

BARBARA JORDAN II COMMUNITY MEETING 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS

October 2018

Prepared by Camiros, Ltd. Summaries included in this memo were derived from feedback received at the second community meeting on October 15, 2018.

camiros RIHousing



1. Introductory presentation

46 neighborhood residents and stakeholders attended Community Meeting 2 at Amos House on Monday, October 15 from 6:00-8:00PM to discuss the future of the Barbara Jordan-II redevelopment plan.



Camirós started the evening with a brief presentation about the project and a summarization of the main themes discovered at Community Meeting 1 and Steering Committee 1:

- Opportunity for BJ-II to preserve and create opportunities for a mix of housing options, especially low income affordable housing.
- The need for the planning process to be transparent and highly collaborative
- Opportunity to increase employment opportunities for residents
- Opportunity to improve civic capacity
- Members of the community need to remain actively engaged
- Opportunity to create more parks/green spaces
- Smaller project idea to restore Grace Cemetery as a community asset
- Smaller project idea to create a civic education class/seminar
- Smaller project idea to create a community charging station with free WiFi
- The need to work synergistically with work already in place and with future opportunities
- Opportunity for BJ-II to serve as a case study for the rest of the community -- consider lessons learned for future projects
- The need to define 'mixed-income' and 'affordable' for the residents of Upper South Providence
- The need for the RFP to prioritize people of color and minority-owned businesses
- Opportunity to explore the project as two separate RFPs since the two clusters or properties are geographically disconnected
- The need to integrate social services, job training, and youth services

Following the presentation and a discussion on affordable housing, which is further detailed on page 13, the meeting broke out into groups for an activity.

2. Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

At Community Meeting 2, attendees at their respective tables of 5-8 participants responded to the question: **Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:** The table indicates how each group responded.



	Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings	New open spaces	Increase number of units	Community services	Improved streets and sidewalks
Table 1	4	3	1	5	2
Table 2	2	4	1	5	3
Table 3	5	2	1	4	3
Table 4	5	4	1	2	3
Table 5	4	3	1	5	2
Table 6	3	5	1	2	4
Score	23	21	6	23	17

Every group unanimously voted to increase the number of units as the top priority for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties. The results illustrate a strong desire to provide more housing, especially in various lower-income categories on the site.

Improving streets and sidewalks came in second. Many attendees reasoned that streets and sidewalks serve a broader public good, and the location of the northern cluster of properties experience high pedestrian traffic counts from Broad Street and into the neighborhood despite their poor conditions.

The final three categories received much less enthusiasm and are almost split evenly with New Open Spaces receiving a few more votes. However, many attendees also asserted that there is already a concentration of public services in Upper South Providence and the community may not need anymore. Many also felt that preserving/rehabilitating the buildings works against increasing the number of units and is more suitable to the southern cluster of buildings. Similarly, adding too much public open space reduces the amount of area to build additional housing units. Some open space is encouraged but should be designed as an amenity for Barbara Jordan-II residents.

3. Activity Results

At Community Meeting 2, attendees participated in an activity that allowed groups to illustrate their vision for the Barbara Jordan-II redevelopment based on their respective priorities. Each table had a large sheet of paper displaying the site area for Barbara Jordan-II. Monopoly pieces and stickers represented different building types and amenities for the sites that allowed each group to design a site plan for the redevelopment project. Below are the key findings:



Number of units

- With each group citing increasing the number of units as their top priority for Barbara Jordan-II, designs generally reflected this sentiment.
- The average number of units proposed for all six groups was 103 units. The highest number of units proposed was 137 and the lowest was 69.



Types of units

- Single-family/townhouse units were the most common building type with three-story multi-family buildings as a very close second.
- Each group produced a mix of housing types. Half of all groups supported six-story buildings.
- There was less enthusiasm for mixed-use buildings. Only two of the six groups had site plans containing more than one mixed-use building.



Retail/Community/Resident Services

- Neither retail nor community services were heavily prioritized. Only 6 total retail spaces and 4 community services buildings were proposed.
- Common retail ideas included a food market, or cafe.
- Resident services replaced community services for many groups often citing the current concentration of social services in the neighborhood.
- On-site laundry, childcare, community rooms, party rooms, youth services, and study rooms were suggested.



Amenities

- Improving streets, sidewalks, crosswalks, and general walkability was frequently mentioned as a need for improvement, reflecting the stated priorities.
- Only two groups had an open space sticker in their design also reflecting the groups' priorities.
- Safety was cited as a major concern for the development site with little consensus on how to address it. Some preferred more proactive measures such as fencing or a gate, while others advocated for elements such as improved lighting.
- Several groups considered parking in their design schemes. Based on the discussions throughout the night, it seems parking is highly important to the needs of the community.
- Public art, trees, playgrounds, and basketball courts were included in design proposals as well.



