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Place Game Workshop

Prospect Village Neighborhood Association

Compass Ministries

March 28, 2015

Introduction

The Prospect Village Neighborhood Association partnered with Omaha by Design to host a Place Game workshop March 28. Participants met at Compass Ministries, and 14 people attended. Three areas were evaluated – 35th Street and Franklin Street, 33rd Street and Parker Street, and 33rd Street corridor from Parker to Hamilton Street.

Evaluation Tools

Workshop participants were asked to evaluate the site according to the four criteria outlined below, which rank responses on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”).

Comfort and image

- Attractive
- Feels safe
- Clean/well maintained
- Comfortable places to sit

Access and linkage

- Identifiable from a distance
- Walkable
- Bikeable
- Accessible by transit
- Clean information/signage

Uses and activities

- Good mix of activities
- Frequent community events
- Area is busy
- Encourages physical activity
- Area is vital economically

Sociability

- People in groups
- Evidence of volunteerism
- Sense of pride and ownership
- Children and seniors present

Workshop participants also were instructed to ask persons who were in the place being evaluated what they liked about it and what they would do to improve it.

General Observations

35th Street and Franklin Street

Workshop participants valued the lot's location to Franklin Elementary School, easy access from the street and the opportunity to improve the neighborhood. Concerns include hanging power lines, dead trees and the uneven grade of the lot.

In terms of the criteria outlined above, workshop participants ranked the park's access and linkage as its greatest asset with an average score of 2.8, followed by uses and activities with an average score of 2.4, comfort and image with an average score of 1.6 and sociability with an average score of 1.4.

Short-term suggestions for improvements ranged from adding seating and trash cans, removing dead trees and adding signage to repainting street crossing. Long-term suggestions for improvements ranged from adding lighting to creating a community garden and outdoor education center.

33rd Street and Parker Street

Workshop participants value the intersection's wide sidewalks, historical significance and the opportunity for commercial growth. Concerns include broken sidewalks, no unified neighborhood identity, and lack of activities and awareness from residents.

In terms of the criteria outlined above, workshop participants ranked the intersection's access and linkage as its greatest asset with an average score of 2.5, followed by sociability with an average score of 2.3 and a tie among comfort and image and uses and activities with an average score of 1.7.

Short-term suggestions for improvements are install a neighborhood monument sign, repair sidewalks, remove chain link fence, install benches, and add cemetery signage and events. Long-term suggestions for improvements ranged from neighborhood branding, historic tours, recruit businesses, façade cleanup, landscaping to opening a community center.

33rd Street corridor from Parker to Hamilton Street

Workshop participants value the corridor's commercial potential and that it is the heart of the residential area. Concerns include lack of maintenance and multiple vacant lots.

In terms of the criteria outlined above, workshop participants ranked the corridor's access and linkage as its greatest assets with an average score of 3.3. The sociability and uses and activities tied with an average score of 1.8. Comfort and image followed with an average score of 1.7.

Short-term suggestions for improvements are overall cleanup, paint a mural at 33rd & Franklin, plant street trees, farmers market and paint stripes for parking spots along 33rd Street. Long-term suggestions for improvements ranged from landscaping, neighborhood marker, sidewalk repair to recruiting small businesses and creating an artist hub.

Analysis

35th Street and Franklin Street

What do you like best about this place?

- Location to Franklin School
- Has potential to improve neighborhood
- Proximity to school garden
- Easy access off street

What is the biggest problem with this place?

- Lack of maintenance
- Uneven grade
- Dead trees
- Hanging power lines

List three things that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Repaint street crossing 4
- Repair sidewalks 1
- Remove dead trees
- Add trash cans and cleanup
- Add benches

What three changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Outdoor education area 9
- Add a public art sculpture 3
- Add a permanent game table 2
- Add solar lighting 1
- Re-grade the space
- Develop community gardens
- Install seating and planters
- Add lighting
- Add signage
- Install a hard surface walking path
- Add a fence along north side

Comments from users of the place.

