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

Minutes December 14, 2012

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, December 14, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners

Mmes. Merrigan, Noecker, Perrus, Porter, Reveal, Thao, Wang, Wencl; and

Messrs. Gelgelu, Lindeke, Ochs, Oliver, Spaulding, Ward, and Wickiser.

Commissioners

Ms. *Shively, and Messrs. *Connolly, *Edgerton, *Nelson.

Absent:

Present:

*Excused

Also Present:

Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Lucy Thompson, Patricia James, Allan Torstenson, Kate Reilly, Michelle Beaulieu, Scott Tempel, and Sonja Butler,

Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes November 30, 2012.

Chair Wencl announced that the minutes are not available at this time. However they will be ready for approval at the December 28, 2012 meeting.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Wencl had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that last Saturday was the grand opening celebration for Union Depot. It was an exciting event with a big turn out.

At last Wednesday's City Council meeting the nonconforming use amendments were finally approved. The City Council decided to change the provision that the Planning Commission had recommended allowing vertical expansion of non-conforming structures up to 10 feet.

Also, Ms. Drummond announced that one of the planning staff, Christina Morrison is leaving to take a job with Metro Transit as a Senior Transit Planner. Ms. Morrison is very excited about the new position but we're sorry to see her leave.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: West Side Community Plan – Item from the Neighborhood Planning Committee. (Scott Tempel, 651/266-662)

Chair Wencl announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the West Side Community Plan. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger November 8, 2012, and was sent to the citywide Early Notification System list and other interested parties.

Scott Tempel, PED staff, talked about the West Side Community Plan saying that the plan has been worked on since 2011 by West Side Community Organization (WSCO). During their process they have had public meetings and visioning sessions with over 300 people participating. The plan includes sections that address community vitality and economic development in addition to the sections normally required in area plans. They have also focused on developing a clear plan for implementation.

Chair Wencl read the rules of procedure for the public hearing.

The following people spoke.

1. Ms. Elena Gaarder, Executive Director of West Side Community Organization, talked about their process and the steps taken, which included making sure that the plan was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. They also hosted nine community workshops so they were able to capture all of the different voices of the neighborhood. They took that and created a draft that staff wrote, which then went through a City review process. They then hosted a leaders gathering with 32 people from various organizations that met and to identify priorities for implementation. Ms. Gaarder said that this has been a long time coming and they encourage the Planning Commission to forward this for approval.

Commissioner Reveal asked for some examples of some of the things that they are implementing.

Ms. Gaarder said that one of the things that came out through the West Side leaders gathering was a desire to connect West Side residents with West Side jobs. The Neighborhood House is championing that strategy and they will be partnering with an employment action center to do a jobs and training program on the West Side. The Port Authority is interested in working with them to identify sites for potential job growth centers, and the Neighborhood Development Alliance is looking at doing mixed use development at Cesar Chavez. So those are the things that are moving forward now.

Commissioner Ward asked for some examples of the outreach that was done to local citizens, rather then leaders of the community and stakeholders.

Ms. Gaarder said that their primary community engagement was done through the workshops she had previously mentioned. They recruited average residents in the neighborhood to bring together their peer networks and their neighbors to participate in the nine workshops. They went to where people normally live and congregate. They reached 125 people doing that kind of outreach, and 60% - 70% of the people that were part of those workshops were people of color and renters.

2. Ms. Karen Reid, Executive Director of Neighborhood Development Alliance, said they were a participant in the planning process and will continue to work on housing and economic development. They are grateful that WSCO incorporated past planning work for Smith Avenue and District del Sol into this plan. Neighborhood Development

Alliance has two sites identified in the District del Sol plan that they will be working to redevelop.

- 3. Ms. Kelly Jameson, Vice President of Property Development for the Saint Paul Port Authority, commended the West Side Citizens Organization (WSCO) on the exhaustive process to develop the plan. WSCO did a great job of reaching out to a wide variety of stakeholders and community members and the Port Authority is happy to be a partner in implementing this plan. Ms. Jamison touched on three main themes that they support in the plan. The first one is land for industry and jobs. The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) recently completed a study for the Port Authority that found that there is capacity and a need for industrial jobs in the city of Saint Paul. They are pleased that WSCO feels that these industrial jobs belong in their neighborhood and look forward to a partnership working with the community to create and expand job centers in the future. The second is assessment and remediation of contaminated sites. The Port Authority has a successful track record of securing funds from local, state and federal sources to assist in the remediation of brownfield sites throughout Saint Paul for industrial jobs. As opportunity for business development or expansion occurs on brownfield sites on the West Side, the Port Authority will use some of its resources to facilitate job creation. The third them is the compatibility of recreational and residential uses surrounding the Southport Terminal. The Port Authority is committed to achieving a balance of recreational and industrial uses along the river. They are exploring a secondary access route at the Southport Terminal to alleviate some of the truck traffic and congestion that occurs on Concord Street. In addition, with the approval of their site plan for a new dock wall at the Southport terminal, the Port Authority donated some land to the City of Saint Paul for park purposes which includes a trail easement along the railway that leads to South Saint Paul. The Port Authority supports the West Side Plan. Ms. Jameson submitted a written letter from the Saint Paul Port Authority with a full list of strategies from the plan where the Port Authority is listed as a partner.
- 4. Mr. Armando Camacho, President of Neighborhood House, said he has witnessed community members and organizations creating a common vision to create a healthy community for the West Side. The exciting piece of this plan is that they all have ownership of this plan and its various components and as president of Neighborhood House they're looking at the work that their trying to do not only on the West Side but the East Side and also in Highland Park. Neighborhood House is really excited to support this plan and to take ownership of sections of it and supports moving forward with this plan.