Legend



Retail (1 story)



Multi-Family
(3 story, 3 units)



Single-Family/Townhouse
(2 story, 1 unit)



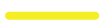
Community Services



Clay to stack buildings



Symbols (Cutout)



Sidewalk/Pedestrian Path
(Pipe Cleaner)



**1st floor retail +
multi-residential above**
(4 story, 3 residential units total)



**1st floor community space +
multi-residential above**
(4 story, 3 residential units total)



Row of 3 townhouses
(2 story, 3 units total)



Row of 3 multi-family buildings
(3 story, 9 units total)



4 multi-family buildings in bulk
(6 story, 12 units total)

Table 1 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster	6 Unit	11	90
	1 Unit	11	11
	Retail	1	-
Southern Cluster	6 Unit	5	30
	1 Unit	6	6
Total Number of Units			137



Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

4 Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings
 3 New open spaces
 1 Increase in the total number of units
 5 On-site community services
 2 Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER

SOUTHERN CLUSTER

Community Meeting 2
October 15, 2018



Table 2 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster	6 Unit	4	24
	3 Unit	16	48
	1 Unit	10	10
	Retail	1	-
Southern Cluster	3 Unit	4	12
	1 Unit	6	6
Total Number of Units			100

Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

1. Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings
 7. New open spaces
 2. Increase in the total number of units
 5. On-site community services
 4. Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER

SOUTHERN CLUSTER

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Community Meeting 2
October 15, 2018



Table 3 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster	3 Unit	3	9
	2 Unit	40	80
	Community Services	4	-
Southern Cluster	3 Unit	7	21
	1 Unit	2	2
Total Number of Units			112



Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

- Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings
- New open spaces
- Increase in the total number of units
- On-site community services
- Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER

SOUTHERN CLUSTER

Community Meeting 2
October 15, 2018



Table 4 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster	6 Unit	6	36
	3 Unit	10	30
	2 Unit	4	8
	1 Unit	10	10
	Retail	2	-
	Community Services	1	-
Southern	3 Unit	8	24
Total Number of Units			108



Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

5 Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings 4 New open spaces 1 Increase in the total number of units 2 On-site community services 3 Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER


SOUTHERN CLUSTER

Community Meeting 2
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Table 5 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern	3 Unit	10	30
	1 Unit	15	15
Southern Cluster	3 Unit	3	9
	1 Unit	15	15
Total Number of Units			69



Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

⑤

1 Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings
 3 New open spaces
 5 Increase in the total number of units
 4 On-site community services
 2 Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER



- Parking on scale of units
 - Garaged entrances
 - Universal design
 - Avenue Concept
 - Mixed

SOUTHERN CLUSTER

⑤

Community Meeting 2
October 15, 2018




Table 6 Design Scheme

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster	3 Unit	16	48
	1 Unit	10	10
	Retail	1	-
	Community Services	2	-
Southern Cluster	3 Unit	5	15
	1 Unit	6	6
Total Number of Units			89



Please list the following in order of importance for the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties:

- 1 Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings
- 2 New open spaces
- 3 Increase in the total number of units
- 4 On-site community services
- 5 Improved streets and sidewalks

NORTHERN CLUSTER

First of 4 meetings
Community Meeting 2
 October 15, 2018



4. General Remarks

At Community Meeting 2, attendees expressed their concerns over a number of issues related to the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties. Below is a summarization of what was discussed.



Affordability and for whom

- A glossary term sheet was provided to those in attendance containing standard affordable housing terminology under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines. For instance, affordable housing is defined as:

"Affordable Housing is a broader definition that is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between **30% - 80% AMI**. For the Providence area, this would be between **\$21,700 and \$57,850** for a three-person household (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits)."

- A definition of targeted income levels, also provided by HUD, was provided to participants. These target income levels are calculated at the regional, metropolitan level which serves as a proxy to determine affordability in a housing market. In this case, annual median income for a family of three in the Providence Metropolitan area. The three targeted household income levels are as follows:

Extremely low-income housing: Subsidized housing available for rent to households earning between **30% or below** the area median income (AMI): **\$21,700 or less for a family of three** in the Providence region.

Very low-income housing: Subsidized housing that is available for rent to households earning between **31%-50%** of the AMI: **\$21,700 - \$36,150 for a family of three** in the Providence region.

Low-income housing: Subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between **51%-80%** of the AMI: **\$36,150 - \$57,860 for a family of three** in the Providence region.

- During this part of the presentation, many attendees in the audience expressed their frustration and concern that the AMI of the Providence region does not align with the socio-economic characteristics of Upper South Providence. Thus, if Barbara Jordan-II develops affordable housing under any criteria other than Extremely low-income housing, then many local residents would not qualify to live there. Reasonably, those in the audience questioned the veracity of how the Barbara Jordan-II redevelopment project would provide them greater access to quality affordable housing for themselves and their neighbors.
- The census tracts that make up Upper South Providence (Census Tracts 4-7), have an average median household income of \$25,552 in 2018 inflation-adjusted dollars according to the American Community Survey 2016 (5-year estimates). This median household income qualifies for Very low-income housing but only a few thousand dollars separates a family from qualifying for extremely low-income housing.



