

NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION MEETING

PROJECT:	The Exchange
DATE:	July 25, 2016
PLANNER:	Ted Shepard

City Process Overview:

- No formal development application has received by the City yet for review.
- The project applicants have submitted preliminary designs, and the City has outlined the review process and key issues based on this early information.
- The project will require Basic Development Review (BDR), and the decision-maker will be City staff. A public hearing is not required for this project.
- Project will be reviewed for compliance with the City Land Use Code.

Applicant Presentation:

- Applicant team includes: Todd Parker, Brinkman Partners, Josh Guernsey, Brinkman Partners, Ian Shuff, project architect, Nick Haws, project engineer and Paul Mills, land planner/landscape architect.
- Brinkman looking to give back to community. Trying to achieve many of the City's goals and policies with this project, such as bicycle parking, sustainability, and reuse.
- Project is located on the block bounded by College, Pine, and Jefferson streets. During its early history, the site used to be a livestock exchange and an old creamery. Has an agriculture/mining history.
- From south to north the project proposes several different types of uses and spaces, including restaurant/brewpub, plaza area, potential restaurant space, retail along College frontage, and office along alleyway/Jefferson Street.
- Building will feature 4-sided architecture.
- Much of the traffic accessing the site is expected to come from bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Have areas on the site designated for public art –Art in Public Places may have involvement.
 - Interest in create a new gateway feature or art at the site's College Ave / Jefferson Street corner for those arriving from north on College Ave
- Project will enhance streetscape with missing street trees, and close the existing interior parking areas -- this allows for 17 additional on-street spaces along College Avenue.
- Focus of the project is on the plaza space between the buildings and to make this area special and unique. There will be tenants in adjacent buildings facing the plaza utilizing the space. Plaza space will also feature trees, lawn areas, and special paving.
- Plaza area buffered along College Avenue with new tenant spaces (repurposed shipping containers creating active storefronts).
- Along the alley there will be tenants and bike parking that bookend the plaza space.
- Will integrate access into Old Firehouse Alley.

- Central area will be active with a central tenant.
- Events or artisans could take place in the open/plaza space.
- Commitment to trees and green space as a unique feature in the Downtown setting.
- Will be a small addition to the existing south building for a restaurant user.
- More activated commercial/retail uses along College and flex office along the alley and Jefferson.
- Buildings will feature a mix of materials, including brick, as well as modern elements. Repeating elements/themes throughout the project. Working with the overall existing building forms.
- May be looking at alley upgrades & aesthetic improvements.
- Ideal tenants are places like CopperMuse, Pateros Creek, which are local businesses. Want to be strategic about the types of tenants in the project.

Comments, Questions & Responses:

Question (Citizen): What is the perspective or elevation if I'm standing on Pine Street looking west?

Response (Applicant): [Showing image] There would be a new façade on the new addition. On the façade where Compass used to be, would be upgraded with new windows and trim. But the façade would not change too much.

Question (Citizen): Would there be any storefront along that stretch?

Response (Applicant): Near the corner of the building (near Pine/College) there are tenants and patio areas, but nothing currently shown directly off the alley or Pine Street. Currently no tenants lined up.

Comment (Citizen): I think you've done very well on other areas, but you're lukewarm on this area. I've been on Pine Street for many years and I was disappointed when the lofts came in with no retail. I'd like to see more retail along Pine Street. It's a little disappointing not to see retail on that side of the street.

Response (Applicant): There is some flexibility built into the project. The current Compass building can feature two tenants, one fronting College and the other fronting Pine. Because we don't have tenants lined up yet, we don't know if one will be fronting Pine or not.

Response (Applicant): We're also looking to recess the building along Pine slightly, so a row of tables could be added.

Comment (Citizen): What's happened in the past is the trucks park in the middle of the street for loading/unloading/deliveries and my tenants have to suck up all the noise/fumes. I'd like to try and avoid that.

Comment (Citizen): I like what you're doing overall. The alleyway (Old Firehouse Alley) is an area I'm concerned about. I've been trying to make that alley look nice as far as Pine Street lofts is concerned, with lighting, cleanup, etc. It's prime for the homeless, and it has been a major issue. As we have more businesses in there, more vegetation, the more homeless there will be. We'll also need to explore dealing with the trash.

We'd like to see that area done. We have some new owners on the Jefferson side and they've asked for more flowers/vegetation along the alley/Jefferson. The porch area is already set-up for things like flowers and could do more to make an attractive area. With what you're doing it will be a big asset. Think about the alley with your project.

