

Parkside Community Engagement Q&A (Non-DHC Event)

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Topic: The Role of the City of Detroit’s Planning and Development Department

Event: Friends of Parkside Monthly Meeting

Members of the Parkside redevelopment project team received an invitation to attend a monthly meeting hosted by Friends of Parkside on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at the community center (5000 Conner St). Other invited guests included two members of the City of Detroit’s Planning and Development Department, one of whom was a guest speaker. This was not an official DHC-hosted meeting for the redevelopment project, but it did provide a good opportunity for the project team to continue gathering questions and comments. We are deeply thankful to the residents who attended the meeting and voiced what was on their minds.

Twenty community members attended, as well as three people from the Detroit Housing Commission/Ginosko redevelopment team, three City of Detroit staff, and two Friends of Parkside representatives. Residents voiced the following questions and comments, which were written down during the meeting. Answers are now provided below.

Residents and community members: you can read through project-related documents and follow the redevelopment progress on DHC’s website by visiting dhcmi.org/villages-parkside at your leisure. If you would like to submit additional questions to the project team, please email parkside@dhcmi.org and a team member will work on getting answers.

1	One resident expressed a distaste for high-rise apartment buildings, preferring duplex-size construction.	<p>The apartment buildings planned for Parkside will be no taller than three or four stories. The development team is also planning to offer a broad diversity of building types on the site in the future, potentially including townhouses, single-family homes, duplexes, and small multifamily buildings (such as only four units per building).</p> <p>A representative from Ginosko explained at the May 29, 2024 design meeting that apartment buildings require less infrastructure (such as underground utilities and roadways) than smaller building types. With smaller buildings, it would take longer to be able to provide enough new homes for all current residents.</p> <p>Given the poor condition of the current Parkside buildings, apartment buildings are planned for the first phase so that residents can move into high-quality residences as soon as possible. However, the team would make every effort to allow for transfers or moves to other units once those are built.</p>
2	One resident said she had sat on a board, explaining that ideas were put down on paper that didn’t happen.	It is possible that the resident is referring to her past participation in the HOPE VI redevelopment of Parkside back in the 1990s. Currently, there is no official resident board at Parkside, and the speaker was not one of the Resident Representatives or Community Advocates. The current redevelopment effort is not through the old HOPE VI program, but rather RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration), which incorporates improvements based on lessons learned from HOPE VI and ensures that residents have the right to remain at the Parkside site and move into the new apartments.

3	<p>One resident said she doesn't want big picture-windows. She expressed a concern about kids playing and throwing rocks that could potentially break the windows.</p>	<p>Safety is a paramount concern for the project team. These options will be discussed in more detail at future community engagement meetings with the design team. As was shared at the design meeting on May 29, the amount of glass shown was for conceptual drawings of buildings in a modern style. However, more traditional designs were also shown, since none of the design is set in stone. We have heard this concern a few times, so the design team will keep it in mind as they design the new buildings.</p> <p>Please also refer to Question 40 of the May 29 Q&A transcript, available at dhcml.org/villages-parkside. A resident had noted that "glass façades are beautiful, but the glass is a security concern," to which DHC provided a very similar answer to the one provided here.</p>
	<p>The resident also said she wants to make sure residents continue to be part of the process the whole time so that they can understand what's happening.</p>	<p>The project team completely agrees. This is why DHC and Ginosko will meet monthly with the Resident Representatives/Community Advocates going forward. The project team is planning on continuing to host community-wide engagement meetings every two or three months, depending on the speed of the project.</p> <p>Please refer to the RAD information video shown at the April 3 and April 17 meetings for details on the RAD process and general requirements that DHC and Ginosko must meet, including hosting community-wide meetings at specific points in the RAD application process. The video can be found at dhcml.org/villages-parkside under "Community Engagement Meetings."</p>
	<p>The resident asked, "How much of this is final and written in stone?"</p>	<p>None of the designs are final or set in stone. The most solidly defined aspect of the project is that the first few buildings will be four-story apartment buildings. However, the unit layouts are still totally subject to change, as is the appearance of the buildings and their general features. The rest of the site layout is still quite flexible. Please see Question 1 above for more details.</p>
	<p>The resident also indicated that she wants to be aware of any potential changes in the plan.</p>	<p>An anticipated rhythm of community engagement events is provided two boxes above.</p>
4	<p>One resident echoed not wanting sliding doors.</p>	<p>We appreciate the comment. For more details, see Question 3 above and Question 40 of the May 29 Q&A Transcript (also noted above).</p>
5	<p>A senior citizen commented that "you're moving us" from our current homes to an apartment building. "This is home for us. Treat us with dignity." "We don't deserve this." "I'm speaking for me and a lot of us. A lot of us are seniors [...] we're starting over, at an age where we need to be treated with dignity." "We're considered as the little people."</p>	<p>The project team appreciates that moving involves a lot of change and logistical coordination, and we are grateful for the resident expressing that relocation may lead to some level of discomfort during the process of moving and settling in. We know, though, that the higher-quality buildings that are being brought to Parkside will offer residents a higher level of resident experience and greater dignity than the current buildings on the site, which have extensive physical and maintenance issues due to their condition. As mentioned above, we will do all we can to minimize the disruption to residents, particularly seniors, and that residents live in a new community they can be proud of.</p> <p>As communicated in the HUD RAD video from the official RAD meetings and as confirmed by the Ginosko representative at the May 29th meeting,</p>

