

Making Democracy Work:

A process for citizen participation

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Making democracy work

September 26, 1973

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The Honorable Lawrence D. Cohen, Mayor
Council President Ruby M. Hunt and Members
of the City Council
St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Mayor Cohen and Members of the City Council:

We are pleased to present you with the final report of the Committee on Citizen Participation. Most of the Committee members thought that the preparation of this report would be a relatively short and easy task. It has not turned out to be so. Our report represents more than fifteen months of intensive study, discussion, and argument on a subject which proved to be substantially more complicated than any of us originally thought.

We feel that this lengthy process has had important and beneficial consequences in itself. The process of the Committee has been educational not only for its members, but also for the many citizens and agency representatives who closely monitored our discussions. Issues too often unarticulated or unconsidered have been identified, discussed, and "made public." Implications of various aspects of citizen participation are better understood. The wide range of feelings on what citizen participation is, and should be, has been clearly expressed by the many people who offered testimony to the Committee. In a word, this community is developing a clearer and more conscious idea of what citizen participation should be like, and what must be done to maximize that participation.

We realized very early that our consideration of a subject of such complexity and sensitivity would undoubtedly not lead to unanimous agreement on the Committee, and that some minority statement would probably be included in the final report. In this we were correct, and you will find a thoughtful dissent on the topic of community council authority included. We urge you to give your full and serious consideration to this minority report.

The question of citizen participation is really the question of what it means to be a citizen, and, more particularly, what it means to be a citizen in the City of Saint Paul. Our charge, as we understand it, was to consider what steps are necessary to insure that the people of this city can most fully and adequately fulfill their responsibilities as citizens.

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In our work, we have made a number of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Out of all of our discussions, three major points stand out above the rest in forming the basis of our recommendations.

First, we reject the notion that the essence of citizen participation is solely the casting of a vote. While voting is a major and fundamental aspect of citizen participation in any society, being a citizen is more than a once-every-two-years task. It is an ongoing, daily responsibility that can only be adequately discharged by an ongoing involvement in civic affairs.

Second, existing structures and procedures involved in citizen participation activities are clearly unsatisfactory. City hall lacks effective procedures to involve citizens in the decision-making process. Citizen feelings of powerlessness and alienation are common. Citizens lack sufficient information to deal positively with community problems, and too often procedures for the collection and dissemination of important information at the community level are ineffective or non-existent. Few communities enjoy a broad-based neighborhood forum in which community issues can be fully discussed, in which positive plans and strategies can be developed to deal with the problems that the people of our neighborhoods are concerned with. Change is necessary.

Third, it is critically important that agreement be reached on a single process within which citizen involvement takes place. Conflict is a given in politics, and we fully expect conflict to continue whether or not the recommendations of this report are implemented. The real question is whether conflict will be controlled or uncontrolled, whether or not all of the various actors in the decision-making process can come to general agreement about basic roles, responsibilities, powers, and procedures, whether or not a process can be developed within which conflicts can be resolved in a timely manner while insuring a full hearing to all points of view. Controlled conflict is the essence of a healthy, thriving city.

These points are the underpinnings of the detailed suggestions and recommendations contained in our report. We feel that we have suggested a realistic and workable alternative to the present situation in Saint Paul, and we urge your careful consideration of our work. The question you must wrestle with, as we did, is: If not this, then what?

We specifically suggest the following:

- That arrangements be made for the printing and distribution of as many copies of this report as our committee staff deems necessary, so that all interested and affected agencies and individuals are able to obtain a copy. Besides the many citizens and community groups who have expressed interest in getting a final copy of the report, we urge distribution to the heads of all public and private service agencies in the city and county, the Charter Commission, and the Ramsey County Delegation.

- That our report immediately be referred to the City Planning Department and the Planning Commission for their review and comment before formal action by the Mayor and Council.

--That the Council reserve funds in fiscal 1974 earmarked for the purposes outlined in this report.

--That the Mayor initiate studies of those administrative changes recommended in the report.

Finally, we would urge you to turn your attention to a question which was always on the periphery of our discussions, but which was not within our charge to consider: deciding which agency delivers what service in our city. We have recommended the creation of a network of community councils across the city, and have suggested how those councils might be related to city hall--two very separate recommendations. We did not, and we could not, outline how they might relate to other public and private agencies in Saint Paul and Ramsey County, although community councils would undoubtedly consider problems related to services delivered by these other agencies. Until there is agency agreement on who does what in our city, it will be a difficult and frustrating task for councils to try to develop close and effective working relationships with the various agencies. To say it again, conflict can only be controlled and intelligently resolved if all of the various actors agree on basic roles, responsibilities, powers, and procedures.

We want to thank you for the privilege of serving the City on this committee, and to express our gratitude for the staff and technical assistance that the Mayor's Office has given us.

Of course, we stand ready, either as a committee or as individuals, to aid you in the implementation of this report in any manner you might consider appropriate.

Most of all, we thank the many dozens of citizens who came to our meetings to present their views and to give us the benefit of their experience and their wisdom.

Sincerely,



TODD JEFFERY LEFKO

Chairman,

Committee on Citizen Participation
on behalf of the Committee

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Summary of Recommendations

About the process . . .

- A city-wide network of community councils should be established. Each council should represent a population of at least 20,000, although this characteristic could be waived in cases where physical boundaries or differences in community problems clearly prevent the establishment of a council representing a population of this size. Each council and its executive body should be representative of the age, ethnic, business, social, and economic characteristics of the community, attracting and involving a majority of the groups and major interests in the community. Both individuals and institutions in the community should have clear access to the community council.
- A range of 9 to 15 councils should be considered. Councils should reflect criteria of geographic proximity, natural boundaries, and common community problems.
- Internal council structure should be left largely to each council. However, city hall should insist on clear evidence that no organization or individual has been unreasonably denied council access, and that representatives do not serve terms of office of unlimited length. There must be some mechanism, such as recall, to insure the ongoing accountability of members of the executive body to their constituency.
- Councils should have the ability to act effectively on community problems -- although they cannot and should not possess formal, legal veto power. The combination of official recognition by city hall and clearly-assured responsibilities in several areas should insure substantial political clout.
- Councils should be involved extensively in the planning activities of the city. Council involvement should include both physical and social planning, encompassing the broad range of city planning and priority-setting activities. Planning areas could include such matters as housing, transportation, retail and commercial development, parks and recreation, use of school facilities for community activities, and so on. Councils should also be encouraged to evaluate city services on a regular basis.

To city hall . . .

- The City Council should pass citizen participation enabling legislation, outlining procedures for the establishment of community councils as well as the general duties and responsibilities of both the City and the community councils. The ordinance should allow petitions for community council establishment to come either from some specified percentage of persons of majority age in the community or from a representative community organization. The ordinance should allow the establishment of a community council structure desired by the community--a council formed by election, by a federation of neighborhood organizations, or some "hybrid" form. Financial assistance should be guaranteed, including funds for organizational staff to be hired and fired by the community council.
- The City Council should demonstrate its commitment to citizen participation by appropriating sufficient funds, whether local or federal, to implement this city-wide community council system.

- The City should implement this structure with the aid of professional organizational talent. This implementation must be accompanied by a reorganization of city hall procedures to handle the establishment of the council system.
- The city planning department should involve councils in the planning process at the earliest possible time, and should acquaint councils with existing plans for their areas. Planning assistance to councils should be available from a planning pool under the control of the city planning department. Procedures should be developed to insure citizen review of certain high impact activities such as rezonings--before these activities are virtually completed.
- Representation for the disadvantaged and less organized must be assured. The city's poor, minorities, senior citizens, and youth should be assured that they will not be denied representation. Particular attention must be paid to the concerns of the poor, who are in a minority in virtually every community of the city.
- The Mayor should inform councils of pending appointments to city and county boards and commissions. He should, as a matter of public policy, attempt to achieve the greatest possible geographic diversity on both the planning commission and the capital improvement budget committee (CIB).
- Relations between city hall and the councils should take the form of an annual contract between the city and each council, based on the city's fiscal year.

To existing community organizations . . .

- Existing community organizations should immediately begin to form coalitions with other, similar organizations to develop representative community councils which can satisfy the performance criteria contained in the enabling ordinance. This should include inventorying organizations in the community and direct organizational efforts.

To city-wide organizations . . .

- City-wide organizations should investigate how their particular special interests correspond to the functional Technical Advisory Committees being established by the city planning department. City-wide groups should be assured representation on relevant Technical Advisory Committees by the city planning department.

To public and private service agencies . . .

- Other agencies should recognize these councils as the official planning and priority-setting forum in the communities. Agencies should work through these councils in performing their planning and priority-setting activities.

--The possibility of consolidating existing community staffs of various agencies should be seriously investigated. Implementation of a city-wide community council system offers the possibility of reducing a wasteful duplication of "citizen participation staff" maintained by various agencies.

The Charge to the Committee

The Mayor's charge to the Committee is spelled out in his letter of appointment, a copy of which is attached as appendix A. Pointing to the need for a "restoration of popular trust in government," Mayor Cohen asked the Committee to aid him in a detailed "reconsideration of the relation of community groups to city government." The general nature of the Mayor's charge encouraged the Committee to investigate all aspects of the question of citizen participation.

