in
 Harper Court a chance to keep operating

—Prepared by M.L. Rantala, 2 May 2006

April 25 Follow-Up Questionnaire: Your Opinion on the Future of Harper Court

1. Would you prefer to see Harper Court rehabbed or rebuilt as something new? (27)

Rehab	16	59%
Rebuilt	11	41%

2. Should the original mission of Harper Court (help develop arts/small businesses) be retained in any degree? (32)

Retain mission	31	97%
Don't retain	1	3%

3. Should public space (such as the court- yard) be maintained and/or new spaces added? (32)

Public space	32	100%
No special space	0	0%

4. Should current tenants be "helped" to stay in business during any development? (32)

Help current	31	97%
Don't help	1	3%

5. In general, how tall is acceptable for development along 53rd and Lake Park? (31)

Two storey	0	0%
Four storey	23	74%
Fourteen storey	4	13%
Between 4 & 14	4	13%

6. Compared to the parking lot on the corner of 53rd and Lake Park, how much parking should be required for any devel- opment plan? (29)

Less parking	1	3%
Same parking	2	7%
More parking	19	66%
Much more	7	24%

7. Should any development include hous- ing? If so, what kind of housing? (open ended)

For sale
 If its' affordable (part rent)
 No
 Apartments or condos or mix
 Only if necessary to subsidize small business
 Not luxury condos, mixed affordable-home
 ownership
 No
 Moderate income rental
 Yes
 No
 Artists/studios & small business 2-story live-
 in
 Yes, mixed at local price & low price
 Yes, mixed live-in studios & workshops
 Two stories of apartments in a 4-storey bldg,
 source of income?
 No, HP needs retail
 Not necessarily
 No
 No
 ? Possible
 No
 No
 No
 No, other development projects are address-
 ing housing
 Artists housing
 No
 Some modest mixed income affordable
 Maybe, studio apts
 Not necessarily

8. What do you think would be appropri- ate retail for Hyde Park? What kinds of stores would you realistically like to see?

Clothing, food

Not national franchise; locally owned
 Food specialty shops, body & fitness servic-
 es, clothing (men, women, children), dry
 goods, home equipment
 Clothing, sewing/notions, small stationery,
 garden supplies and plants
 Non-franchise
 Second hand store, art supplies store
 Casual wear stores (sweaters, slacks, etc.) and
 lingerie
 Something in general needs, like old wool-
 worth's or Breslauer's
 Cool stores
 Notions, sewing needs, good restaurant (an
 Indian/South Asian one), also many stu-
 dents
 Vintage, charming restaurants, fiber art/yarn
 store (good for community), coffee
 Small unique shops
 Brown Elephant thrift store
 Women's clothing, sportswear, varied gift
 wares, Chinese restaurant, antique shops
 Clothing, sundries, yarn, fabric store
 Restaurant, gift/craft shops
 Artisans 21 and small businesses
 Clothing, "fine foods" like chocolates, pas-
 tries, toy stores, artisans cafes, sporting
 goods, restaurants
 Too many subcultures, too many choices
 Canvas the community
 Children's clothing, toys, housewares, jew-
 elry, knick-knacks
 Bigger Artisans 21
 Local business - no franchises
 Art galleries
 Arts, crafts, practical shops, such as sewing,
 etc.
 Vanities including basic and a few dining
 destinations
 Women's retail clothes

Draft Notes from March 28, 2006

Planning Meeting on Harper Court Aimed toward the May 8 TIF

by Trish Morse, HPKCC Board

Alderman Preckwinckle (TP): Asked for an “aggressive schedule” for the RFP. Parking lot included so it’s a joint RFP of public and private land, so the Planning and the Law Departments of the city must sign off on it.

Jack Spicer: Where is the line defining the city part?

Mark Johnson (MJ): The true line is the line of trees behind the Dixie Kitchen to the east

Nancy Stanek (NS): Are these inextricably together?

TP: Redevelopment terms would want to guarantee parking

George Davis (GD): What is the prerequisite of a PUD and why is the city involved here?

TP: Harper Court Foundation was not able to cast a wide net so the lawyer brought the buyer. The Planning Department casts a wide net. RFP will go to the Planning Dept. mailing list of developers. A diverse pool of buyers. So all this is being done as a service to the Foundation.

