

Presentation to the
Ann Arbor
Parks Advisory Commission
regarding the
Center of the City
Council of the Commons

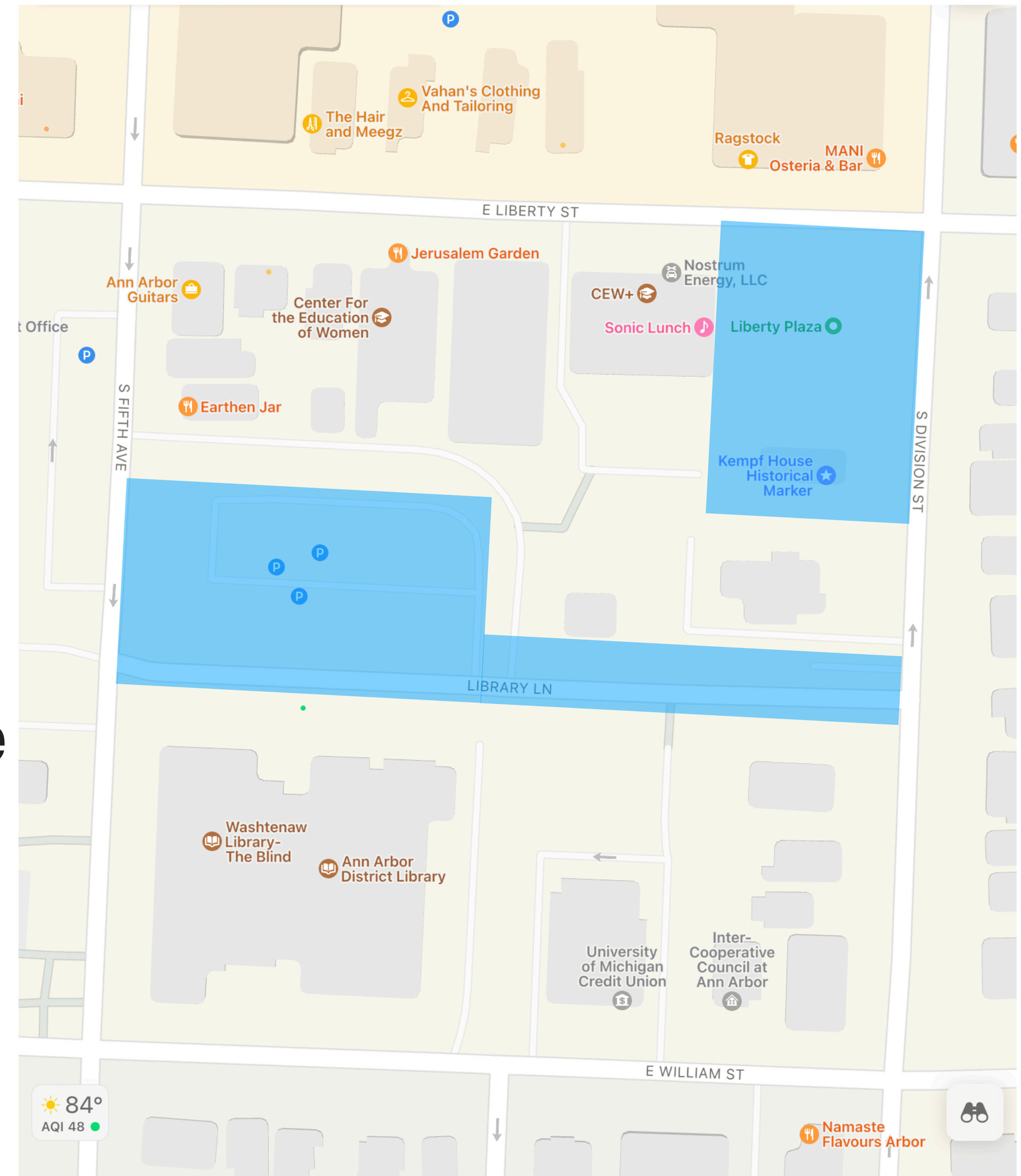




History

History of this site

On November 6, 2018, voters approved Proposal A to amend the City Charter, which states that city-owned land bounded by Fifth Avenue, and William, Division and Liberty Streets, including Liberty Plaza, the surface of the Library Lane parking structure and Library Lane itself, "shall be retained in public ownership, in perpetuity, and developed as an urban central park and civic center commons known as the 'Center of the City;'"