The Committee feels that the city must take the lead in encouraging citizen participation which is positive and productive. Democracy must include the involvement of competing groups and individuals in the decision-making process--yet this involvement of groups and individuals has not been on an equal footing in the past.

The Committee believes that Saint Paul faces serious difficulties if citizen unrest and discontent with government continues to increase. Effective involvement of citizens in the affairs of their local government is critical if popular trust in government is to be restored--and if decision-making is to become truly democratic.

As society, and government, become more complex, it becomes increasingly important that a process be established which allows individuals and neighborhoods to participate and to be heard. In our meetings the theme of powerlessness and alienation, of limited control over institutions by citizens, was sounded again and again. We believe that this situation affects not only minorities and poor people, but extends to all citizens throughout the community.

We fear that a situation is developing in which distrust of our basic institutions is not only a fact of life but often even a way of life. We see a situation developing which is increasingly characterized by the negative

politics of opposition and confrontation. We do not believe that the politics of constant confrontation is an acceptable--or even long-endurable--process of decision making.

Unfortunately, this negative politics of confrontation is practically the only experience that either elected officials or citizens have had. Presented with plans, projects, and programs for their community which are virtually complete, citizens who lack technical expertise, staff assistance, and knowledge of plans are often reduced to last minute, "irrational" attempts to stop plans by packing the City Council chambers. Unable to articulate their concerns or to develop viable alternatives because of a lack of expertise and staff assistance, citizens necessarily appear "irrational" to Council members, who in turn find it difficult to conceive of "citizen participation" as a positive and effective involvement in the planning and priority-setting process at an early time. The fact that what the Committee is advocating is, literally, outside the experience of most officials and citizens, has impressed on us the difficulties involved in bringing about positive and meaningful participation.

But we feel strongly that an effective politics of participation can be established--a process that will improve both the planning and the delivery of services. The Committee shares the assessment of what positive, creative citizen participation can mean which Mrs. Elizabeth Clark, President of the South St. Anthony Park Association, offered in her eloquent testimony before the Committee:

It is unfortunate that the most highly-publicized efforts of neighborhood organizations have been those which have involved demonstrations at city hall. Not so well recognized are those long hours of planning, of deliberation and debate, of agonizing over alternatives and compromises, that reflect the true character of most community organizations. Not so well known are those legitimate concerns of the people, unencumbered by devious political considerations . . . Not so well known is the depth of dedication, willingness to sacrifice and the yearning to do that which is right and good for the community

and the city. Not so well known is that myriad of talent and ability which lies in every community; a wealth of human resources waiting to be involved in the great issues that confront our society.

The Committee shares Mrs. Clark's belief that a well-informed and active citizenry is the great resource and also the great necessity of a strong democratic society.

We believe that our recommendations can lead to a structure within which that substantial, effective participation of citizens in the affairs of local government will take place. We offer our report in the hope and the belief that a politics of participation--and not confrontation--is possible.

Goals and Objectives

Our overall goal was to suggest a process in which substantial, meaningful, and positive participation of citizens in the affairs of their local government could take place, and, hopefully, to help every citizen develop a concern for the total city. As the Committee deliberated on the elements which would be necessary in such a process, three principal goals and objectives emerged:

1. Get more information out sooner to the communities. Time after time citizens who presented testimony to the Committee indicated that their principal desire was to find out what was planned for their community before these plans were cast in concrete.
2. Provide an effective process in each community for the gathering and dissemination of information. Many groups and individuals in each community are interested in knowing what is happening in the community and to the community, but in most communities no process exists to disseminate such information effectively. Similarly, no effective process usually exists to gather information on how residents feel about the city services they are getting.
3. Create a broad-based community forum in which community issues can be fully discussed, a forum in which positive plans and strategies can be developed to deal with the problems that residents are concerned with.

While reaching these three goals demands many changes, it is important to realize that these three goals are interrelated, and should not be considered independently. What good is it, for example, to get information out sooner from city hall to the communities if there is no effective procedure for seeing that that information is directed to all appropriate groups and individuals in the community? To take another example, what good is the dissemination of information if no community forum exists to give in-depth consideration to that information or to use that information effectively in planning methods of dealing with community problems?

In the pages that follow, we outline several changes and several new processes that we feel are necessary to reach the goals and objectives that we

have identified as key in our attempt to make our city more open and more democratic, to restore the trust of our citizens in their government.

General Findings

In the community . . .

- A high degree of community organization presently exists in Saint Paul. Saint Paul has a long history of vigorous and viable community organization, based primarily on strong neighborhood and ethnic identifications. These identifications are still found throughout the city. Any city-wide citizen participation process must improve and strengthen this organization--not work against it.
- However, feelings of powerlessness and alienation are common. Time and time again the Committee heard testimony that citizens had been "left out" of actions affecting their lives--until presented with a finished product for their willing or unwilling consent. Citizens felt that they had little say or control over public and private institutions--particularly governmental bodies.
- Accompanying this feeling of powerlessness is a desire to participate. Citizens want to participate in the affairs of their government--but often lack the knowledge necessary to do so, or feel that government is so unresponsive that attempts at participation would be fruitless.
- Many different structures of community organization now exist. Community organizations range from federations like the Merriam Park Community Council to totally elected bodies like the Model Neighborhood Planning Council, to partially elected bodies like the Project Area Committees. Differences also exist in terms of staff capability and clout in relation to governmental agencies.
- The present system of community councils is not well-structured from a city-wide point of view. Some areas are "over-represented," while other areas are not clearly represented at all. An example of the former is the Summit-University area. Several different organizations exist within the community, including the Ministerial Alliance, Model Neighborhood Planning Council, Urban League, Urban Coalition, Black Union, Dale-Selby Action Council, Summit-University Federation, Target Area "A" Advisory Council and others.
- City-wide groups are not involved in the city planning process in an early and meaningful manner. While city-wide groups, because of their size and clout, are more able to affect public policy, they are fundamentally in the same situation as community groups. Lacking information, shown plans which are virtually completed, they are also often forced into the negative and reactive politics of opposition. They lack formal involvement in the planning process.
- Few neighborhoods can be said to have a broad-based, truly representative community "forum." No mechanism exists either for the creation and

dissemination of unified community policy, or for the dissemination of information to the community. It is extremely difficult to adequately gauge neighborhood opinion, or to develop a coherent, community-based planning process.

In the institutions . . .

- City hall has no place in its formal decision-making process where specific provision for meaningful community involvement exists. The planning process has not systematically included citizens in an early and ongoing manner. Opportunity for plan review is offered on some specific activities--although plans for similar activities are not offered for review. No effective mechanism for citizen evaluation of public services exists. No single standard process exists in city departments for dealing with community groups and individual citizens.
- Federal support of citizen participation is decreasing. The Federal government, which took the lead in insuring the opportunity for citizen participation in the 1960's, is abandoning that stance under the present Administration. The decision to dismantle community action agencies is perhaps the best evidence of this attitude.
- Federal "general" and perhaps "special" revenue sharing necessitates the creation of a workable city-wide planning process to insure the correct identification of problems and priorities on a city-wide basis. Particularly important here is community development revenue sharing. Passage of this federal legislation would force a city-wide approach to community development problems--an approach which will be difficult if not impossible without a rational city-wide participation process.
- Agency cooperation is discouraged, because each agency deals with a different community group. Ideally, agency cooperation would be fostered by the fact that various agencies all serve the same public. But this is not the case. The Housing and Redevelopment Authority deals with its Project Area Committees, Ramsey Action Programs with its Target Area Advisory Councils, and other agencies with their "publics." A valuable path of cooperation and communication between agencies has been lost because of this creation of a different "public" for each agency. A result of this, of course, is the tremendous waste of agency staff and material resources which this parallel structure has caused--and continues to cause.

Between the two . . .

- There is little or no relationship between the social structure and the governmental structure of our community. The governmental structure lacks an effective way of finding out about--or dealing with--the basic concerns and problems that people have as they go about their daily life. No mechanism exists for direct social group input into the governmental decision-making process--particularly at the community level.

- No formal relationship between the city and community groups exists, with the exception of the Model Cities program. This is in sharp contrast to other public agencies in Saint Paul: the Housing and Redevelopment Authority is formally related to its Project Area Committees, Ramsey Action Programs to its Target Area Advisory Councils, and Independent School District #625 to its Area Planning Committees. Questions of power, responsibility, and recognition remain unanswered.
- There is uncertainty on the part of both elected officials and citizens about what a sound citizen participation process would look like. Testimony to the Committee revealed wide differences of opinion on what "citizen participation" should be--or even is.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Powers and Responsibilities

In recommending the powers and responsibilities of these councils, the Committee had to consider two separate but related issues: the issue of areas of participation and the issue of power.

To consider the former, the Committee identified various areas of participation in which council action would be both appropriate and desirable. Of those, the most critical was seen to be planning, and review of high impact activities in particular. Accessibility to these processes was declared by many citizens to be their greatest desire, and access to the planning process in a well-planned government assures substantial access to the entire service delivery system.