George Rumsey (GWR): What is the legal standing of an RFP? Contract? Are there letters of intent, penalties, deposits with the bid?

TP: Saw the RFP as a way to reach a broader pool of developers

GD: does it bind the foundation?

TP: “It’s always possible to reject all bids” Arts Council has held one meeting with the Chicago Consulting Studio folks

ML Rantala (ML): Bundling parking, so who decides it’s ok for the city?

TP: Department of Planning. They are doing it as a “favor to me” “I work very closely with the Department of Planning”

Mary Anton: This is a parallel process, we have requested suggestions and not received any

NS: No one has suggested bulldozing Harper Court but now I hear the bulldozers now that it’s one land mass.

TP: Keeping the court can be one of the proposals. There are no plans for bulldozing.

GWR: This is supposed to be a meeting to plan 4/11 “vent” forum and 4/25 working groups for ideas about good development for the neighborhood.

TP: The Arts Council owns it and will decide what to do with it, though anyone can give advice, but ultimately it’s their decision.

GWR: Have they met with the attorney general about rewriting their by-laws?

TP: Know nothing about internal affairs

GWR: Are they the group best to do this? Will they open their board to someone with actual arts background

Mary Anton: We did ask for input through the e-mail site, we have defined a process, but no one dropped us a line, no one wrote, you just want a totally parallel process

TP: There was no response to the Arts Council offer for input at the TIF

NS: Was there a public announcement? No one saw it

Mary Anton: There is a letter in the Herald this week, we asked for feedback at the TIF but the community could care less.

NS: Where is the statement of the actual terms?

Mark Johnson: Most know HCF created during urban renewal in particular by Muriel Beadle and Bruce Sagan. Courageous people helped (lists). The mission was to find a place where artists, artisans, and small business displaced by the UR could find a home. A lot that ran from McDonalds, to the parkway, to Harper court sits on a PUD. It’s all restricted, not zoned, controlled by ordinance. They bought the land from the city for \$1 (originally for a police and fire station that were located elsewhere). The parking lot was unpaved for the first 20 years. HCF pays income and property taxes. The three buildings were built for \$360,000, sold \$100 bonds, and borrowed \$250,000, 1 loan for each space. By the time it was built, the artists had gone from the neighborhood. They didn’t want people to live in the studios, so the bathrooms are too small, there’s no A/c (hence the vents on the windows), hands on management, as the tenants went under, the foundation paid all 26 loans.

HP Arts Council created as a vehicle to spend money after bond money was paid. Pays for the artists in residence, but a major bond holder was the U of C and it complicated things because of what a non-profit could do in terms of giving money to other nonprofits.

Mom and Pop businesses are folding, buildings structurally in need of major work--original windows cost \$1000 each to replace, balconies need replacing and ADA compliance. In 1998, one cost \$250,000. The small spaces had to expand. The land lease to the Checkerboard ends in 2016. The lower levels flood with the sewers so it’s nasty. The catch basins and sump pumps and electrical all need work.

By-laws say that they can give the assets to a 501(c)3 organization “like the U of C” not requires that it go to them, just an illustration.

Mary Anton: “I don’t know what the history of Hyde Park has to do with what kind of real estate should be done.

Lady in back) ???: It’s important to me--gives us a chance to find out what you’re about.

GWR: The RFP will be open to comment when written.

Mary: These meetings are too late

Barbara O’connor: Nobody knew anything about this, no one knew who was on the Board, the first TIF meeting was the first anyone heard from you. Even I didn’t know. We’re concerned with what’s going on. You negotiated for years but not an open process. You need to allow people to put together ideas.

Baby Ph.D.: History is important to refine comments. I am a tenant of Harper Court and I think we need to focus on a series of topics: land use, current building conditions, types of tenants wanted, where others may go if displaced

Barbara: I called George. The HPKCC since 1949 is always there for a crisis, they always dug in. TIF is not a community wide structure. I pushed him into doing this.

Mary Anton: It’s too late, April 11 and April 25 are too late.

Carol Bradford: I don’t know you from anybody. Mary, why is it too late?

Mary Anton: If a presentation is to be made at the TIF May 8, a working group 4/25 is too late. You just want a parallel process.

ML: The problem is of your making

Carol: You didn’t have this open process from the git go. You are disingenuous and it’s insulting.

Mary Anton: We won’t have adequate time to include your comments by May 8. It’s an unrealistic process...