City's Response to Proposal A

Center of the City Task Force

- On April 19, 2019, City Council passed a resolution to create the Center of the City Task Force to determine what to do with the space.
- This task force was charged with “engag(ing) citizens in visioning, long term planning, and immediate and intermittent uses, building toward the final vision for the Center of the City.”
- It produced a report of it's work and findings on February 28, 2020 and submitted them to City Council.

Council on the Commons

- On October 5, 2020, City Council passed a resolution to create the Center of the City - Council on the Commons and appointed members in January 2021. The COC first met in March 2021.



Center of the City - Council on the Commons

Charge

The Council of the Commons is an advisory body to City Council that is to build upon the work of the Center of the City Task Force and provide recommendations for the public spaces on the Center of the City.

Members

Stephen Borgsdorf

Erica Briggs

Jennifer Cornell

Lisa Disch

Milton Dohoney

Alan Haber

Sara Hammerschmidt

Geoffrey Henny

Camilla Lizundia

Rita Mitchell

Alice Ralph, Vice-Chair

Frank Wilhelme

Adam Zemke, Chair



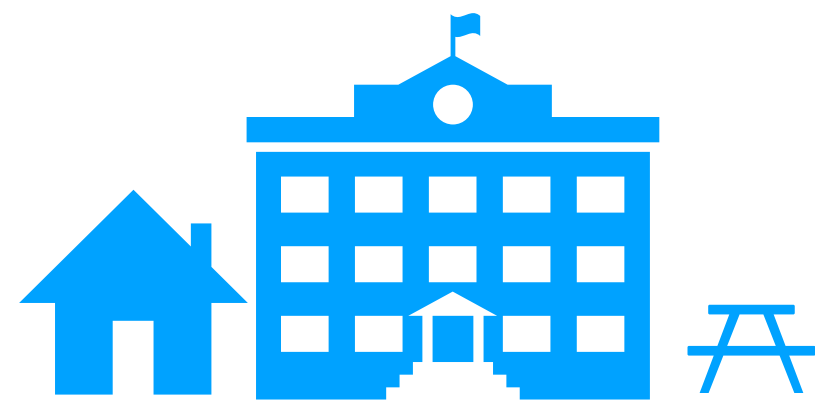
Work of the Council on the Commons



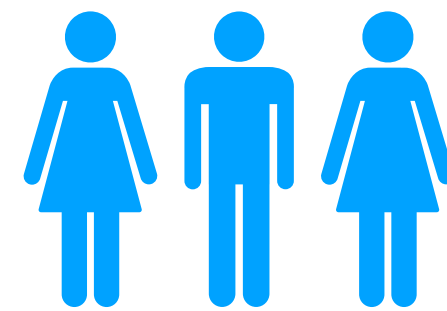
Work of the Council on the Commons

There are five working groups with specific charges that report back to the advisory commission at each meeting.

