

Saint Paul Planning Commission

Notice to Commissioners and the public:

The chair of the Planning Commission has determined that it is not practical nor prudent for the Planning Commission and its Committees to meet in-person or pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.02. In light of the COVID-19 health pandemic, it is not feasible for any member of Planning Commission to be present at the regular location, and all members of the Planning Commission will attend this meeting by telephone or other electronic means.

It is also not feasible for members of the public to attend the meeting at its regular location due to the health pandemic and emergency. Accordingly, no meeting will be held in City Hall Conference Center Room 40 at 15 W. Kellogg Boulevard.

Minutes May 1, 2020

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, May 1, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. by telephone or other electronic means.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Anderson, DeJoy, Grill, Underwood; and Messrs. Baker, Edgerton, Hood, Lindeke, Oliver, Perryman, Rangel Morales, Risberg and Vang.

Commissioners Absent: Ms. *Mouacheuapo, and Mr. *Ochs.
*Excused

Also Present: Anton Jerve, Acting Planning Director; Yaya Diatta, Department of Safety and Inspections, Menaka Mohan, Allan Torstenson, Bill Dermody, Kady Dadlez, Josh Williams, Mike Richardson, Michael Wade, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes – No minutes are available.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Rangel Morales had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Acting Planning Director, Anton Jerve announced that the Planning Director Luis Pereira will be returning a week from Monday. After this meeting Planning Commission will be going to a more regular schedule. Menaka Mohan, PED staff has a Bridge Fund update.

Ms. Mohan announced that the Mayor presented to the HRA Board on April 21, 2020 for the Saint Paul Bridge Fund for families grant program. There were more than five thousand (5,000) applications received they were received from every corner of the city 80% came from areas of

concentrated poverty, 99% of the applicants indicated that they were experiencing reduced hours, less available work, they had been laid off or furloughed or other factors related to the COVID-19 which resulted in a loss of income. 56% of the applicants identified as renters and 83% came from household sizes of 3 or more in their home. The Saint Paul Bridge Fund Business grant the city received more than two thousand (2,000) applications. Among those applicants 98% indicated they were independently owned, with 71% coming from areas of concentrated poverty and 85% were ordered to close under the executive order from the governor.

Commissioner Underwood asked what resources were being used to fund the Saint Paul Bridge Fund?

Ms. Mohan said 3.3 million dollars from the Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and some from individuals.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: RM Zoning Study – Item from the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee. (*Bill Dermody, 651-266-6617*)

NOTE: Written comments may be directed to the Planning Commission c/o Bill Dermody at bill.dermody@ci.stpaul.mn.us by 12 noon on April 30, 2020. Questions to bill.dermody@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651/266-6617.

Chair Rangel Morales read the rules of procedure for the public hearing. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger on Monday, April 20, 2020 and mailed to the citywide Early Notification System list of recipients and other interested parties. Written comments by noon April 30, 2020 have been extended today until Monday, May 4, 2020 by 4:30 p.m.

Bill Dermody, PED staff stated that this is the remote version of the public hearing for the RM Zoning Study. Back in February 2020 the Planning Commission released this for public review and set the public hearing date for April 17, 2020, however that meeting was canceled, and the public hearing was postponed until today May 1, 2020. The zoning changes are significant. The commission saw this when it was released, including some items we particularly wanted to get input on: moving the RM density standards to a floor area ratio (FAR) model, allowing a conditional use permit for height in the RM2 district up to 70 feet, and many others smaller issues detailed in this comprehensive study. Comments were received from 10 people at this time including four landowners, four neighbors, and two district councils. Staff have met with seven district councils and there will be an eighth in a few weeks, including districts 1, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, and 16. Districts 6 and 16 have both submitted comments. Mr. Dermody has spoken with Summit Hill Association regarding their comments, so could address any questions or clarifications. Moving forward, after receiving all the comments they will be analyzed and sent back to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee for a final recommendation.

MOTION: Commissioner Grill moved to close the public hearing, and refer the matter to its Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee, Planning Staff will hold the record open for additional written testimony and this testimony must be received no later than 4:30p.m. on Monday, May 4, 2020 in order for it to be included in the Commission's hearing record. Commissioner Vang seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

V. Zoning Committee

STAFF SITE PLAN REVIEW – List of current applications. (*Tia Anderson, 651/266-9086*)

NEW BUSINESS from April 9, 2020 Zoning Committee meeting

#20-018-602 Told Development – Conditional use permit for 2 drive-thru lanes, and variance of minimum floor area ratio (0.3 required, 0.126 proposed) for a new bank building. 1212 Prosperity Avenue E, NE corner of Prosperity Avenue and Maryland Avenue. (*Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621*)

MOTION: *Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions and denial of the variance. The motion carried 11-1 (Edgerton) on a roll call vote.*

#20-018-721 Bandana Blvd. Housing Ramp – Rezone from B3 general business to T3 traditional neighborhood. 1015 Bandana Blvd W, NW corner at Energy Park Dr. and Bandana Blvd. (*Josh Williams, 651/266-6659*)

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

#20-018-744 Bandana Blvd. Housing Ramp – Variance of maximum front yard setback in T3 district. 1015 Bandana Blvd W, NW corner at Energy Park Dr. and Bandana Blvd. (*Josh Williams, 651/266-6659*)

Josh Williams, PED staff said during the site plan review he learned that the roadway in front of the building is public, the reason why it was not recorded that way in the county property records is not entirely clear. The presentation at the Zoning Committee meeting shows it’s possible that makes the setback conforming. Mr. Williams does not believe that materially changes the recommendation of the Zoning Committee or the staff. The net impact is that if thinking about magnitude of variance it substantially reduces it, if not all together eliminates the need.

Chair Rangel Morales asked whether there would be a notice issue with regards to any variance by this changing.

