



Saint Paul Planning Commission

City Hall Conference Center Room 40
15 Kellogg Boulevard West

Christopher B. Coleman,
Mayor

Agenda

May 17, 2013
8:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Saint Paul
Planning Commission

Chair
Barbara A. Wencil
First Vice Chair
Elizabeth Reveal
Second Vice Chair
Paula Merrigan
Secretary
Daniel Ward II

I. Approval of minutes of April 19th and May 3rd, 2013.

II. Chair's Announcements

III. Planning Director's Announcements

IV. Zoning Committee

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

OLD BUSINESS

#13-170-946 Icy Cup Farmers Market – Conditional use permit for outdoor sales. 63 George Street West, NE corner at Stryker. *(Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618)*

NEW BUSINESS

#13-174-966 Pope Automotive – Establishment of nonconforming use as vehicle parking accessory to auto repair garage at 991 Front Avenue, with variance of paving requirement. 977 Chatsworth Street North, between Front and Hatch. *(Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617)*

#13-173-821 Macalester College Shared Parking – Conditional use permit for shared commercial parking in an institutional parking lot. 1655 Grand Avenue, between Cambridge and Macalester. *(Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)*

#13-172-049 Old Home Plaza – Conditional use permit to allow a maximum height of 45 feet for new construction. 370 University Avenue West, SE corner at Western. *(Hilary Holmes, 651/266-6612)*

Pat Connolly
Daniel Edgerton
Gene Gelgelu
William Lindeke
Kyle Makarios
Gaius Nelson
Rebecca Noecker
Christopher Ochs
Trevor Oliver
Julie Perrus
Marilyn Porter
Betsy Reveal
Tony Schertler
Emily Shively
Robert Spaulding
Terri Thao
Jun-Li Wang
David Wickiser

Planning Director
Donna Drummond

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Island Station Designation – Approve resolution that the Planning Commission finds the designation of the Saint Paul Gas Light Company Island Station as a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site, with accompanying Preservation Program, is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and any other planning considerations. *(Amy Spong, 651/266-6714)*

VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee

West Grand Zoning Study – Approve resolution recommending adoption of zoning amendments to the Mayor and City Council. (*Josh Williams, 651/266-6659*)

VII. Transportation Committee

VIII. Communications Committee

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

X. Old Business

XI. New Business

XII. Adjournment

Information on agenda items being considered by the Planning Commission and its committees can be found at www.stpaul.gov/ped, click on Planning.

Planning Commission Members: PLEASE call Sonja Butler, 651/266-6573, if unable to attend.

**Saint Paul Planning Commission &
Heritage Preservation Commission**
MASTER MEETING CALENDAR

WEEK OF MAY 13-17, 2013

Mon (13) _____

Tues (14) _____

3:30- Comprehensive Planning Committee
5:00 p.m. (Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547)

13th Floor – CHA
25 Fourth Street West

Island Station designation – Review and comment on Heritage Preservation Commission to designate the St. Paul Gas Light Company Island Station at 380 Randolph Avenue as a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site.
(Amy Spong, 651/266-6714) Email: amy.spong@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Weds (15) _____

Thurs (16) _____

Fri (17) _____

8:30- Planning Commission Meeting
11:00 a.m. (Donna Drummond, 651/266-6556)

Room 40 City Hall
Conference Center
15 Kellogg Blvd.

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

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Neighborhood Planning

Committee..... West Grand Zoning Study - Approve resolution recommending adoption of zoning amendments to the Mayor and City Council. (*Josh Williams, 651/266-6659*)

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

Minutes April 19, 2013

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, April 19, 2013, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Merrigan, Perrus, Reveal, Shively, Thao, Wang, Wencl; and Messrs. Gelgelu, Makarios, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver, Spaulding, and Ward.

Commissioners Absent: Mmes. *Noecker, *Porter, and Messrs. *Connolly, *Edgerton, *Lindeke, *Schertler, and *Wickiser.

Absent: *Excused

Also Present: Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Allan Torstenson, Josh Williams, Scott Tempel, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes April 5, 2013.

MOTION: *Commissioner Reveal moved approval of the minutes of April 5, 2013. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Wencl had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that the City Council adopted the Great River Passage Plan on April 10th, which sets out a 30-50 year vision for the Mississippi River within Saint Paul. Work will now begin on implementation, and the City hopes to tap state and federal funding sources to help with many of the recommended projects. She also announced the Great River Gathering dinner and requested that interested commissioners provide payment to her or Sonja Butler.

Ms. Drummond also reported that Saint Paul projects received three of four Best in Real Estate awards at the Minneapolis/Saint Paul Business Journal's awards dinner the previous evening. Winning projects included the Schmidt Brewery project, Urban Organics at the Hamm's Brewery and the Penfield project.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING:

Chair Wencl announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission was holding a public hearing on the West Grand Zoning Study. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Saint

Paul Pioneer Press on April 1, 2013, April 8th, and April 15, 2013, and the Legal Ledger on April 8, 2013, and was sent to the citywide Early Notification System list of recipients and other interested parties.

