

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

Minutes June 28, 2019

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, June 28, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. DeJoy, Mouacheupao, Reveal, Underwood; and Messrs. Baker, Edgerton, Lindeke, Ochs, Oliver, Rangel Morales, Risberg, Rodriguez, and Vang.

Commissioners Absent: Mmes. *Anderson, *Grill, *Lee, and Messrs. Khaled, and *Perryman.
*Excused

Also Present: Lucy Thompson, Acting Planning Director; Kady Dadlez, Mike Richardson, Tony Johnson, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes May 17, 2019.

Chair Reveal announced that the minutes are not available at this time. However, they will be ready for approval at the next Planning Commission meeting.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Reveal announced that the Steering Committee drafted a letter to the City Council about equity work and goals. The letter will be passed around to all the Planning Commission members to review, and the Planning Commission will receive a final copy of the letter.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

The Director Luis Pereira is on vacation, so Acting Planning Director, Lucy Thompson, announced that the City Council approved 2040 Comprehensive Plan last Wednesday. Ms. Thompson also announced that she is retiring, and her last day is Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: Highland Park District 15 Plan – Item from the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee. (Kady Dadlez, 651/266-6619)

Chair Reveal announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the Highland Park District 15 Plan. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger on Thursday, June 13, 2019, and mailed to the citywide Early Notification System list of recipients and other interested parties.

Kady Dadlez, PED staff, gave a detailed presentation on the draft Plan on May 17th when it was released for public review, so she provided only brief remarks today. She reminded everyone that the District Council submitted the plan in mid-April, and the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee discussed it in early May. It has similar chapters to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, but also includes a chapter on public art. After today's public hearing, the Plan will go back to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee to discuss the testimony and determine whether any changes should be recommended based on that testimony. In early August, the full Planning Commission will consider the Committee's recommendations and approve a final draft for forwarding to the City Council. As of today, two written comments have been received.

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

The following people spoke.

Frank Jossi, former Highland District Council (HDC) member and vice president, and former chair of the HDC Community Development Committee, 1810 Hartford Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55116. He helped lead the District 15 Plan initiative, a two-year process. He noted that the draft plan does not cover the Ford Site or the Shepard Davern area. The HDC Committee began meeting in March 2017. In the summer of 2017, the Highland District Council used several community events to reach more than 1,500 people, attracting hundreds to fill out a survey. During 2018, hundreds more residents were engaged at several major community events.

The draft plan supports many of the goals and policies of the City's 2040 plan. In the Transportation section: *Prioritize expansion of pedestrian safety infrastructure*; and *Ensure facilities meet the needs of people with disabilities*. In the Housing section: *Promote housing options for older adults, families with children, and people with disabilities that accommodate a range of household incomes, cultures and ethnicities*; *Prioritize preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing to minimize resident displacement, especially in those areas in which transit or redevelopment investments are planned*; and *Encourage development of affordable housing throughout Highland Park*. The hope is that the City accepts this plan as a testament to a lot of hard work of many volunteers who captured the thoughts, dreams and concerns of residents of Highland Park.

Written comments from two individuals were also submitted.

MOTION: Commissioner Mouacheupao moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 1, 2019, and refer the matter back to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

and

PUBLIC HEARING: Ford Design Standards – Item from the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee. (Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621)

Chair Reveal announced that the Saint Paul Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on the Ford Design Standards. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Legal Ledger on Thursday, June 13, 2019, and mailed to the citywide Early Notification System list of recipients

and other interested parties.

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

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

The following person spoke.

Tony Barranco, representing Ryan Companies, 4439 Fremont Avenue So., Minneapolis, MN 55419. Mr. Barranco acknowledged the retirement of Lucy Thompson and said they will miss her greatly. Mr. Barranco clarified that the design standards process is running independent of Ryan, although they have been able to have a seat at the table in preparing them. They are supportive of the development of design standards, as they will help maintain consistency and quality throughout the development. The main focus of their comment is to ensure there is consistency between the different planning documents. They are concerned that the design standards may not reflect something in the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan*, and there will be confusion on which governs.

Ryan would like to preserve as many of the existing trees as possible. They want to make sure that certain setbacks and other guidance in the design standards don't conflict with maintaining trees. Also, the topography of the site slopes a lot from east to west, which impacts elements like retaining wall heights and access to garages. Mr. Barranco provided written comments to be included in the record.

Commissioner Baker asked if Mr. Barranco would elaborate on the design standards potentially being in conflict the Master Plan. Are there a lot of issues or concerns?

Commissioner Baker asked Mr. Barranco to elaborate on the design standards potentially being in conflict with the master plan.

Mr. Barranco said that ensuring vehicular site access is critical. The presence of lateral non-vehicular roads reduces options for site access, and some content in the draft may create conflicts for access. There are not a lot of areas of inconsistency; they just wanted to make sure that there isn't conflict between documents.

MOTION: Commissioner Mouacheupao moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 1, 2019, and refer the matter back to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Edgerton commented that design standards are good, but the Commission should consider the impact of design standards on equity and affordability, since they have the potential to add cost. If the City continues to impose design standards, they need to keep in mind that they also want housing affordability.

V. Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee

Frogtown Neighborhood Plan (the SMAPL) – Release draft for public review and set public hearing on August 9, 2019. *(Tony Johnson, 651/266-6620)*

Tony Johnson, PED staff, gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed on the web page at: <http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission>

Commissioner Edgerton said that the idea of rezonings to T1 in Frogtown is great, but perhaps this would be a good strategy for areas beyond Frogtown. T1 can be used to add more density and vibrancy in the neighborhoods and improve walkability, because people would be able to walk to commercial uses from their homes. He hopes that they can really push forward with the zoning piece.

Tony Johnson, PED staff, said the possible amendments that he is thinking about would make T1 fit even better in a neighborhood context, so the potential changes would make it a useful tool anywhere for the type of application that we are considering in Frogtown.

Commissioner Lindeke said he remembers seeing SMAPL a couple of years ago, but then has not seen it for the last couple years.

Mr. Johnson said that he was waiting to bring SMAPL forward until the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is adopted, because of the increased permitted density range in Urban Neighborhoods. They have also been tweaking the policies since the original release.

Commissioner Lindeke said this is a good example of the implications of using zoning that was designed for the wealthier parts of the city and then applying it to the parts of the city that are more working class. He asked whether rezoning in a way that would make non-conforming uses conforming would free-up staff time.

Mr. Johnson replied that proactively rezoning to make non-conforming uses conforming would absolutely reduce the number of zoning cases.

Commissioner Baker said he thinks this potential zoning change would also make sense in the other areas in the city. They had a conversation a few Planning Commission meetings ago, about how it seems like commercial uses are being reduced. Mixed-use T1 zoning would allow the land use pattern to be more market-driven. He likes that the format of SMAPL; it makes it easier for anyone to understand what the plan is about. If it was digital, then anyone could access it.

Mr. Johnson said that there is digital version online that will be updated once we get through the adoption process.

Commissioner Baker appreciates that Mr. Johnson is thinking through some of the potential issues like gentrification and increasing local food production.

Mr. Johnson said he does not feel comfortable with doing a zoning study until there are more policies in place to help prevent potential gentrification and displacement. The work that they are doing now with the Anti-Displacement Network and the Frogtown strategic housing plan is intended to help queue up potential zoning changes in the future.

Commissioner DeJoy said that this is the most creative neighborhood plan she has ever seen -

from the graphics to the name. It reminds her of MAD magazine without the sarcasm and more substance. She likes the T1 zoning idea and the fact that it's a living document. It's also something she could share with her grandchildren; there is not another neighborhood plan in the City of Saint Paul that her 10-year old granddaughter would sit down and go through with her. This one she would. Commissioner DeJoy thinks SMAPL should be nominated to the Urban Land Institute/American Planning Association for some kind of recognition and she is happy to do that if there is a way to get it done. She asked where she can get a copy.

Mr. Johnson said that, unfortunately, he has given out all of his printed copies. Hopefully, when the plan is adopted, they will be able to get funding to print more. He would like to print a lot of them and put them all around the neighborhood - like in barber shops or grocery stores or the library.

Commissioner DeJoy is willing to work on a grant request to a foundation to get it printed, if need be.

Commissioner Ochs said he is so happy to see the SMAPL be released. He thanked Commissioner DeJoy for offering to find a grant to help with reproduction of SMAPL. Commissioner Ochs wanted to know how Mr. Johnson proposes to implement this T1 zoning concept.

Mr. Johnson replied that is to be determined. They have to do the zoning study, and figure out what people want and how they want it applied. We could potentially just rezone nonconforming uses and make them conforming, or we could do a more widespread rezoning that would address other land use opportunities – for example, to make it possible for larger single- family structures to be converted to duplexes.

Commissioner Ochs said that he is in favor of a widespread approach, but before that's implemented we should identify areas and corridors that make the most sense, and leave some areas as single-family residential zoning.

Commissioner Underwood noted that these kinds of things make her happy to be on the Planning Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Mouacheupao moved, on behalf of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee, to release the draft for public review and set a public hearing on August 9, 2019. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

VI. Zoning Committee

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

No upcoming site plan reviews.

NO BUSINESS

Commissioner Edgerton announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Tuesday, July 2, 2019.

VII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Lindeke announced that at their last meeting, they talked about Safe Routes to Schools implementation, bump-outs in the University area and the Rush Line BRT project. Rush Line BRT will go from downtown Saint Paul north to White Bear Lake. The Ramsey County web site has more information about alignment and planned stations.

Commissioner Baker asked about Safe Routes to Schools and whether there were major changes to the current plan.

Commissioner Lindeke said that white plastic temporary bollards have been installed at one of the schools. Funds have been secured to support a position in the Saint Paul School District to have a coordinator, which Minneapolis has had for awhile and it will be helpful. The next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, July 1, 2019 has been canceled.

VIII. Communications/Nominations Committee

Commissioner Underwood had no report.

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

No report.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Approved July 26, 2019
(Date)



Lucy Thompson
Acting Planning Director



Lue Vang
Secretary of the Planning Commission

Planning team files\planning commission\minutes\June 28, 2019