Mr. Williams said no he does not think so.

MOTION: *Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the variance subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.*

#20-015-283 Charles Belcher – Change and expansion of a nonconforming use to add auto repair and outdoor auto sales to existing auto body shop and dwelling, and variances for parking (24 required, 7 proposed) and distance between vehicular access and intersection (60 ft. required, 13 ft. proposed). 1334-1346 Arcade St, SE corner of Arcade Street and Clear Avenue. (*Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617*)

MOTION: Commissioner Edgerton moved denial of variance for minimum distance between vehicular access and intersection, approval of the variance of required parking and approval of the change and expansion of nonconforming use to add auto repair and outdoor auto sales subject to additional conditions. The motion carried 10-2 (Baker, Underwood) on a roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS from April 23, 2020 Zoning Committee meeting:

#20-021-233 337 7th Street West – Conditional use permit for a maximum building height of 85 feet, variance to increase the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) from 3.0 to 4.1, and a variance to reduce the required number of off-street parking spaces from 136 to 110. 337 7th Street West and 366-372 Smith Avenue. (Anton Jerve, 651/266-6567)

Commissioner Underwood said she believes in density, but it needs to be done right and not done for density sake. From the thirty plus letters opposed to this project there are significant concerns with the additional height and the parking. There has been city time and investment in parking studies for this exact area of the city. The study does not take into account this project at all. While this project was made T3 in the last round of changes, it does have some planned commercial space. That space is reduced in this new proposal, yet the streetfront is right for casual retail and helping encourage foot traffic in this part of the city. Also, she continues to hear varying information and commitments on the intent of the affordability of this site, which is something the community really needs. She has been uncomfortable with this project from the start and making it taller reducing its commercial space and reducing parking in a really challenging area and continued little information on affordability does not help. She will be voting no.

Commissioner Grill is in favor of the project, taking in the context of the neighborhood, there are buildings like the towers which are double the height of this project. There are the parking ramps and hospitals and the building is being aimed at staff that work in the hospitals, that is what the developer mentioned when they were talking about this. The city parking study did say that there was not a shortage of parking and there were options like meters further down on West 7th. Based on the needs for housing the fact that it is on the 54-bus route and some of the parks downtown really makes this a great location for more development.

Commissioner Lindeke addressed the letter from the Ford Road Federation. He said that the Ford Road Federation has been doing a lot of important work that is valuable in Saint Paul. As far as getting more renters onto their board and setting a standard that he would like to see replicated for district councils throughout the city. Their letter points out that we're in a challenge with providing new housing in Saint Paul because it's expensive, so market rate for new construction is always in this situation where it's very expensive compared to the average rents in neighborhoods. But the developer in this case has done some interesting things to try to reduce this cost, including the parking. The semi-automated parking he has not seen in Saint Paul before. Also, this modular construction which is why their apartments are going to be below (AMI) Area Median Income for Metro AML. It's an impressive project as far as trying to get more affordable housing built in Saint Paul and he thinks that is one of the reasons Ford Road Federation supported it. That is one of the reasons he supported the project.

MOTION: *Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions. The motion carried 11-1 (Underwood) on a roll call vote.*

Commissioner Edgerton announced the items on the agenda at the next Zoning Committee meeting on May 7, 2020.

VI. Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee

District 14 and District 15 Residential Design Standards – Initiate a study, release for public review and set a public hearing for May 29, 2020. (Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621)

Mike Richardson, PED staff gave a brief presentation, which can be viewed on the web page at: <http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission>

MOTION: *Commissioner Grill moved on behalf of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee to initiate a study, release the draft for public review and set a public hearing on May 29, 2020. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.*

VII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Lindeke announced that at their last meeting they discussed Ayd Mill Road Greenway proposal that the City’s Public Works Department had drafted. This has been in the news a lot and it is putting a bike walk path down the Ayd Mill Road trench as part of the Mill Overlay that the city has been planning on doing for over a year. The Committee approved it after the presentation, also City Council passed it on Wednesday. Our next meeting is Monday, May 4, 2020 and anyone can dial in to join the meeting, they will discuss the Capital City Bikeway Interim Design on 9th and 10th Street which will hopefully take place this summer.

VIII. Communications-Nominations Committee

Commissioner Underwood announced that they will be meeting on Tuesday, May 5th at 2:30p..m. to confirm final recommendations for Planning Commission appointments.

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

Commissioner DeJoy announced that the Hillcrest Community Advisory Committee met on April 21, 2020 and they voted to approve sixteen (16) of the community priorities for the Hillcrest Master Plan. They amended one (1) of them, and they deferred four (4) other draft priorities for future discussion. Their next meeting is on May 19, 2020 to pick those up and have a discussion.

The ones that they did approve were: Respect the quite nature of the existing neighborhood, any development should be walkable with connections to nearby parks, development should address the housing shortage in Saint Paul, and new jobs would be created for diverse working class, strengthening the existing businesses, pedestrian accessibility, and manufacturing building types should integrate with the neighborhood’s character. Better public transportation, extend trails to the site, public services such as Fire, Police and schools. For more go to the web site at: <https://www.stpaul.gov/hillcrest-cac> .

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

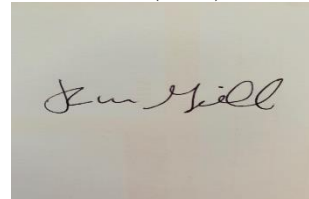
Submitted by:



Anton Jerve

Acting Planning Director

Approved June 26, 2020
(Date)



Kristine Grill
Secretary of the Planning Commission

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Information on agenda items being considered by the Planning Commission and its committees can be found at <http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission>

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, envíe un correo electrónico a luís.pereira@ci.stpaul.mn.us

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