SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

Prepared by the Department of Planning and Economic Development

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BACKGROUND

The Shepard Davern neighborhood of Highland Park is a vital and high profile community serving as the southwest gateway to the City of Saint Paul. The area is characterized by a mix of commercial, office and industrial uses along West 7th Street, blocks of single-family, multi-family and senior housing, a handful of religious and community institutions, and is adjacent to miles of trails and open space amenities of the Mississippi River Valley. The "gateway" portion of the neighborhood in the southwest underwent significant redevelopment shortly after 2000 when a number of multi-family and senior living building projects replaced blocks of former single-family homes.

In 1999, the Saint Paul City Council adopted the **Shepard Davern Small Area Plan** prepared by City staff in collaboration with a community task force. The plan addressed future land use, design guidelines, streetscaping and housing goals, and included the adoption of two overlay zoning districts – the Shepard Davern Commercial and Shepard Davern Residential Overlay Districts – which required higher design standards, allowed building heights up to sixty-five (65) feet, and allowed some retail and residential uses above the underlying zoning.

Shortly after adoption of the Shepard Davern overlay districts, the City of Saint Paul created new "traditional neighborhood" zoning districts, which included design standards very similar to those in the Shepard Davern overlays. The availability of these new districts prompted a recommendation in the **District 15 Plan Summary** (2007) to replace the Shepard Davern overlay districts and underlying zoning with T3 traditional neighborhood zoning.

Traditional Neighborhood zoning is also consistent with land uses policies for the area in the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, as outlined below.

The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010) Land Use map that guides future development in the city designates:

West 7th corridor through the Shepard Davern area as a "*Mixed Use Corridor*"

- thoroughfares served by public transit that are appropriate for a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional, and open space

Sibley Plaza area as a "*Neighborhood Center*"

- compact, mixed use areas of higher density housing, as well as shopping, community amenities, and employment centers

In early 2013, the Planning Commission initiated the Shepard Davern Zoning Study for the area generally defined as Shepard Road on the south, Homer Avenue on the east, a north border running from the east along West 7th/Highway 5 and then 1 block north of Saint Paul Avenue for the remainder, and a western border along Edgecumbe Road to West 7th/Hwy 5 and then jogging west to Shepard Road.

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA TODAY

Existing Zoning

The study area and its diverse land uses are within ten (10) zoning districts:

1. R1 (single-family, large lot) = 2 properties
2. R3 (single-family, standard lot) = 135 properties
3. RM1(multi-family, low density) = 8 properties
4. RM2 (multi-family, medium density) = 115 properties
5. RM3 (multi-family, high density) = 7 properties
6. OS (office and services) = 8 properties
7. B2 (community business) = 25 properties
8. B3 (general business) = 14 properties
9. I1 (light industrial) = 14 properties
10. VP (commercial parking) = 1 property

Each of these districts and potential changes to them are described in the next section.

A "Current Zoning" map on page 8 shows existing zoning in the study area, followed by a "Proposed Zoning" map on page 9 which shows recommended zoning changes.

Recommended Changes to Zoning

A B2 district is intended to serve the needs of a consumer population larger than that served by the "local business district," and is generally characterized by a cluster of establishments generating large volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

- In the study area, parcels zoned B2 include restaurants, offices, general retail (including grocery), professional services offices, personal services, and parking.
- The Sibley Plaza development on West 7th is the hub of the Shepard-Davern commercial area. The one-story mall was built in 1955 and has over 95,000 square feet of retail, service and restaurant uses. Paster Properties, owner and manager, plans to redevelop the property with a new mixed retail and residential project in 2015. The property is currently zoned B2. The owner would like the zoning to remain B2 to support the type of redevelopment envisioned. The Shepard-Davern Task Force, the Highland District Council, and community members who commented for the Planning Commission public hearing support retention of B2 for the property to advance its redevelopment in the near term. B2 zoning:
    - allows a mixed commercial and residential project, if at least 50% of the first floor is commercial uses
    - allows drive-thrus for retail businesses – the redevelopment proposal includes drive-thru uses
    - allows parking to be located between the main street and the building, similar to the current configuration of the property, which can be a practical solution given that the property is triangular in shape and because it promotes parking visibility and easy access for vehicular customers using West 7th Street access
    - allows building height of thirty (30) feet, plus an additional one (1) foot of height for each one (1) foot of setback from all property line setbacks.

- Of the remaining B2 parcels, all but one is being considered for rezoning to T3, which would:
    - allow the addition of stand-alone residential uses, in addition to the currently allowed business, service and office uses
    - require higher design standards for new construction
    - allow an increase in the maximum height of new structures from the current 30 feet, to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential (under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet)
- The final B2 parcel, which is on W 7th St. just east of Madison and adjacent to a residential district, is recommended for T2 zoning, consistent with the rest of the block it is on, (more information on page 6).