Josh Williams, PED staff, gave a presentation about the West Grand Zoning Study: The purpose of the study is to determine the type and scale of residential and commercial development appropriate for West Grand and whether or not the current zoning will guide that scale of development. A map was shown of the study area, which runs on Grand Avenue between Cretin and Fairview and includes the commercial parcels on Grand immediately east of Fairview. The recommendations for the study are to the RM2 dimensional density standards and rezoning B2 parcels to TN2 at the commercial nodes. A map was shown of those proposed zoning changes. The study also talked about an alternative consideration, looking at T1 and T2 zoning for the entire study area. Three changes to RM2 density and dimensional standards are proposed- new buildings would be limited to four stories in height, there would be an increase in the minimum required lot area per unit (reducing the overall allowed density), and a reduction in required side yard setbacks.. The proposal is to change the currently required 1500 sq. ft. of lot area per unit to 1750 sq. ft. for 3-bedroom units 2000 sq. ft. for 4-bedroom units. Diagrams were shown representing maximum potential building mass under existing and proposed zoning. A list of the design standards required in traditional neighborhood districts was also shown.

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

The following people spoke.

1. Ms. Rina Cooper a former resident of Lincoln Avenue, supported the recommendation to change the current RM2 zoning for the properties on Grand Avenue, but stated she would like to see the height rezoned to a maximum of 40 feet, in keeping with the maximums for St. Thomas and the standards in the East Grand overlay. The Planning Commission should consider the cumulative impact of development that uses the maximum allowed by RM2. A 3-story building maximum with a 40 foot limit would give the neighborhood a chance of absorbing the cumulative density successfully. She encouraged the Planning Commission to support the rezoning, lower the density, lower the height, and promote growth in a manner that is good for the city. (Ms. Cooper also submitted a written statement.)
2. Mr. Graham Merry, owner and developer of the building at 2124 Grand Avenue, testified against the proposed zoning amendments. (Mr. Merry distributed a sheet explaining the reasons that he is opposed to the proposed rezoning). He states that a decrease in density from existing zoning makes underground structured parking cost-prohibitive. Structured parking typically costs \$25,000-\$30,000/space. For a small project with bedrock and ground water conditions on Grand Avenue, structured parking costs \$40,000/space. Projects developed under the proposed zoning changes with decreased density will not be able to afford underground parking and will not

make use of the structured parking bonus. The result is a significantly greater decrease in density than intended by the zoning changes proposed. The greatest concerns of neighbors are total height and parking. The proposed zoning changes effectively discourage developers from incorporating underground parking by decreasing development size to a point where structured parking is cost prohibitive. This is the goal of the community and of the city is to encourage underground parking and remove vehicles from street parking. Therefore, consider zoning changes to allow 4-stories/45 ft. as proposed to satisfy the community's desired decrease in height while allowing the lot area requirement and total density to remain unchanged. The result will be a shorter building more pleasing to the neighbors that maintains the necessary density to make underground parking and the associated density bonus needed for scaled development possible. With these proposed guidelines, development will not happen and that is not what the city wants.

Commissioner Oliver asked if Mr. Merry has compared this section of Grand to any other section in the city as far as apartment development or a comparable city for development.

Mr. Merry replied yes he has compared it extensively to Minneapolis.

Commissioner Oliver stated that some of the other east-west streets north and south of Grand Avenue have similar areas of RM2 zoning, that is sharing an alley with small single-family houses. He asked if Mr. Merry is aware of any other set up like that in any of the sites he's looked at?

Mr. Merry is not familiar with any other situations with that same zoning, but that he thinks that the part of this project that bothers the neighbors most is the height, more than density and parking. He thinks that there is potential for 4-story buildings that would look substantially lower and more consistent with the neighborhood that can then be wider, which is what's been proposed, but only if the overall density isn't decreased so that the shorter and wider buildings generate enough revenue to afford underground parking and achieve the goal of the city to get cars off the street. He also stated that a better approach, rather than limiting 3- and 4-bedroom units, would be to leave a 1500 sq. ft. lot area requirement for 3- and 4-bedroom units and reward developers who do smaller bedroom units with a 900 sq. ft. lot area requirement for 1 and 2 bedroom units. The demand in this neighborhood is for young adult renters, it's not for senior housing, it's not for condos and it's not for townhomes. His building is designed for what the demand is and developers build for what the demand is.

Commissioner Spaulding said that there is a proposal to rezone several of the corners on the commercial node from B2 to T2. Commissioner Spaulding asked whether Mr. Merry did any review of that aspect of the proposal or if he has any thoughts on those rezonings.

Mr. Merry replied that the approach should be extrapolated beyond to the six main intersections around St. Thomas formed by Marshall Avenue, Summit Avenue, and Grand Avenue with Cretin and Cleveland. But looking at those intersections, there is not a single developable corner. In an ideal setting, if building a new city, higher development at corners is a great idea but in reality the corners that are present in this neighborhood are already developed at such a high value that they will not be able to be purchased to do housing development.

Commissioner Ward commented that Mr. Merry is spot on as far as what the intended outcome is based on the zoning amendments as proposed; he has reviewed the area extensively, he's punched the numbers and looked at what can be done and it's next to impossible. He agrees with a lot of Mr. Merry's findings but that is not what they're here to discuss today. The Commission must consider the potential zoning changes and decide on a proposed plan to move forward. Commissioner Ward concluded by asking of Mr. Merry: If the proposed zoning changes are passed, what will you do to make something work that is both acceptable to the community and economically viable?

Mr. Merry replied that he was not sure; he is in a difficult position that other developers are not in. Other developers that have not purchased land in this neighborhood will have the luxury of walking away if this bad zoning gets passed. Having already invested in land there, he has a choice between losing the money he's invested in land he hasn't been able to develop or trying to develop a building that loses less money than he will lose if he walks away from the land. He ends up a loser either way. He thinks developers will say that this is one more reason not to enter Saint Paul.

