**Section 106 Consulting Party Meeting 1/30/18, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

**Western Library, 604 South Tenth Street**

**Attendees:** Darnell Farris, Myra Friend-Ellis, Cheri Hamilton, Katheryn Higgins, Ta’Londa Holland, Kelly Kinahan, Barbara Sexton-Smith, Jay Stottmon, Darcy Thompson, Jim Turner, Joanne Weeter, Lavele White, Natalie Woods, Laura Kinsell-Baer, Marilyn Edwards, Michael Striker, Bernard Pincus, Anne Baden, Chris Gunn, Jennifer Ryall, Majon Walton, Chloe Quiroga, Jeana Dunlap, Allison Smith, Jason Canual, Gretchen Milliken, Cynthia Johnson

**Review of Consulting Party Meeting 1**

Section 106 overview

The Historic Section 106 process is about balancing the needs of the commercial and economic growth and how to preserve historic properties as we continue growth and development. This process is about finding a balance between these two things and helping to find a common goal. There are steps to follow during the 106 process and the steps are legally defined. The goal of this meeting is to review the undertaking of the project – everything that will happen through the Choice Neighborhood Initiative grant and includes the entire project from beginning to end. It is emphasized that the consultation process of Section 106 happens throughout the entire CNI project period, no matter where we are in the Section 106 process. Anytime anyone wants to comment on any part of this process, you may submit feedback using the online form: <http://visionrussell.org/historic-preservation/section106/consulting-party-feedback/>

Feedback already received can be viewed at <http://visionrussell.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Consulting-Party-Feedback-Responses-2.pdf>

Who are the consulting parties?

Some are consulting parties by right as defined by the 106 process (advisory council of historic preservation, state preservation office, LMHA, Native American tribes that choose to participate). Three Native American tribes have responded that they would like to be included in the Section 106 process. Some are consulting parties by invitation.

Role of consulting parties

The most important thing that a consulting party can do is to help the Section 106 team understand what historic places that are present in the Russell neighborhood are significant and help determine if we would like to celebrate, commemorate, and have them brought forward during the next phases of the Beecher Terrace redevelopment project. Potential mitigation alternatives are the result of comments received thus far in the process. If you know of anyone what should be included in the Section 106 process who is not currently involved, please let us know.

**Review of Project Effects**

Where are we are in the Section 106 review process?

Step 1 has been completed and Step 2 is to identify historic properties. Below ground resources have been described in a report and is currently under review by the SHPO. The above ground properties have also been included in a report and we know that the project will adversely affect some of these historic properties. Beecher Terrace is a historic property itself and the project calls for demolishing the entire site. Step 3 is to resolve these adverse effects and this comes through as mitigation. How do we mitigate the impact of destroying historic properties? There is a map that shows where the historic properties are located in the project area. The biggest historic structures/sites are the Beecher complex itself, the Baxter Community Center, and Baxter Square Park, which will all be included in the Beecher Terrace Historic District. There is also an archeological site under Baxter Square Park. Adjacent to Beecher, are three other historic resources - Church of Our Merciful Savior, St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, and the Fire Department Headquarters.

Project Overview

Vision Russell is a Choice Neighborhood Initiative that impacts Beecher Terrace and the entire Russell neighborhood. The initiative is broken into 4 components: People, Neighborhood, Education and Housing. More information about the Choice Neighborhood Initiative can be found at <http://visionrussell.org/about/choice-neighborhoods-grant-programs/>

Community Engagement

The historic section 106 review process is a federal requirement, but LMG and LMHA want the most out of this process to make sure they do what is the best for the Russell neighborhood. Consulting parties will be engaged on a regular basis as we move forward with the Beecher Terrace redevelopment.

The goal of adding additional through streets to the Beecher Terrace site is to open up the neighborhood again and create a typical street pattern throughout the redevelopment area. Phase I of construction will be a 120-unit senior building (age 55+) that will be called the Life Long Wellness Building. It will feature two management offices – one just for seniors and another to serve residents of the remainder of the site. Future phases are yet to be determined and consulting parties will be engaged as we make these decisions.

**Project Design and Planning Process**

There was a two year planning process preceding where we are today in the redevelopment of Beecher Terrace. One of the principals we followed during the planning process was capturing the history of Russell. How do we bring the past into the new, future development? Design teams looked at the rich architectural character that is found throughout the neighborhood and the infill, residential properties. The urban fabric was also taken into consideration – a portion of Russell disappeared during Urban Renewal. The design team will be recreating the historic blocks by developing through streets and standard block sizes. Russell community feedback received showed that residents want to see a variety of housing types in the Beecher redevelopment, keeping Baxter a green space, and create complete streets (collected feedback at community meetings).

