



## Public Meeting #1 Visioning Exercise Summary

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June 30, 2010

Denver Community Planning and Development (CPD) and Councilwoman Jeanne Robb hosted a public meeting at the JW Marriott to kickoff the Cherry Creek Area Plan and discuss the participants' vision for the future of the Cherry Creek Area. Participants totaled 68 people and included residents, property owners and business owners. City staff from CPD, Public Works and Office of Economic Development also attended to help with the Visioning exercise. Councilwoman Jeanne Robb started off the event with a welcome to all participants, an explanation of why an update is necessary to the 2000 Cherry Creek Neighborhood Plan, and an introduction of the Plan Coordination Team members. Planning Director Peter Park discussed growth trends in the city and region, impacts and opportunities within Cherry Creek, and the role that planning plays in guiding decisions finding the right balance. CPD staff presented the planning process, schedule and an analysis of existing conditions. The presentation is posted online at [www.denvergov.org/cherrycreek](http://www.denvergov.org/cherrycreek).

Following the presentations, members of the public split into small groups that focused on particular parts of the planning area: 1. Cherry Creek North Residential, 2.) Cherry Creek East Residential / Alameda Triangle, and 3. Shopping District / Mixed Use Area. Three tables focused on Cherry Creek North Residential, one table focused on Cherry Creek East Residential / Alameda Triangle, and one table focused on the Shopping District / Mixed Use Area. Each table responded to a series of questions regarding their focus area and the planning area as a whole. Following is a summary of what was discussed at each table. The list of questions and a map of the focus areas are included at the end of this summary.

### **Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area – Table 1**

Facilitator: Deirdre Oss

*Which characteristics of the Sub Area are most valued?*

- Walkability
- Proximity to shopping district
- Sidewalks-the northeast portion of the neighborhood is inconsistent in sidewalk development-some new, some old, some areas with no sidewalk
- Library
- Safeway-grocery store specifically indicated as important to keep in the neighborhood
- Restaurants

*What is of most concern, services and amenities still needed:*

- Better snow shoveling
- Safer crossing of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue
- More connections to Cherry Creek North
- More affordable homes; better mix of housing types and sizes
- Community event space
- Increased theft occurring on blocks between 5th and 6th due to easy access to alleys from 6th Avenue. Group asked about possibility of closing off alley access at 6th Avenue-they don't think it would put out residents to drive around the block to get to their garages. (This may be something to at least get the crime rate stats to confirm whether these thefts are reported)
- unsightly recycling bins in the alley
- designated bike path on Madison

*Where are the high priority sites for reinvestment and/or redevelopment within the Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area and what is your vision for these sites?*

- Colorado Boulevard at 3rd is a typical entrance into the neighborhood from the east. Currently there is no left turn arrow, makes access difficult.
- 1st and Colorado-two vacant corner properties make an excellent gateway opportunity with new development, signage
- Discussed gateway on the north side at 6th Avenue-table participants mentioned there would be a very cold reception by those living closest to 6th if there were further attention brought to the east access points to Cherry Creek North.
- Currently too much traffic, including cab traffic to the airport-uses Clayton to 6th as a getaway route. They think residents would rather block of 6th (this was not encouraged, just mentioned by group)

*What will it take to ensure the long-term desirability and quality of life within the Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area?*

- Keep local shops in the neighborhood & less dependency on chains
- In order to continue long term neighborhood stability, we need to be open to change; allowing housing to change with the times but keeping relative density the same except for identified Areas of Change – see area wide questions
- Introduce businesses along Colorado Blvd.

*Which parts of the neighborhood have become Areas of Stability*

- everything between Clayton and Harrison, 5th to 2nd.
- Also mentioned site of the mall.

*Which remain an Area of Change?*

- Alameda Triangle

*What do you envision for the remaining Areas of Change?*

- Envision mixed use/hotel and emphasis on retail corner in Alameda Triangle since crossings are hard to go north into Cherry Creek North.
- Also see more multiple unit/apartment development in Alameda Triangle.