Commissioner Perrus stated that the Commission is not making any decisions today, but are listening to the thoughts from the community and will take that information back to have further conversation about the proposal. They've had discussions about this prior to the public hearing, and it's great to hear all the comments on both sides.

3. Ms. Cheryl Fogarty, 2166 Lincoln: As a resident in the area, she participated in the Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) workshops, wherein citizens make an effort to articulate what type of development they hope to see on West Grand in the future. She agrees with the guiding principles of development it outlines, and thinks it captures the general sense of what the community wants. She supports the reductions in unit density recommended by staff, but does not believe a density bonus should be provided for constructing structured parking. Structured parking should be required. Parking in [residential permit parking area] 22 is already a serious problem and more development will add to that. She supports reducing height limits to prevent construction of additional 5-story buildings, but would go beyond the staff recommendation. The City, neighbors and University of St. Thomas (UST) agreed by means of a conditional use permit that UST would have 40 feet height limit on the north side of Grand between Cretin and Cleveland. This height limit was agreed

upon to provide a transition zone from campus to the single family homes on Lincoln Avenue and the rest of the neighborhood. To be consistent with that transition concept, the south side of Grand directly abutting homes on the north side of Lincoln should step down further to 35 feet not jump up to 45 feet. They support a height limit of 35 feet and maximum 3-story buildings. As the zoning stands, future private developers will be permitted to pierce that transition zone which UST was not allowed to do; this is a substantial inconsistency in City policy.

Also, the Grand/Finn building is not appropriate in scale and mass for West Grand; now that the fifth story is framed it can be seen that it towers over all the other buildings on West Grand (pictures distributed to Planning Commission members). The building is already destabilizing the immediate neighborhood: three families on the north side of Lincoln adjacent to the project have moved or are in the process of trying to sell as a direct result of the Grand/Finn building. They love their neighborhood and most of them have invested heavily in their homes. They are alarmed that the developer was allowed to have such a negative impact on their neighborhood's quality of life. They ask that the City do what can be done to limit further damage to their neighborhood. This is how blight begins.

The developer [Graham Merry] cannot see past building more student dorms to maximize his profits at the expense of the neighborhood's quality of life and cannot see the value of the CDI design principles that they were asked to develop at the workshops. Residents are counting on the City to support zoning changes that will require lower heights, lower density, and more diverse use of Grand Avenue properties as they become available in the future. A letter from Brian and Cheryl Fogarty was received before the public hearing.

Commissioner Oliver noted that last year there was a controversy about students taking over houses in the neighborhood, and now that a multifamily building is under construction there are complaints about that too. In light of this, he asked Ms. Fogarty what she suggests is the answer regarding providing housing for the thousands of students in the neighborhood.

Ms. Fogarty said that they have houses in the neighborhood and they have systems in place for neighbors and students to work together, and an ordinance in place so that there aren't a lot more duplex houses turned over to student rentals. There are limits to the number of students that can live immediately close to St. Thomas. Putting them in less dense buildings, lower in height on the north side of Grand that does not abut the neighbors in the single family homes on Lincoln on the south side of Grand is the best option. Also the University should have a role in the discussion as well.

4. Mr. David Redmond, a resident on Lincoln Avenue east of Cleveland Avenue, stated that the recommendation for restricted building height and density on RM2 parcels should be supported. The Planning Commission may consider restricting building heights to no more than 40 feet or three and one half stories rather than the recommended 45 feet or four stories. The recommendation for more flexible T2

zoning for commercial corners should be rejected. The basis for both arguments is that West Grand Avenue exists in an area that is already developed at high density and intensity of use at and around the University of St. Thomas (UST), and should be protected from further dense development, additional population pressure and additional traffic and safety issues. The west end of Grand Avenue is already a highly developed location far exceeding the concept of a residential corridor in overall density of construction, population and traffic. Existing buildings are predominantly two and one-half to three and one-half story apartments that already approach or exceed the residential densities recommended by current planning objectives.

UST operates under a conditional use permit that caps the student attendance at 8,000 students [note: enrollment is capped at 8,750 student] and restricts building heights on the blocks bounded by Summit, Cleveland, Grand, and Cretin at 40 feet [note: the 40-ft height limit only applies to buildings fronting Grand; buildings on the Summit frontage may be higher]. These restrictions are in recognition of the higher density and more intensive use of land on the adjoining UST campus, and the need to reduce that impact at the boundaries between the campus and residential neighborhoods. There remains a disconnect between those standards and the existing RM2 classification on Grand Avenue with a 50 foot height limit. That disconnect should be repaired and is repaired in the proposed zoning changes, at least with regard to matching the 40 foot height restriction. The Planning Commission should advise the City Council to adopt the reduced building height and increased density restrictions recommended by the West Grand Zoning Study. A further restriction in building heights to no more than 40 feet might be advised.

The recommendation to change B2 and /or BC zoning on corner parcels at Cleveland and Fairview Avenues to T2 zoning is a bad idea because the domination of this area by high density use at UST together with high traffic demands, pedestrian safety issues, and parking issues means that additional density would be undesirable. These negative impacts outweigh possible benefits that might be offered by more flexible development opportunities and design guidelines that increase density at commercial intersections.