The Committee realized that the principal objection to substantial citizen involvement in planning--and perhaps to this report as a whole--would be that this citizen participation will slow down the process of government to an intolerable extent. Our pragmatic response to this objection, quite aside from any consideration of the intrinsic merits or demerits of citizen participation, is that to deny citizens this early involvement in, and review of, planning activities will in fact slow down government over the long haul. We point to incidents like the halt in construction of Interstate Freeway I-35E, or the recent abandonment of the twenty-year old Arch-Penn Freeway project, as examples of the delay or total halt of projects caused by a failure to involve citizens in the planning process in an early and meaningful capacity. The costs of these delays and halts are tremendous, involving not only wasted personnel time and land acquired for plans never implemented, but also costs to citizens who attend City Council meetings during working hours and to developers forced

to redesign their plans. In long range terms, effective citizen participation will substantially increase the speed and decrease the costs of planning, development, and service delivery.

Regarding the issue of power, the Committee determined that "power" should be thought of as "the ability to act effectively." It is very important to understand the real focus of the Committee's work to realize that we did not see the question of legal or formal power as the central issue of citizen participation. The real issue is the process within or through which participation takes place. The nature of that process determines whether or not community councils do indeed have the "ability to act effectively."

Our recommendations seek to reorganize the process by which decisions are made in the total activities of the city. This reorganization demands the creation of a clear and rational city-wide participation process which will make the best use of city resources while creating a context in which citizens can act on the issues and problems that they are concerned about.

I. A. Participation in Planning

The Committee viewed the early and meaningful access of citizens to the city planning process as the single most critical aspect of citizen participation. The Committee found that much of the negative and unproductive activity of citizen groups was caused by their inability to participate in the planning process until the plans of city hall, public and private agencies, or private developers were virtually, if not entirely, completed. The Committee felt that early access to planning and policy-making activities would reduce citizen distrust of government, and would also put the community on a more even footing with private developers and special interest groups.

We firmly believe that, with planning assistance available, neighborhoods can and will propose highly positive community development programs dealing with both social and physical development, including specific recommendations in such areas as streets and traffic, business development, use of school facilities for community programs, parks and recreation, and so on. Besides the creation of specific development plans, general priority-rating of various city services is also important as part of the annual budgeting process. While actual budget preparation on a community-by-community basis is not desirable, citizen input on service levels reflected in the budget is desirable. City planning and budget personnel must make it clear to council members what a call for a certain level of service in one area (like snow removal) may entail in another area (like recreation). Council priority lists are virtually useless if they are merely "wish lists." Councils must be provided with adequate information on the budgeting process to insure their timely access to that process.

The Committee realizes that the impact of this involvement will be lessened by the fact that there are many other sources of important planning and decision-making in Saint Paul besides city hall, as well as by the fact of the limited city planning resources.

However, the Committee is hopeful that cooperation between the public and the private spheres can be increased. Such cooperation is critically necessary. In this regard, we are heartened by the recent formation of a public-private task force to consider city-wide funding priorities in the wake of Federal funding cutbacks. We urge members of both public and private sectors to continue and expand this joint venture. We also strongly urge private agencies and other public agencies to endorse the proposals of this report, and

to lend staff and financial assistance to this participation process once it is established.

The Committee did not want to make specific recommendations concerning the structure within councils which would conduct this wide range of planning activities, since we felt that this was a matter which should be left to each council.

The Committee does want to point out one area in which a direct link between community councils and the city planning process could be established. In testimony to the Committee, the City Planning Coordinator outlined a system of city-wide planning task forces which he is in the process of establishing. These task forces, to be called Technical Advisory Committees, will be established in several functional areas, such as housing, industrial development, human resources, transportation, retail and commercial development, and so on. Each TAC would be chaired by a member of the new city Planning Commission, and would seek to involve representatives of appropriate institutions and appropriate council representatives in each functional area in the city.

If this structure is developed in the city planning department, the Committee strongly urges community councils to duplicate these functional planning task forces within their councils, for their neighborhoods. Not only would this tend to coordinate the planning efforts going on in various functional areas across the city, but a chairman of a task force in a community council (say a housing task force, for example) could then serve on the appropriate TAC--in this case, housing. This would directly link neighborhoods into the city planning process in several different functional areas, and would also provide an opportunity for those with similar interests, but from different communities, to come together on a regular basis to discuss their common concerns.

We further specifically recommend the following: (1) information concerning short-range and long-range city plans for a council area should be provided to, and regularly updated for, each council, and (2) information on where and how to acquire specific areas of planning assistance should be provided to each council.

Councils should be encouraged to priority-rate services and programs as part of the annual city budget process. To accomplish this, councils must be provided with information which explains the nature and timetable of city budgeting, so that they will have the opportunity for access to that process.

I. B. Review of High Impact Activities

One of the most often-expressed desires of community organizations was the desire for early notification of proposals for certain types of "high impact" activities such as rezonings or liquor license transfers. While early involvement in the planning process should eliminate many of the problems associated with these high impact activities, the possibility of community council review remains desirable--especially where high impact activities of private developers are concerned. The Committee saw early planning involvement and review of high impact activities as complementary and not contradictory.

City hall should establish a "notice of intent" system for the activities detailed below. These notices, describing the proposed activity, could be sent at any time in the planning process. In no case, however, could final legislative (in the case of matters requiring formal Council action) or administrative (in the case of matters requiring administrative action) action

in relation to the proposed high impact activity begin until 45 days after the notice of intent is sent out. In those cases where public hearings are required by law, the time period for giving notice of the hearing should be increased from 10 to 20 days. This 20 day period should not begin until 25 days after any notice of intent is sent out. The notification time period would be concurrent with, and not in addition to, the notice of intent time period.

Notices of intent should be sent to all residents living within 300 feet--not 200 feet--of the nearest point of any area in which a high impact activity is proposed. Further, notice of intent should be sent to the council within whose area the activity is proposed, as well as to any community group which has registered for notification in city hall.

Community groups should be able to register for such notification for a nominal fee. Registration would be valid for the period of one year, although a grace period of 90 days would be allowed. During the grace period, the chief registration official should make a determined effort to contact the group to determine the reason for non-registration.

These high impact activities include both physical and social activities, although physical developments are generally of greater impact. These activities for which notices of intent are required should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- eminent domain proceedings and public improvement projects, including street vacation
- street or sidewalk use, excavation, or obstruction permits
- special assessments and reassessments
- zoning district changes, as well as zoning appeals and platting actions

- building permits either with a construction value over \$100,000, or on a parcel of land over 15,000 square feet
- mining, grading, and similar permits
- sign permits
- annual capital improvements program as recommended to the capital improvements committee
- licenses of many kinds, including liquor, sauna, homes for the aged, rooming houses, various types of industrial and commercial developments, auto repair, filling station, and parking lot

I. C. Participation in Appointment

The Committee saw citizen involvement on citizen boards and commissions as an aspect of citizen participation in which councils could play an important role. For too long, the Committee found, many communities and neighborhoods have gone unrepresented on such important bodies as the planning commission. One task of the councils would be to correct that situation to the greatest degree possible.

The exact mechanism to be employed was the occasion of much discussion. The Committee realized that certain types of citizen boards demand certain types of expertise on the part of at least some board members. We recognized that there would be difficulty in calling for total neighborhood representation on a board such as the Saint Paul Civil Service Commission--which has only three members. Finally, and most importantly, the Committee agreed that the centralization of the appointment power in the hands of the Mayor was an important and desirable part of the strong Mayor-Council form of government, and was designed to enhance the Mayor's ability to implement his programs.

We recommend that the Mayor's Office annually provide each council with a list of all positions on city boards which will become vacant in the next

year, and also inform councils of positions that become vacant during the year. This list should be sent at least 45 days before the first vacancy will occur, and should include a short explanation of the composition and function of each board. The Committee felt that this procedure would give councils ample time to make well-considered suggestions, and would also help the Mayor by giving him a substantially broader range of choice in making appointments. The Committee further urges the Mayor, as a matter of policy, to represent the communities and neighborhoods on these boards to the greatest degree possible.

I. D. Participation in Administration

The Committee recognized the need for a regular evaluation and monitoring by citizens of the quality and adequacy of both public and private service delivery. Such evaluation would not only aid in improving the delivery of services to people, but would also aid public and private agencies by bringing a substantial amount of information concerning service delivery problems to the attention of supervisory personnel on a regular basis.

The Committee did not want to suggest evaluation mechanisms, since we felt that the establishment of such mechanisms was the prerogative of each council. The Committee did envision, however, the possibility of a system of standing council committees which would allow evaluation reports to be made on a regular basis to a council for its review and transmittal to appropriate public and private agencies.

Such a mechanism could provide the opportunity for a workable, efficient, manageable, and continuing review of services by the citizenry. Such an ongoing review would be invaluable in insuring the delivery of necessary and desired services at a high level of quality.

I. E. Veto Power

In considering the question of power, the Committee distinguished between the formal, legal power which elected officials have, and the power to act effectively, which involves such factors as early possession of adequate information, effective communication with others, and the ability to unify substantial numbers of citizens in pursuit of a single goal or set of goals.

We recognize that the Mayor and City Council can not delegate their final legal authority to community groups or individual citizens. We saw our task as developing a participation process which would: (1) insure that the opportunity for community input was structured into the governmental process, (2) be "rational" from a city-wide perspective--establishing clear boundaries and common procedures, (3) create to the greatest degree possible a single planning process in the community, and (4) involve as many citizens as possible in the affairs of local government in a positive manner.