One-for-one replacement

- Another area of concern is clarification on the one-for-one replacement of the previous 74 units comprised of the Barbara Jordan-II properties.
- The language that is currently used does not indicate if the new units will include the same number of bedrooms of the former units. Technically speaking, a 4-bedroom unit could be replaced with a 1-2 bedroom unit unless this is specifically stated in the RFP.

Comfortability

- While increasing density is still the number one priority among the community, the redevelopment of Barbara Jordan-II needs to remain comfortable for its residents.
- Too many people stacked on top of one another was echoed several times. Not only does the community want to eliminate the unfair stigma of affordable housing, but that comfortability and private space must be maintained to a high standard.



Assurances and the RFP

- Several people in attendance expressed concern about what assurances can or cannot be guaranteed in the RFP document as it relates to community input and desires.
- Attendees want to be sure that the selected developer is held to commitments outlines through the community engagement process.



BARBARA JORDAN II
COMMUNITY MEETING 2:
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Glossary Terms

Area Median Income (AMI): All government housing programs qualify recipients based on their income. Since each market area has varying living costs and income levels, the government determines an Area Median Income (AMI) for each housing market. The AMI for a household of three in the Providence area is **\$72,550** (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits). Once the AMI is established, households earning less than 80 percent of that amount are considered low-income. Those earning less than 50 percent are considered very low-income, and anyone making less than 30 percent of the AMI is considered extremely low-income.

Affordable Housing: Affordable Housing is a broader definition that is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between **30% - 80% AMI**. For the Providence area, this would be between **\$21,700 and \$57,850 for a three-person household**. (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits). Specifically, affordable housing is targeted at the following income levels:

- **Extremely Low-Income Housing** - Extremely low-income housing is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent to households earning between 30% or below the area median income (AMI). For the Providence area, this would be **\$21,700 or less for a three-person household** (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits).
- **Very Low-Income Housing** - Very low-income housing is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent to households earning between 31%-50% of the area median income (AMI). For the Providence area, this would be between **\$21,700 and \$36,150 for a three-person household** (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits).
- **Low-Income Housing** - Low-Income Housing is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between 51%-80% of the area median income (AMI). For the Providence area, this would be between **\$36,150 and \$57,850 for a three-person household** (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits).

Types of Affordable Rental Housing:

First, there's something called "Low-Income Housing Tax Credits" that go to developers who agree to set aside a certain percentage of units for low-income families. In turn, the rents for these units must remain affordable for low-income renters (at or below 60% AMI); as long as the rents remain affordable, the developer can continue to receive tax credits.

Then there's public housing, which is government-owned housing. It stays affordable, because the government sets the rental rates. This program is fading out - no more public housing is being built (and hasn't been since the 1970s), and when the units are torn down,

they're gone for good.

Finally, there's Section 8. HUD's Section 8 program helps renters pay rent when it exceeds 30% of their income. There are two types of Section 8 - Tenant-Based and Project-Based. Tenant-Based means the voucher goes directly to the renter, and they can move with it - they don't have to stay in one apartment or community. Project-Based means the subsidy goes with the landlord. The landlord agrees to set aside some units for qualifying families.

Workforce Housing: Workforce Housing is generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between 80% - 120% AMI. For the Providence area, this would be between **\$57,850 and \$86,700 for a three-person household** (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits).

Market-Rate Housing: Market-Rate Housing is recognized as housing units that have no price restrictions. An owner or landlord who owns Market-Rate Housing is free to attempt to rent or sell the unit at whatever price the local market may fetch.

Mixed-Income Housing: A Mixed-Income Housing development is comprised of housing units with differing levels of affordability, typically with some Market-Rate Housing and some housing that is available to occupants below Market-Rate. The "mix" of Low-Income, Affordable, Workforce and Market-Rate units that comprise mixed-income developments differ from community to community, and can depend, in part, on the local housing market and marketability of the units themselves. Mixed-Income Housing is an attractive option because it can contribute to the diversity and stability of local communities (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).

Community Benefits Agreement: A Community Benefits Agreement or "CBA" is a contract signed by community groups and a real estate developer that requires the developer to provide specific amenities and/or mitigations to the local community or neighborhood. Site-specific community benefits agreements (CBAs) ensure that particular projects create opportunities for local workers and communities (Source: *ForWorkingFamilies.org*).

Mixed-Use Development: Mixed-use development is a type of urban development that blends residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or community uses on a single site or in a single building.