- Make it a more visible siting area
- Potential for educational space for students and staff
- Transform space to a pocket park
- Like the proximity to the school
- Improve with involvement and activities for kids

What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed activities? Please be as specific as possible.

- Local churches
- City of Omaha
- NeighborWorks Home Solutions
- OPPD tree grant
- Franklin Elementary School
- Mayor's Neighborhood Grant
- Kiewit Neighborhood Grant
- Volunteers from neighborhood
- Van Rowen, independent contractor
- ABIDE Network
- Christ Community Church

Analysis

33rd Street and Parker Street

What do you like best about this place?

- Trees
- Wide sidewalks
- Historical significance
- Potential of the vacant lots
- Diverse
- Has potential

What is the biggest problem with this place?

- No commercial draw
- Not inviting
- Lack of involvement and awareness from residents
- Vacant or undesirable businesses
- Broken sidewalks
- No activities for families
- Lack of unified identity for the neighborhood
- Chain link fence everywhere
- Inconsistent architecture

List three things that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Cemetery events 4
- Add benches and tree plantings 3
- Clean up/ pick up trash
- Stakeholder meeting with businesses in area
- Neighborhood monument sign

- Block parties in the neighborhood
- Repair sidewalks
- Remove chain link fence
- Cemetery signage
- Gather historical information of the neighborhood

What three changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Cemetery becomes “focus” of the neighborhood 4
 - Historic tours
 - School groups tours
- Historical commercial plaza and gathering area across from cemetery 3
- Improvements to cemetery to make it more inviting for people to walk through and visit 2
- Neighborhood branding, complimentary architecture 2
- Replace cemetery fence with more “upscale” fencing 1
- Sidewalk repair/ replacement 1
- Move cemetery historical marker to outside along street 1
- Recruit businesses such as coffee shop, small manufacturing, job training
- Curbing improvements
- Complete Streets
- Diversity in businesses
- Landscaping
- Façade clean up
- Community center

Comments from users of the place.

- N/A

What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed activities? Please be as specific as possible.

- Business owners
- Cemetery board
- ABIDE Network
- Restoration Exchange Omaha
- Douglas County Historical Society
- Compassion in Action
- Ron Poe (owns American Legion)
- Local daycare centers
- City of Omaha
- Neighborhood Association

Analysis

33rd Street corridor from Parker to Hamilton Street

What do you like best about this place?

- High traffic area
- Has potential
- Zoned commercial
- Heart of residential area
- Corridor for activity
- Potential for “mom & pop” businesses
- Potential main street
- Good corridor for neighborhood
- Bus route
- Close to midtown
- Narrow street

What is the biggest problem with this place?

- Lack of maintenance
- Not visually attractive
- Lack of ideas
- Lack of color
- Skewed overhead power lines
- Vacant lots
- Sidewalks need repaired
- No human activity

List three things that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Farmers market adjacent to Compass Ministries with Food trucks 7
- Paint mural on church wall at 33rd & Franklin 6
- Neighborhood cleanup days 1
- Landscaping in right-of-way 1
- Street trees between sidewalk and street
- Stripe parking spots and crosswalks
- Recruit business for corner lot at 33rd and Hamilton
- Mom and pop business
- Renovate 1623 N. 33rd Street

What three changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

(Participant vote tally in red)

- Street fair 5
- Brand the Prospect Village 5
- Public art 4

- Shipping containers for temporary use
- Healthy food corner store
- Repurpose existing community buildings
- Add a neighborhood marker – maybe a monument or sculpture
- Create live/ work spaces
- Recruit small businesses
- Music shell
- Public bathrooms
- Beautification – sidewalk repair, enhancements
- Create more visual interest
- Connect with Seventy-five North
- Create an artist hub

Comments from users of the place.

- Like that the childhood care center is located here
- Need better access to food
- Need entertainment for junior high age
- Need grocery/ convenience store
- Need activities for adolescents

What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed activities? Please be as specific as possible.

- Recording studios
- Modeshift
- Union for Contemporary Arts
- Kent Bellows Studio
- Innovative merchants

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