Chorus of voices--well, push the timetable back

Baby Ph.D. tenant--This has been dragging on for years! Don’t push it back

Herald reporter tries to clarify what they think they included in the paper.

Person in back: We need a process to organize input.

Vet: The question is “do you want Harper Court to stay? If so, we’ll try to put together a proposal unless the engineers prove that it’s an unworkable white elephant. If you don’t want it to stay, hell, I’ll just get a site somewhere else. An important element in the RFP is how you think current tenants should be treated

Mary Anton: Well, go to the website, the contact information is there.

Excerpts from “A Vision for the Hyde Park Retail District” (March 2000, direct quotes)

Vision for the Hyde Park Retail District (p. 2)
 The Hyde Park Retail District will build on its existing assets to become a vibrant, energized mixed use district serving Hyde Park residents, students, visitors and neighboring communities. Future development at Lake Park Avenue and 53rd Street will bring new retailers, offices, housing, and institutional and civic uses, and an ample supply of parking to the district. This new focus for development will create a highly visible and attractive commercial center, providing a clear and strong identity for the Hyde Park Retail District. The improved quality of the shopping environment will encourage shoppers to walk between stores, shopping streets, and shopping centers within the district. The district will have improved vehicular connections to local highways, and major institutions such as the Museum of Science and Industry and the University of Chicago. Properties will continue to be renovated through the efforts of retailers and local organizations.

53rd Street is Hyde Park’s main street, home to a retail and business community that serves residents and visitors alike. The street will continue to grow as more people patronize the diverse mix of stores and restaurants, the Hyde Park Bank, the Hyde Park Theater, and professional service providers. Harper Court will continue to add to the vitality of 53rd Street with its mix of specialty stores, popular restaurants and public gathering spaces. New streetscaping will improve the sidewalks and landscaping, and bring pedestrian scaled lights to the street, reinforcing 53rd Street’s role as Hyde Park’s main street.

The Retail Market (pages 5 and 6)
 Market demand is clearly adequate to support new and expanded retail activities in Hyde Park. These activities could better serve the immediately surrounding market area and create a more vibrant shopping environment. A detailed analysis of market data and surveys of Hyde Park shoppers and residents found that Hyde Park has the potential to be a much stronger retail location. Given the affluence of many of its residents, Hyde Park can offer a prime location to retailers interested in a central-city location.

MARKET DATA FINDINGS
Hyde Park has Positive Population and Household Trends for Retailing.
 Overall population density has remained high for the primary and secondary market areas served by Hyde Park’s commercial establishments. Like most neighborhoods in Chicago, these market areas lost population and households in past decades, but more recently the rate of population and household loss has dropped significantly. However, much of the population loss was due to decreasing household size, and today, findings suggest that the number of households will likely increase. This projected increase in the number of households results in part because of the rehabilitation of existing housing and new construction in the trade area.

Hyde Park has Substantial Household Income and Purchasing Power.

In 1998, the aggregate income for the primary market area served by Hyde Park was about \$1.02 billion, and the aggregate income for the secondary market area was approximately \$1.3 billion. Within Hyde Park, the average household income was over \$63,000. Because of the trade area’s high population density, total resident expenditures on retail goods and services are substantial.

Retail Expenditures are Lost to Competitive Retail Locations.
 Only a small percentage of the trade area’s high retail expenditure potential is actually captured by Hyde Park establishments. Like many inner-city neighborhoods in Chicago and other cities, Hyde Park loses sales to shopping locations that offer a greater variety of shopping selections and choices. In 1998, retail sales in Hyde Park establishments accounted for only about \$106.3 million of the \$780.1 million total retail sales potential for the primary and secondary trade area.

A More Competitive Hyde Park Could Support More Retailers.

Demand for New Office Space is Limited.

WHAT RESIDENTS AND SHOPPERS SAY
Residents and Shoppers Want More Shopping Alternatives.
 ...One particular opportunity exists in women’s apparel: currently, Hyde Park shops are not meeting local needs and tastes, so women are going elsewhere to make their apparel purchases. Despite its potential for niche markets, however, Hyde Park is too small to compete with the Loop, Greater North Michigan Avenue, or regional malls.

Adequate Parking is Key.
 ...The survey found that the automobile is still their primary mode of travel for shopping, and convenient accessibility and parking are very important factors in their decisions on where to shop. Any new development will have to incorporate an access and parking strategy.

