

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

Minutes January 25, 2013

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, January 25, 2013, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Merrigan, Noecker, Perrus, Porter, Reveal, Shively, Thao, Wang; and Messrs. Connolly, Edgerton, Gelgelu, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver, Schertler, and Spaulding.

Commissioners Absent: Ms. *Wencl, and Messrs. *Lindeke, *Ward, and *Wickiser.

*Excused

Also Present: Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Patricia James, Allan Torstenson, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Bill Dermody, Scott Tempel, Hilary Holmes and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes January 11, 2013.

MOTION: *Commissioner Noecker moved approval of the minutes of January 11, 2013. 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.

Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers.

Commissioner Spaulding reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. The committee offered the following slate of officers: Barbara A. Wencl for Chair, Elizabeth Reveal for First Vice-Chair, Paula Merrigan for Second Vice Chair, and Daniel Ward, II for Secretary.

First Vice Chair Reveal called for nominations from the floor. There were none.

MOTION: *Commissioner Spaulding moved to approve the slate of candidates. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, announced that the City Council approved a resolution to request that Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority study the Riverview Corridor for transit options. This is very significant because Riverview was considered for major transit improvements some years ago and there was community disagreement about what should happen

there. The City turned back \$40 million of funding that would have gone for those transit improvements. The corridor that will be studied will include West 7th, Shepard Road, and a portion of 35E. The Ford Spur, which is being abandoned, is also a part of the study. This could potentially connect to the 46th Street station for Hiawatha LRT. West 7th and Shepard Road connect out to the airport and that is an important connection; it's the missing piece of the triangle of the three major transit improvements with Central Corridor and Hiawatha and Riverview.

Planning Director's report on achievements during 2012 and projects for 2013.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, referred to the list of 2012 planning accomplishments and the major planning projects for 2013 that was handed out. Ms. Drummond highlighted some of projects that were completed in 2012. She highlighted a number of projects such as the Greater Lowertown and Great River Passage Master Plans, Student Housing Zoning Study, Bar/Restaurant Parking Amendments, Non-conforming Use Text Amendments and the Saint Paul Trends Report. The Trends report is a new effort by staff and includes information on building permits, jobs and various demographics and statistics which will be updated regularly.

Ms. Drummond highlighted projects where there had been major progress on in 2012. There continues to be a lot of time spent on Central Corridor related projects and issues, which is focusing more on implementation. Other projects and activities she highlighted included the Streetcar Study, Complete Streets Plan, Peak Democracy/Open Saint Paul, and the Central Corridor Design Center. The Design Center is an ongoing activity where the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation's Design Center and staff from Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Planning and Economic Development (PED) and Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) meet to do early concept review of development projects. This input to the developers and architects provides early feedback on ways to make projects better for both the developer and meet some of the goals and objectives for new development along Central Corridor.

2013 is divided up into topic areas and work will continue on Central Corridor. Transportation planning projects will take up a larger portion of work program this year. A new area of focus will be Permit Parking, and PED's newest addition to staff, Hilary Holmes, will be working on that along with other projects. She also highlighted several neighborhood plans and zoning studies that are underway or will be started in 2013.

Commissioner Connolly asked how staff approaches a project like the permit parking.

Ms. Drummond said staff will look at what other cities have done, including Minneapolis, and look at how Saint Paul's system works currently. It's a grass roots approach now, where people on a block have to sign a petition to have their block face considered for permit parking. It is unclear whether that will be the best approach for Central Corridor.

IV. Zoning Committee

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

One item to come before the staff Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, January 29, 2013:

- St. Albans Park townhouses, site improvements for existing townhouses at 633-701 Selby Avenue and 662-676 Dayton Avenue.

One item to come before the staff Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, February 5, 2013:

- Christie Place - Complete a single-family development that was started in 2007 by another developer but never finished. Fifteen lots were platted and only five houses were built at 1589 Christie Place.

NEW BUSINESS

#12-222-925 Hamline Park (Mosaic On A Stick) – Rezoning from R4 One-Family Residential to T2 Traditional Neighborhood. 1564 Lafond Avenue, area bounded by Lafond, Snelling, Thomas, and Asbury. (*Scott Tempel, 651/266-6621*)

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

Commissioner Nelson announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, January 31, 2013.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Industrial Zoning Study - Approve resolution recommending adoption of zoning amendments pertaining to industrial districts. (*Allan Torstenson, 651/266-6579*)

Allan Torstenson, PED staff went through the highlights of the testimony and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The Zoning Code amendments pertaining to industrial zoning districts and regulation of industrial uses were drafted to reflect policies in the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*, support the intent and purpose of industrial districts for employment and economic activities, and provide for efficient land use and aesthetic quality. The amendments also bring the code up-to-date, incorporating Planning Commission determinations of similar use in recent years, and addressing current technology and market conditions.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the draft industrial zoning text amendments last June, and referred the draft amendments to Comprehensive Planning Committee for consideration, review of the public testimony, and recommendation. The public testimony was in four main topic areas which are addressed in the committee report.