Implicit in all of these goals is the single fundamental end of strengthening the capability of local government to deliver services sensitively and effectively on a city-wide basis. A delegation of formal veto power could lead to a situation in which that capability to deliver services is weakened, not strengthened.

The Committee felt that the central question was how to create a participation process which would increase the ability of citizens to act effectively. Having established that goal, we developed a number of recommendations which are contained in sections I-A through I-D above. We feel that the sum of these powers and responsibilities, when combined with formal recognition of councils by city hall, will give citizens and neighborhoods that ability to act effectively on their concerns.

II. The Participation Process

The Committee found this section to be the most difficult and time-consuming of the entire report. Each of the sub-sections below raised a number of complicated and sensitive questions. How should a community council be formed? Who should decide what its structure should be? Is one basic council structure necessary in each community, or could councils vary in this regard? What types of staffing are necessary for an effective citizen participation program? Who should control these staff? Who should pay for them? How much staff is necessary?

How many councils should there be in Saint Paul? Who should make that decision, and how should it be made? How is the decision implemented? Who determines council boundaries? Should the City implement this network of community councils unilaterally? If not, how can community-by-community implementation be handled? What personnel, procedures, and legislation are necessary for implementation?

As these questions indicate, this section of our recommendations is the heart of the report. All other sections take their direction from this section, which tackles the central, basic questions of the relation of the general citizenry to its government in a representative democracy. Our principal conclusion is that the participation process, this ongoing, vital, dynamic relationship, must be kept as open and as flexible as possible.

II. A. Structure

The Committee spent the greatest part of its deliberations on the question of the structure of the community councils, discussing the questions noted above as well as many others. Certainly we found this one question the most difficult of all. Various formal Committee votes, as well as the debate itself, revealed that the Committee was very evenly split between election and federation as the best structure for community councils.

After lengthy consideration, we have decided not to recommend any one of the major possible structures--election, federation, hybrid--over the others. We do so for the following three reasons:

First, and most importantly, council structure should be left to each community to determine for itself. While each of us has strong feelings about the pluses and minuses of particular structures, we all feel that it would totally contradict the spirit of a citizen participation program to dictate to citizens the basic structure through which and within which they will participate. The structure and process of participation must be left as flexible as possible.

Second, we do not want our disagreement on this one point to be seen in any way as a general disagreement on the basic premise of our work: a city-wide network of strong, workable community councils is necessary and desirable in Saint Paul. On this essential point we are all firmly agreed.

Third, the disagreement we found among ourselves on this question is a reflection of a similar disagreement in the community. In evaluating our recommendations, we want the Mayor and Council to be aware of this disagreement in the community as they develop formal positions on our report and move into implementation.

In the paragraphs that follow, we outline the three general types of council structure that are possible: election, federation, and hybrid. In each case, we suggest a fundamental example of the structure, possible variations on that example, and the key advantages claimed for that structure.

Election. The fundamental example of an elected community council, as we see it, would have executive officers elected at large in the entire council area, with remaining council members elected on a sub-district or precinct basis. Several variations on this example are possible. Among them are councils in which all members are elected at large, with the members choosing their own executive

officers; in which all members are elected at large, including executive officers; and in which all members are elected by sub-districts, with the members then choosing their own executive officers.

There are four principal advantages claimed for the election approach:

1. Legitimacy. Proponents claim that legitimacy in a society based on representative democracy can only come through the process of election. This right to vote is fundamental; a part of the basic traditions of our entire society.

2. Opportunity for Participation. Related to 1, no citizen can say that he did not have a right to participate. Everyone has the opportunity to have a say in the selection of council members.

3. Accountability. The process of election insures accountability-- council members must "run on their records" if they want to continue to serve on the council.

4. Manageable Size. Any group of people working together cannot grow too large and retain the ability to function effectively. The size of an elected community council can be arbitrarily set to insure a workable council.

Federation. The fundamental example of a community federation would allow virtually any community organization to have representation on a council in some proportion to the size of the organization. These council representatives would then select executive officers from within their own ranks. Several variations are again possible. Among them are councils in which the kinds of organizations permitted membership are arbitrarily limited, or in which the proportion of council representation to organization membership is altered to give more representation to large organizations or more to smaller organizations.

There are four principal advantages claimed for the federation approach:

1. Broad Participation. By definition, all major elements and interests in the community are directly represented on the council. Many different "avenues

of access" are available to most citizens.

2. Maximum Use of Community Resources. Proponents argue that direct involvement of community organizations makes a substantial amount of important resources available. These include the communication networks of organizations, organization staff resources, and the functional expertise and knowledge that organizations inherently possess.

3. Potential for Autonomy. Because of organizational involvement, federations have the greatest ability to become financially independent through a levy of dues from member organizations.

4. Generation of Participation. An organization without goals or issues will stagnate and become useless. The diversity of interests in a federation insures the continual generation of new community issues for community council discussion and action.

Hybrid. The fundamental example of a hybrid council would have the executive officers elected at large, with a certain number X of representatives elected by sub-district. Another group of representatives, numbering X (or less than X) would be elected by major community organizations as their representatives. With the variations noted above as possible for both election and federation, hybrid variations are many. Among them are councils in which an unlimited number of organization representatives are allowed; in which only the executive officers are elected, with X number of organizational representatives; or in which only executive officers are elected, with an unlimited number of organizational representatives.

The major advantage claimed for a hybrid is that it combines the best of the election and the federation approaches. While the Committee agrees with this line of reasoning to some extent, we want to point out that in any hybrid

an increase in the number of organization representatives (particularly to a number greater than the number of elected representatives) tends to limit all the advantages claimed for election, while a decrease in the number of organization representatives tends to limit all of the advantages claimed for federation.

II. B. Staffing

The Committee agreed strongly that supportive staff was essential to a viable and vigorous citizen organization. We identified two types of staff assistance which are important: planning and community organization.

The Committee decided that planning assistance should be readily available from a planning pool of the city planning department. The Committee advocated city direction of the planning staff because it recognized the staff limitations under which the department labored, and because it recognized the city's need to develop a coordinated city-wide plan in cooperation with other public and private agencies. The Committee does urge the planning department to investigate ways to insure a close working relationship between professional planners and community residents--perhaps including this question as a matter of discussion and negotiation between city hall and councils in the development of annual contracts. We also feel that the planning department should investigate the feasibility and desirability of a substantially greater orientation toward planning by geographical area rather than by functional area.

The Committee did not attempt to develop a precise mechanism or formula for citizen use of planning assistance. We did not do so because the city planning function is still undergoing substantial reorganization as this report is being written, and the exact extent of staff resources is not yet clear, and because the extent of planning resources which will become available through the consolidation of existing citizen participation staff in other

agencies is also not yet clear.

Community organization assistance should be available to each council satisfying certain population criteria, and should be under the council's control. Largely basing our recommendations on the Project Area Committee (PAC) process, we recommend that the city be prepared to fund the organizational staff, to be hired and fired by each council. The amount of staff can be negotiated between each council and city hall. However, the Committee recommends that the city be prepared to fund for each council, at a minimum, one community organizer, plus all office and material costs. The Committee felt that any additional staff not agreed on with the city which a council wanted to employ should be funded with resources raised by the council itself, and believed that council development of community paraprofessional talent was both possible and desirable.

II. C. Number and Boundaries

The number and boundaries of these councils is a complex and sensitive subject, as the Committee quickly found out. The hesitation that the Committee felt in making definite proposals in this area was reinforced by substantial citizen antagonism to the perceived action of "city hall telling us what our neighborhood is."

After an initial attempt to set number and boundaries, offering alternatives of each, the Committee decided that Committee determination--or city hall determination--in this area was politically unacceptable to a large number of citizens.

The Committee came to the conclusion that some procedure would have to be developed to allow the number and boundaries of the councils to develop naturally, and this consideration--combined with our heightened sense of the

importance of performance rather than structure--led to the recommendation of enabling legislation contained in the next section.

However, the eventual number of councils is critically important. If the number in the city-wide network is too low, each council might be unworkably large, having too much work to handle swiftly and effectively, and could "swallow" the smaller neighborhoods. On the other hand, if the number is too large, funding and staff resources will be severely strained, while the relatively small councils resulting from a large number could emphasize neighborhood parochialism.

After substantial discussion, we recommend agreement on the range of 9 to 15 councils in the city-wide network, and to that end suggest a minimum population of 20,000 in a council area--although this figure could be waived in extraordinary cases.

We urge the City Planning Department to immediately update the map of general Saint Paul communities and neighborhoods to indicate existing boundaries. In determining these general boundaries, close consideration should be given to natural boundaries, common problems, and citizen perception of boundaries. This map should be used as part of any evaluation of proposed boundaries for a community council.

The Committee also examined the question of the alteration of the number and boundaries of councils, and determined that the question of such alteration is a matter best left to individual negotiations between affected councils and the City Council--although perhaps a coalition of councils could act as a "moderator" for such discussions. No boundary should be changed unless all affected councils and the City Council are in agreement.

II. D. Implementation

The Committee increasingly came to realize the critical importance of the procedures followed in implementing a city-wide network of community councils.