Appearance and Safety Count.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Define a Core Retail Area.
 ...the area lacks definition and focus. Efforts are required to define the core area more clearly and to realize this area’s potential as Hyde Park’s “main street” — a place to shop, browse, stroll, eat, and mingle with other neighborhood residents.

Focus on Local Residents.
Expand and Improve Existing Businesses.
Attract Larger Stores.
Enliven Retail Areas.

Create a Vibrant Mixed Use Center for the Hyde Park Retail District (pages 8 and 9)
 The Hyde Park Retail District will gain from the development of a central place that offers a critical mass of retail and street activity, and serves as a gateway to the entire district. To achieve this goal, the following steps are recommended:
 ☒ Locating a new center for the Hyde Park Retail District around the intersection of 53rd Street and Lake Park Avenue.
 ☒ Bringing new mixed use development to the Lake Park Avenue and 53rd Street intersection.

- ☒ Renovating the Harper Court Shopping Center.
- ☒ Renovating vintage buildings at the intersection of Harper Avenue and 53rd Street, and the Hyde Park Theater buildings to create an attractive gateway to Harper Court.
- ☒ Upgrading the quality of the streetscape around the 53rd Street and Lake Park Avenue intersection.
- ☒ Energizing the “Gateway Plaza.”
- ☒ Upgrading Metra stations, viaducts and the embankment along Lake Park Avenue.

Bringing New Mixed Use Development
 City Parking Lot (between 52nd and 53rd Streets):
 The City of Chicago is encouraged to pursue retail, office and residential development options for this site in conjunction with the renovation of Harper Court. Development of retail or commercial space on this lot will require replacement parking. A parking garage behind new uses along the streets can meet this need, and also met the demands of new developments on Lake Park Avenue and 53rd Street.

Phase Two: Redevelop the City Parking Lot and Harper Court (page 11)
 Introduce mixed-use development along Lake Park Avenue with retail along the street level, and residential, commercial, and/or institutional uses above.

Parking Garage: Encourage a three to four floor parking garage, with vehicular access on Lake Park Avenue, and landscaped setbacks along Lake Park Avenue.

5. Establish Design Guidelines for Buildings and Signs (page 22)
 Hyde Park’s retail streets have a great pedestrian scale, with vintage buildings that are mostly three or four floors high lining both sides of the street. ... An attractive street environment will bring more shoppers to the stores and restaurants of the Hyde Park Retail District, increasing sales in existing businesses, and attracting new retailers to the district.

Building Height
 ☒ Buildings on retail streets in Hyde Park are scaled to the pedestrian environment. To maintain this quality, new buildings are discouraged from being more than four storeys in height.
 ☒ Where zoning allows a new building to be taller than four storeys, floors above the fourth floor should be set back at least 15 feet. This allows the character and scale of the street wall to be maintained.

Next Steps: Priority Actions (page 26)
 8. Establish a Hyde Park Retail District Design Committee to encourage retailers to renovate and upgrade facades and signs in line with the design guidelines, and to review new proposals for development.

(Signatories to this document include 4th Ward alderman, 5th Ward alderman, University of Chicago Community Affairs, Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce, SECC, HPKCC, Harper Court Foundation, and Chicago Department of Planning & Development. Consultant Team was from SOM.)

Key Excerpts from the University of Chicago RFP for "53rd and Harper Properties"

Pages 12-15: Part IV. The Development Framework

A. Development Objectives

- ☒ Create a **vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood development** to serve the community, the University and the mid-south residents
- ☒ Improve the **image and identity of the 53rd Street/Harper area** as an attractive commercial district
- ☒ Leverage the **historic character of the neighborhood** and college town appeal
- ☒ Attract **high quality retail tenants and/or entertainment uses**, which enliven the area
- ☒ Increase the **residential and office offerings in the neighborhood**
- ☒ Feature **high quality urban design and architecture** commensurate with Hyde Park

B. Design Criteria

With prime frontage along 53rd Street, the property is a key anchor parcel and signature development for the district as well as an important entry into the Harper Court area. The existing builds serve as good precedent 53rd Street structures for the massing, quality materials and architectural detail/character [sic]. Designs that propose a new development are encouraged to refer to this precedent with respect to the overall composition. The following are some general design criteria for the redevelopment of the property.