Response (Applicant): We've started a dialogue with Police Services. We want to make sure we're not causing security concerns. The plaza and alley could be a draw for those types of concerns, but it will be a secured area that will be locked down when not in use, it will not be open 24 hours. It will have fencing/gates/green screens. It won't be a late night hangout space.

Comment (Citizen): You may also need to explore lighting on the side of the buildings.

Comment (Citizen): I expect there will be issues in the alley. Jefferson is always fairly quiet and making the transparency/storefronts will improve this as a pedestrian. Anything to discourage people from sleeping will make an improvement to the area.

As an Old Town resident walking past this area, I'm worried you're not addressing the core issue of what will draw pedestrians to this space and make it inviting. Many of the nearby sites (city building, lofts, parking lots, etc.) don't create enough of a reason as a pedestrian to walk along this block.

As a pedestrian the activity level dies after the stores closes. It's not a very comfortable place to walk around. My concern is the blocking off the plaza that will make it an in-and-out situation and not improve the flow. Looking at the corner of the Compass building, it's still a dead end, people cut the corner and use the alley - it would be nice if that was chopped to increase the pedestrian flow through the plaza area. I'm looking for a reason to continue flowing through this block.

Response (Applicant): We've been marketing this to see retail carried further north along College towards Jefferson. We're responding to the market and may be looking at phased uses. As the area becomes more activated, those more activated uses could eventually turn the corner onto Jefferson.

Comment (Citizen): The reason I feel Old Town is so successful is because there is a motive to go there. If the plaza is closed at night, or the area is dark, there is no motive, and there won't be a reason to visit the space.

Question (Citizen): What is the fugitive light from the project? Will there be specific lighting techniques?

Response (Applicant): City has dark sky initiative. Lighting will be cut-off, down-directional.

Question (Citizen): How will the project affect the access/alley to Pine Street Lofts? I have concerns about having to use Jefferson for this purpose or that the alley becomes blocked up. There's going to be a lot more traffic in the area due to future developments. I'd really like to see the alley developed; it's going to help your tenants and left as is will be an invitation for travelers to gather. I'd also like to see the central tenant you're talking about in the plaza space - I know the articles in the paper talk about the Churn ice cream - is that a done deal?

Response (Applicant): Not a done deal just yet. Churn is a unique to Fort Collins branding of Little Man Ice Cream. They are a fantastic tenant -- a lot of synergy as a tenant and activation of the plaza space.

Question (Citizen): Is there a reason you're not scraping the buildings?

Response (Applicant): From the City they liked the reuse of the buildings, and as our own sustainability efforts, it allows reuse.

Question (Citizen): I live in Pine Street Lofts closest to the Churn / central tenant. I think there are some great ideas, but my big concern is sound. You have a 60 decibel limit during the day and 55 after 7pm. We know from experience it's almost impossible to have live amplified music that doesn't exceed this. Is there going to be live music and amplified sound from the plaza area? I'm also concerned about the entertainment liquor license idea, but it's my understanding this is supposed to facilitate the movement of people around the plaza and go from beer to whiskey, and experience has shown when you have bands, you want to have several hundred people in front of them.

Response (Applicant): We're not focusing on having bands. There may be events where there will be a band, but it's not intended to be concerts. We don't want to compete across the street with the redevelopment of Washington's. We're trying to mitigate sound as we can with landscaping to soften reverberation, the location and orientation of the containers. The City also has sound requirements that we will have to stay under.

Response (City): The City will also be shortly starting a review its noise ordinance to look at decibel levels. We're finding in certain areas, background noise such as traffic is already exceeding limits.

Response (Citizen): Hopefully you're not looking at raising them.

Response (City): Just beginning the process and will be looking at all types of sounds aspects.

Question (Citizen): Are you still pursuing the entertainment liquor license?

Response (Applicant): Yes. We're having conversations with the City. They are looking at it as a possible entertainment district, which allows a common consumption area. We're not setting up a beer garden. If someone grabs a beer at Pateros, but their kid wants ice cream at the Churn, they could move around the plaza freely rather than being restricted to a fenced in patio at Pateros.

Question (Citizen): Will you be building a bandstand?

Response (Applicant): No.

Question (Citizen): Who in the City is looking at the entertainment district?

Response (City): The City issues liquor licenses following state rules, and it's a type of liquor license already offered by the state.

