Saint Paul Planning Commission City Hall Conference Center 15 Kellogg Boulevard West

Minutes July 2, 2010

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, July 2, 2010, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners

Present:

Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Halverson, Smitten, Thao, Wang, Wencl; and

Messrs. Alton, Commers, Connolly, Fernandez, Gelgelu, Kramer, Nelson,

Schertler, Spaulding, and Wickiser.

Commissioners

Absent:

Mmes. *Merrigan, *Porter, Young, and Mr. *Ward

*Excused

Also Present:

Lucy Thompson, Allen Lovejoy, Department of Public Works, Patricia James, Christina Morrison, Anton Jerve, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and

Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes June 18, 2010.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Commers moved approval of the minutes of June 18, 2010. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Donnelly-Cohen had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Lucy Thompson reported on two items at the June 23rd City Council meeting. The District 9 Plan summary was laid over until next Wednesday, July 7th for final adoption. The District del Sol Zoning study was also laid over for reconsideration of zoning for several properties in the study. This will also be back at City Council on July 7th.

Ms. Thompson also said that City staff are exploring a few federal grant opportunities. HUD Community Challenge Planning grants will offer grants for planning activities that contribute to creating sustainable communities. Staff is considering several potential projects, mostly related to pre-development activities for some major development sites. Also, three federal departments, HUD, DOT and EPA, have formed a new partnership called Sustainable Communities. They are offering awards of up to \$5 million for regions to plan for sustainable development on a regional scale. Finally, there is and EPA grant program called Greening America's Capitals. There is no money involved but they bring a design team to town for a three day charrette, so staff are looking at some possible projects for that. A lot is going on at the federal level and PED is coordinating with Parks and Recreation and Public Works to make sure that the best advantage is

being taken for those funding opportunities.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Official Zoning Map Study – Item from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. (Anton Jerve, 651/266-6567)

Chair Donnelly-Cohen announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Official Zoning Map Study Notice of the public hearing was published in the Saint Paul Pioneer Press on June 11th, June 18th and June 25, 2010, and was mailed to the citywide Early Notification System list and other interested parties.

Anton Jerve, PED staff, said that nothing has changed since his last presentation, but he wanted to show the GISMO map again since there were some technical problems at the last showing. So he pulled it up using the internet to show the new zoning layer. Originally the zoning labels were listed in the visible layers legend, but Mr. Jerve has received some feedback from people who wanted labels on the map, so labels were added that are visible after you zoom into a certain level. What GISMO allows you to do is overlay various zoning layers so that you can put the zoning over a photo background, for example, and lighten the zoning to enable you to see what is behind it. This will be more useful to everyone, planners, citizens and developers by enabling them to use this map and making it more functional then the previous paper maps.

Chair Donnelly-Cohen read the rules of procedure for the public hearing.

No one spoke at the hearing.

Commissioner Alton said that this is online now, but it is not official yet.

Mr. Jerve explained that yes it is online now, and it will be official as soon as the public hearing is completed and adopted by City Council.

MOTION: Commissioner Wickiser moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 6, 2010, and to refer the matter back to the Comprehensive Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

V. Zoning Committee

SITE PLAN REVIEW – List of current applications. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

Four items will come before the staff Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, July 6, 2010. They are: Washington Jr. High Parking Lot – Partial Replacement at 1041 Marion Street; Parking Lot to serve The Salvation Army St. Paul Citadel Worship & Community Center at $401 - 7^{th}$ Street West, the parking lot is at 337 & 383 Smith Avenue; Rebuild BP Gas Convenience Store, Pump Islands, and Canopy at 1200 White Bear Avenue North; Remodel of BP Gas Convenience Store and Car Wash at 1347 University.

NEW BUSINESS

#10-502-292 TransPark Inc — Conditional Use Permit for temporary parking lot, with variances from surface parking requirements and TN3(M) standards and conditions. 43 Water Street East, NE of intersection of Water and Starkey. (Lucy Thompson, 651/266-6578)

Commissioner Spaulding expressed concern that the parking is not tied to some specific use.

Commissioner Kramer explained that it is vacant land, currently being used with out benefit of a conditional use permit for parking. People are parking there and walking across the bridge to downtown, and the intended re-development of the site at a later date will eliminate the temporary use.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Kramer moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Kramer announced that Peter Warner from the City Attorney's office updated the Zoning Committee and gave a similar update to the Board of Zoning Appeals regarding a Minnetonka court case involving variances that Mr. Warner believes will have a dramatic affect on the City's grounds and ability to issue variances.

Patricia James, PED staff added that Peter Warner had not had a chance as of last Thursday, to study the opinion, but he will be writing an analysis for the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Planning Commission. For now, if the City receives an application for a variance, Mr. Warner should be consulted.

Commissioner Kramer announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, July 8, 2010.

