

CIC Meeting 9/12/2023

Staff Present: Harmonee, Rheanna

Council Members Present: Mia, Ren, Brian, Susan, Jim, Calvin, Tim, Hannah, Jeanette

Presenters: Lower SouthEast Rising (Hector, Bill)

Bill Cunningham & Hector Rodrigues Ruiz presenting on their Lower SE Rising Area Plan

Lower Southeast Rising Area Plan

- Addresses land use and transportation issues in the Brewood-Darlington neighborhood and nearby areas, including parts of the Mt. Scott-Arleta, Woodstock, and Lents neighborhoods
- Plan set up to improve sidewalks & services
- Project started in spring of 2021
- Plan in partnership with PBOT
- Partly funded by a state ODOT grant
- Goals
 - o Increase commercial opportunities and neighborhood-serving businesses
 - o Increase housing affordability and choices
 - o Expand active and green transportation access
 - o Accompany improvements with community stabilization strategies
- Project Advisory Committee (21 people) met 12 times over the course of the project and mainly consisted of local community members
- Public outreach
 - o 15k postcards sent
 - o 1500 surveys responses
 - o 1100 newsletter subscribers
 - o 9 community stakeholder interviews
 - o Door-to-door canvassing
 - o Tabling at Lents Farmers Market
 - o Pedalpalooza bike ride through the project area
 - o Partnered with Latino Network
 - o Online Open House and Survey translated in 4+ languages
 - o Focus group discussions in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese in partnership with Latino Network and Community Engagement Liaison Services (CELS)
- Planning Commission Meeting – October 10
- City Council – TBD

Council member comments that it's the best presentation she's seen in the two years she's worked with the CIC.

Council Member: How do you get 1500 survey responses?

Southeast Rising: Making sure as many people as possible get the survey in their physical and email inboxes. We also have an amazing comms team that puts together QR code links to reach more people

with surveys. Should be noted that though the surveys were given in multiple languages, almost none of the responses were in languages other than English.

CM: Do you have demographic data on who you reached?

SER: We have some of that information, but in the last round of outreach that information wasn't as easy to track because of the direct outreach approach vs. surveys. Skewed towards younger community members. Could have had a greater focus on youth, since there are many schools in the area.

CM: The numbers sound high but they don't know the context of how many community members are in the area. Could make the information more successful at council.

CM: Encouraged SER to publish this as it is a wonderful example of a neighborhood case study.

CM: For the planning commission, it would be good to include information on how your public outreach relates to your final project decisions. Telling the story of, for example, "We found out that the community wanted 'x' amount of lights so we plan to do install 'x' amount of lights on 'x' street" would make the presentation more impactful

CM: Who decided this was something that needed to be pursued?

SER: Marty ___ was the planner for Southeast and gave her input on the needs of the neighborhood as she saw it.

CM: Did you get any questions/concern about fear of gentrification and displacement?

SER: Yes, we did economic analysis would likely (or not) result in displacement. Made sure that none of the zoning would be changing or be pressured to change for low-income multiple-family housing. Some things the community wanted are things they'll have to continuously work on such as local economic development and investment in low-income housing. We don't have the funds for that, so that would become part of the next step. So the first step is to get the zoning set up so that affordable housing is possible, and then the next step is to make sure that that is used for affordable housing instead of displacement.

Harmonee: Are there other things you wish you could have done, other than youth engagement?

SER: Yes, we were wanting to do age-friendly and disability-friendly outreach but had a staffing issue to make that happen. We'd also love to come in with a pot of money allocated to directly spend on projects that the community asks for so that they can see that we can deliver on the projects that come out of the engagement that they offer us. Community has engagement fatigue from being asked what they need and then not having prompt (or any) follow-up.

CM: Do you feel that the people in the Brentwood-Darlington area are more empowered to be advocates for their community because of this project?

SER: Yes. We encouraged people to go to city council meetings, get engaged, etc. Latino Network will also follow up with families, which makes them feel more cared for and thus more engaged.

CM: Is there a way to have the data from this project be put in some kind of "bank" so that other bureaus, etc can access the data to use them for improvements, potentially to alleviate community engagement fatigue?

SER: Yes, this plan sets up a framework to encourage community stabilization in that area that is being shared with others.

CM: This is a neighborhood plan and is very place-focused. That has not been the case for some of the other projects we've seen with the CIC, and we've been disappointed to see the lack of community engagement from those teams. What do you recommend for you colleagues who are working with non-place-based projects?

SER: Having some focus areas for those broad efforts can really help. It's possible to meld the two kinds of projects by focusing on a more general area rather than no area at all.

Harmonee: After those next steps (planning commission and council) is there planning to go back to that community to give them an update and to instigate implementation? Are there grants that can be asked for to present to community members?

SER: Would love to see funds in the future for the follow-up on projects. Would love to see grants for community leaders to send them to PSU, etc, to invest in relationship-building to continue engagement in local government.

CM: What kind of say do you get in the re-organization of the city?

Harmonee: That depends, we have some and there are sub-groups that are working on it. The newest plan was released to city staff today, which will come to the media later this week. We need this part, first, that's pretty high level, and then we can start working on how those parts work with each other. We hope that BPS and BDS and Housing and Prosper, since we are likely being grouped together, can potentially open some doors to collaborate on projects.

CM: You did an initiative for Pedalpalooza, what is that?

SER: Portland has a summer bike festival that happens, we had an event to rope in people from Pedalpalooza.

CM: Did you have good engagement there?

SER: A fair amount of reach, yes, but it was harder to actually engage people while on bikes.

Harmonee: Since a lot of the feedback for this project focused on Brentwood Darlington is very similar to the responses in Parkrose, do you think this could be a blueprint?

SER: Absolutely, we can and hope to replicate things that all of east Portland want. Community hubs, community kitchens, resource centers, etc. It's difficult because it's not necessarily in any one Bureau's wheelhouse, but we do hear a lot of feedback on the desire for community hubs of all kinds. There also may be lessons to be learned from beyond Portland that we can replicate here.

CM: It will be interesting to see what happens when we have a larger, more diverse city council, to see if there's any synergy that can be leveraged.

Harmonee: Well, a lot of power is being taken away from City Council, which will be interesting, too. A lot of that power will be with the City Administrator(?).

SER: Having an equity measurement tool could be useful to harmonize synergy between different bureaus and projects, to have equity be the thread between them all.

CM: You were doing this during COVID, too, right? So I just want to credit your response and what you were able to do given where we were during the pandemic, and you might have gotten a better response because of that.

SER: It will be interesting to see what the dynamic will be between in person and online events, connection vs convenience

Harmonee: The standard is to be hybrid, because of the increased accessibility not only to disabled folks but to people with children, etc.

CM: Did you see gender differences in the three “cultural groups” you saw in Brentwood-Darlington,

SER: There was a response from the Latino community that not having resources for kids to be safe in the neighborhood means that one parent has to be home caring for the kids all the time, so improving safety for kids in the neighborhood will help gender equity in the communities.

CM: In some Asian cultures women do not speak in public, did you see that in the focus groups?

SER: There was a woman-only focus group with CEL

Announcements:

- Latest city re-org plan has a citywide equity person that will hopefully help address some of those disconnects we talked about tonight
 - o This draft from today will be posed to council who will tweak it, but nothing huge
 - o Zoning districts maps is done
- Next month we'll see the Sustainability and Climate Commission, and they'll be at council in December