A major change in the structure and process of citizen participation is proposed in this report, and we came finally to understand that local government could not unilaterally and directly create a city-wide network of councils.

While implementation can and must be aided by professional organizers who have both the time and expertise to engage in effective organizational work, the final decision on the establishment of community councils must rest with community residents--not city hall.

To that end, the Committee recommends that the Council pass citizen participation enabling legislation regarding the establishment of community councils through community petition. A petition should be allowed either from a certain percentage of the number of persons of majority age in a given community or from a representative community organization.

With regard to petition by individuals, we suggest a percentage required for petition between 10% and 20%. If the percentage is too low, the will of the community could be violated by a small number of tightly-knit activists. On the other hand, if the percentage is too high, it could be too difficult to assemble a legitimate petition even though a community does desire a community council as outlined in this report.

With regard to petition by a community organization, such a group should be considered to be representative if it satisfies the following performance criteria:

1. The organization should be broadly representative. The organization should attract and involve a majority of the groups and major interests in the community. The organization and its executive body should be representative of the age, ethnic, business, social, and economic characteristics of the community (see section VI).
2. Accountability must be insured. There must be some mechanism, such as recall, to insure the accountability of members of the organization's executive body to their constituency. Members of the executive body should serve for terms of a limited and designated length, probably not to exceed three years, although they should be able to serve more than one term.

3. Accessibility must be insured. It must be possible for individuals and institutions in the community to have clear access to the organization. The greatest possible participation should be facilitated.

Any organization submitting a petition should be required to submit documentation of its membership as justification of its claim to be representative of the community.

The ordinance should allow the establishment of any of the three general structures outlined in II-A above. Either individuals or a community organization should be able to petition for the establishment of an elected or a hybrid council. In addition, a community organization should be able to petition for direct designation as a community council.

In evaluating and acting on any petition, the Council must make certain determinations. In addition to determining whether enough people have signed a petition, in the case of a petition by individuals, or whether an organization is representative, in the case of a petition by a community organization, the Council must also determine whether or not the petitioning area satisfies the general population criteria outlined in II-C above. If not, the Council should deny the petition. If the population criteria are satisfied, but with a population of less than 20,000 people, the Council can consider allowing the establishment of a community council without extending the offer of financial assistance to that council.

The Council must also consider the question of boundaries. In the case of a petition for the establishment of an elected or hybrid structure, specific boundaries must be acceptable to adjacent communities. We suggest that a standing sub-committee of the Planning Commission be formed to deal with this question, as well as other questions relating to the general question of citizen participation. The Council should refer boundary questions to the City Planning Department and to the citizen participation sub-committee of the Planning Commission

for their consideration. This evaluation should include consultation with affected residents of the petitioning community and adjacent communities through appropriate procedures. In the case of a petition by an organization for direct designation, the Council must determine whether or not the organization's boundaries are roughly those of one or more existing communities.

Finally, the Council must consider the question of representativeness. Any petition for the establishment of an elected or hybrid council should outline in detail the specific structure being proposed. This outline should make clear how the community council will be representative of the age, ethnic, business, social, and economic elements of the community. In addition, the proposal should satisfy any criteria developed as a result of our recommendations in section VI concerning representation for youth, senior citizens, minorities, and the poor.

After considering these questions, the City Council should hold a public hearing on a petition, preferably in the affected neighborhood, before taking any formal action on it. Generally, the enabling legislation should contain clear procedures for the handling of any petition. The legislation should also contain clear guidelines for the dissolution of a community council by either the City Council or the affected community, setting forth criteria for dissolution and insuring a public hearing on any such proposed action.

In the event that legitimate petitions are presented by a group of individuals and by a representative community organization from the same area, before the Council has taken action on either of them, and if the petitions seek essentially different community council structures, the Council should not take action on either petition. It should not act unless and until one or both petitions is withdrawn, and one petition from a given area is before the Council.

The legislation should guarantee financial assistance for any community

council, not to exceed \$20,000 per council (with the exception noted above for councils representing communities of less than 20,000 people). Finally, the legislation should contain a clear statement of the general powers and responsibilities of both the City and the community councils, particularly in relation to procedures to be followed in the preparation of community development plans.

The Committee sees several advantages to this method of implementing the network of community councils. First, it establishes a clear legal framework within which citizen participation is established and continued. Second, it gives the Council the key role that it should have in the establishment of this major new process. Third, it leaves communities free--free to take advantage of the ordinance if they want to and when they want to. Fourth, practically speaking, it would allow a phase-in period before a full city-wide network would be established, thus eliminating the need for any sharp budgetary increases and also allowing a relatively more gradual internal change in the planning and administrative procedures within city hall. In effect, it would create a "trial period" in which the effectiveness of the process in a few communities could be closely monitored and evaluated. Fifth, presuming that any enabling ordinance which is passed would have the powers and responsibilities of both parties spelled out in detail, any community which avails itself of the ordinance would be knowledgeable of and in agreement with the "rules of the game" before beginning a more formal relationship with city hall. The importance of this agreement of all parties before planning and decision-making activities begin is absolutely clear.

We realize that the formation of the council system we propose will not just happen, and we believe that professional organizational staff are necessary

III. The Role of City Hall

A. "The Tie that Binds"

The question of what formal relationship should exist between city hall and a community council was often intertwined with the totally-different question of the accountability of councils: were they accountable to the Mayor or to the Council?

The Committee quickly concluded that the second question was a false one. In no sense are the councils accountable to either the Mayor or the Council. Rather, the city offers certain resources and responsibilities to community councils without attempting to direct them. Community councils are free to accept or reject this offer of resources and responsibilities as they see fit. If they accept, they are subject to certain basic requirements which would be outlined in the enabling ordinance.

The Committee did not question the assumption that an enhanced role for citizens demanded formal recognition of the proposed councils by city hall, and felt that this recognition was implicit in the idea of enabling legislation. In addition, however, some arrangement was necessary to set forth in more detail the powers and responsibilities of both parties, and to handle the fiscal details involved. We felt that the most effective and convenient vehicle for these matters was an annual contract between the city and each council--although we presume that the contracts between the city and each council will be virtually identical. This contract should be based on the city's fiscal year if at all possible.

III. B. The City Planning Department

The Committee recognized the fact that implementation of this report would

entail a significant change in the nature of the city planning operation. A substantial amount of staff resources would have to be directed to planning on a community basis. Further, as the main point of access to city hall, city planning would in addition have to deal with a much greater volume of information and input than ever before.

We made no specific recommendations regarding the organization and size of the planning department. However, if the recommendations of this report are adopted, it is clear that the following measures must be implemented:

1. Key planning personnel in city government must be located within the city planning department. To not locate the key planners here will not only deny the department the range of technical ability it needs, but will also lead to confusion of community council members who are unable to locate the planning expertise they need.
2. Expansion of the planning department will be necessary. That demand on planners will increase is undeniable. Not only will this demand increase if the early, positive planning involvement of citizens is secured, but extensive review of proposed high impact activities, especially rezonings, will certainly involve a sizable demand by the councils for planning assistance. In this connection, we applaud the recent major department expansion proposed by the Mayor and approved by the Council. This is an important first step in the right direction.

III. C. Administrative Procedures

The Committee recognized that in the area of administrative procedures, just as in the area of planning, implementation of the report's recommendations would have substantial impact. While many of the internal procedures of city hall would remain unaltered, it is clear that several new procedures would need to be developed.

Important examples of new procedures which would be necessary include procedures to insure the timely notification of any council of an activity over which it is given review authority by ordinance or administrative regulation, to translate the increased volume of output of the planning department into

line activities, and to handle the evaluations of service prepared by each council.

Of particular importance is the notice of intent system outlined in section I-B above. This system would not only give earlier notice of high impact matters requiring City Council action to more citizens, but would also provide similar notice on high impact matters now handled administratively. This system, which should cover the many high impact activities outlined in section I-B, is also designed and intended to keep community councils (as well as other interested community organizations) informed of high impact activities proposed for the community. This would allow broad community consideration of these matters, as well as the notification of appropriate individuals and groups that might not happen to be located within the 300 foot "impact zone" that we suggest.

The Committee recommends that the City Administrator's Office immediately begin an analysis of how to structure these new procedures, since it is apparent that only that office can provide the high degree of coordination which these procedures necessitate.

IV. Funding

The Committee fully recognized the importance of developing a "fundable" program. While we believe strongly that city hall should back up its verbal commitment to citizen participation with the necessary funding, we also realize that the resources of the city are not unlimited.

The Committee's funding estimates involved use of existing Project Area Committee budgets, based on an allocation of one organizer to each community council.

While the Committee was originally in favor of a per diem payment to community council members, the almost unanimous citizen opposition to per diem evidenced at various public hearings convinced the Committee to suggest reimbursement of meeting-related expenses (baby-sitting costs, transportation, etc.) to members of the councils' executive bodies.

Taking all of these factors into account--including staff expenses plus fringe benefits, meeting expenses, and office expenses (including neighborhood newsletter)--we estimate a cost of approximately \$20,000 annually to operate a community council, given the economics possible with a city-wide network. In addition, establishment costs can be approximated at \$250 for a "constitutional convention" involving the establishment of a federation and at \$1,200 for an election in a community of 20,000 people. The total budget for the annual operation of the 9 to 15 number we suggest could then range between approximately \$182,000 and \$318,000.

