What We Are Hearing
From DPD Staff
(partial list)

Draft as of October 6, 2012

In this packet, please find “What We are Hearing” from DPD staff, organized around a possible outline of recommendations for the Commercial Revitalization Plan document (these would need to be distilled further). We’ll discuss these further at meeting #8 and subsequent meetings.

We’ve also included all meeting notes through FDUD meeting # 6 for your interest. All meeting notes can also be found on the DPD project web site at: /www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/University_District/.

Increase residential/ employment density to support a lively business district and neighborhood

- Greater allowable heights in certain areas (potential heights, locations and building forms to be discussed conceptually in 2012, and further studied in 2013)
- Height and density near transit station, and 50th and south
- Generally a mixed-use neighborhood, except in certain areas such as key retail corridors, lower density residential areas
- Adopt standards informed by financial feasibility for residential, office and retail development types
- Respond to the needs of retail businesses and business strategies that are identified as part of the commercial revitalization effort

Achieve an attractive urban form that reinforces the assets of the U District

- Design guidelines for buildings, streets, open spaces – seek to strengthen cohesive U District character while allow variety and eclecticism
- Flexibility for different types of buildings
- Focus on appealing street frontages: emphasize the first 30 feet of the building
- Design standards for building “podiums” and towers to achieve a desirable form for high rise structures
- Integrate mid-block corridors and small public spaces with future development
- Enhance public safety through building and open space designs
- As the area grows and develops, protect historic resources and enhance cultural amenities.
Create a diversity of housing types (upcoming topic)

- Students, professionals, families, seniors, affordable housing at various levels including market-rate and low-income levels
- Single family, midrise, highrise, townhouse...
- There is a need for community development organizational capacity in the University District for targeted types of housing in partnership with private developers and government
- Consider possibility of increasing the allowable density in certain lower density residential zones with the potential for higher quality infill development
- Address issues of under-investment, dilapidated properties and housing, and poor rental property conditions
- Retain the character of older residences

Plan and design for the needs of the U District’s diverse population (this has not been identified as a recommendation for the Commercial District Revitalization report, but it is a message we have heard from the group)

- Urban design should respond to the needs of different populations in the U District—people who live, work and play in the district now and in the future. The future population of the U District may be slightly more diverse than today’s population.
- Make sure churches and social services can continue to serve the community as the area grows
- Find ways to accommodate and support low income housing for a variety of people, through a combination of private and public funding, and through community initiatives
- Consider the need for hygiene facilities, lockers and other services for homeless youth and young adults
- Consider the access needs of the whole population through design decisions—including strollers and the needs of senior citizens

Integrate a network of public places the neighborhood grows and changes

- The Ave is an important asset in the neighborhood’s open space network, with a character that changes south to north
- Identify a network of public spaces that connect neighborhood areas, meet the social needs of the neighborhood, and serve public safety goals
- Create pocket parks and/or seating areas along the Ave and designated green streets.
- Streetscape concept plans – Brooklyn is of particular importance as it connects the new waterfront park with the future light rail station, with the University Heights Center. The Ave north of 50th may provide some opportunities, east-west green streets and certain alleys may also be addressed
- Create more inviting entrances to campus at key east/west connections.
- The waterfront park (“Bryant Park”) is a major opportunity
- Provide active recreation opportunities such as sports facilities for community use and enjoyment
Consider the needs of all public open space users in the U District when designing parks and open spaces

Improve major corridors and neighborhood connections in future design: improve connections across I-5, improve the pedestrian environment along NE 45th Street and NE 50th Street while retaining vehicle travel capacity

**Leverage the future light rail station for better pedestrian connections and coordination with transit (This may be worded differently in the Commercial Revitalization Plan)**

- Provide a higher level of urban design and pedestrian circulation within five minutes’ walk of the future light rail station (upcoming discussion to address blocks immediately surrounding the station)
- Engage with King County Metro, Seattle DOT, Sound Transit and other agencies to begin coordinating around transit modes in the U District as light rail comes on-line
- Make sure the U District does not lose local transit options as light rail comes on-line