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

Minutes January 16, 2015

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, January 16, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present:	Mmes. DeJoy, McMahon, Noecker, Padilla, Reveal, Shively, Thao, Underwood, Wang and Messrs. Gelgelu, Lindeke, Makarios, Nelson, Ochs, and Ward.
Commissioners Absent:	Mmes. *Merrigan, *Wencl, and Messrs. Connolly, *Edgerton, Oliver, and Wickiser. *Excused
Also Present:	Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Allan Torstenson, Josh Williams, Jake Reilly, Bill Dermody, Jamie Radel, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes December 5 and 19, 2014.

MOTION: ***Commissioner Noecker moved approval of the minutes of December 5, 2014. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

and

MOTION: ***Commissioner Noecker moved approval of the minutes of December 19, 2014. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

II. Chair's Announcements

Commissioner Reveal, the Commission's First Vice-Chair, chaired the meeting and she had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that the next meeting will be the annual meeting for the Planning Commission. The annual report for 2014 will be presented. There will also be the election of officers. Chair Wencl had appointed Commissioners Wickiser, Noecker, and Shively to the Nominating Committee and they have nominated the current slate of officers.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: Parkland Dedication Amendments Study – Item from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. *(Jamie Radel, 651/266-6614)*

First Vice Chair Reveal announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission was holding a public

hearing on the Parkland Dedication Amendments Study. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger on January 5, 2015, and was sent to the citywide Early Notification System list and other interested parties.

Jamie Radel, PED staff, gave a brief introduction, noting her presentation at the November 14, 2014, Planning Commission meeting. She said the proposal amends the current parkland dedication ordinance, which has a two part dedication requirement. One part is at the time of platting and requires dedication of 2% of the land. There are additional parkland dedication requirements at the time of building permits. Ms. Radel summarized the draft amendments. They would move the parkland dedication requirements that apply at the time of building permits from the subdivision regulations to the Zoning Code regulations of general applicability because they apply to building permits that may be unrelated to a new plat. The amendments increase the maximum amount of land to be dedicated at the time of platting. If land is not wanted by the City at the time of platting, a fee in lieu of land would be paid at the time of building permits.

First Vice Chair Reveal read the rules of procedure for the public hearing.

The following people spoke.

1. Lorrie Louder, Senior Vice President for Business & Intergovernmental Affairs at the Saint Paul Port Authority, said parkland dedication requirements have to be balanced and fair. She said that businesses pay taxes to support city services but don't use many city services. She noted that 20% of Saint Paul's land is in open space, which is large relative to other cities of the same density. So the Port is interested in the proportionality of the dedication requirements, and they think the proportionality proposed is appropriate. They do not see any justification for the rate of parkland dedication being any higher. Written comments were received previously from the Saint Paul Port Authority.

2. Shirley Erstad, Executive Director of Friends of the Parks and Trails of Saint Paul and Ramsey County, submitted a letter that she read. They support a robust parkland dedication ordinance. Neighboring cities collect parkland dedication fees to supplement their park budgets. Percentages for dedication vary, but 10% of estimated market value of the land is commonly used. They suggest 12% for St. Paul.

MOTION: ***Commissioner Thao moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, and to refer the matter back to the Comprehensive Planning Committee for review and recommendation. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

V. Zoning Committee

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

One item to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, January 20, 2015:

- Midway YMCA, demolish existing YMCA building and construct new three-story building at 1761 University Avenue.

One item to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, January 27, 2015:

- McDonough Homes, construct two new 6-unit townhouses and parking lot at 1586 Jackson Street.

NEW BUSINESS

#14-345-787 Fleetwood Motors – Rezone from IT Transitional Industrial to B3 General Business. 550 Como Avenue, SW corner at Burgess Street. *(Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)*

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

#14-344-764 Fleetwood Motors – Conditional use permit for outdoor used automobile sales. 550 Como Avenue, SW corner at Burgess Street. *(Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)*

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

#14-352-705 East 7th & Bates Senior Apartments – Conditional use permit for a 45 foot building height. 720 7th Street East between Maple and Bates. *(Jake Reilly, 651/266-6618)*

Commissioner Ward asked why the applicant wants a 45 ft. rather than 35 ft. building height.