It is important to realize how dramatically the addition of each council increases the cost of these recommendations--and thus the need to keep the number of councils to a minimum. However, we feel strongly that funding resources should not be a major consideration in determining whether or not

an organization receives designation as a community council.

The proposed funding must be compared with present levels of funding in order to achieve a full and balanced picture of what we are proposing. Many agencies are now in the business of funding citizen participation programs, and the total expenditures for citizen participation by Ramsey Action Programs, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Model Cities, and the Department of Public Works now amount to \$594,662! This does not reflect any monies spent by private agencies or other public agencies (like the school district) for citizen participation purposes, nor does it include any figures for monies generated by community organizations--which in total certainly represents many tens of thousands of dollars.

In other words, our proposal ranges from approximately 47% to 70% less than the present level of funding by public agencies, even though our budgets fund a city-wide participation process. We believe that substantial savings are possible through a more rational structuring of citizen participation, and point to these budgets as an argument for that contention.

It should be pointed out that any expenditures for the program suggested in our report would not come all at once if enabling legislation is used. The group by group "phase-in" involved in the use of such enabling legislation would mean incremental additions to the operating cost over a period of at least several months, as each community formed its community council and sought funding under the terms of the enabling ordinance.

Additional costs are found in the use of organizers in the early months of the formation of the councils. As outlined in section II-D of this report, these costs are estimated to range between \$36,000 and \$54,000 and are a "one-shot" expenditure. The Committee recommends that these "start-up" costs be financed with state and federal monies to the greatest extent possible.

We want to stress that both "start-up" and operating costs can be

substantially reduced by effective use of existing agency and neighborhood resources, both personnel and non-personnel. Specifically with regard to operating costs, we are hopeful that councils will be able to make use of the many resources of existing neighborhood organizations, and will increasingly move to a position of financial autonomy through a combination of membership dues and donations of "in kind" services and resources from neighborhood organizations.

The last question which the Committee wrestled with is the best source of funds to finance the recommendations of this report. The Committee realized that virtually all of the existing citizen participation funding was federal-- and that to shift all of this funding on to the shoulders of local government at one time would be asking too much of both elected officials and the city's taxpayers.

In addition, the Committee has been advised informally by the City Attorney's Office that city funds cannot be expended for the purpose outlined in this report. Frankly, we find this opinion somewhat hard to believe, and we would urge the Mayor and Council to request additional consideration of this matter by the City Attorney. We want to emphasize strongly that citizen participation is not something which should be encouraged simply to satisfy federal criteria. It is simply the right thing to do. The question here is a moral one, not a monetary one, and city hall should eventually finance a citizen participation process on an ongoing basis.

We recommend that the participation process be funded in the first few years of its existence with state and federal funds, with a gradual phase-in (perhaps during the anticipated life of the revenue sharing programs as presently programmed) to city financing. The exact rate of phase-in is a subject we feel is best left to the city's Budget Director for his consideration.

V. The Role of City-Wide Groups

The Committee from time to time during its deliberations considered the question of what role city-wide groups such as the League of Women Voters, Association of Commercial Clubs, Trades and Labor Assembly, Chamber of Commerce, and so on could and would play in the process it was developing. We were hesitant to consider this question, not feeling that it was part of our charge, but the intensity of concern which several major city-wide groups expressed compelled us to give our formal attention to this question.

We do wish to point out that the great majority of members of city-wide groups are also people who live and work in the neighborhoods of Saint Paul.

Like other citizens, they belong to community groups and organizations which would, presumably, be active in the community councils outlined in this report. In this manner, many of the individuals in city-wide groups would find themselves playing a strong and vital role in different community councils across the city.

As we looked at the situation of city-wide groups, we realized that they were in a position in relation to city hall that was fundamentally the same as the position of neighborhood groups. Often lacking information about city plans, they were also too often forced to react to plans which had been virtually completed. Like neighborhood groups, they lacked any formal positive input in the planning and decision-making process that they clearly want to make.

The Committee felt that city-wide groups could play an important, effective and appropriate role on the city-wide Technical Advisory Committees (TAC's) outlined in section I-A above. City-wide groups should have representatives on those TAC's in which those groups have particular interests. The Association of Commercial Clubs, for example, would undoubtedly want to be represented on the TAC dealing with retail trade and commercial development, and possibly the

transportation TAC, while the Senior Citizens Coalition would be more interested in the human resources and the community facilities TAC--although seniors would also probably be interested in the transportation TAC, for different reasons.

The Committee feels that this type of involvement would provide for every city-wide group to be involved to whatever degree the group wanted to be involved. This role would give city-wide groups a direct input into the city planning process, an input in those particular functional areas in which each group has interests. This direct involvement would make good use of the expertise and knowledge which these city-wide groups possess, and would greatly clarify the relationship of these groups to city hall in regard to the city planning process.

Another question which the Committee considered was the relation of city-wide groups to any city-wide coalition of community councils which might form. We feel very strongly that this is a question we cannot, and should not, address. This is a political question between city-wide groups and any coalition of community councils which might form, and does not concern the relationship of citizens to their government in any way. This is a question between the city-wide groups and community councils, and neither we nor city hall has any role to play in raising or resolving that question. The Committee considers it critical that the sharp difference between these two questions--the role of city-wide groups in the city planning process, and the relationship of city-wide groups to a coalition of community councils--be clearly recognized by all parties concerned.

VI. What about the Disadvantaged?

The Committee understood its charge as indicating the need for a process to better articulate the concerns and desires of one of the poorest informed, poorest financed, and poorest organized special interests in the city--its residents. While we wholeheartedly agree that this is a city-wide problem, we must stress that there are those groups within the citizenry who are in relatively greater need of information, technical and staff assistance, and organization than other residents. Within the context of a city-wide community council network--clearly the main thrust of our report--we must recognize the concerns of the city's disadvantaged, its overlooked citizens: the poor, the minorities, the youth, and the senior citizens.

While the development of the community council network outlined in the preceding pages will benefit all citizens, and accordingly these disadvantaged citizens as well, we feel that special attention is necessary in discussing the representation and involvement of these groups. Additionally, the Committee was informed by its staff that the Area HUD Office has formally contacted Mayor Cohen on this matter, urging that the Committee give special consideration to this matter.

In any development of a city-wide participation process the Committee would be concerned to assure an appropriate role for the more disadvantaged residents of the community. But recent developments at the federal level indicate a greater urgency in this concern: specifically, the prospect of community development revenue sharing.

While the exact timetable for a switch from categorical programs to revenue sharing in this area is unclear, it is our sense that this funding process will be in effect in the relatively near future. While we understand

the benefits of local flexibility in allocating these funds on a city-wide basis, we also see the opposite side of the coin. No longer are funds targeted for those groups and neighborhoods who need them most. Those who need funds the most are traditionally those who have had the least political ability to get them, and the Committee can easily foresee substantial political pressure being brought on local officials to allocate community development funds in areas where they are not so critically needed.

We suggest that clear and specific criteria in the use of community development revenue sharing funds be developed as quickly as possible. This criteria should be distributed to interested groups and individuals, and should be embodied by the Mayor and Council in formal statements of their intent in the use of these funds.

It is within this framework that we perceive a need for special attention to the concerns of our youth, senior citizens, minorities, and poor. The Committee recognizes that the problems of these groups, from an organizational point of view, are substantially different. Our youth and senior citizens are spread with relative uniformity across the city, while our minorities are relatively "ghettoed" in a few neighborhoods. The city's poor form a minority in several city communities ringing the downtown area.

Different strategies are necessary to each case to insure representation. In the case of youth and senior citizens, the Council should demand clear representation of both groups in any organization seeking designation as a community council under the terms of any enabling legislation which is passed.

In the case of minorities, they will, presumably, be well-represented on community councils because of the ghettoization of the city's black, Mexican-American, and American Indian populations in a few city neighborhoods. The Council should, however, make certain of minority representation on any

organization alleging to represent a community with a sizable minority population.

The Committee realizes that this is only a partial answer to the larger problem of the relation of these "minority communities" to the entire city. How can a rational and reasonable allocation of community development funds be guaranteed? We can suggest some ideas, but in the final analysis this is a political question which depends on the intelligence and good will of our elected officials.

It is the city's poor who are in the worst of all possible situations. In the minority in virtually every neighborhood, yet having the most desperate concerns of any group in the city, they must be clearly and visibly represented in any community in which there is any major concentration of the poor. The Committee has reservations whether the poor can play an active and effective role in community councils without additional organizational assistance. We feel strongly that such an effective voice for the poor is necessary. In those communities in which the poor have not been effectively represented in the community council, the Mayor and City Council should give special consideration to assuring their representation, including consideration of additional funding for community organizers for this constituency.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHAT WILL THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS CITY-WIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SYSTEM MEAN FOR AN EXISTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION?

An existing organization will have access for the first time to a participation process formally recognized by city hall, a process which has the use of city-funded staff which is hired and fired by the community council. Through the community council, an existing organization can receive earlier notice of more activities which affect its members, and will have a better chance to evaluate city services and be involved in planning what services will be delivered.