One area of public testimony was amendments to the “Principal Uses in Industrial Districts” table. The draft amendments considered at the public hearing included deleting churches, grades K-12 schools, theaters and assembly halls from the list of uses permitted in industrial districts. The committee’s recommendation is to continue to include churches, schools, theaters, assembly halls, and certain limited residential uses in the list of uses in the table as they are currently permitted in the IT (currently IR) and I1 districts; to add a conditional use permit requirement for mixed residential and commercial use, churches, schools, theaters, and similar institutions and places of assembly in the I2 General Industrial District; and to avoid separation requirements for industrial uses from residential uses in industrial districts.

The second topic area of public testimony was about draft amendments to standards for residential uses in industrial districts. The draft amendments considered at the June 1, 2012, public hearing included amendments to § 65.143, *Mixed residential and commercial use*, that would require a conditional use permit for mixed residential and commercial use with more than 6 dwelling units in the I1 Light Industrial and I2 General Industrial Districts, and not allow dwelling units in the basement or first floor of buildings in these districts, to provide greater protection for primary commercial and industrial functions and uses in these districts. District 12, South Saint Anthony Park Creative Enterprise Zone, and others opposed the draft amendments to further narrow and restrict residential uses in industrial districts. The committee's recommendation is to revise the draft amendments to § 65.143, *Mixed residential and commercial use*, to apply the addition of a requirement for a conditional use permit for mixed residential and commercial use with more than 6 dwelling units only to the I2 General Industrial District.

A third topic of public testimony was the draft amendments for elimination the I3 Industrial District and incorporating three I3 uses into the I2 General Industrial District as conditional uses. There was a lot of testimony against this from District Councils 1, 2, 6, 7, and 12 and from Brown & Bigelow. The committee recommendation is to retain the I3 district and continue to permit the uses currently permitted only in the I3 district as they are currently permitted only in the I3 district, and not to incorporate them into the I2 General Industrial District.

The fourth primary topic area of the public testimony was about dimensional, density and design standards. The committee recommends removing the floor area ratio limits for industrial uses, removing the 3 story height limit for the IT Transitional Industrial District, and changing the IT Transitional Industrial District height limit from 3 stories/30 feet to 35 feet. They also recommend revising the I1 light industrial design standards to subject development in the I1 district only to draft design standards; (4) door and window openings, (6) landscaping and street trees, and (7) sidewalks, not to design (2) building facade articulation and (3) materials and detailing, and deleting new §66.544, *I2 general industrial district design standards*.

The recommendation for action is that the Planning Commission forward the committee report and the attached draft zoning code amendments pertaining to industrial districts to the Mayor and City Council with a recommendation for adoption.

Commissioner Nelson said that the design standard for materials and detailing lists synthetic stucco products as generally not acceptable. There have been concerns about some of these products in the past, particularly when improperly used and installed. However, when current products are properly used they can work well, with different material near the ground for long-term durability.

Commissioner Merrigan agreed, saying the bad reputation that the material got that may no longer be warranted, and use of is not so much of a problem in the industry any more.

Commissioner Nelson said synthetic stucco products provide for cost-effectively adding articulation and color to a building.

MOTION TO AMEND: *Commissioner Nelson moved to amend the committee recommendation by striking out the term "synthetic stucco products." Commissioner Oliver seconded the motion.*

Commissioner Ochs asked about adding language for building inspectors to determine whether the material is quality or not.

Commissioner Merrigan said she thinks interpretation by individual building inspectors would be too unpredictable.

The motion to amend carried unanimously on a voice vote.