Pedestrian safety crossing Cleveland Avenue toward UST is a recognized problem. There is work in progress to manage pedestrian crossings and bicycle commuter traffic along Cretin, across Grand and Summit, and down River Road. All of these problems will be exacerbated by additional density and further bottlenecking of this "not residential" corridor if rezoning to T2 is approved.

The nature of this location in the city of Saint Paul is such that the Planning Commission should recommend acceptance of density and building height limitations to R2 zoning mid-block but should oppose additional density enabled by changing to T2 zoning at commercial intersections. A two-page letter was received from Mr. Redmond before the public hearing.

Commissioner Ward commented that Mr. Redmond keeps referring to this as an institutional use, and even though it is an institution Commissioner Ward thinks of UST as a business. The students don't go there just because, and the people who work there don't work for free, they get paid and are there in order to support what goes on campus. The Planning Commission needs to consider what the neighborhood and city will be like 30-40 years from now. There are going to be more people, more traffic and so they have to think about what they can do in order to mitigate, plan and move forward. And all of this together is what they have to look at.

Mr. Redmond stated he agreed with that conclusion. The need is to not let things get out of control around the boundaries of UST to a point where it is unmanageable.

Commissioner Oliver asked Mr. Redmond if he sees a significant difference between this section of Grand and the section of Marshall Avenue between Cleveland and Fairview, and if Mr. Redmond thinks that the changes being considered here should be applied on Marshall as well.

Mr. Redmond replied that he found Commissioner Oliver's point valid, and that you can take any of the avenues that bound UST or that lead to it and you're certainly going to have some other issues about what should be done and how it should be done.

5. Mr. Joel Clemmer, President of the Macalester Groveland Community Council (D14) gave a report on the D14 review of the zoning study findings and recommendations, which is not yet completed. When the study began, D14 wanted to take a broader look and invited the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to help guide them through a visioning process for the neighborhood, with support from UST, Macalester College, the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee and the City. LISC facilitators and collaborating architects and developers led three large community meetings which resulted in development guidelines. Using the guidelines to help inform their discussion, the D14 Housing and Land Use Committee held a public meeting regarding the zoning study findings and recommendations. The committee voted 4-3 (tie-breaking vote cast by Chair) to support the proposed RM2 changes but further restricting building height to a 35 foot maximum, removing the density bonus for inclusion of structured parking, and including design standards that reflect and are compatible with the results of the Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) development guidelines. The committee also voted with a strong majority to support the proposed rezoning of properties to T2 traditional neighborhood. The committee motions will be reviewed by the Macalester Groveland Board of Directors at their May 9th meeting, and City staff will be notified of the outcome well before the May 17th vote at the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Nelson stated that earlier in his testimony, Mr. Clemmer had mentioned the idea that he would encourage higher density, and that it sounded like Mr. Clemmer meant higher density from what currently exists, as opposed to what the

zoning might currently allow. He asked Mr. Clemmer if this understanding was correct.

Mr. Clemmer replied that it was correct in general terms.

Commissioner Oliver inquired whether the motion to remove the density bonus for structured parking applied only to 'mid-block' development or throughout the study area.

Mr. Clemmer replied that that motion was in regard only to 'mid-block' development.

Commissioner Oliver said so structured parking would be allowed as you get closer to the corners?

It was clarified that the term 'mid-block' referred to those areas outside of the commercial nodes at Cleveland and Fairview. Mr. Clemmer also provided written testimony before the public hearing.

6. Mr. Ed Martell, a resident of Goodrich Avenue, stated that from a project development standpoint he was concerned with the lack of control. He is not against change in general but he is against unmanaged change. Mr. Martell had a meeting with several of the neighbors and they identified some major concerns. There were eleven things brought up, and they all seemed to come around density, parking, quality of life type crimes, and the impact on property values. They want to maintain the property values of existing homes as well as develop Grand Avenue in a responsible way.
7. Mr. Marc Manderschied, an attorney and resident of Goodrich Avenue, stated that he thinks that the issue in front of them is one that can be summarized by asking the question of what level of increased development and density is appropriate for West Grand Avenue? What this primarily comes down to when thinking about the value which is already in the existing apartment buildings is "what ought to replace houses on Grand Avenue?" If you drive down Grand Avenue what you will see is that from Snelling Avenue west, other than on the Macalester and St. Thomas campuses, nothing new has been built except Mr. Merry's building in the last 40-50 years. Currently there is only one 6-story building, only one 5-story building on Grand Avenue, and everything else that exists on Grand Avenue at this point in time from its development as a streetcar corridor is 4-stories or less. The majority of the structures are 3 ½ stories or are 2 stories. Grand Avenue's character is buildings set primarily in the range of 3 stories; he is asking the City to be smart on this, do smart development. What is allowed under current zoning are levels of density and housing much greater than allowed for UST on the north side of the street. The recommendations for changing to T2 zoning at the intersection of Cleveland and Grand will allow for much more development than has ever been allowed there previously. Significant change is

going to occur, and it ought to mirror the development that is going to be allowed for St. Thomas on the north side, that is 40-foot, three-story type buildings.

Mr. Manderschied continued by stating that the issue of dormitories had not been addressed. He noted that under current City code (Section 65.190) the only place that you can have a dormitory is on a university, college, and seminary campus where a building is built for students and either owned or developed by the university etc. But what Mr. Merry is building is really a dormitory; it is being built as and marketed as a dormitory. That last clause in Section 65.190 should be removed and the City needs to come to grips with the fact that we now have private dormitories. He asked that the Planning Commission support a rezoning of this area which provides for an increase in density relative to existing use, but less than allowed under the existing zoning. Nothing has been built along the stretch of Grand Avenue under the existing zoning. So changing the zoning to allow for smart development over what is there now is the way to go.