## **Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area – Table 2**

Facilitator: Steve Nalley

Note Taker: George Guerin

### *Most valued assets within Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area*

- Library
- Fillmore Plaza
- Safeway and Whole Foods
- Farmers' Market
- CC Arts Festival
- Post Office
- Bromwell School and Manly Park
- Convenience of having everything within walking distance

### *High Priority for Reinvestment and Redevelopment within Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area*

- Not losing key services and businesses
- Fillmore Plaza
- Maintaining density the way it is – medium density versus highrises
- Maintaining affordability
- Keeping rents low for small businesses
- More green – green roofs and green architecture; more trees and plazas
- More pedestrian friendly
- 1st and Steele – crossing as a pedestrian not comfortable
- Biggest loss – Tattered Cover
- Better transportation options to get downtown, specifically Denver Center for Performing Arts and the Pepsi Center, such as a shuttle

### *What would it take to maintain the quality of life in the Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area?*

- Keeping medium density
- Better transportation to downtown

### *What parts of the planning area should remain Areas of Change?*

- Alameda Triangle

### *What parts of the planning area should become Areas of Stability?*

- All residential areas

- All commercial except Alameda Triangle

### **Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area – Table 3**

Facilitator: Cindy Patton

*Which characteristics of the Sub Area are most valued? Which services or amenities are needed?*

- Close-knit character of the neighborhood
- Proximity to Cherry Creek Shopping Center and Cherry Creek North
- Central location
- Walkability of the neighborhood
- Need Post Office
- Need left turn lane from Colo. Blvd onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. into the neighborhood
- Need better lighting like Cherry Creek East, especially on the proximity of the neighborhood nearer to 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. and to Harrison St./Colo. Blvd.

*Group also discussed what is of most concern to them:*

- Traffic cutting north through the neighborhoods from Cherry Creek North shopping area
- Crossing 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to access shopping center

*Where are the high priority sites for reinvestment and/or redevelopment within the Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area and what is your vision for these sites?*

- Harrison Street
- Changing uses along 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue (e.g.. 7-11, etc.)
- Need to co-brand Cherry Creek North and Cherry Creek Shopping District to create a better synergy between the two to leverage for the good of the entire area.
- East and West ends of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center (e.g. Bed, Bath and Beyond and Safeway sites) should be redeveloped to look like the new addition at Park Meadows where the American Girl, Brio, and White Chocolate restaurants are located.
- Gateway improvements are needed at 1<sup>st</sup> and University as well as 1<sup>st</sup> and Colo. Blvd.

*What will it take to ensure the long-term desirability and quality of life within the Cherry Creek North Residential Sub Area?*

- Communication and coordination with residents as the area continues to change, etc.
- Better parking management to minimize impacts to the CCN neighborhood from both CCN shopping district visitors and employees. Re-evaluate current time limits in place.
- Additional bike-lanes through neighborhood connecting to the Cherry Creek Trail and to Pulaski Park.
- Better crossings at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to support walkability.
- Need to keep the area unique by offering independent shops in CCN shopping area and more options at the Cherry Creek Shopping Center. They should continue to serve different

markets but co-brand so that visitors visit both sides of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue during their trips to the area.

*Which parts of the neighborhood have become Areas of Stability and which remain Areas of Change?*

- CCN neighborhood is by and large considered more stable at this point with change anticipated along Harrison and land use changes along 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.

### **Shopping Center / Mixed Use Sub Area Table**

Facilitator: Courtland Hyser

Note Taker: Kyle Dalton

*Characteristics valued in the Shopping Center/Mixed Use Sub Area:*

- The mall
- Library
- Open Space
- Restaurants
- Local, unique stores
- Walkable and Bikeable
- Cherry Creek Trail
- Access to transit
- Diversity of uses
- Small, intimate, human scale
- Safe
- Easy to navigate
- Comfortable
- Diversity of people
- Short blocks
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is walkable
- Charm

*Amenities & Services that are needed in the Sub Area:*

- Need to attract more “users” to Cherry Creek North
- The Tattered Cover
- Neighborhood – serving retail (e.g. hardware store) and employee-serving retail (e.g. shoe repair)
- Improved connection to downtown – both synergy and transportation
- Free shuttle connecting downtown to Cherry Creek
- Better transportation connection north and south on Colorado Blvd. to Cherry Creek
- More pedestrian friendly connection on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue between CCN and the mall
- Better attractions/destinations to attract visitors, especially in the evening (e.g. make Fillmore Plaza as attractive and vibrant as Larimer Square); need to capture the attention of drive-through traffic
- Countdown pedestrian timers on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (red flashing lights) are uninviting
- 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue needs better streetscape design, charm
- Looking north across 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from the mall, nothing visually attracts people to CCN; need a better sense of attractive retail
- Crucial to keep the grocery stores within the shopping district (e.g. Whole Foods and Safeway)

*Key sites for reinvestment/redevelopment:*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, west of Steele
  - but signage is a problem, especially the bank sign
  - Some concerns expressed regarding building height on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue
  - Crossing 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue at Clayton is not as safe as Milwaukee
- Cherry Creek Shopping Center – west end and east end;
  - perhaps a grocery store on the west end?
  - Vision for west end – more urban; push buildings toward the edges (ie. University and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue); less big box; more walkable
- Old post office site in CCN on Columbine south of 3rd
- 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, east of Steele
- As more parcels are developed, green space is important