A B3 district is intended to accommodate businesses more diversified than those in the B1 and B2 districts along major traffic arteries or adjacent to community business districts.

- In the study area, the fourteen (14) parcels zoned B3 are along W 7th St. and are used for a mix of restaurants, offices, retail and distribution uses.
- Nine (9) B3 parcels clustered together near Alton and Madison, and adjacent to multi-family housing are being considered with T3 zoning, which would:
    - allow the addition of stand-alone residential uses, in addition to the currently allowed business, service and office uses
    - prevent the addition of certain uses that are allowed in B3 districts, but not in T3, such as auto repair and sales, bingo halls, pawn shops, green houses and drive-thrus (existing businesses of these types would be allowed to remain in operation as "nonconforming" businesses)
    - require higher design standards for new construction
    - allow an increase in the maximum height of new structures from 30 feet to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential. Under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet.
- Five (5) B3 parcels clustered on the north side of W 7th between Wheeler and Davern, and adjacent to single-family housing are being considered with T2 zoning, which would:
    - allow the addition of stand-alone residential uses, in addition to the currently allowed business, service and office uses
    - prevent the addition of certain uses that are allowed in B3 districts, but not in T3, such as auto repair and sales, bingo halls, pawn shops, and green houses (existing businesses of these types would be allowed to remain in operation as "nonconforming" businesses); drive-thrus are allowed with conditions
    - require higher design standards for new construction
    - allow an increase in the maximum height of new structures from 30 feet to 35 feet or to 45 feet if special conditions are met

RM1, RM2 and RM3 districts are intended for low-, medium-, and high-density multiple-family residential development and a variety of congregate living arrangements, as well as social, religious and recreational uses that serve the needs of the multiple-family residential districts.

RM1 zoning exists only in the Brandychase Condo/Coop development area which consists of eight (8) parcels. This area is recommended for rezoning to T2, which would:

- allow new development to include a wide range of retail and service uses
- require higher design standards for new construction
- allow a small increase in the height maximum of three (3) stories under RM1 zoning to 35 feet or to 45 feet if special conditions are met

RM2 zoning is widespread in the study area, covering 115 parcels with a range of single and multi-family rental and owner-occupied housing.

- 15 RM2 parcels are NOT proposed for new zoning -- these are primarily properties with apartments and a nursing home along St. Paul Avenue and one apartment complex south of the industrial area on the east
- 96 RM2 parcels are proposed for T2 zoning – this includes a few blocks of primarily one- and two-family homes between Shepard Road, Snelling Place and Alton Street, a few single-family lots along Stewart near the office building, a couple of mainly apartment blocks east of Alton between Stewart and Shepard Road, and the two blocks south of West 7th between Rankin and Madison. T2 zoning would:
  - allow new development to include office, service and commercial uses
  - require higher design standards
  - reduce the maximum height of new structures from current limit of 50 feet to 35 feet or to 45 feet is special conditions are met

- Three (3) RM2 parcels are proposed for T3 zoning – the Sibley Manor development and a property along Shepard Road used for auto service and parking. This would:
  - allow new development to include a wide range of office, service and commercial uses
  - require higher design standards
  - change the maximum height of new structures from the current limit of 50 feet for any residential to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential. Under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet

RM3 zoning exists on six (6) parcels, 4 of which are developed with multi-family and senior projects and 2 as single-family lots. All parcels are proposed for rezoning to T3, which would:

- allow a wide range of new service and business uses to the area, in addition to housing
- require higher design standards for new construction
- add height limits on new buildings -- 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, 45 feet for multi-family housing, and 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential, or up to 90 feet if special conditions and setbacks are met; a height limit does not exist in RM3

R1 and R3 one-family residential districts provide for predominantly low- and medium-density, one-family dwellings along with civic and institutional uses, public services and utilities that

serve the residents in the districts. The two (2) R1 parcels are undeveloped, one owned by the city along the north side of St. Paul Avenue and a small one owned by and adjacent to Chateau Care Suites.

- The 135 R3 parcels comprise the single-family neighborhood north of West 7th between Edgecumbe and Davern.
- No changes to zoning are proposed for the R1 and R3 properties.

The I1 district is intended to accommodate wholesale, warehouse and industrial operations whose external effects are restricted to the area of the district and are not detrimental to surrounding districts.

- The fourteen (14) I1-zoned parcels constitute an industrial area on the eastern side of the study area.
- No changes to zoning are proposed for the I1.

The OS district is intended to accommodate various types of office and service uses performing administrative, professional and personal services and to serve as a transitional use between more intensive uses of land such as major thoroughfares or commercial districts and the less intensive uses of land such as one-family residential.