8. Mr. Doug Hennes, Vice President for the University and Government Relations at St. Thomas, stated that St. Thomas would not take apposition on the City staff's recommendations. They supported and participated in the CDI process. Their long term plan is to add housing on campus, including a residential village. The conditional use permit that the City approved in 2004 restricts them to height limits of 40 feet as well as 450-475 beds on the blocks bounded by Cretin, Summit, Cleveland, and Grand. They currently have between 150-175 students living on those blocks. Also under the conditional use permit, they have an enrollment cap of 8,750 people on the Saint Paul campus, and today they have approximately 7,500. They don't anticipate any significant growth over the next several years primarily because of the difficult economic times, stiff competition both for undergraduates and graduate students, and changes in demographics.

Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Hennes to repeat the number of the enrollment cap.

Mr. Hennes replied that 8,750 is the allowed head count. Even if a part time student is taking only one class that student is counted.

Commissioner Merrigan asked if St. Thomas will be looking for non-traditional students to fill the facilities if traditional student enrollment goes down.

Mr. Hennes said that over the last decade undergraduate enrollment has grown and they have increased it because graduate enrollment has fallen so much. At their peak they were at around 6,000 graduate students but are probably down to 4,000 today, located mostly on the Minneapolis campus. They believe that their near a maximum in terms of what they can reasonably expect to enroll because of the conditions out there.

Commissioner Nelson inquired regarding the current bed capacity overall at the University of St. Thomas.

Mr. Hennes replied that this number is around 2,700. Last fall about 44% of the undergraduate population lived on campus, and of the 56% living off-campus, half lived within a mile of campus and the rest lived beyond that. They have added over 1,000 beds on campus since 1998 through the construction of the two apartment style buildings on the north end of campus, and they also have converted houses on Grand Avenue to student housing.

Commissioner Oliver asked if UST has a waiting list for those beds or if they are fully subscribed?

Mr. Hennes said they are fully subscribed and typically there is not a waiting list. Right now their housing deposits are running about 100 students behind where they were a year ago.

9. Ms. Rachel Westermeyer representing West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) read the WSNAC's recommendations that were passed at their board meeting on April 9, 2013. "The WSNAC recommends the adjustment of the Residential Dimensional and Density Standards set forth in the March 8th Grand Avenue Zoning Study released by the Neighborhood Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission, with the exception that the maximum height be 35 feet and that structured parking allowances not be permitted; and the request that design standards that reflect, and are compatible with, the results of the Corridor Development Initiative conducted [by] the MGCC, WSNC and other organizations be included in the recommendation." The board meeting was very long and they did not address commercial corners. A printed copy of the statement was provided to the Planning Commission in their packets.
10. Ms. Nancy Wacker a resident on Lincoln Avenue, stated that in regards to [residential permit] parking area 22 which is between Cleveland and Cretin, there also are parking concerns on the other east side of Cleveland as well. Her concern with the zoning is that it dodged two big issues, one being parking. On the Saint Paul web site it says that Saint Paul is the most livable city in America. And as we have this change are we going to live up to the name? She does not understand how the City evaluates whether a development will have an impact on parking or not. Ms. Wacker would like to see parking more significantly addressed in the zoning changes. It is easier to take steps now rather than let the neighborhood go down and have things happen that bring change to the neighborhood and make it not as nice.

Commissioner Oliver asked about Ms. Wacker's opinion on the suggestion that the City eliminate the incentive for structured parking with the new apartment building.

Ms. Wacker said that she does not understand it, because if you say they put structured parking but then have more people then is there enough parking for the extra people that come because they put in that parking? When push comes to shove does it mean that there is more or less parking on the streets?

Commissioner Reveal proposed a friendly amendment to include the acceptance of the recommendation(s) from the Macalester Groveland Community Council's board after the 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 22, 2013 closing for written testimony.

MOTION: *Commissioner Oliver moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 22, 2013, with the exception of District 14 Macalester Groveland's board recommendation(s) and to refer the matter back to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

V. Zoning Committee

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

Two items to come before the staff Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, April 23, 2013:

- Johnson Brothers Liquors remote parking lot, pave existing gravel lot to park and store trucks and trailers at 1145 Homer.
- Upper River Services, construct new building and site improvements. (Site plan was originally reviewed in April 2012. These plans have revisions.) Located at 283 Alabama.

NO BUSINESS

Commissioner Nelson announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, April 25, 2013.

VI. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Merrigan had no announcements.

VII. Neighborhood Planning Committee

Commissioner Oliver announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 24, 2013.

VIII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, April 22, 2013.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao had no announcements.

X. Task Force/Liaison Reports

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, reported that a spreadsheet of STAR applications was enclosed in the Commissioners' packets. At its next meeting the Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting will evaluate Comprehensive Plan conformance and pass those comments on to the Neighborhood STAR Board.

Commissioner Merrigan reported that the Shepard Davern Task Force met last week with Councilmember Tolbert in attendance. They went over a SWOT analysis, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats. Also, they are having a community open house on Wednesday, May 8, 2013 from 6-8 p.m. to invite neighborhood feedback on the issues the task force is considering.

