

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

**Minutes July 22, 2016**

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, July 22, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

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

**Commissioners Absent:** Mmes. DeJoy, and Messrs. Edgerton, Lindeke, and Wickiser.

\*Excused

**Also Present:** Lucy Thompson, Acting Planning Director; Bill Dermody, Mike Richardson, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

**I. Approval of minutes June 10, 2016.**

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Reveal moved approval of the minutes of June 10, 2016. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

**II. Chair's Announcements**

Chair Wencl had no announcements.

**III. Planning Director's Announcements**

Acting Director Lucy Thompson announced that the Snelling-Midway Soccer Stadium master plan and site plan is going to City Council for final approval on August 3, 2016. PED staff have prepared responses to comments received on the Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR).

**IV. Zoning Committee**

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

One item came before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, July 19, 2016:

- 3-Story condo – Project includes 8 condo units with underground and rear surface parking. Variances approved for setbacks and lot coverage. 1174 Grand Avenue. SPR# 16-053339

Two items to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, July 26, 2016:

- Alter St. Paul River Terminal – Material & Heavy Lift Pad. 801 Barge Channel Road. SPR# 16-056524

- City House – Addition of a mobile kitchen and use for events. 258 Mill Street. SPR# 16-060655

## **NEW BUSINESS**

#16-051-111 Samir Raval – Change of nonconforming use from a carpet warehouse to a dry cleaning and commercial laundry serving several retail outlets. (*Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617*)

Commissioner Reveal gave the report.

Commissioner Ward asked about the difference between wholesale and commercial laundry establishments.

Commissioner Reveal replied that the applicant picks up clothing from neighborhood establishments that are dry cleaning outlets. The subject property is not a commercial/“retail” business where people drop off their dry cleaning. They have a number of retail outlets in different neighborhoods around the city.

Commissioner Ward clarified, then, that it is a business-to-business service.

***MOTION: Commissioner Reveal moved the Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the change of nonconforming use subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

Commissioner Nelson announced the items on the agenda at the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, July 28, 2016.

## **V. Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan: Update on Community Engagement - Lucy Thompson. (*Lucy Thompson, 651/266-6578*)

Commissioner Merrigan reported that the Committee met last week to finish reviewing the remaining two chapters of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan: Water Resources and Parks. There have been a lot of improvements and innovations in stormwater management in the last 10 years. The Committee talked at great length about considerations for the new Parks chapter. The Committee also discussed the differences between policy, strategy and implementation.

Lucy Thompson, PED staff, gave a brief Power Point presentation, available here: <http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission>

Commissioner Underwood said that she appreciates seeing the issue of food access as one of the issues that will be “embedded” throughout the new Plan. She asked for clarification on what this means specifically to the Comp Plan – is the idea to address local and fresh food, or is it open to any kind of food?

Ms. Thompson replied that “food access” has not been defined yet. The next meeting of the Comp Plan staff team will feature a conversation with representatives from Ramsey County

Public Health and the Saint Paul/Ramsey County Food & Nutrition Commission. This will help the team get their arms around the issue and begin to understand how it impacts each chapter.

Commissioner Merrigan added that the emphasis is on “good” food, locally grown and healthier than what is typically available at a convenience store. The emphasis is also on healthy food choices being available throughout the city, not just in certain neighborhoods.

Commissioner Gelgelu asked about the community engagement plan for the update.

Ms. Thompson said that the approach is to go out to as many groups as possible, to meet people where they are, where they are already gathering. Tapping into district councils is one way to do that, but there have also been numerous meetings with special interest groups, advocacy groups, resident associations, and other neighborhood-based organizations (e.g. Asian Economic Development Association). The challenge is always to reach people who do not normally attend meetings, so staff is hoping that by attending community events and otherwise adding on to conversations already occurring, we will reach way beyond the “usual suspects.”

Commissioner Gelgelu expressed a concern that business owners might be overlooked, especially in the Midway area.

Ms. Thompson acknowledged that concern, and asked for suggestions on how to reach (especially small) business owners. One resource is the various Chambers working in Saint Paul, including the ethnic Chambers, and perhaps the commercial community development corporations.

Commissioner Ward thanked Ms. Thompson for her leadership in this effort, and acknowledged the challenge of doing visionary, city-wide planning. He reinforced that the scheduled period for intensive community engagement is relatively short, so it really has to be both comprehensive and deep. He encouraged staff to use the PED interns as much as possible, and to use social media to its full capacity. Commissioner Ward suggested sending a survey (or packet of information) home with each student in the Saint Paul public school system. He also offered to do personal outreach as a Commissioner – door-to-door perhaps.

Ms. Thompson said that staff prepared a Comp Plan Update FAQ, and she will send it to the Commission. The staff team and interns are pursuing every outreach/engagement opportunity now; we’re out at an event or meeting probably 2-3 times a week. Community engagement will not stop in December; there will be periodic check-ins during 2017 as the Plan is being drafted. Ms. Thompson asked Commissioners to let her know if they know groups or people we should talk to.

Commissioner Wang said to be sure and connect with Saint Paul’s young leaders; she will provide some names.

## **VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee**

Commissioner Oliver announced that the next meeting, originally scheduled for Wednesday, July 27, 2016, is canceled.

## **VII. Transportation Committee**

Commissioner Wang reported the next Transportation Committee meeting, originally scheduled for Monday, July 25, 2016, has been canceled.

**VIII. Communications Committee**

Commissioner Thao had no announcements.

**IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports**

No reports.

**X. Old Business**

None.

**XI. New Business**

None.

**XII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lucy Thompson  
Acting Planning Director

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Daniel Ward II  
Secretary of the Planning Commission