

Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA) - Zoning and Planning Committee
Project Questionnaire – Design Response
Sons of Norway Redevelopment

Background

- The Project Questionnaire is a set of standardized questions to be completed and submitted prior to Zoning and Planning Committee meetings by developers who wish to present project proposals to the Committee.
- The intent of this questionnaire is to promote a meaningful conversation at Committee meetings by allowing guests to better prepare for and address commonly-asked questions.
- Guests are to answer the Project Questionnaire to the best of their ability and submit to the Committee Chair **two days before the meeting**. Answers will be posted online as an attachment to the meeting agenda.
- The Project Questionnaire is not a comprehensive list of questions, nor is it a regulatory tool.
- Questionnaire responses will help guide Committee discussion and provide informed voting on any motions made in the meeting.
- A map of the Lowry Hill East neighborhood is provided on page two of this document.

Questions

Addressing Needs

- How does the project fill a need within the neighborhood and city?
The project fills a need by supplementing housing, retail, office and public amenities in the Uptown neighborhood. The project will ensure that Sons of Norway, a long time Uptown tenant and cultural presence will remain in the neighborhood, but now in a thriving new space. Both the commercial and residential components of the project are committed to the Uptown Neighborhood and will continue their support of local events such as the Uptown Art Fair and the City of Lakes Loppet. In addition, Sons of Norway will be hosting a visit by the King and Queen of Norway in 2020, soon after they move into their new office space.

From a land use perspective, the project intends to take an underutilized surface parking area and improve it into an active district that includes office workers, retail, and housing for a variety of price points. The project will also introduce some fresh publicly accessible spaces including the mid-block Fjord element that connects Lake St to an internal green space that will offer a variety of outdoor activities and programs to serve the Uptown neighborhood.

- What type of residential units or commercial space will be offered by the project?
The project includes 326 residential units, 15,000 SF of new office space for Sons of Norway, along with approximately 7,000 SF of retail. Fronting a vibrant, mixed use corridor in the heart of Uptown, retail and office uses line Lake Street with residential units above. A break in the building massing occurs along Lake street, inviting pedestrian activity deep into the block where a privately-owned, public green space is included to further encourage activity and help create a sense of community on what is currently a surface parking lot. Street-level walk-out residences line both Humboldt and

Holmes and building massing is softened towards 31st Street out of sensitivity to the traditional residential neighborhood.

- If rental property, what is the anticipated price range, generally?
The project will feature market rate rental homes starting at around \$975 per month.

Land Use and Zoning

- Is the project in compliance with the City of Minneapolis zoning code, or will it require rezoning, a variance, conditional use permit, or other land use application approval?
It is anticipated the southern portion of the site will require a zoning change from R4 to R6. The project is currently scheduled to appear before the Zoning and Planning Committee in early 2018.
- Will you be seeking approval from the Committee?
The project is located in the ECCO neighborhood, so we have been working through the neighborhood process there. We are grateful for any comments that the Wedge neighbors can provide.

Design and Quality

- How does it fit contextually into the neighborhood?
The neighborhood context varies moving south from Lake Street to 31st St. Lake St has denser mixed use development with lots of activity and 31st St is the residential neighborhood edge. The project responds by locating the housing lobby, mixed use retail/office, Fjord and Public Park access off Lake St then moving to residential only on 31st St. Along 31st Street, the project has been deliberately massed in a similar rhythm to the project's context in Uptown, taking cues from the multiple brick apartment buildings that have populated Uptown for decades. The building height is similar to, although slightly lower than, three recently built project across Holmes Ave. As the project gets closer to 31st St the top story is set back through use of a mansard roofline. Along Holmes and Humboldt, the elevations are residential in nature, and the design palate is focused on single color masonry with classic building lines.

The buildings fit contextually by using residential scale components, including the window type and exterior materials. Both buildings have four sided architecture with the materials and detailing carried to the inside of the block.

- What type of exterior materials will be used?
Brick, Metal Panel, Fiber Cement Panel, Granite base, Pre-cast and Metal cornice, Glass and Metal Handrails
- How will the project enhance the public realm and pedestrian environment?

The community will benefit from the inclusion of green space in the development in multiple locations; street front plantings on all four sides of the block complement business and residential units entries, the Fjord creates an entry point to the block that includes planting and seating and the Park includes green space and plantings to support 12 months of activity.

Environmental Impact

- How does the project incorporate best management practices for green building design (e.g., energy conservation, water conservation and stormwater management, mitigation of light and noise pollution, etc.)?

The project will contribute to the greenspace enhancement of the urban environment by taking a city block that is currently a sea of asphalt and adding significant green landscaping along the street front all four sides of the block, as well as creating an internal park with landscaping. A project goal is to incorporate native and adaptive landscaping. This will reduce irrigation requirements and increase plant longevity by using species that are appropriate for the region.

Storm water management will also be significantly improved. The current condition is sheet flowing asphalt parking lots and sidewalks that drain directly into the storm sewer. After the project is built 100% of the storm water will be treated or will remain on site using techniques that increase permeability such as planting beds that capture sidewalk drainage.

During demolition and removal of the parking lots, bituminous and concrete will be salvaged for re-use.

Transportation Impact

- How does the project contribute to active transportation (walking, biking, transit) in the neighborhood?

The Uptown neighborhood is a very popular location for housing, retail and office, due to its proximity to lakes, parks and transit options to downtown Minneapolis. The project creates an urban mixed-use, pedestrian friendly community that allows residents to live, work and play without dependence on daily automobile usage. This includes creative density, high quality public open spaces, proximity to variety of retail services, restaurants, lakes, parks, pedestrian and bike trails and availability of convenient bus service. This project will add 326 units of housing ranging in size and price from efficiencies, studios and 1 BR units to townhouses and penthouses, which will be desirable to a broad population of renters. The retail and office space will be immediately adjacent to the Fjord and Park space with potential for outdoor seating and year round activity, which will make it attractive to restaurant or café tenants. The proximity of bus routes to downtown and other parts of the city, bike / walking paths and a Nice Ride station located one block away further enhance the desirability of the development.

- Do you anticipate the project impacting traffic operations? If so, what mitigation strategies will the project employ?

We have employed a traffic consultant that will work with our team and City staff to review any impacts anticipated based on project plans. We will review the recommendations of the study with the City and, if necessary, implement any required mitigation strategies.

- How will the project address loading and delivery zones (if applicable)?
Loading and delivery will occur mid-block to eliminate street congestion.

Economic Impact

- What is the estimated municipal property tax revenue associated with the project?
Unknown at this time, but we expect there to be significant increase in property taxes generated on the site.

- How many estimated jobs will be created/supported by the project in the short and long term?
 - Construction jobs – 77 FTE, with as many as 150 to 200 workers onsite at once
 - Sons of Norway offices – 50 FTE (retained jobs on existing site) returning in spring 2020
 - Other retail on site – 10 FTE, 30 PTE starting spring 2020.
 - Housing management – 10 FTE

Lowry Hill East Base Map



Source: Minneapolis GIS Files
Data as of August 2006
Scale: 1:10,000
August 2006

Legend	
	Neighborhood
	Parcel
	Park
	Water