Commissioner Reveal reported that the West Side Flats Task Force has not met this month, but a charrette is coming up at the beginning of May that the task force will participate in. The commissioners will be invited the last two hours when the results of the charrette are being presented. All of the information about this will be sent to the commissioners.

Commissioner Oliver, who serves as a liaison with the Neighborhood STAR Board, invited commissioners to let him know if they have any questions about the STAR applications and he will try to get the answers.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Drummond
Planning Director

Approved

(Date)

Daniel Ward II
Secretary of the Planning Commission

PED\Butler\planning commission\minutes\April 19, 2013

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

Minutes May 3, 2013

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, May 3, 2013, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Merrigan, Noecker, Reveal, Shively, Thao, Wang, Wencl; and Messrs. Edgerton, Gelgelu, Lindeke, Makarios, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver, Schertler, Spaulding, and Ward.

Commissioners Absent: Mmes. *Perrus, *Porter, and Messrs. *Connolly, and *Wickiser.
*Excused

Also Present: Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Lucy Thompson, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Kate Reilly, Hilary Holmes, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes April 19, 2013.

Chair Wencl announced that the minutes are not available at this time. However they will be ready for approval at the May 17, 2013 meeting.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Wencl had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that the Great River Gathering Dinner will be May 9th, and it is always a great community event. The main speaker is Katherine Loflin, a renowned urbanist and placemaking expert.

She also announced that the Commission's group membership to the American Planning Association is due; it will be renewed July 1st. Commissioners who are interested in being a member or renewing membership should provide a \$50 check payable to City of Saint Paul to Donna Drummond or Sonja Butler sometime between now and June.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING:

Chair Wencl announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the District 9 Area Plan Amendments. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger on April 18, 2013 and was sent to the citywide Early Notification System list and other interested parties.

Lucy Thompson, PED staff gave a brief presentation regarding work that has been done with neighborhood representatives since the Planning Commission released the document in March. After the Planning Commission completes its review and makes a recommendation to the City Council, the proposed amendments will be dropped into the District 9 Area Plan Summary in the appropriate place. As of today, no written testimony has been received.

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

The following people spoke.

1. Ms. Marit Brock, West 7th/Fort Road Federation Board incoming Chair and President of the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association. Ms. Brock explained the community's intentions and objectives in developing the proposed amendments. Going through their options and vision for the community, it became clear that they had a communication problem. They determined that the area plan did not provide enough specifics for City staff or developers to know the community's vision for the commercial corridor. With guidance and expertise from Lucy Thompson, Betty Moran and Becky Yust, their project team developed the proposed amendments to the District 9 Area Plan. They believe the amendments support the unique nature of West 7th and will encourage development in the area. The neighborhood believes the proposed amendments are welcoming, clear and provide accountability so the neighborhood can manage its vision for commercial development.
2. Ms. Becky Yust led the neighborhood group that prepared the area plan amendments. They realized that the area plan summary adopted in 2010 did not provide enough clear guidance on what the community wanted to see along W. 7th Street. In response to concerns raised by Commissioners in March when the proposed amendments were released for public comment, Ms. Yust presented new wording to remove potential conflicts with existing zoning dimensional standards, be more flexible so that language does not become obsolete so quickly, and clarify the intent of the guidelines.

Commissioner Oliver stated that the proposed changes to the amendments presented by Ms. Yust adequately address his concerns.

MOTION: Commissioner Oliver moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 6, 2013, and to refer the matter back to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Commissioner Merrigan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

V. Zoning Committee

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

Three items came before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, April 30, 2013:

- Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity House, addition to existing fraternity house at 2060 Carter.
- Kowalski's Market, preliminary meeting for expansion of existing grocery store. Expansion extends into right of way for Ayd Mill Road.

- Securian Plaza, revised plans for renovating existing plaza. Staff looked at this plan before in December 2012 at 400 Robert Street North.

Two items to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, May 7, 2013.

- Macalester College Parking Lot, expand existing parking lot at 1655 Grand Avenue.
- Metropolitan Council LRT Elevator Tower, elevator and stairs to provide access from Cedar LRT station to skyway system at 46 5th Street East.

NEW BUSINESS

#13-170-780 Bilal Alsadi – Conditional use permit for an auto convenience market. 1188-1200 Rice Street between Maryland and Rose. (*Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618*)

Commissioner Reveal gave the report.

Commissioner Spaulding made a motion for two amendments to add two additional conditions, 1) that the owner(s) complete to the City's satisfaction any repair order(s) for the fence or property within 45 days. 2) that the storm water basin undergo annual intensive cleaning appropriate to its function which is removing any debris or filtered materials from the bottom of it. Commissioner Oliver seconded motion.

Commissioner Spaulding also said that the stormwater basin is on the owner's property, which is part of his site plan approval requirement and part of the Capital Region Watershed District's requirement to meet their requirements. So it is something expected of any property owner, it's just being articulated clearly here because maintenance has been a problem and that's one area easy to overlook maintaining one's property.

Commissioner Ward asks how that would be enforced.

Commissioner Spaulding said if the owner is out of compliance then the City can go in and request compliance with that condition because it is in the conditional use permit.

Commissioner Ward suggested that since the underground storage retention basin is hidden out of sight and if there is an issue one way to tell that it is not functioning properly is if there is water percolating up but there should be a maintenance plan. He suggested a friendly amendment be included that there is a yearly inspection and a check list that can be seen. Now there is some type of checks and balances that says this was done on this date and this was the authority that did it and there's some way of enforcing that because it's kind of ambivalent and it doesn't provide the necessary enforcement we're looking for, so he'd like to add that.