VI. <u>Transportation Update and Preview of Transportation Committee's Work Program</u> – Presentation by Allen Lovejoy, Department of Public Works, and Christina Morrison, PED. (Allen Lovejoy, 651/266-6226, and Christina Morrison, 651/266-6546)

Christina Morrison, PED staff, gave a brief overview of the new Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission, which will have its first meeting in late July or early August. The resolution establishing the committee was recently introduced by Councilmember Stark in order to broaden and elevate the public dialogue about transportation planning and projects. This diverse group of stakeholders will review projects and advise the Planning Commission, who advises the City Council and Mayor. Morrison noted that the committee will be implemented under the Planning Commission structure for several reasons: in order to implement the new Comprehensive Plan, to ensure consistency with neighborhood, small area plans, and zoning, and to provide a clear decision-making process for major infrastructure investments.

Ms. Morrison introduced the committee members who have been appointed to the committee, including four planning commissioners. Commissioner Spaulding will serve as the committee chair. It is anticipated that the committee's work program will follow items outlined in the Transportation Plan, including transportation-related zoning amendments, modal planning,

review of large or complex public works projects, and engagement in regional/interagency projects, and guidance on federal funding opportunities.

Ms. Morrison listed many upcoming projects that may come to the committee for review, including transit corridor planning, the draft Complete Streets Plan, the Northwest Quadrant Study, Union Depot restoration and rail capacity work, and several major capital improvements.

Allen Lovejoy gave an update of major transportation projects. The Lafayette Bridge, proposed to be under construction in 2011 to 2014, will cost an estimated \$185 million, and will include solutions to several traffic issues at the north end of the bridge. Lovejoy also updated the progress of the Central Corridor process and timeline, which will include heavy construction on University in 2011 and 2012, and ongoing construction in much of downtown. He also outlined the additional project elements which the City has funded, which will include above standard lighting, street trees and soils, boulevard pavers, street furniture, parking mitigation, an addition LRT station, and upgrades to the overhead electrical poles. The funding sources dedicated to these "betterments" will include some combination of CIB, STAR, TIF, and property assessments.

Other current projects Mr. Lovejoy touched on include the Cayuga Bridge over 35E, slated for replacement and connection to Phalen Boulevard in 2013 and 2014, and the Pierce Butler Route Eastern Extension, which will improve property access and relieve truck traffic from local streets. He noted that staff also is working on Holman Field airport zoning that is required by state statute. The zoning code amendments, expected in 2011, will include height limit enforcement and land use provisions.

Mr. Lovejoy added that there are several rail transit projects and studies underway as well, including an initiative to introduce high speed rail to Chicago, and to study transit way options in the Red Rock, Rush Line, Robert Street, 1-94, and arterial bus way corridors. MnDOT has recently completed a passenger and freight rail plan, and Ramsey County has begun work on an East Metro Rail Capacity study. Lovejoy concluded the presentation by speaking about the recent federal funding opportunities, as well as the dire state of federal transportation funding mechanisms.

Commissioner Spaulding wanted clarification about the additional station that was talked about he thought that there were three additional stations.

Mr. Lovejoy said that there are three additional stations, but the City only committed to paying for one of the three.

Commissioner Kramer said regarding the OCS poles, why are those a City cost as opposed to a project cost?

Mr. Lovejoy said that these poles are tapered, they are round and they will be painted Saint Paul Brown. It is not an enormous cost, but it is a cost the project office would not carry. Also in the Capital area downtown they are not only tapered, round and Saint Paul Brown, but they are fluted, so they look a lot like the light poles that are in a historic area.

Commissioner Smitten ask if Mr. Lovejoy would give an update on the Southwest Corridor.

Mr. Lovejoy said that the Southwest Corridor runs from downtown Minneapolis to West Southwest into the Hennepin County suburbs and is completing their draft EIS. They have some fairly ambitious plans about how they are going to have a certified final EIS by the end of 2011 and be under construction by the end of 2012. Two things are clear, one they are a little unrealistic in terms of timeline and two they are moving ahead much faster than Central Corridor. So it is conceivable that they will start construction before Central Corridor is completed. Hennepin County is spending a lot of their own money to do the kind of planning that the City of Saint Paul did around station areas. They have some capacity and resources that in Saint Paul we don't have to move quickly.

VII. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Commers had no report.

VIII. Neighborhood Planning Committee

Commissioner Wencl announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Committee meeting and that they will be starting a half hour earlier at 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, July 7, 2010.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Smitten had no report.

X. Task Force Reports

Commissioner Commers said that the West Midway had a meeting on June 28, 2010 and there were a number of potentially contentious issues raised. The next meeting is on Monday, July 19, 2010.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Drummond Planning Director Approved

(Date)

Marilyn Porter

Secretary of the Planning Commission

PED\butler\planning commission\minutes\July 2, 2010