- ☒ **Facade Preservation and/or Adaptive Reuse Option:** preference is for options that preserve the facade and/or adaptively reuse the property, if feasible and economically practical, while being complementary to the existing materials and design intent
- ☒ **Demolition and New Construction Option:** a partial or complete demolition of the structures must produce a new design reflective of the character and quality of Hyde Park
- ☒ **Scale, Massing and Materials:** the scale, massing and materials of a new construction project must respond to the historic context and quality of the surrounding area and the 53rd Street district
- ☒ **Zoning:** a development that exceeds the current B3-2 zoning (max. floor area: ±40,000 SF, max. dwelling units: 19, max height: 50') would require City approval through a Planned Development process
- ☒ **Off-Street Parking:** the project needs to accommodate off-street parking for proposed uses as stipulated by City zoning
- ☒ **Pedestrian Environment:** the overall development should reinforce the 53rd Street pedestrian-friendly character through quality storefront design, appropriate signage and streetscape, as well as follow the City zoning ordinance since 53rd Street is designated a "pedestrian street"

C. Program and Use Guidelines

...a list of preferred program uses and

components to help ensure that the Proposed Development becomes part of a vibrant neighborhood district . . .

- ☒ **High quality Retail** uses at the ground floor are encouraged in order to reinforce an active, dynamic urban neighborhood center. The opportunity with this property, given its size, is to secure a national retailer anchor or signature store not currently in the area and possibly smaller local or specialty "home grown" retailer(s) that offer unique, boutique shops or one-off stores. With the objective of attracting patrons from Hyde Park as well as the surrounding areas, a strong retailer(s) should help activate the area and create a "destination" draw for the district.
- ☒ **Entertainment/Restaurant** uses at the ground floor are also desired to energize the area, both daytime and nighttime. Building on the new Checkerboard Lounge venue, other entertainment/restaurant uses are encouraged. However, the site's proximity to a church may preclude the issuance of a liquor license. . . . Options that serve the student population, especially 24-hour dining (other than fast food), have also been suggested for the area. . .
- ☒ **Residential development**, above the ground floor, is highly encouraged to increase the number of people living in the district, and enhance the neighborhood vitality and vibrancy with a 24-hour resident population. . . .
- ☒ **Office** options for "above-the-store" professional office space and service businesses could be included in market demand dictates.
- ☒ **Off-Street Parking** for the Proposed Development needs to be accommodated on-site as stipulated by City zoning ordinance.
- ☒ **Civic, Arts & Cultural** options could be pursued to enhance the unique character and destination appeal of Hyde Park.

D. Architectural Objectives

In conjunction with the design criteria, a number of architectural guidelines have been outlined to preserve the strong architectural character and quality of the Hyde Park community. Whether applicable for adaptive reuse or new development, these objectives are as follows:

- ☒ **High Quality Design and Materials** . . . Durable exterior wall materials, particularly on the ground level facade, should be considered including brick, stone, ornamental terracotta and/or stucco that continue and reinforce the area's masonry traditions. . . Unique and creative designs are welcome
- ☒ **Massing/Scale** — building massing and scale should generally be appropriate to the context of the Hyde Park area, the size and nature of the street and adjacent buildings. Along 53rd Street, a two to four-story facade is common though some buildings reach upwards of twenty stories, particularly closer to the lake. Residential buildings off of 53rd Street and further into the neighborhood vary in height and type



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PROGRAMS

- Chicago Academic Games League
- Condos/Co-ops
- Development/Preservation/Zoning
- Friends of Blackstone Library
- Hyde Park Garden Fair
- Nichols Park Advisory Council
- Parks Committee
- Schools Committee
- Transit Task Force
- WhistleStop/Safety

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from four-story walkups to eight to ten-story apartment buildings. As a general rule, no proposed building shall be taller than the Hyde Park Bank building that stands at approximately 160' tall with 14 stories. In addition, key facades should be designed to respond to pedestrian scale, much like the stratification of the facades along 53rd Street.

☒ **Other**

Storefront Windows — maximize the transparency of ground floor, street facing commercial facades and provide primary building entrances facing or clearly visible from public sidewalks. Clear glass is preferred over opaque or tinted glass.
Awnings/Signage/Lighting/Streetscape — architectural features that embellish the visual appeal of buildings as well as help create a more pedestrian scaled, comfortable environment are encouraged.