MOTION: *Commissioner Merrigan moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to recommend approval of the resolution as amended and forward the zoning amendments to the Mayor and City Council for adoption. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee

District 12 Plan Amendment for the Creative Enterprise Zone – Recommendation to release for public review and set public hearing for March 8, 2013. (*Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651-266-6547*)

Merritt Clapp-Smith, PED staff gave a presentation about a proposed update to the District 12 St. Anthony Park Community Plan. This plan was adopted as a summary to the Comprehensive Plan in 2008. Ms. Clapp-Smith presented a map showing the outline of what is being called the Creative Enterprise Zone in South St. Anthony Park. The Creative Enterprise Zone is an attempt to identify and brand something that's been going on in South St. Anthony Park for years. The main tag that they are using to describe themselves is to be a recognized center of creativity and enterprise, a place where more people make a living by their creative capacities. The Creative Enterprise Zone does not exist elsewhere in the city or other cities; it is a name they have given to identify a hub of industry and creative commerce that has evolved in South St. Anthony Park.

The Creative Enterprise Zone effort kicked off in 2010 and 2011, but related efforts go back to 1992 when the area was recommended as a cultural district, followed by the formation of cultural association, and subsequent efforts to retain space for artists and arts groups. City staff from the Mayor's office, Councilmember Stark's office and PED participated in the 2010-2011 Creative Enterprise Zone steering committee, which formally launched the initiative, but it has always been a community driven process guided by the St. Anthony Park Community Council. The Creative Enterprise Zone initiative is now well underway, with various activities to grow it and to connect businesses and entrepreneurs in South St. Anthony Park with one another.

The District 12 Planning Council wants to formally identify to the "Creative Enterprise Zone" in the district plan because it has become one of their leading priorities. The proposed District 12 Plan amendment identifies the Creative Enterprise Zone as an initiative of the District 12 Planning Council, marks its general boundaries are, and states that the district will work with the City of Saint Paul and other partners to stabilize and advance conditions in which creative enterprises – light industry, artisans and artists – can thrive in the zone. There are three strategies listed: (1) consideration of a special designation for the zone, such as a development district, to help advance job retention and creation for workers in light industry, artisans and artists; (2) project support through site preparation, zoning, cleanup, design standards, financial incentives, tax credits and/or financing, as available and appropriate; and (3) consideration of infrastructure improvements that encourage a livable, mixed-use transit oriented neighborhood recognized and sustained as a center of creativity and enterprise such as pedestrian friendly corridors, pocket

parks, greenways and facade improvements. The proposed amendment to the District 12 Plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other small area plans.

Commissioner Merrigan asked how a “zone” works verses an overlay district and how it dovetails with the approximately 30% industrial property in the area and new zoning amendments under consideration in the industrial zoning study. For example: some of the conditions about pocket parks, greenways and façade improvements may conflict with design standards of industrial zoning. How does that functionally work if we adopt the Creative Enterprise Zone amendment, designating it as a special district or zone?

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that the Creative Enterprise Zone is not intended to imply zoning or related standards; the word zone means an area. The ideas and objectives of the Creative Enterprise Zone are consistent with zoning that exist in the area currently. There isn't a plan to seek broad property rezoning or design standards. The effort is focused on nurturing connections between businesses and industry and offering support that helps them stay and grow.

First Vice Chair Reveal added that the proposed amendments in the industrial zoning study, which the Planning Commission just voted to recommend to the City Council, are more consistent with the Creative Enterprise Zone goals than existing industrial zoning. It may happen that IT will be more appropriate to certain parts of this area than I1 and I2 and the Planning Commission can consider some tweaking there, but any actual project will be subject to zoning review and decisions. The proposed District 12 Plan amendment is an organizing concept for the area, not a zoning proposal.

Commissioner Schertler asked if there would be any reason they couldn't expand the Creative Enterprise Zone to other areas of the city or the entire city. If it isn't a zoning designation, then what would be the harm of applying it more broadly, since many areas might want to be considered creative zones?

Ms. Clapp-Smith noted that this question came up in the Neighborhood Planning Committee. However, one of the goals of the Creative Enterprise Zone is to publicly identify it as a unique area of the Metro that fills a niche and is visible as such. The Creative Enterprise Zone effort and related activities are already underway. Giving the effort a name and actively working to advance its goals creates a lot of energy. It's similar to having a business group on Grand Avenue or in Highland Park or the Phalen Village initiative. There are lots of areas around the city that have names or names for their projects. It does not mean that we have to apply those to the whole city. The strength of the city comes from finding its niches and identifying them so that each neighborhood has something that can attract people on terms appropriate to the place.

Commissioner Edgerton asked if the vision was for a place where artist and artisans would live and work or sell their things? Those are two very different things -- the artist working versus artist selling -- and creates different needs for the neighborhood.