		<p>the project will follow the Uniform Relocation Act, and every resident will have a personalized relocation plan.</p> <p>Please refer to the RAD information video shown at the April 3 and April 17 meetings for more details on relocation. The video can be found at dhcml.org/villages-parkside under “Community Engagement Meetings.”</p>
	<p>The resident expressed adverse opinions about high-rise buildings, and specifically a concern about seniors not being able to get downstairs.</p>	<p>Unlike the current townhomes at Parkside, which are all two-story units with interior stairs, the apartment buildings will all feature single-level units, and residents will be able to travel between floors of the building on elevators. These units will offer easier mobility and be more accessible for seniors and people with mobility disabilities.</p> <p>The Ginosko representative confirmed at the May 29 meeting that all multi-story apartment buildings would include elevators.</p> <p>Please also refer to Question 33 of the May 29 Q&A transcript, available at dhcml.org/villages-parkside. A resident asked, “What if people want a first-floor apartment?” DHC responded, “We are required to meet accessibility and reasonable accommodation requirements under the Fair Housing Act, Section 504, and the ADA.”</p>
	<p>The resident seems to have expressed wanting to keep private access to her unit as the townhouses currently do, in contrast to hallway access.</p>	<p>Mirroring the information in Question 1 above, the Ginosko representative at the May 29 meeting explained that every resident will have an apartment to move into at the beginning of the project. If the resident does not choose to move into the provided apartment, a suitable alternative housing option will be provided.</p>
6	<p>The resident said she understands that DHC meets with Ginosko once a week, and she wants to know if the Representatives and one more resident could sit in the meeting.</p>	<p>DHC does have a weekly meeting with Ginosko as its contracted vendor, but that meeting is for DHC and Ginosko only. The Resident Representatives/Community Advocates will be meeting regularly with DHC and Ginosko on a monthly basis going forward, starting on Monday, July 8 at 12pm. At that meeting, all attendees will help plan the agenda for the next community-wide engagement meeting and determine a suitable date.</p> <p>As the Ginosko representative explained at the May 29 meeting (see Question 31 of that transcript), the large community meetings are intended to obtain resident feedback which informs the planning of the project. If residents have comments, questions, or concerns in between these meetings, residents can contact the project team via parkside@dhcml.org or provide their feedback to the project team via the Resident Representatives.</p>
7	<p>Could we get something in writing on things that “you personally told us was going to happen”?</p>	<p>Please visit the Parkside redevelopment project webpage at dhcml.org/villages-parkside for a large repository of project documentation. This includes a description of the project’s intentions, a project timeline of major milestones, a map, a chart of roles and responsibilities for several project participants, audio and video recordings of community engagement meetings, transcriptions of questions/answers and comments from those meetings as well as those</p>

		<p>received by email, and full documentation on the procurement process for how Ginosko was selected as the developer.</p> <p>A binder is currently available on a table in the lobby of the community center at 5000 Conner featuring RAD notices (including the Resident Information Notice and the General Information Notice) plus material related to the RFQ. A member of the project team confirmed its presence and availability on the evening of June 26, 2024. By Wednesday, July 3, 2024, all materials available on the Parkside website were printed and placed in that binder alongside RAD Fact Sheets published by HUD. Residents requiring this information in a language other than English may also request these materials in their preferred language.</p> <p>Please refer to the RAD information video shown at the April 3 and April 17 meetings for details on relocation. The video can be found at dhcml.org/villages-parkside under "Community Engagement Meetings."</p> <p>Going forward, the project team will work with the Resident Representatives to make sure website materials are also available in a print format in the lobby of the community center at 5000 Conner.</p>
8	Is there someone like Friends of Parkside who can advocate on behalf the residents?	<p>As is detailed in the Roles and Responsibilities chart available on the Parkside website at dhcml.org/villages-parkside, Resident Representatives were initially "elected by peers in October 2022 for the purpose of serving on the RFQ selection committee to identify a developer." DHC is now working to convert the Resident Representatives position to a Community Advocate position. This is a "stipend-support position working under the Detroit Housing Commission's Resident Services department," and "the goal of the [Community Advocates] is to support the residents."</p> <p>Please see Questions 3 and 6 above for more details on upcoming opportunities to participate at community-wide engagement meetings, where residents can freely voice their opinions and advocate on behalf of topics of importance to them.</p>
9	"How long is it going to take to make repairs to the current roof?" A resident shared that there were things happening in her particular unit that need to be addressed.	<p>Please continue to contact your property manager to report maintenance issues and repairs needed in your unit. Also, please know that DHC currently is taking steps to address maintenance and management needs at Parkside because DHC's intention is to improve the living conditions and resident experience at Parkside now, in addition to the improvements that will happen as part of the redevelopment process.</p>
10	Where are we in the process as far as going forward in this development?	<p>Please refer to the high-level timeline available on the main page of the Parkside website at dhcml.org/villages-parkside. Environmental studies are being performed on the vacant Village I parcel where Phases 1A and 1B (the first apartment buildings) will be built. DHC is also preparing a RAD application to HUD, which will reserve DHC's and Parkside's spot in the program. For more information on the RAD program, please refer to the resources available from the April 2024 engagement meetings, all</p>

		posted on the Parkside website. These include recordings of the meetings, transcripts of the question/answer sessions, and a half-hour video detailing how RAD works and how it will impact residents.
11	Are the buildings finalized? Are there other options as far as buildings?	Please refer to the answers provided in Question 3 and Question 5 above.
12	Can the project employ some of the residents?	Yes, this is known as the Section 3 program, which requires that participants of HUD-supported projects like Parkside must provide certain opportunities to residents and recipients of federal housing assistance. More information on the project's Section 3 plan will be provided in the future.
13	Can we have 2 bathrooms in one unit? Not one bathroom, 2 bathrooms, and each with a bathtub.	Thank you for providing this comment. Bathrooms will be designed on a right-sized basis, commensurate with the number of people anticipated to live in each unit as well as any accessibility needs.