

Member Forum on Expansion Design Ideas December 12, 2009, Linden Hills Park Building

Facilitator: Ryan Allen, member of Linden Hills Co-op's Board of Directors
Approximately 30 co-op members gathered, including board and staff.

Ryan set out meeting goals and guidelines. The goal is for member-owners to provide suggestions, ideas and input on the new Linden Hills Co-op. The list of suggestions generated at the meeting will be provided to the project design team, which was represented at the meeting by general manager Luke Schell, project manager Tom Lundgren, the co-op's merchandising manager, Peter Doolan, and Mike Wilkus and Duane Perry of Wilkus Architects, Inc. Not all suggestions gathered at this meeting will necessarily appear in the new site, but all will be given serious consideration by the project team.

Additional questions or suggestions can be sent via email to board@lindenhills.coop, info@lindenhills.coop, or in writing, or member-owners can call Luke at 612-279-2461.

Ryan introduced Mike Wilkus, who gave a brief description of his firm (wilkusarch.com) and their experience with retail and restaurant/food service projects as well as experience with LEED certification guidelines and projects.

Ryan opened the floor to general questions about the project.

Member asked about the comparative square footage of the existing co-op to the new space.

	CURRENT LOCATION	NEW SPACE
Total square footage	13,200 square feet (includes Natural Home)	17,087 square feet (includes small addition in back)
Retail sales floor	6,400 square feet	10,000 (approximately)
Parking spaces	35	50

Another person asked if the solar panels are moving with the co-op, and Mike Wilkus responded that this is what is planned, once the current landlord is assured that the removal will leave the roof in excellent condition.

Ideas generated by categories (if an idea relates to more than one category, it may appear in more than one section below):

GREEN FEATURES

- On-site composting
- A vestibule area to minimize heating/cooling losses
- Incorporate LEED considerations in pre-design phases, so that eventual certification will be cheaper down the line (since we've already built with an eye towards certification requirements)
- Provide trees/shading in parking lot and as part of streetscape/landscaping
- Flooring considerations: should be environmentally friendly, have a "warm" feel like natural woods, bamboo. Polished and tinted existing concrete floors are probably the most environmentally-friendly option, and can be tinted to indicate different store "areas."
- Explore the possibility of rainwater recapture from the roof; stormwater management systems; rain gardens.
- Increase solar/wind capacity to be able to sell power back to the grid

ENERGY USE

- Pedestrian-friendly store access
- Green energy considerations
- Wind energy
- Offset credits
- Reinsulate walls
- Not too high ceilings (both for aesthetics and energy savings)
- Provide incentives for non-fossil fuel vehicles:
 - Accessible electrical hook-ups for electric cars and bikes
 - Parking for bicycles, non-gas vehicles
 - Bicycle “repair station” including air pump, basic maintenance tools
 - Showers for bicycle-commuting employees
- Geothermal heating
- Air recapture energy systems
- Solar hot water

STORE INTERIOR

- Use of natural light
- Materials should maintain “natural” feel: wood, brick, warm colors. Not plastic.
- Family-friendly (i.e. stroller parking, aisle access, kid’s play area)
- “Dwell” space, both indoors and out
- Multipurpose space to allow the co-op to fulfill its educational mission
- Not too high ceilings (both for aesthetics and energy savings)
- Information spaces (customer comments board, public bulletin board, space for product literature)
 - Locate these NOT by the bathrooms
 - Near front of store/checkout area
- Consistent motif/branding elements throughout the store (similar to Seward Co-op’s “green and growing” tree/leaf usage in its new store)
- Public art (e.g. Seward’s mosaic pillar)
- Create good traffic flow in the store, allowing for reentry to the produce aisle from the checkouts (in case you forgot the garlic). Not too many cul-de-sacs and nooks, don’t make it hard to just run in and grab a carton of milk. Easy to navigate.
- Exposed wood beams like the current store.
- Maintain a customer service area near the front of the store to welcome shoppers.
- Create a space for eating, talking in the store
- Skylighting: consider solar tubes to bring in more natural light
- Have a demonstration kitchen/classroom space with cooking facilities.
- Occupational safety considerations in work areas

STORE EXTERIOR

- “Dwell” space, both indoors and out
- Materials should maintain “natural” feel: wood, brick, warm colors. Not plastic.
- Family-friendly (i.e. stroller parking, aisle access, kid’s play area)
- Provide trees/shading in parking lot and as part of streetscape/landscaping

- Include spaces for people to gather throughout the store. Don't lose the "interactivity" that the current store has—the sense of "smallness" and intimacy our shoppers value.
- Consider using rooftop space as public space
- Ensure good traffic flow in parking lot
- Consider rainwater recapture/rain gardens

COMMUNITY

- Building a connection (both physical and otherwise) between the 43rd & Upton business node and the 44th & France area, including reviving the old trolley car path
- Pedestrian-friendly store access
- Expand relationships with "village" vendors, e.g. Clancy's Meats, Harvest Bread
- Public art (e.g. Seward's mosaic pillar)
- Include spaces for people to gather throughout the store. Don't lose the "interactivity" that the current store has—the sense of "smallness" and intimacy our shoppers value.

STORE PRODUCTS

- Liquid bulk products
- Fresh nut butter grinder
- Juice bar
- More books on wellness

OTHER QUESTIONS:

Member asked if the co-op's project team has consulted with Seward Co-op about their experiences with their new LEED-certified store, regarding what worked, what didn't, what they'd do differently. Peter Doolan responded that Luke Schell has been working with the general managers of both Seward Co-op and Mississippi Market to get advice and learn from their experiences.

Member asked if we had heard anything negative about the proximity of the new store to the existing Marthon gas station. Luke Schell responded that the nearby dry cleaners was probably more of a concern from a pollution control standpoint, even though they are now a "green" cleaner and no longer use toxic products.

Member asked about the long-term viability of the new site: are there possibilities for further expansion, and will it be adequate for the co-op's needs 15 to 20 years down the road. Ryan Allen responded that one of the advantages of the new site is that the co-op has first right of refusal should the new landlord wish to sell anytime during the 15-year lease, and that a strong component of the project is that purchasing the building is possible—which leads to further opportunities for expansion in that site, should it be necessary. Another member referred to his experience at Park Slope Co-op in Brooklyn, NY, which has 6,000 square feet of sales space and more than 14,000 members. Space is tight, but in a much more densely populated area than Linden Hills, Park Slope serves its members adequately.

Member asked how updates and new information about the project will be disseminated. Jeanne Lakso, the member services manager, responded that updates are provided on the website, in store handouts, and via the co-op's weekly email news—and that she would be posting the notes from the meeting online. She is also open to any other suggestions of ways to disseminate information to member-owners about the project.