Response (Applicant): Part of the site we want to have as open without barriers so you can sit on the lawn with your beer and ice cream. Current code and laws mean you would have to fence off every single patio that serves alcohol, so instead of a wide open area; you have more private individual patios.

Response (Applicant): The shipping container spaces are food concepts, we do have alcohol brewers/vendors, but that isn't the sole focus. We see these smaller vendor spaces as incubator spaces. They can try out different concepts.

Question (Citizen): The businesses that have a license now, could they stay open beyond the time that the plaza is open?

Response (Applicant): Yes.

Comment (Citizen): Shipping containers have an industrial connotation or vision – can you expand on the concept?

Response (Applicant): It's a concept popping up around the country, and there are many variations. Some repurpose them with different materials, such as wood. The idea is sustainability and repurposing and to be fun and unique.

Comment (Citizen): I believe a big issue with the containers is how you get the required insulation, meet energy codes, bathrooms, etc.

Comment (Citizen): There's not a lot of quick, easy food in Old Town that isn't sit-down. Now there are the food trucks around town. I really hate having to listen to food generators at food trucks, and I like the idea of having the little incubator spaces, but worried about if they are in the plaza and closing at 9pm, it can defeat the purpose of quicker spaces open late at night.

Response (Applicant): They are set up around the perimeter to provide flexibility. Some have room available for entrances on both the street and the plaza, so even as the plaza closes, they could still serve from the street side.

Comment (Citizen): Shipping containers are really not a sustainable building option and a source of adaptive reuse because it could be recycled to begin with and even insulating them, they are not as energy efficient as a custom-made building. I'm very worried about repurposing shipping containers and it's a neat idea, but it seems to be just a current fad.

Question (Citizen): On the Pine Street going to the Walnut Corner – you were talking about a setback for café tables. Were you thinking running them along the entire length of the building?

Response (Applicant): At that point it will be a right-of-way encroachment permit to ensure clear pedestrian access. It would likely end at the transition area where the building “jogs” slightly.

Question (Citizen): Will you be using electricity generators for the shipping container buildings?

Response (Applicant): No, the buildings will have normal electric power supplies available.

Question (Citizen): I think I read the construction costs are about 6.5 million?

Response (Applicant): Yes, that’s about the hard cost of construction.

Question (Citizen): The south intersection is difficult for pedestrians. I see you have the patio with chairs – will that be fenced in?

Response (Applicant): Yes.

Question (Citizen): How will that impact pedestrians walking to that area?

Response (Applicant): In the plan view, there is 10-feet of space available to walk around, so there’s room to transition around the corner.

Response (Applicant): We’ve also been having conversations with the City/state about the island to see if there could be any potential improvements.

Comment (Citizen): I’m really concerned about 9pm in Old Town when businesses start to close and people decide if they are going to stay in Old Town or not. If this closes at 9pm, what is your ideal look at how this space plays out in the evenings?

Response (Citizen): For the closest residents, the 9pm closing idea is one of the most attractive elements of the project.

Comment (Citizen): I don’t see those places closing, I see Pateros, the distillery, those staying open. It’s just the grassy area of the plaza being the portion that closes.

Response (Applicant): We’re in the exploration mode right now. The state ordinance says you have to shut it down by a certain hour. Businesses would need separate entrances to continue operating after this hour.

Question (Citizen): What was your target tenant along the alley/Jefferson?

Response (Applicant): We’re getting interest from office users for spaces between 2,000-6,000 square feet in size. If you’re familiar with Galvanize, some of those similar types of users is where we’re currently getting the greatest interest.

Question (Citizen): Where will all the dumpsters for the development be located?

Response (Applicant): It’s currently shown near Pateros Creek currently. For restaurants trash needs to be picked up more frequently (daily pick-up) due to wet trash, so you’ll likely won’t see trash sitting for long periods of time or for odors to accumulate.

Question (Citizen): Could we consider doing something across the alley attached to Pine Street lofts? A lot of people are jumping over those fences into our side and we’ve had homeless in our garage even. One of the things we’re trying to brainstorm is to secure the area, but there may be potential for shared or collocated trash areas

Response (Applicant): There are other examples of shared trash areas in downtown/Old Town.

Comment (Citizen): Where the trash is currently shown it’s near Pateros’ patio right now, and we’d prefer not to have to look at it.

Comment (Citizen): We’re happy this is what you’re looking at doing and the people doing it. It seems pretty compatible.