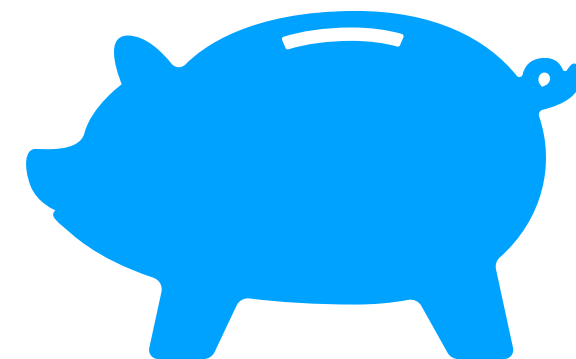
Comparable Communities



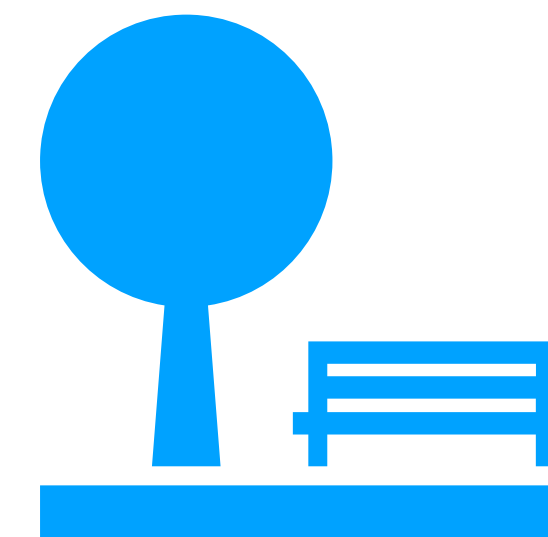
Block Partners Outreach



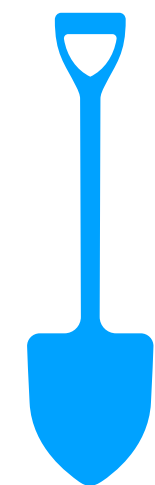
Funding



Near Term Activation



Planning





Work of the Council on the Commons

Comparable Communities

- Working group is dedicated to researching communities' central parks from across the state and elsewhere.
 - Focus is wholistic:
 - Construction
 - Funding
 - Maintenance and upkeep
 - Governance and space management
 - Community input
 - Activation
 - Long-term community engagement and use



Work of the Council on the Commons

Funding

- Working group is dedicated to determining potential funding options for different phases of project and engaging with non-profit partners to help support fundraising efforts.



Work of the Council on the Commons

Block Partners Outreach

- Working group is engaging with neighboring businesses, associations, property owners and residents to gather input about specific uses of the space that will enhance their experiences. Specific topics include but are not limited to:
 - Casual use of space
 - Design
 - Activation and deliberate public programming



Work of the Council on the Commons

Near Term Activation

- Working group is working on plans for shorter-term activation and public use, including the following:
 - Planned events and processes for space use
 - Volunteer engagement
 - Casual use
 - Use of temporary structures for space enhancement
 - Maintenance
 - Capital and ongoing costs associated with each



Work of the Council on the Commons

Planning

- Working group is set to help staff with any planning tasks associated with a request for proposal.



Request for Partnership



Planning

January 2022 Request for Information

- The Council on the Commons issued a request for information (RFI) on a professional planned design in January of 2022. The purpose of this was to:
 - Gauge interest in potential firms who may respond to a follow up request for proposal (RFP) and review work they have previously engaged in, and
 - Determine approximate costs of an RFP.





Planning

January 2022 Request for Information

- Key drivers from responses
 - Be bold and innovative - the space should and can push the envelope of traditional urban park design.
 - Promote an authentic sense of place - celebrate what is uniquely Ann Arbor, utilizing it's past and our future to drive interest in the space.
 - Be inclusive - embrace surrounding structures and use them to enhance the space for people.





Planning

January 2022 Request for Information

- Work should be done in phases. Examples were as follows:
 1. Pre-design, site assessment, programming
 2. Stakeholder and broader community engagement
 3. Site planning and concept design
 4. Complete plan development



Timeframe for all four phases is approximately 12 months. Cost estimates are \$120k-\$140k



Planning

Request for Proposal

- The next step in the planning phase for this site is publish a request for proposal from a professional design firm.
- The Council on the Commons feels strongly that **it is important that this process be a coordinated effort between COC and PAC**, with strong engagement with neighboring property owners, interested parties and community members.
- COC has secured approximately 50% of total estimated funding to support the full RFP process, from public and private sources, and is actively pursuing additional funding opportunities.





Planning

Questions

- Are you comfortable with the RFP process being coordinated between COC and PAC?
- Are there other activities that PAC would like to be involved in?
- Other questions?





Thank You