Ms. Clapp-Smith replied that both of these do and would occur in this area.

Commissioner Spaulding commented that this area of the Central Corridor has the potential to direct in more subtle ways that aren't changing zoning or influence the course of action. He appreciates that this is coming forward in this way and the effort that's been made.

Commissioner Connolly asked what the second bulleted strategy* in the proposed amendment text promises or commits us to?

* “Project support through site preparation, zoning, cleanup, design standards, financial incentives, tax credits and/or financing, as available and appropriate.”

Ms. Clapp-Smith explained that because the phrase ends with “as available and appropriate”, it doesn’t promise or commit the city to anything from a legal standpoint.

Commissioner Connolly doesn’t want the language to represent a hollow promise, but it is okay as long as the people who are involved in the work that lead to this and drafting the language, understand that it doesn’t promise anything.

Commissioner Noecker asked if these types of smaller plans, when approved, are reflected on changes to the Comprehensive Plan map.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said this plan amendment would not be recognized on a Comprehensive Plan map.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, added that on the city’s Neighborhood Plans web page there is a map that shows the whole city and the boundaries of all small area plans and district plans, but not sub-areas within plans. However, if you click on the map, it opens the respective plan for the area and you can view maps within that plan. Therefore, there should probably be a map of the Creative Enterprise Zone added to the district plan as part of the amendment, to identify it further and make it easier to find.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that an illustrative map showing the Creative Enterprise Zone area could be added to the District Plan amendment, without it being a formal designation.

Commissioner Noecker thought that it would be nice to be able to see special areas like this in the city represented somewhere on a map.

Commissioner Schertler thinks that is a good idea, because when you identify a special area or initiative, certain expectations may go with it or access to certain resources may follow. When you define a distinct area, it’s easy to amend other things that can occur in there. We are always asked does this particular investment conform with the Comprehensive Plan and land use, so our participation is limited and it would be nice to know what it is.

Commissioner Oliver said the map of district and small area plans is not part of the official mapping where we are bound by a legal requirement, so PED staff can add maps on their own to the extent that they think it is a good idea. It’s an automatic; we don’t have to worry about implementing it in the resolutions.

Commissioner Edgerton suggested doing some research into potential funding for the Creative Enterprise Zone work in South St. Anthony Park. It may not impact how the plan amendment is written, but it should be in the back of our minds.

First Vice Chair Reveal said that they will probably hear about such opportunities in the public hearing and expects that the people who initiated this have been thinking about it for a decade.

Commissioner Wang said that it just happens that this group through much work and community involvement chose the name 'Creative Enterprise Zone', but the city does not have a designated meaning for an enterprise zone. The project could have been named 'Little Bohemia' and we could have Little Bohemia come to the Planning Commission and we decide we'd like to adopt it into the plan -- that's kind of an equivalent. There is no defined 'enterprise zone' designation in the city; it just happens that this is the name that makes sense for this community effort.

Commissioner Porter added that in Minneapolis there are 'empowerment zones', which is different because it is officially defined and has designated funding. She agrees that it is important to provide a clear distinction.

MOTION: Commissioner Oliver moved on behalf of the Neighborhood Planning Committee to release the draft for public review and set a public hearing on March 8, 2013. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Oliver announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 30, 2013.

VII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Spaulding reported that at their last meeting they discussed three items. Public Works provided their list of submissions to the CIB process and the Planning Commission will review and make comments as to conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Next they talked about the Hamline Avenue bridge reconstruction. This is the Hamline Avenue bridge between Summit and Selby Avenue, it is a bridge that no longer is in suitable condition and is being replaced through a variety of funds.

Finally the committee talked about and reviewed the presentation that was given two weeks before from the Department of Transportation which is planning for potential multi modal improvements along Snelling Avenue between Selby and Midway Parkway. The committee faced a deadline that did not allow them to formally make comments through the Planning Commission so they submitted comments that were from individual committee members at the committee meeting and presented as such to MnDot as comments.

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, January 28, 2013.

VIII. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao announced that the Communications Committee will meet today immediately after Planning Commission.

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

None.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

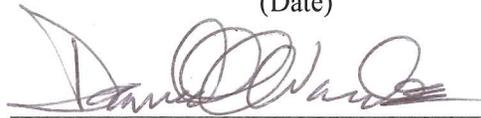
Recorded and prepared by
Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary
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Respectfully submitted,



Donna Drummond
Planning Director

Approved February 8, 2013
(Date)



Daniel Ward II
Secretary of the Planning Commission