

GROUP 1 NOTES

Moderator (Planning): Nora Yoo

Note Taker (Design Center): Gary Gaston + Taylor

Introductions of each participant; how was where you live or work affected by the explosion? (10 mins.)

- **Nora Yoo - Metro Planning, working within the Design Studio and Comm. Engagement team - 2nd Ave touches those two teams greatly. Design Team handles everything within downtown code - Engagement reaches the community**
- **Gary Gaston - CEO of Design Center, tornado, house destroyed in march, understanding what the residents are feeling. Perfect for listening session and empathizing with the residents. Can't wait to make it even better than before.**
- **Taylor Young - Research Associate of Design Center**
- **Elizabeth Mayhall - Resident of Church St. Lofts; She fell in love with the red brick, has been the focus of her community work. She owns a piece of it - her treasure. Did not get the damage others received. Others windows blew out with the frames but this can be repaired. Regions bank, trust advisor, metro historic zoning commission - passion is preservation. Central district improvement district, and is on downtown partnership board. Best way to save the buildings is through economic development. Lots of hats she wears!!!**
- **Deborah Lotz (a proxy on the phone with Deborah) - owns a 2nd Ave lofts (the Quarters) -**
- **Jonathan Swafford - Purchased at the Quarters, operated as short term rental**
- **Juan Fernandez - General Manager at 21c hotel, Very affected. Living in the hotel!!!**

What did you love about 2nd Ave. area before the pandemic and the explosion? (15 mins.)

- **Jonathan - grew up in Nashville, moved away for awhile, when he moved back - trying to decide what area to live in...downtown due to energy. Moved from DC -- very walkable. Downtown fit the bill for some things to walk to, a sense of community and vibe that he was accustomed to in DC. historic charm, very appealing, brick walls.**
- **Nora - New to here...within this past year. Drawn to the downtown area, walkability in NYC but is what downtown (Nash) also has - moved us to the 2nd question.**
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What challenges were you facing before COVID and/or explosion? With respect to 2nd Ave.? (15 mins.)

- Elizabeth - 80s and 90s - trees needed trimming but NES cut the plugs. visioning session - safety. Didn't feel safe anymore. Not a lot of police presence. Lots of attention now. Tom Turner is going to get lights in the trees. Place needs to be safe. Corner on 2nd and Commerce - murder corner, people killed there and police weren't really there. But now is better...
 - Beautification and Safety
 - Nora asked if it had changed in terms of covid...Elizabeth: quieter, but then the street people were the only ones left and it felt less safe for residents. Had an impact on her.
- Juan - tourist and hospitality, big focal point and first impressions, for the visitors and residents - lighting is poor. Vehicular traffic...sprint zone to try and get to union due to the turning sections off 2nd. Not safe for pedestrians. With tourism, pedal bars and hot tub trucks and loud music probably is an issue. Creates bigger problems for people. Only until 11...but before restrictions, was happening and how to transition 2nd ave from that aspect to create a space between church and commerce, can expand sidewalk cafes? Kiosks pop up shops? Outdoor promenades to host concerts? How to reduce vehicular traffic. Enhancements to that area.
- Gary - Scale of street, intimacy of it, different character. Trees were lit up. Made you want to walk down it or stroll in the summer when its shaded. Feels very european. So historic. Architecture. Brick sidewalks, small scale shops...what began to change that character? Changing of lighting and usage switches? Bigger venues. Overwhelming noise...would get to church street and theres that big parking lot and its dark, not lit up. 21c coming in, brings people further up the street and the alley is beautiful and the courthouse and the park. So many things that tried to get there but many obstacles along the way. Be addressed to this street can recapture that character and be something that is different than Broadway...Broadway got a lot of attention and that noise and feel didnt fit 2nd ave. Hope we can define what makes this street special and bring that back.
- Nora - How can we recapture that 2nd ave feel? Let flourish those special elements that make it unique
- Deborah - born and raised in Nashville. Downtown was not a place where you went when it was younger. 80s started going to 2nd ave, going to spaghetti factory. 2nd and church - security issues. Not a lot of lighting. Lots of homeless people on the corners. Architecture and the courthouse...more sentimental, Deborah likes her building with exposed brick (quarters), wants her rooftop back, bought in Nashville 7-8 years ago. Loved the building hand the street. Large building on 2nd that remained dormant...has yellow paint on it. Security situation was getting worse and worse...1st ave has little security as well. Beautification, what a great little street, cobblestone, and the trees. A gem without the honky tonk of Broadway. Access to so many things (Ryman, park, etc) Corner is one of the most magic places in Nashville.
- Nora - this area captures the riverfront...lots of characters within the region.
- Taylor - art, engaging alleyways, shaded trees, engaging facades, public square park