*Which areas remain Areas of change?*

- Cherry Creek North Business District, north as far as 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and west as far as the alley between Steele and Adams; some participants expressed CCN BID as being area of stability now, other than surface parking lots
- Cherry Creek Shopping Center
- Both sides of 1st Avenue, east of Steele to Colorado
- Cherry Creek East (primarily residential)
- Alameda Triangle

*Which areas have become Areas of Stability?*

- Cherry Creek North Residential

*Priority Mobility challenges and suggested solutions?*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, between University and Steele – too challenging from a pedestrian perspective; better connections are needed
- Better connections are needed to downtown from 1<sup>st</sup> & University and also from Colorado Blvd.
- Gateways are a challenge – 1<sup>st</sup> and University, 1<sup>st</sup> and Colorado, Alameda & Colorado

**Cherry Creek East / Alameda Triangle Sub Area Table**

Facilitator: Kristin Krasnove

The Cherry Creek East/Alameda Triangle table was represented by CCE residents Dianne Huttner, Barbara Metzger, Janet Knauer, Brooks Waldman and Meredith Gabow. Janet, Barbara, Brooks and Lou Raders serve on the CCEA Board. Property owners/developers were represented by Lou Raders, Mickey Zeppelin, and Alan Brown. Tom Hart sat in as a rep from the CC Area Plan Coordination Team. We were also joined by a reporter from the Denver Post's "Hub" section. I encouraged her to contact Chris or Barbara to follow up on her story. I felt she needed to hear the City's assessment of those areas of the existing plan that had been achieved, addressed, etc.

*Concerns:*

1. Pedestrian lighting has been a goal with roadblocks from the City's changing policies. Isn't there an opportunity for a policy change instead of creating, funding and maintaining an improvement district?

2. Gateways are still identified by vacant lots (1st and Colorado), challenging intersections (1st and Steele, South Madison/Steele/CCN, Steele and Ellsworth, Steele and Bayaud.) Are IGA's a possibility with an intersection like 1st and Colorado?

Poor signage does not help with traffic patterns.

3. Connectivity - Pedestrian, between CCE and CCN (1st Avenue),

There is blockage for residents and our "namesake" - the Creek and its bikepaths, greenspace, and access to the other side of Colorado to the east and to the rest of the city to the west.

Could the plan start with the pedestrian instead of the traffic? Where does the pedestrian need to go and want to go and how can the traffic be addressed around those routes?

Why could there not be a connection between the greenspace of Pulaski Park with the greenspace across the street (an intersection close to impossible to navigate)/what about the creation of a parallel bikepath, what about some "creative financing" to fund these projects?

4. Quality of Infrastructure - needs improvement and upgrading BUT not just with digging up the streets. What about PW pilot programs that combine private and public solutions to stormwater drainage as development occurs? What about including sidewalks, as in DETACHED, as part of a coordinated plan whenever city mandated infrastructure projects are made.

*Which areas remain Areas of change?*

All seem in agreement that the interior of CCE maintain its residential core, that creative commercial be encouraged at our Bayaud/Madison intersection, that edge development allow for greater density. We were hoping for a better merging of commercial into residential with the SchnitzerWest project - renovation of an office building making its outside spaces more welcoming to resident walk through and possible change of use. CCE made a significant change this spring with the change of zoning for a 1st floor commercial property with an "interior" facing site: Zeppelin Development's proposal for the remaining "greenHouse" property.

*High priority sites for reinvestment and redevelopment:*

a) We were all in strong agreement that the impact of re-development of the west side of Steele (RiteAid, Safeway) was very important to our residents. Practically, it offers the possibility of safer crossings at Ellsworth, and the continued need for access to groceries! Aesthetically, we would hope for a commitment to the responsibility of existing greenspace (the sad median) and the possibility for a Living Streets approach to the re-development of such a broad expanse of commercial property. We would hope there would be dialogue with the present and future owners of the east side of Steele.

b) Bayaud and Madison has been given an upzoning on the northwest corner and residents also were in agreement in maintaining the commercial status of the other three corners. Madison has the possibility for being its own "gateway" to CCE, Pulaski Park on the south and a safe entrance on the north (providing 1st Avenue plans become a reality.)

c) greenHouse site, if finished, would establish more finished edge on the south, allow for a small commercial piece, a possible educational addition, and the opportunity for improved infrastructure conversations

d) intersection of 1st and Steele - try to drive it or cross it - it is a challenge to CCE for multiple reasons.

e) Harrison Street from 1st to Alameda and, as one of the participants suggested, should be considered as it continues across Alameda and into the Alameda Triangle.

f)Pulaski Park - entrance, use as access to across the street