- The eight (8) OS-zoned parcels are on a half block on both sides of Stewart Avenue, just west of Rankin between the industrial district and residential districts. The parcels have a mix of office, parking, and single-family properties. All of the OS-zoned parcels are recommended T2, which would:
    - allow residential uses as a conforming use in area
    - allow a wide range of retail and service uses, in addition to currently allowed office and limited service uses
    - require higher design standards for new construction
    - allow a small increase in the height maximum of new buildings from 30 feet to 35 feet or to 45 feet if special conditions are met

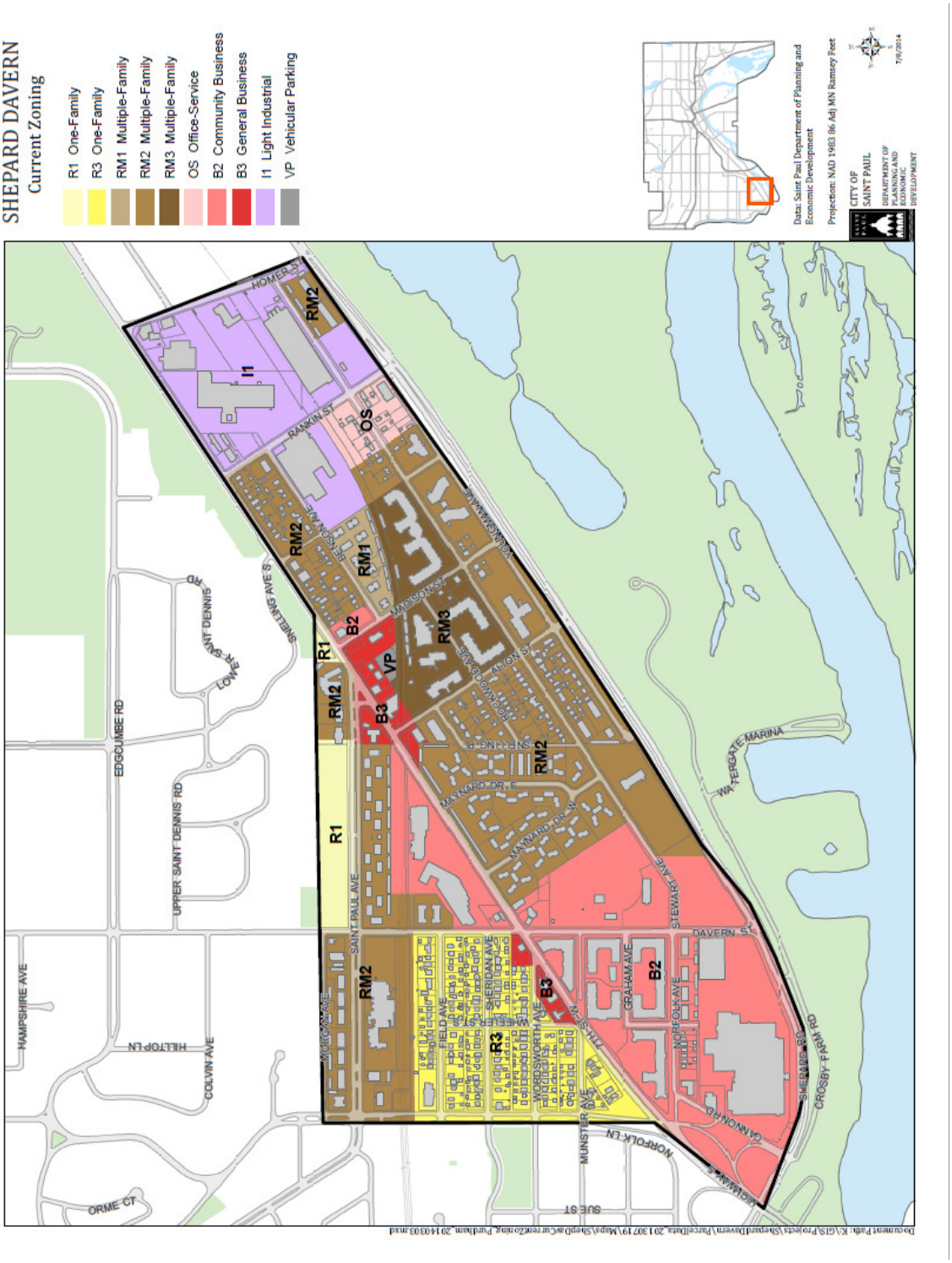
The VP district provides for off-street parking facilities incidental to a principal use.

- In the study area, the one (1) parcel zoned VP is used as parking behind Krugers at W 7th and Alton St.
- This parcel is being evaluated for rezoning to T3 (traditional mixed use), to be consistent with potential zoning for adjacent parcels, which would:
    - allow a wide range of uses, instead of being limited to commercial parking

Split Zoned Parcels in the study area are recommended for rezoning as a single zoning district, consistent with adjacent zoning.

- In the study area there are eight (8) split zoned parcels recommended for rezoning. The recommended zoning for these parcels is shown on the PROPOSED ZONING map and indicated in the list of parcels for rezoning.

CURRENT ZONING in the Shepard Davern zoning study area



RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO ZONING in the Shepard Davern zoning study area