- Gary - strengthening the aspect to the river and arcade...pulling all these streets together.

What other concerns do you have? (15 mins.)

- Elizabeth - has seen it through all the years. At one point it became 2 ways, it was a cruising spot. Created gridlock downtown, was terrible. Bill Purcell as mayor...#1 issue he heard about during his campaign and fixed it back to 1 way. Merchants group (Elizabeth likes Juan's plaza idea), does not like the idea. Caution everyone...when we think of these changes, be thoughtful and think of everyone's opinion. This area is inclusive, diverse, mix of community. We're all in it together down here.
 - Think strongly of everyone's opinions
- Nora - Reminds me of NYC, inclusivity and special
- Gary - with the buildings, with the historic buildings that are damaged...can't be restored...mission "tooth" on the street. Damaging aspect if more parking...got to get the buildings back. How is that done to look historical or repair the facades? Modern way? Having buildings there is so critical. The city has to do more about the homeless issues...more services to provide? Less activity and aggressiveness....provide resources and housing?
- Deborah - Fine line between bringing it back with the charm and allowing it to become a more commercialized zone. Important that Nashville keeps the charm for 2nd ave. Every city needs streets that you walk down and go "wow", walk around the corner and there's the walking bridge and the river...keep it magical! I love 2nd and I want to see it stay magical. March 15th (coming down) and wants to be involved (calling in from LA). She used to come every month and stay quite a bit...also stays in East Nash when not staying at her quarters loft. Rooftop - is what made her buy. Never forget the day she walked up and saw the river, the brick, all the charm. Sentimental.

What opportunities and aspirations would you like us to consider? If you could make one change to the built environment on 2nd what would it be? (15 mins.)

- Jonathan - 1st ave fort - didn't add a lot of value...needs to be there for historic reasons? Would take my dog out to use facilities on 1st...ended up being more dangerous...space could be used in a more effective manner. Historic preservation issues??
- Elizabeth - DAR went ballistic against Karl Dean, and that is why it didn't move. Karl Dean did study on riverfront and got attracted to a fountain element at base of Broadway? She felt like this is a fabulous idea. Tangible things to connect the river. When you are at Broadway, don't even know it's there. Predecessor to the District is the Historic riverfront (not sure I got that right)
- Gary - That parking lot...has to have something. Active facade along that street. Start to activate the alley. The street itself, trees were lovely and beautiful - tree variety right. Do we need all that parking? On street dining like in Europe / Philadelphia. Business owners would own that space...would help with loitering.

- **Deborah - Her apartment is the 4th floor facing the river, overlooks the fort. She likes it, rather sweet. Its a creepy corner, not because the fort. Gang of people that hang out there...(not best intentions), did a good job remodeling the fort. Needs to light the area more. Natural gathering place, but has gotten worse. Youth hostel and empty parking lot, then gay street to the bridge, its dormant - perfect spot for people to camp out f not activated. History and charming. Empty patch is the issue??**
- **Juan - Coming from Savannah (2nd oldest city in the US), we know a little about preservation. Balance the modernization of the city and how you bring in the historical factors. How to back historical society and tell history and develop more of a historical walking tour. Sidewalk (Juan got cut off)**
- **TY thoughts - need a crosswalk from butlers run to 1st ave, engaging greenspace and activation of the riverfront. Better lighting, more trees, engaging alleyways, historic charm/architecture and history is engaged, preserved, and cherished. ART!!!**