Lifelong Wellness Building

We are still determining the façade materials for this first phase of development, but a current rendering is available to see. We would like to take traditional elements and bring it into a more contemporary view, such as having a front porch. Designing for an urban element, these units will have both a back and front side. Instead of replicating an old look, we are taking these design materials and creating something that has never been seen before. We have also been talking about activating the architecture since these units and home will be right up to the street and directly next to downtown. Window treatments and varying materials are very important to create a unique and contemporary look. We are also creating complete streets around Beecher, which creates a safe and inviting atmosphere. We are also including a variety of housing types- town homes, traditional apartments that will vary in size and height. We will also be providing homeownership units. We will be replacing all units loss from Beecher, but some will be off-site. Right now there are 758 units and 640 units-316 units will be Beecher replacement housing- will be replaced on-site. We do not anticipate a loss of any housing from this project, they will just be distributed throughout the community.

Setbacks of buildings

It was asked if it was possible to make certain housing types in the redevelopment include a setback from the street and while other types be placed closer to the sidewalk. Phase II may address Jefferson Street with larger buildings and a little setback. The design team is trying to create an urban neighborhood since Beecher Terrace is in such close proximity to Central Downtown. The design team envisions the new development to be designed in a way that will encourage residents to walk and engage with their neighbors. It was asked if green space would be included between the buildings and the sidewalk. The redevelopment will include green space throughout the site, but not large front lawns. It was mentioned that having personal yards makes residents feels less like they are in a large housing project and that yards can also serve as a sound barrier on busy streets. The interior streets will feel most like neighborhood streets as the majority of traffic will be from the residents who lives there.

How will Baxter Square Park be approached and who will be making the decisions on how that will be done? There are a lot of factors LMHA and LMG do not know right now. The park is a historic Olmsted Park and the intention during the planning process was to return it to its original Olmstead design. This may not be possible. LMHA and LMG pledge and commit to come back to this decision.

It was asked if the greenspace should be in order before the first phase of construction is complete so that residents can immediately use the greenspace as they relocate to the site? The Phase I building will take 18-20 months. LMHA and LMG are working east to west and are thinking about what the residents will be exposed to when they first move in,

**Review of Project Effects:**

Project has adverse effects on historic properties and the archeological sites that are present on-site. LMHA and LMG are working to resolve some of the indirect effects of the project. A map of structures that may be indirectly affected can be found here: <http://visionrussell.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/BeecherTerraceAbovegroundAPE_revisedBT-CHS-2.pdf>

On the website, it states that there is no direct effect to Baxter Square Park. The park is a more active space involved and is included in the Beecher Terrace Historic District. We can incorporate the park into the indirect effects.

Direct effects is where demo will happen (The Beecher Terrace complex itself) and indirectly affected structures will be potential changed visually, through any vibrations from demolition and construction, and/or any encroachments.

**Potential Mitigation Alternatives:**

A preliminary list has been created based on some of the feedback we have received so far. To see list of potential mitigation alternatives, visit:

Louisville Story Program

This organization helps write and publish stories about the lives of residents and entire communities in Louisville. They have done some past projects that are more historic in nature and propose this type of project (~2.5 year duration) would be a good fit for the Russell residents who want to tell the story of the rich layers of history found in the neighborhood. This organization has a good track record of this or working with communities and listening to the stories of individuals. Educators have even created curriculums using some of the books Louisville Story Program has published and they envision this for the Russell history book. Not only would this project create a great book, but it will also bring attention to new authors, create education curriculum for local schools and would provide leverage for other positive things to happen (in Shawnee, the book created was used to leverage job opportunities). Louisville Story Program is currently working on *Available Light*, by Ed Dorsey (lived in Beecher and Russell). Jack Norris lives in Russell and would be a photographer would be involved in the project. Louisville Story Program wants the book it to represent many generations of people and not just highlight typical leaders. There would be a lot of listening before hosting writing workshops that would result in a book that would be well edited and professionally designed to honor the history and hard work of the Beecher Terrace and larger Russell community.

Western Library Archives

Western Library is the first African American library in the nation and was fully operated by African American staff. Western Library wants to assure the African American archives are accessible and well known within the Russell community. They also want to digitize what we have so everything can be accessed online and are currently in the process of professionally photographing the items with the help of a volunteer. Traveling and remote exhibits can also be taken into the community. The archives are nationally known, but locally many people are unaware of them. Librarians came from all over the country to be trained at this historic library and Dr. Martin Luther King spoke in the very room that this consulting party meeting took place in.