Commissioner Spaulding did not object as long as we don't lose the sense that this needs to be intensively cleaned and maintained and he believes that this is above ground.

Chair Wencl is not sure that basin is the word used. So we may be talking about the same thing but defining it differently.

Commissioner Spaulding said the actual terminology used in the plan is Rate Control Basin. The intent of it is to slowly allow storm water to enter the system rather than in one surge. The idea here is certainly for appearance but also in order for these to function effectively there needs to be some additional maintenance, usually cleaning out filtered materials and that needs to be cleaned out regularly.

Commissioner Ochs asked whether they should put on any conditions for annual or scheduled maintenance or can we rely on the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) to inspect and ensure it's in working order.

Commissioner Edgerton said that these are very common devices that are used all over and it is typically required that there is some periodic or at least annual maintenance. He's not sure where it is built in the development requirements but that the City through DSI probably has some requirement already for that. In terms of what maintenance is required it is mainly debris and litter that needs to be picked up, sediment that must be removed, and removing sticks and trash. It is something the owner can easily do and it's normal and expected on all of these things. It is a little redundant, that we put a special condition on this, as this is not an unusual thing that must regularly be done.

Commissioner Noecker asked what it means if we do have these conditions and they're already expected of property owners and then we put them in a conditional use permit. Does that mean that next time if we don't put them in the conditional use permit that it's not expected? Does that weaken the fact that it is already expected by giving it this additional emphasis?

Commissioner Oliver said that the issue here is not just the fact that it has a retention basin but it has a retention basin on a prominent corner. And in terms of how he would expect it to be worked out, in terms of enforcement it will likely become a City issue if someone complains that it's not working or it is full of junk. Doing the annual inspection and cleaning part makes the enforcement somewhat easier because the owner can't point to what they've done, in terms of actually satisfying the condition rather than having a broader condition about keeping it clean. Even though it duplicates an existing duty he thinks it is an appropriate item for a conditional use permit condition.

Kate Reilly, PED staff, made it clear that this is a Rate Control System. There is a basin with a pipe that gradually allows water to filter into the storm water system.

Commissioner Nelson pointed out that the second condition already states that a litter collection plan is provided and he would not expect that to exclude the Rate Control Basin.

The Commissioners had more discussion and some tweaking of Commissioner Spaulding's two conditions.

Commissioner Shively said since Capital Region is the body that has required these types of facilities for new construction, maybe we are entering into territory where we don't understand all the things that they require for this. She thinks we should require in a condition to have maintenance of it in accordance with Capital Region requirements. She would like more information at some point if these types of facilities are being used increasingly around the city. We should have a better understanding of how these work, who the regulatory authority is, how often those things are maintained and who inspects them.

MOTION: *Commissioner Spaulding moved to add two additional conditions to the conditional use permit. 1) That all City-issued maintenance orders for the fencing be completed within 45 days of receipt of the order. 2) That a maintenance plan for the storm water detention pond be filed with the City that, at a minimum, requires annual maintenance of the storm water detention pond. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

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

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, said that it was a good suggestion to have someone from Capital Region Watershed District come and give a presentation. That would be very helpful for everyone and she will ask them about that.

Commissioner Nelson announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, May 9, 2013.

VI. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Neighborhood STAR Proposals: Review for Comprehensive Plan Conformance – Approve resolution and comments to be transmitted to the Neighborhood STAR Board for 2013 funding applications. (*Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547*)

Commissioner Merrigan said that they had met last Tuesday, and on their agenda was review of the staff's comments regarding Neighborhood STAR applications conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee had a lengthy discussion and as a result there are some items in the cover memo for next year's review, which will help them do their job more effectively and create a better relationship with the staff of the STAR review team. After the committee meeting Merritt Clapp, PED staff, thoroughly reviewed a number of the applications and made sure the language was consistent in the citations for compliance for similar types of applications and sent it to the committee for review. This resulted in a better set of comments to represent the work of the Comprehensive Planning Committee and the Commission.

MOTION: *Commissioner Merrigan moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to recommend approval of the resolution and comments to be transmitted to the Neighborhood STAR Board. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

VII. Transportation Committee

Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan – Approve resolution recommending approval of the plan to the Mayor and City Council. (*Don Varney, Parks and Recreation*)

Don Varney, Parks and Recreation Design staff said that the Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan began in 2007 with the idea of making a trail connection between

Harriet Island Regional Park and Kaposia Landing Park in South St. Paul. The Parks Department applied for Federal Transportation Enhancement Grants to help fund the construction but due to grant size limitations, the project was broken into multiple segments and 5 separate grants applications were submitted. None of the grant applications were successful but since that time several changes occurred to strengthen the merits of the project. 1. The Department of Transportation began supporting the Mississippi River Trail- a multi-state trail that starts at the headwaters of the Mississippi River and continues near the Mississippi River all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. 2. South St. Paul and Dakota county planners collaborated with us in further planning of the trail. 3. Master Plan development began to add this to the Regional Park System. On the strength of these developments, St. Paul, South St. Paul and Dakota County jointly applied for a Surface Transportation Program (STP) grant for construction of the entire trail. Up to a maximum of \$5 million is available for trail projects under this program. The grant application was successful and in 2017, we will be able to join forces with the other agencies and build the trail guided by the Master Plan.