Any community organization would be entitled to clear access to its community council, and would in fact be strengthened by having access to such a formally-recognized community group.

HOW MUCH WOULD THIS CITY-WIDE STRUCTURE COST THE AVERAGE TAXPAYER PER YEAR?

Depending on how many community councils are created, the cost to the average taxpayer in Saint Paul who owns a \$20,000 house would range from a low of about \$.75 to a "high" of about \$1.20 per year, if the program were funded totally with city funds.

HOW CAN CITY HALL CREATE A CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROCESS WITHOUT CO-OPTING AND CONTROLLING IT?

Process is the important word. The Committee saw its task as creating a process within which participation could take place--not within which it had to occur. We feel that the community councils advocated in this report are very much independent of city hall:

1. No member of a council is selected by city hall.
2. Council staff is hired and fired by the council--not the city.
3. Councils are related to city hall by ordinance and by annual contract. Organizations have the choice whether or not to take advantage of the enabling legislation, and they retain the right to break the contract if city hall refuses to live up to its contractual obligations.
4. These community councils would possess more political clout than almost any community organization operating in Saint Paul today because of their quasi-official status, the availability of staff assistance, and the number of people they represent.

WHAT GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY CAN OR SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO A COMMUNITY COUNCIL?

The question of what community organizations should have access to a community council is difficult--and one which, within the criteria for representation developed in section II-D and section VI, should be left up to each community to the greatest degree possible.

IS THIS NETWORK OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS ANOTHER LAYER OF GOVERNMENT?

No. Unlike a government, community councils can not levy taxes, deliver services (if they do so, it is incidental and minimal), or exercise direct legal control over what happens within the geographical area they represent. In no way can, or should, a community council interfere with the right of community residents or groups to deal with the Mayor and Council.

The principal purpose of the councils is to act as a community forum to bring together all interested parties to discuss and act on issues of common community concern, enabling the articulation of positive community plans and programs, as well as the swift dissemination and collection of information.

THE COMMITTEE AND ITS WORK

The Committee on Citizen Participation was created by Mayor Lawrence D. Cohen in June of 1972. The Mayor's original nominations to this Committee were approved by the City Council on March 27, 1973. Subsequent nominations were approved on July 16, 1973. Copies of the Council resolutions are attached as appendix C. The Mayor had called during his campaign for the creation of such a committee to consider in detail the question of how to create the best possible structure and process of participation of citizens in the affairs of Saint Paul government.

The Committee was formed to consider the structure and process of "participation"--broadly defined--rather than to consider particular problems of specific communities. For this reason, none of the Committee members represented a particular neighborhood or community. Rather, members represented groups either interested in the general problem of citizen participation or involved in some particular participation process.

The members of the Committee were:

1. Mayor Lawrence D. Cohen
2. Councilman Rosalie L. Butler
3. Todd Jeffery Lefko (chairman of the Committee), representing the Ramsey Residents for Reorganization.
4. Cheryl Allen, chairman of the Economic Core of the Model Neighborhood Planning Council.
5. Carolyn Cochrane, representing the City Planning Board.
6. Father Thomas McKenna, representing the Organization for a Better Saint Paul.
7. Donald Pauley, chairman of the Joint Project Area Committee Council.

8. Merrill Robinson, representing the Association of Saint Paul Communities.
9. John Rutford, representing the Association of Saint Paul Communities.
10. Adolph Tobler, representing the Saint Paul Trades and Labor Assembly.
11. Lowell Torseth, representing Ramsey Action Programs.
12. James Weaver, chairman of the Citizens League committee which authored "Sub-urbs in the City".
13. George Winter, representing the Association of Saint Paul Communities.
14. Lorraine Wood, representing the League of Women Voters.

The Committee did not restrict itself to citizen participation which occurs through the community group-city hall relation. As several members pointed out, many other forms or methods of participation do exist, and are extremely important. The Committee noted several whose initiation or maintenance it considered of importance:

- night City Council and Council Committee meetings, both in City Hall and in the neighborhoods, on a regular basis
- a city hall newsletter
- "Open Night" in the Mayor's Office, on a regular basis
- staff assistance of all kinds to community groups whenever possible

The main thrust of the Committee's efforts, however, was the detailed development of a structure through which effective and productive citizen participation could take place. The development of this structure included several different steps during the months of the Committee's work.

After holding preliminary meetings, the Committee separated the material it had into three groups: general reading on the subject of citizen participation, working papers of local groups and individuals, and testimony from public officials, citizens, and community groups.

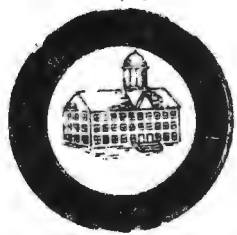
The Committee acquired many articles and essays on various aspects of citizen participation, as well as working papers or reports from Mayor Cohen, Councilman Butler, the Citizens League, Ramsey Residents for Reorganization, the League of Women Voters, and several others. This mass of material proved to be valuable not only for the many issues that it raised, but also for the several highly different perspectives on citizen participation that it provided.

In order to obtain testimony from both public officials and interested citizens, the Committee invited public officials and citizens to present their views at five public hearings held at different points in our deliberations. At those hearings and on a few other occasions when individuals addressed the Committee, we heard from the following individuals:

- Ruby Hunt, St. Paul City Council President
- William Konopatzki, St. Paul City Council
- Dean Meredith, St. Paul City Council
- Michael Sirian, Legislative Aide for St. Paul Councilman Victor Tedesco
- Linda Berglin, State Representative
- Eloise Adams, private citizen
- Joseph Barrett, West Seventh Street Association
- Elizabeth Clark, South St. Anthony Park Association
- Vincent Coughlin, City Planning Coordinator
- Lawrence Cutkomp, St. Anthony Park Association
- Willard Dahl, Dale-Western Improvement Association
- David Dickinson, Mankato State College student
- Dennis Dorgan, Human Resources Planning Council
- William Grace, Community Organizations Coordinator
- Virginia Greenman, Chairman, Cable Television Task Force
- Reginald Harris, Black Union
- Edward Helfeld, Executive Director, St. Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- Herman Hetager, Citizens of the West Side
- Robert Hickman, Model Neighborhood Planning Council
- Timothy Howard (deceased), Senior Citizens Coalition
- David Hozza, Administrative Aide to the Mayor
- Pamela Jackson, Desnoyer Park Improvement Association
- Blanche Johnson, Rice Area Citizens
- Edward Krahmer, Dayton's Bluff Community Council
- Edith Lallier, Ramsey Action Programs
- James Litman, Highland Park Community Council
- Larry Mazzitello, Region 10, Minnesota Social Services Association

--Philip McDonald, Merriam Park Community Council
--Eugene Mokrzycki, East Central Community Council
--Al Palm, Payne Avenue Businessmen's Association
--William Patton, City Grant-in-Aid Coordinator
--Lois Pearson, Phalen Area Community Council
--Arthur Peoples, Model Neighborhood Planning Council
--Charles Rauschnot, Rice District Merchants and Professional Men's Association
--Samuel Reed, Black Union
--Helena Rubbelke, City-Wide Residents Council
--Angelo Rulli, Phalen Area Community Council
--Paul Savage, St. Anthony Park Association
--Clarence Shallbetter, Citizens League
--Daniel Slater, East Side Citizens Civic Council
--Joseph Summers, private citizen
--George Thompson, Battle Creek Community Council
--Joan Van Poperin, Concerned Taxpayers of Saint Paul
--Wilfred Weber, Ramsey County Chapter, T-Party

The Committee also distributed a questionnaire (a copy of which is attached as Appendix D) to many groups, and the questionnaire responses provided the Committee with additional information.



APPENDIX A

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

LAWRENCE D. COHEN
MAYOR

Dear

As you know, the need for citizen participation in government at all levels has become evident. Citizens often feel that their government is a hostile institution which is actively working against them. The restoration of popular trust in government is a matter of critical importance.

I have proposed a reconsideration of the relation of community groups to city government, and am writing to ask you to serve on a citizens' committee to consider this matter in detail. I am enclosing a list of those people I have asked to serve on this committee.


This committee must aid me in answering the following questions:

1. Is there a demonstrable need for a community council structure which would involve the creation of new community councils? We must ask what effect the creation of new councils would have on existing councils. We must also consider the question of whether or not it is possible to bring about a situation in which one group can legitimately be said to speak for a particular community.
2. What would be the relation of existing community organizations to these councils? Will these councils perform an intermediary clearing-house function, vis-a-vis existing organizations, or will present councils relate directly to city government?

3. Should attention be given to community groups which are in some sense already formally recognized, such as the Model Neighborhood Planning Committee (MNPC) and the Project Area Coordinating Committee (PACC)? We must remain open to the possibility of a hybrid community council structure in which new organizations are created for some communities but not others.
4. Community councils traditionally have arisen in reaction to specific problems in their communities. This has given community councils an essentially negative orientation. How can the orientation of community councils be changed to a positive one?
5. How many councils should there be; what should the geographical boundaries of these councils be; how many members should each council have? How can we insure that all neighborhoods of specific communities get representation on the councils?
6. What should the staffing arrangements for these councils be? Fully staffing up a system of community councils is a very expensive proposition-one which is clearly beyond the means of the city at this time. On the other hand, it is clear that successful and positively-oriented community councils demand substantial staffing. Various staffing arrangements for these councils must be considered.

