

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

Minutes January 16, 2009

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, January 16, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Faricy, Lu, Morton; Smitten, Wencl; and Messrs. Alton, Barrera, Bellus, Commers, Gordon, Johnson, Kramer, Margulies, Nelson, and Spaulding.

Commissioners Absent: Ms. *Porter and Messrs. *Goodlow, and *Ward.
*Excused

Also Present: Larry Soderholm, Planning Administrator; Patricia James, Christina Morrison, Kate Reilly, Greta Alquist, Emily Goodman, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes January 2, 2009.

MOTION: *Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen moved approval of the minutes of January 2, 2009. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Alton announced there is a 3M Site Advisory Committee that has been formed as a City Council Committee and they asked the Planning Commission to appoint a representative. He designated Commissioner Kramer to be our representative and Commissioner Smitten to be his alternate. Last night they had their first meeting. Commissioner Kramer had a copy of the Port Authority's analysis of the site. He said that this information is on the Port's web site at www.sppa.com/3M. Commissioner Kramer also said that there will be 3M site tours on Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday, January 24, 2009 at noon. Members and staff who are interested in touring the 3M site should contact him advance.

Chair Alton also announced that the next Planning Commission meeting is the annual meeting. Staff expects to have the annual report done. The Nominating Committee will report and officers will be elected for 2009.

III. Planning Administrator's Announcements

Larry Soderholm reported on planning-related business at the City Council for last week and their agenda for next week. He also encouraged members to look at the program for the national APA conference, which will be in Minneapolis in late April.

IV. Zoning Committee

NEW BUSINESS

#08-220-421 REDA-Holy Land Restaurant and Grocery – Rezoning from B2 Community Business, VP Vehicular Parking, and RM2 Medium-density Multiple Family Residential to TN2 Traditional Neighborhood for 10,000 sq. ft. retail/restaurant development. 80 Cesar Chavez Street, SW corner at Congress. (*Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618*)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#08-235-993 Holy Land Restaurant and Grocery – Variance of river corridor regulations to permit commercial development affecting slopes of 12% or greater. 80 Cesar Chavez Street, SW corner at Congress. (*Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618*)

Commissioner Spaulding wanted clarification as to where the noncompliant sections of slope are on the site?

Kate Reilly, PED staff, showed the site plan on the overhead screen and she pointed out the two areas in the parking lot where steep slopes would be cut back and held in place by retaining walls.

Commissioner Smitten said protection of steep slopes in the River Corridor is a special interest of hers, so she had checked out the two areas of impact. One is not a natural bluff or steep slope. The other, the little node area, is part of the original bluff. The slopes do not exceed the 18-percent standard. She said the slopes on this site pose challenges for its development; however, she thinks the trees and other vegetation will help to maintain the integrity of the bluff.

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the variance subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#08-234-775 Sisters of St. Joseph-1884 Randolph – Rezoning from R3 One-family Residential to RM2 Medium-density Multiple Family Residential. 1884 Randolph Avenue, SW corner at Fairview. (*Emily Goodman, 651/266-6551*)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#08-234-979 Sisters of St. Joseph – Conditional Use Permit for nursing home/assisted living facility. 1884 Randolph Avenue, SW corner at Fairview. (*Emily Goodman, 651/266-6551*)

Commissioner Nelson said our Zoning Code talks about facilities that are licensed by the Department of Health. He said for assisted living facilities in the state of Minnesota there is no such thing as a Department of Health license. In this zoning case, we are treating assisted living and nursing homes as substantially similar to each other in terms of land use regulation. In the nursing home industry, this causes some consternation--is it housing, is it nursing, and who has regulatory authority for the different facilities? Commissioner Nelson agreed with the committee’s recommendation and thinks the proposal of the Sisters of St. Joseph is for this site is

appropriate, but he would like the staff and commission to take a look at our Zoning Code and bring it up to date with current practices in the industry.

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit with conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#08-237-826 Mendota Partners LLC – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as a 10-unit apartment building. 602 Mendota Street, NE corner at Fifth Street. (Sarah Zorn, 651/266-6570)

Commissioner Morton reported that the Zoning Committee laid this case over to January 22, 2009 meeting.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Transportation Chapter – Adopt resolution recommending approval to the Mayor and City Council. (Christina Morrison, 651/266-6546)

Christina Morrison said that after the public hearing on October 3, 2008, the Comprehensive Planning Committee had two discussions in response to the comments and some other issues. They also reviewed and revised the plan's implementation section and the appendix that listed proposed projects. She thanked Jon Commers, who chaired the Transportation Task Force, and Bob Spaulding, who was an active member.

MOTION: *Commissioner Commers moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to recommend that the Transportation Plan be adopted by the Mayor and City Council as a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Land Use Plan – Adopt resolution recommending approval to the Mayor and City Council. (Penelope Simison, 651-266-6554)

Larry Soderholm said that Penny Simison couldn't be here today, but on her behalf he wanted to thank the Land Use Task Force members. There were a lot of meetings. The task force was chaired by Richard Kramer. Gladys Morton also participated regularly, and George Johnson came to several meetings even though he wasn't officially a member.

MOTION: *Commissioner Kramer moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to recommend that the Land Use Plan be adopted by the Mayor and City Council as a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Wencl seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Introduction and Implementation Sections – Adopt resolution recommending approval to the Mayor and City Council. (Penelope Simison, 651/266-6554)

MOTION: *Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to recommend that the Introduction and Implementation Sections be adopted by the Mayor and City Council as part of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee

Committee Chair Wencil was unable to be at the last committee meeting, so Commissioner Morton gave the report. She said the committee had no items for action today, but the committee discussed two interesting items. First, they reviewed the 2008 report on the activities of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC), which was established in 2004 to facilitate communication and collaboration between the University of St. Thomas and the neighborhood organizations in their area. WSNAC appears to be effective at addressing issues as they arise. The committee asked the staff to distribute copies of the report to the full Commission today. It seems to be a good model, which may be useful for certain types of neighborhood issues in the future.

Commissioner Morton said the second issue the committee discussed was Citywide Infill Housing Design Standards. In fact, last Wednesday the City Council approved interim guidelines for infill development and asked the Planning Commission to study them. The committee reviewed the staff's draft of the proposed interim guidelines and looked at slides of houses that illustrate the challenges the Planning Commission will be addressing in the development of workable guidelines.

VII. Communications Committee

Chair Smitten reported that they are continuing to work on the Annual Report for 2008.

VIII. Task Force Reports

Commissioner Commers announced that the Duplex/Triplex Conversion Task Force is going to resume its work. They are looking for a good meeting time in mid-February.

IX. Old Business

Draft Public Art Ordinance – Joe Spencer of the Mayor' staff will discuss the draft and answer questions.

This item of business has been postponed.

X. New Business

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Approved _____
(Date)

Larry Soderholm, AICP
Planning Administrator

Marilyn Porter
Secretary of the Planning Commission

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