One key factor in developing the trail alignment was the ability to use existing public land and eliminate the need for expensive acquisition. Through discussions with a representative of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and the St. Paul Port Authority, we have preliminary agreement that we will be able to utilize no cost easements to build the trail. South St. Paul has initiated discussions with the CP Railroad to allow the construction of a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the multiple rail lines adjacent to Kaposia Landing Park. We are seeking a Planning Commission recommendation for the City Council to approve this plan which is a prerequisite for us to obtain Met Council approval to add this trail to the Regional Trail System. This will allow the City to obtain Met Council maintenance funds to assist the cities in operating and maintaining the trail.

Chair Wencl asked about federal requirements in terms of no fly zones and areas where they don't want a lot of people to be and security around the airport.

Mr. Varney, Department of Parks and Recreation said that MAC was agreeable with our use of the road right of way even in proximity of some flight paths as long as there was nothing to encourage people to stop and congregate. Their other primary concern was that we maintain security fencing between the trail and airport property.

Chair Wencl said regarding the railroads have there been discussions on how likely are we to get the necessary easements?

Mr. Varney said they have had initial discussions with Ramsey Co. Regional Rail Authority and they have reviewed this Master Plan. Since existing at-grade rail crossings already exist in the Saint Paul segments, the modifications to the existing crossing agreements should not be a problem. In South St. Paul, a bike/pedestrian bridge is proposed to cross the CP Rail lines. They have hired the engineering firm TKDA to do cost analysis and to initiate discussions with rail representatives on the feasibility and conditions required for bridge construction over the rail lines.

Commissioner Ward said that in the plan on page 10 it talks about the Stewardship Plan and it talks about each entity, the City of Saint Paul, City of South Saint Paul, and Dakota

County cooperatively managing their portions of the trail. In those areas where there is a shared easement between the railroad and each of these entities who specifically is going to be responsible for maintenance of the trail?

Mr. Varney replied that each municipality will be responsible for their respective portions of the trail for both operation and maintenance. When the trail has been given Met Council's Regional Trail Status, both cities will be able to utilize regional trail maintenance funds to assist with trail maintenance costs.

MOTION: Commissioner Spaulding moved on behalf of the Transportation Committee to recommend approval of the resolution and forward to the Mayor and City Council for adoption of this Plan. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, May 6, 2013.

VIII. Neighborhood Planning Committee

Commissioner Oliver announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Committee meeting on Wednesday, May 8, 2013.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao had no report.

X. Task Force/Liaison Reports

Commissioner Reveal said that the charrette for the West Side Flats was held the previous two days and thanks to Lucy Thompson and the design team they worked extremely hard those two days. There is going to be a lot of exciting stuff to come out of this. The next task force meeting is on May 23, 2013.

Commissioner Merrigan said that the Shepard Davern Task Force will have their community open house Wednesday, May 8th, 6-8:00 p.m. at the Graham Place Senior Apartments.

Commissioner Edgerton and Commissioner Ochs went to the E. 7th Better Block planning meeting on April 25th. The actual event is June 8, 2013 on East 7th Street between Margaret and Arcade Streets. It is a one day event, temporarily transforming the existing block into a Complete Street with walkable and bikeable amenities and pop-up businesses. Commissioner Edgerton encourages people to go and see it as it will be a really interesting event.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Drummond
Planning Director

Approved _____
(Date)

Daniel Ward II
Secretary of the Planning Commission



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 14, 2013
2nd Floor Conference Room
375 Jackson Street, Suite 218

<u>Time</u>	<u>Project Name and Location</u>
9:00	Twin Cities German Immersion School 1030 Van Slyke Avenue Building additions and new parking lot for existing school
9:50	Hmong Academy 1515 Brewster Street Kitchen addition to existing school

Applicants should plan to attend this meeting.

At this meeting you will have a chance to discuss the site plan for your project with Saint Paul's Site Plan Review Committee. The Committee is made up of City staff from Zoning, Traffic, Sewers, Water, Public Works, Fire Inspections, and Parks. You are encouraged to bring your engineer, architect, or contractor with you to handle any technical questions raised by city staff. The purpose of this meeting is to simplify the review process by letting the applicant meet with staff from a number of departments at one time. Staff will make comments and ask questions based on their review of the plans. By the end of the meeting you will know if the site plan can be approved as submitted or if revisions will be required. Staff will take minutes at the meeting and send you a copy.

The meeting room is on the skyway level and 25' to your left as you get out of the elevator.

Parking

A few free parking spaces are available in our visitor parking lot off of 6th Street at Jackson. Parking is also available at on-street meters. The closest parking ramp is on Jackson one block south of our office between 4th and 5th Street.

If you have questions, please contact Tom Beach at 651-266-9086 or tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us.



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SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 21, 2013
2nd Floor Conference Room
375 Jackson Street, Suite 218

<u>Time</u>	<u>Project Name and Location</u>
9:00	French Meadow Bakery & Cafe 1662 Grand Avenue Addition to back of existing restaurant
9:30	Raymond / Myrtle Parking Lot 2391 Myrtle Avenue Pave new parking and resurface existing parking lot
10:15	Linder's Nursery Parking Lot 270 Larpenteur Avenue West Regrade and repave existing parking lot
11:00	Highland Ravine Stabilization Project 1 Edgcombe Place Stabilize eroding ravines

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