

MINUTES
COMMUNITY MEETING
Co-sponsored by
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C
And the
CLEVELAND PARK CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
Monday, December 11

CPCA President George Idelson and ANC 3C President Nancy McWood opened the meeting at 7pm and thanked Rabbi Lustig for providing meeting space at Washington Hebrew Congregation.

The meeting agenda was a progress report on plans for the proposed two-block development on Wisconsin Avenue from Macomb Street (Cactus Cantina) to Idaho Avenue. The proposal calls for a new Giant supermarket with a large pharmacy, retail stores, office space, and residential units. Ms. McWood introduced the two major speakers: Tony Colavolpe, Senior Vice President of Stop and Shop (sister corporation of Giant Foods); and Richard Heapes of Street Works, the urban design firm charged with designing the development. Colavolpe assured the audience that he was the key decision-maker for the project and said he was sensitive to the concerns and needs of the community. Accommodating a return of current retail establishments at affordable rentals and providing affordable and workforce housing were among the concerns he said were being addressed. He and Heapes advised that they have been working to incorporate suggestions made at the last community meeting in February 2006 and would continue to respond to comments on the store website.

Heapes outlined the following design principles. The project will be accessible to traffic, pedestrians, and public transportation. Sidewalks should be fully utilized. The new Giant will keep its visibility. The residential quality of Idaho Avenue will be maintained and attention will be paid to the transition between the commercial and residential entities. The plan will integrate the historic aspects of the neighborhood and reinforce its eclectic nature. And, there will be green space on Newark Street and the north end of the project.

Heapes advised that the new proposal provides more entrances for cars and a separate entrance for trucks. The underground garage will provide over 400 parking spaces for cars, approximately 100 more spaces than currently available. Parking will be free. In addition to parking under the Giant, there will be parking for the residential units.

The proposal envisions street-level commercial units on Wisconsin, with second floor commercial and residential space and up to four levels of residential units (including workforce housing) at the north end. The height of the development will not exceed those of existing buildings on the south and north sides of the site.

Heapes presented square footage estimates for the new development. Over all, the retail space will be 137,495 square feet (64,870 for the new supermarket, 57,125 for street-front retail, and 15,560 for second floor commercial). There will be 134 residential units and 488 parking spaces (400 under the Giant and 88 for the residential units).

In response to questions from the audience, Colavolpe and Heapes advised that the start-up date will be early 2008, with completion targeted in mid-2009 to early 2010. All existing building will be reconstructed, starting with the south section (the Giant.). The Giant and existing small businesses will be phased in to assured their continued operation during construction. There was some audience concern about the number of residential units.

Marty Wells, a traffic engineer and planner working with Stop and Shop and Street Works advised that he is working to assess the impact of the project on public transportation, automobile, and pedestrian traffic and analyzing current traffic patterns.

The website for the project is www.wisconsinavegiant.com.

Idelson adjourned the meeting, which was attended by over 150 people, at 9:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joan Buchanan, CPCA Recording Secretary