Commissioner Nelson said that the discussion was about how the building fits on the parcel and the number of units needed for an affordable senior rental project of this type to be viable.

Commissioner Ward said he agrees that the 35 foot height limitation is somewhat prohibitive for project feasibility, and expects this to be an issue for future projects along University Avenue. He asked if there was any opposition from owners of adjacent single family homes.

Commissioner Nelson said that they have not heard directly from any of the adjacent property owners. He noted Metropolitan State University's new parking structure across the street that was recently before the Planning Commission for approval. In this case the neighborhood group felt that the developer did not have as robust a discussion as Metropolitan State had had with them about how to make the building fit in.

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

#14-353-762 University of Saint Thomas – Modification of condition of a previous Planning Commission site plan approval to allow an existing parking lot to continue to be used until March 11, 2018. 2060 Summit Avenue, NW corner of Grand at Cleveland.
(Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)

Commissioner Ochs asked why they needed another 3 years.

Commissioner Nelson said that recent development on the campus had reduced their bonding capacity. The 3 years will give them time to increase their bonding capacity to build housing on the site and to decide what they want there. They would then landscape the area if housing was deemed not to be necessary.

Commissioner Ochs said it's important for the fabric of the neighborhood that this site at the intersection of Grand and Cleveland Avenues should be housing rather than parking.

Commissioner Lindeke noted a list of projects St. Thomas has been working on in the past few years, and asked how much of a priority housing on this site is for St. Thomas.

Commissioner Nelson said the first project on the list was the large multi-story residence hall they built a few years ago towards the north end of the campus. They have agreed to escrow money to landscape the parking lot area if they don't build housing on the parcel in the next 3 years.

Commissioner Reveal added that the St. Thomas representative said at the hearing that they were commencing a new campus master plan, so one of their requests was to have time to complete the master plan and reconsider their existing capital program.

Commissioner Lindeke said that, with new housing on Grand Avenue seen by the neighborhood as problematic in some locations and desirable in others, he hopes that they can put housing where people want it.

MOTION: ***Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the modification of condition No. 1of a previous Planning Commission site plan approval to allow the existing parking lot to continue to be used until March 11, 2018, subject to a condition. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

Commissioner Nelson announced the item on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, January 22, 2015.

VI. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Thao said they met and had two agenda items. One was continued discussion about how the Planning Commission adds value to the CIB and STAR funding processes. The other item was continued discussion about the DNR's draft Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Rules. Staff reported on the DNR's latest version that addresses some of the issues raised at the public hearing. Staff will update the draft report the Planning Commission will consider based on what we expect to be in the final draft rules so we are ready to forward comments to the Mayor and City Council when the final draft rules are released for a short public review period. The next Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting is on Tuesday, January 27, 2015.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, added that the DNR staff is sending their draft to the Revisers Office, which is busy with the start of the legislative session, so the final draft rules are anticipated to be released toward the end of first quarter. The Comprehensive Planning Committee will then review the final draft, see if there are any changes from the current draft, and recommend comments to the full Planning Commission to forward to the Mayor and City Council so that the City can have an official response within the 30-day comment period.

VII. Neighborhood Planning Committee

Donna Drummond, Planning Director announced that the next meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 2015, has been cancelled. The meeting after that is on February 4, 2015, when the Ward 3 Residential Design Standards Study recommendations will be considered.

VIII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Lindeke said they met on Monday and discussed the bike plan and changes to make based on the public input. It will be discussed further at their next meeting on February 9 and then brought back to the full Planning Commission for a recommendation.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao said that they are meeting after the Planning Commission meeting to go over the draft 2014 annual report so that it is ready for the annual meeting on January 30, 2015.

X. Task Force/Liaison Reports

Commissioner Makarios announced that the Ford Site Planning Task Force will have a meeting on January 29, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at Cretin-Derham Hall on the energy study that the City is currently conducting for the site.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Drummond

Donna Drummond
Planning Director

Approved January 30, 2015
(Date)

Daniel Ward II
Secretary of the Planning Commission

PlanningTeamFiles\planning commission\minutes\January 16, 2015