What in in the archives: The archives include a diploma from the 1911 Louisville Colored School , VHS tapes, documents, newspaper, photographs, original writings of Dr. Blue items from 1800’s, etc. Library staff and volunteers are working on a complete list of items that were in storage boxes at the library. Items are accepted on an ongoing basis, though there is a cut off for books. An author from outside the state is writing about the history of the Western Library and the Eastern Colored Branch Library. Western Library would like to expand and has spoken to KCAAH about collaborating. The archives are accessible to everyone.

Historic Building Fund

What can we do instead of tearing down buildings to help preserve other historic structures in Russell? Some historic structures have no funding to be preserved, so what is proposed is the building of a fund that LMG could allocate towards historic preservation projects available to people in Russell. Someone could apply to this fund to do projects in the neighborhood that would help preserve historic buildings rather than demolishing them. Currently, there are not a lot of resources to community members to preserve historic properties and this fund would create guidelines on who would be eligible for funding and the process for selecting grantees. Consulting Party’s input would be used to create the criteria for this fund. Boston Edison Historic District has a similar model. There are also historic tax credits that residents can use. The Western New York Landmark Society utilizes these tax credits. The goal could be to identify the that a percentage of the tax credit would go towards training to incentivize the contractor to train employees which they hire. 3-4% of the tax dollars would go towards a training program. To flesh out these ideas, the sheet that was passed out asked if Consulting Party’s want to join a task force to hammer out details.

Commemorating Important Places at Beecher Terrace

There is a very rich history in and around Beecher Terrace and through research, it has been discovered that places that used to be on the redevelopment site are no longer there today. It is suggested that signs be used to commemorate these historic locations that are no longer there. One example is a particular block within Russell that once had a high concentration of black professionals, including many doctors. There are also schools that served the black community that could have signage. It is suggested that a monument be erected to pay tribute to the veterans past and present, including the 25 black veterans that once lived in Beecher in units set aside specifically for their use after war. There were medical institutions that were in the Russell neighborhood and Beecher Terrace that were used as a national model for other medical. A commemoration could also be placed at Baxter Square Park. They have a list of some of the people who were buried there, but the list is not complete. Old Walnut Street Park was dedicated in 1945 to serve Beecher Terrace and was an important park that served the community.

Archaeological Data Recovery

When there is an archeology site that is being affected, what is most important is the information it contains. The process includes gathering data organized by research design, doing the analysis and producing a report. Excavation includes removing the recent soil and construction to look at older foundations, house shafts, wells and cisterns and is staged. A technical report will be produced from this process.

Public archeology- Many people may not understand why we are doing archology at the Beecher Terrace site and it is because the history is important, along with the people who lived there in the last 200 years. It is suggested that the public be involved in the archeology component of this project and be engaged in the process of recovering and preserving information found on the site. There has been trenching and other activities that residents has seen, so having site tours, informational events, and public artifact wash nights to allow for residents to interact with the archeologists and understand why this process is so important. These activities can allow for community members to experience the thrill of finding things that have not been seen in a very long time. It is also suggested that educational materials for schools be created and develop an archeology trunk for mobile exhibits. It was also suggested to have a day where people can bring in their own artifacts; Using history and archology to build community and identity. Davis Bottom site in Lexington followed a similar procedure of community engagement.

Publication on Public Housing – There is a short (5-6 pages) on public housing done by Carolyn Brooks on the Iroquois housing project. A more comprehensive public housing project.

Beecher Terrace documentary – Lavell White is leading this documentary project. He will be collecting stories from residents, government staff workers, consulting parties and many others over the next couple of years to document the process of redeveloping Beecher Terrace.

Suggestion: Developing a school curriculum that provides education on historic places within the community that would be primarily for middle and high school students. The settlement period, graveyard, tornado era, Olmsted era, federal relief era, suburban growth, etc. would be included in this curriculum. Engage the community in learning about these things. A video that tells the story of the community part- how citizens of Louisville view Olmstead parks. The small, community parks are very important.

**Next Steps**

A programmatic agreement document will be created that will govern how the project will move through the Section 106 process. There are things that we know today and things we will find out over the coming years. This agreement will put things in place to mitigate and also anticipate things coming up as we move forward with the redevelopment project. All documents will be posted on the website. Email will also be used to keep in touch with consulting parties.

During stage 1, information will continue to be shared through email and consulting parities will continue to meet remotely for the next 3 to 6 months. There were no objections to meeting remotely during stage 1. Consulting parties can decide what they prefer to be involved in and may indicate which area of the Section 106 process they would like to be involved with based on what their priorities, specific interests, and/or expertise are.

It has not been determined the amount of money that will be allocated towards mitigation activities. This will be determined as we move forward in the Section 106 process. Not everything that was included on the list provided at this meeting will happen and consulting parties were asked to rank the level of priority for each suggested mitigation activity.