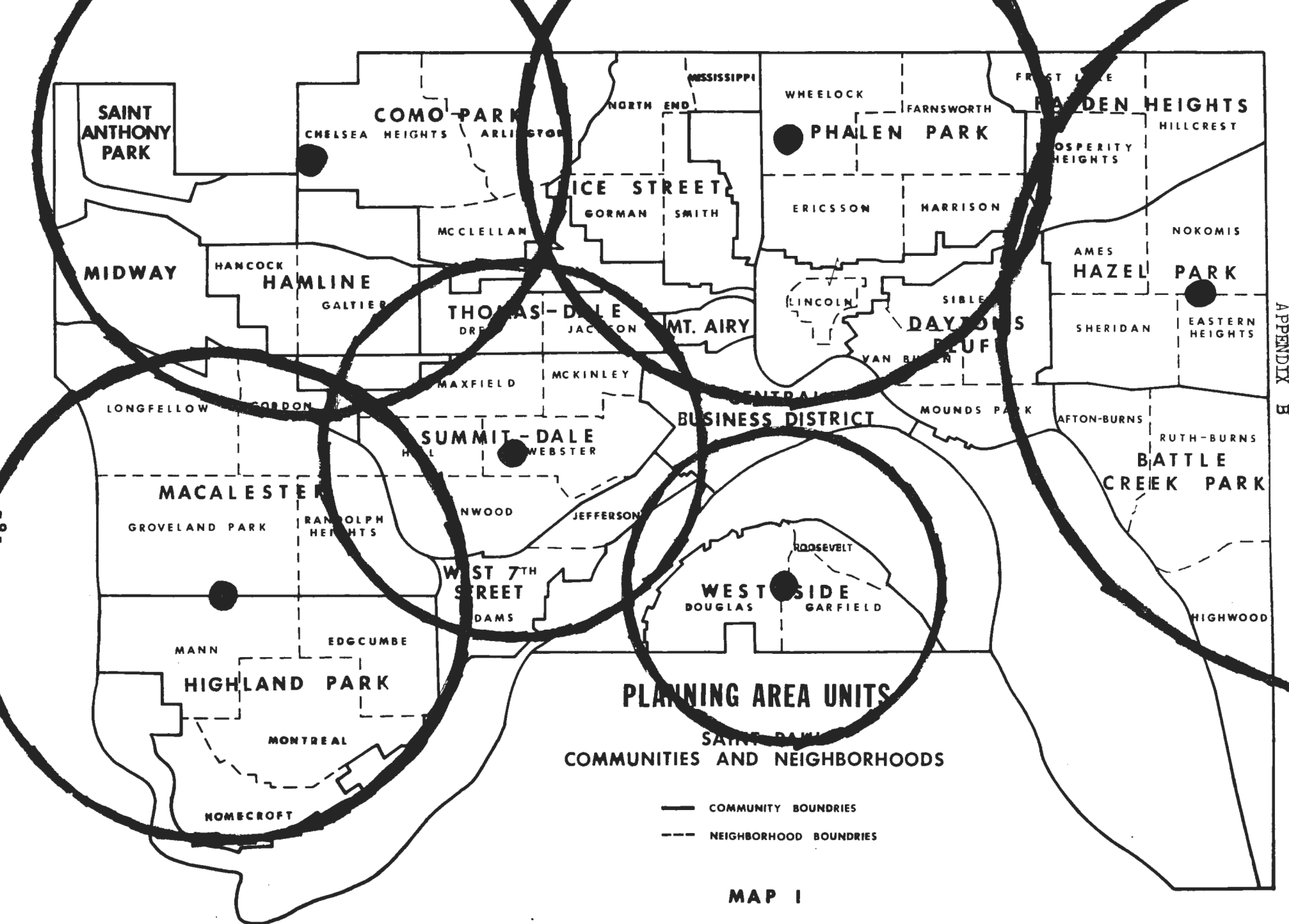
If a new council structure of some form is envisioned, such a structure can gain legitimacy only if council members are elected. To insure that any proposed council elections would have as large a voter turn out as possible, we should attempt to get such elections on the November ballot. I realize that this will be very difficult, but I still feel that we should begin meeting immediately. For this reason I have scheduled the first meeting on the night of Friday, June 30th, at 7:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, 356 City Hall. It is my hope that if you cannot be at this meeting you will send a staff representative.

Sincerely,



LAWRENCE D. COHEN
Mayor

LDC/jr
enclosure



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CANARY - DEPARTMENT
BLUE - MAYOR

APPENDIX C

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Council Resolution

Council
File NO.

260940
260940

Presented By

W Konopatzki

Referred To

Committee:

Date

Out of Committee By

Date

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council desire to obtain maximum citizen participation in the affairs of local government; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Saint Paul hereby concurs in the recommendation of the Mayor and creates a committee on citizen participation to consider the relationship of community groups to City government and submit to the Mayor and City Council a written report thereon outlining such considerations as the committee determines will be helpful to the Mayor and City Council in considering the participation of various citizen groups in the local government process; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that in accordance with Section 3.01.8 of the Saint Paul City Charter, the Council of the City of Saint Paul hereby approves the following appointments of the Mayor to the committee on citizen participation to serve at the pleasure of the Mayor:

Mayor Lawrence D. Cohen
Councilwoman Rosalie Butler
Todd Lefko, as Chairman of said Committee
Cheryl Allen
Carolyn Cochran
Father Thomas McKenna
Don Pauley
Merrill Robinson
John Rutford
Lowell Torseth
James Weaver
George Winter

COUNCILMEN

Yeas ~~Butler~~ Nays

Konopatzki

Levine

Meredith

~~Spencer~~ Roedler

Tedesco

Mme. President ~~Butler~~ Hunt

Adopted by Council:

Date

MAR 27 1973

Certified Passed by Council Secretary

By

Approved by Mayor:

Date

MAR 28 1973

Requested by Department of:

By

Form Approved by City Attorney

By

Approved by Mayor for Submission to Council

WHITE - CITY CLERK
PINK - FINANCE
CANARY - DEPARTMENT
BLUE - MAYOR

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Council
File NO.

261677

Council Resolution

Presented By

W. H. Hunt

Referred To

Committee:

Date

Out of Committee By

Date

RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Saint Paul hereby approves the following appointments of the Mayor to the committee on citizen participation:

Adolf T. Tebler

Mrs. Cecil (Lorraine) Wood

COUNCILMEN

Yeas

Nays

~~Harry~~ **Butler**

Konopatzki

Levine

Meredith

~~Spencer~~ **Roedler**

Tedesco

Mme. President ~~Harry~~ **Hunt**

Adopted by Council:

Date

JUL 17 1973

Certified Passed by Council Secretary

By

Henry T. Marshall

Approved by Mayor:

Date

JUL 18 1973

By

Requested by Department of:

By

Form Approved by City Attorney

By

Approved by Mayor for Submission to Council

By

August 26, 1954

- 1) Do you think a city-wide structure of community councils should be established?
- 2) If so, should it be through petition of each area affected _____, by public hearings _____, by a boundary commission _____, or other procedures _____?
- 3) What relationships should the councils have to existing bodies, i.e. Model Cities, PAC, TAC's, or existing neighborhood Councils?

- 4) What do you see as the primary role of a community council?
- 5) What should be its scope of authority?
- 6) What kind of duties and responsibilities do you feel community councils should assume?

7) Do you recommend the **representatives** be elected or appointed?
By whom?

8) Should a per diem or salary be established for members
community councils?

9) Would a community council need neighborhood staff or could a
centralized staff be utilized?

10) Would a community council be most effective working through the mayor or city council?

11) What do you think the boundaries of your neighborhood are?

MINORITY REPORT: COMMUNITY COUNCIL AUTHORITY

With the creation of community councils, a major effort will be made to involve as many groups and individuals as possible in the planning process on an ongoing basis. However, this is a battle which has been fought for many years by already-existing citizens groups with little or no success. The reason for this frustrated attitude is that citizens feel alienated when they are powerless. They know that the most they can do is review existing plans or advise those formulating plans; and they feel that they will have very little, if any, impact upon the final proposal.

In order to effectively involve the citizens in the workings of their community and the planning process, we feel that community councils should be given final authority over spot zoning, public improvements and parks and playground proposals which will affect their areas only. Should a proposal in one of these areas play a part in a city-wide plan, the City Council will continue to have the ultimate authority. This type of final authority for the community council would not cripple the city's ability to deliver services to the council areas on a city-wide basis.

Should cooperation in the planning process be as effective as is suggested in the report, the use of this authority will most probably be extremely limited. However, the ability to use this authority will not only assure the citizens of their right to decide what they want and need, but will also guarantee cooperation in planning.

We also recommend that the community councils appoint one representative from each of their areas to the Planning Commission with the Mayor appointing

an additional three (3) members and the Chairman. With fifteen (15) community councils, there would be a total of nineteen (19) members rather than the twenty-one (21) member Planning Commission the City now has.

Respectfully submitted by:

Cheryl Allen
Donald Pauley
Lowell Torseth
James Weaver

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Making democracy work : a process for citizen participation /

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