Chair Wencl announced that a written letter was received from Carol Neumann and a copy of her letter will be forwarded to all of the Planning Commissioners.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Oliver moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, December 17, 2012, and to refer the matter back to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING: <u>Highland Village Special District Sign Plan Amendments</u> – Item from the Neighborhood Planning Committee. (*Kate Reilly*, 651/266-6618)

Chair Wencl announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the Highland Village Special District Sign Plan Amendments. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger November 8, 2012, and was sent to the citywide Early Notification System list and other interested parties.

Kate Reilly, PED staff said that the Highland Village Special Sign District Plan Amendments were crafted during 2011 and 2012 by a task force made up of members of the Highland District Council and the Highland Business Association. Most of the recommendations are to clear up imprecise or unclear language and to make the sign plan more in keeping with the organization of the zoning code as a whole. There is also a recommendation to ban dynamic display signs. Included in the Planning Commission's packet were comments from the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) related to Dynamic Display Signs as well as other issues. Also there were two corrections made to the notes in the strikeouts and underlined version of the sign plan that the Planning Commission previously received when this was set for public hearing. Both are on page 5 – The note that begins "Change to this paragraph" should state that the proposed one times the lineal front footage is the same as the Grand Avenue Special District Sign Plan. The TN and OS-BS standard is 1.5 lineal feet of lot footage. This was changed as part of the Traditional Neighborhood code changes that went along with the Central Corridor Zoning Study. The second change is in the note that begins, "This standard, recommended by the task force," should go on to say, "is similar to the Grand Avenue Special District Sign Plan," not that it is similar to the Traditional Neighborhood and OS-B1 business districts.

Chair Wencl read the rules of procedure for the public hearing.

The following person spoke.

1. Tia Anderson, Highland District Council Board President, also a member of the Sign Plan Task Force, presented resolutions that the District Council and Highland Business Association support the sign plan. She stated that staff would provide an electronic copy of those resolutions. The Highland Village Special Sign District Plan was created in 1985 and has not been reviewed or updated since. There was a desire to update the Highland Village Special Sign District Plan to reflect changes that have happened in sign technology, the City code, and to do some modeling after the Grand Avenue code. In 2011 the District Council requested a review by the Planning Commission of the sign plan and the Planning Commission initiated a task force. The task force worked to update the sign plan and to modify the boundaries to include the Ford site and to look at the entirety of the Highland Village area, which has expanded in years beyond the corners of Cleveland Avenue and Ford Parkway. So the task force looked at expanding the boundary all the way up Cleveland Avenue to the end of Randolph and all the way up Ford Parkway to Snelling to encompass what has now become the village.

The Highland Business Association and the District Council both have voted to support the sign plan as presented earlier this year and urge the Planning Commission and City Council to adopt the sign plan. In light of some of the comments by DSI the task force plans to have additional conversations with staff about the concerns with dynamic display signs. The Grand Avenue Sign Plan and Highland Village Sign Plan have both opted to ban dynamic display signs outright, without understanding the implications to gas stations in particular. But that is something they hope to revisit with staff.

Commissioner Spaulding asked about additional comment from the task force after the public comment period has closed.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, said that it would make sense to have the Neighborhood Committee talk about these issues and then wait to hear further discussion by the Sign Plan Task Force and take that as input. That would be appropriate in this case.

Commissioner Perrus appreciates the work put into this but she does not want to deal with this until they are dealing with this as a final set of recommendations. There is a need to address the dynamic display issue for gas stations especially before this moves further.

MOTION: Commissioner Oliver moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, December 17, 2012, and to refer the matter back to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

V. Zoning Committee

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

This site plan application notice was received after the meeting.

One item to come before the staff Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, December 18, 2012:

■ Metropolitan State University, 895 car parking ramp (preliminary review) at 7th Street East and Bates Avenue.

NEW BUSINESS

#12-116-679 William Mitchell College – Conditional use permit for expansion of campus boundary. 889 Portland Avenue and 918 Portland Avenue/46 Milton Street North between Milton and Victoria. (Michelle Beaulieu, 651/266-6620)

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

#12-212-747 Justin Waggoner – Change of nonconforming use from 10 unit roominghouse to 4 unit multi-family dwelling. 361 Bates Avenue between 6th and 5th. (Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Perrus moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the change of legal nonconforming use subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Perrus announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, December 20, 2012.

VI. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Merrigan had no report.

VII. Neighborhood Planning Committee

<u>Shepard Davern Area Plan and Zoning Study</u> – Initiate area plan update and zoning study. (Michelle Beaulieu, 266-6620)

Commissioner Oliver said that the Neighborhood Planning Committee is recommending a resolution to initiate an area plan and zoning study for the Shepard Davern area. He noted that this area has its own overlay district, which will be studied as part of this process.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Oliver moved the Neighborhood Planning Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution initiating an area plan and zoning study. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Oliver announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Committee meeting on Wednesday, December 19, 2012.

VIII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, December 17, 2012.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao had no report.

X. Task Force/Liaison Reports

None.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ooma Ommond

Donna Drummond Planning Director Approved December 28, 2012

(Date)

Daniel Ward II

Secretary of the Planning Commission

PED\Butler\planning commission\minutes\December 14, 2012