

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

**Minutes April 24, 2015**

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, April 24, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

**Commissioners Present:** Mmes. DeJoy, McMahon, Merrigan, Reveal, Thao, Underwood, Wencl; and Messrs. Edgerton, Gelgelu, Makarios, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver, and Wickiser.

**Commissioners Absent:** Mmes. \*Noecker, \*Padilla, \*Shively, \*Wang, and Messrs. \*Connolly, \*Lindeke, and \*Ward.

**Absent:** \*Excused

**Also Present:** Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Tom Beach, Department of Safety and Inspections, Allan Torstenson, Josh Williams, Bill Dermody, Jamie Radel, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

**I. Approval of minutes April 10, 2015.**

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Thao moved approval of the minutes of April 10, 2015. Commissioner McMahon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

**II. Chair's Announcements**

Chair Wencl had no announcements.

**III. Planning Director's Announcements**

Donna Drummond announced that staff had received a number of communications after the Zoning Committee public hearing closed last Thursday regarding several matters on today's Planning Commission agenda. The City Attorney's Office has advised that any communications received after the close of the Zoning Committee public hearing is not to be considered or passed on to the full commission. Ms. Drummond will put together a chart that explains the difference between zoning applications that are quasi-judicial and matters that are legislative, like small area plans or zoning studies. The rules prohibiting additional testimony after the close of the public hearing don't apply for legislative items. She also announced that commissioners interested in APA (American Planning Association) membership should provide a \$50 check made out to APA and give that to her or the Planning Commission secretary. She also reminded commissioners to let her know if they have registered for the Great River Gathering Dinner on May 14, 2015 so she can request that planning commissioners be seated together.

**IV. Zoning Committee**

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

Two items to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, April 28, 2015:

- Hamline Point Apartments – add a new building with a first floor club house and 7 small apartments on the second floor to an existing apartment complex at 1362 Wynne Avenue.
- Pier Foundry – new foundry finishing shop and storage facility building added to existing buildings that Pier Foundry already has on the site at 293 Alabama Street.

Two items to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, May 5, 2015:

- Flint Hills – replace 3 existing storage tanks at 2209 Childs Road.
- CHS Field event parking lot – new 230 car parking lot at 396 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street (at Willius).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#15-018-147 Hawkins Inc. – Conditional use permit for construction of 8 new tanks and tank containment area, truck containment area and rail containment area structures not elevated on fill in the Flood Fringe District. 637-701 Barge Channel Road. (Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)

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

#15-022-204 Shepard Davern Mixed Use Development – Variance of 40 foot River Corridor height limit and 55 foot height limit for a mixed use building in the T3 District to allow a maximum building height of 73 feet 6 inches. 1465 Davern Street, NW corner at Shepard Road. (Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)

Commissioner Thao asked about the amount of traffic and parking there had been for the previous use of the site.

Commissioner Nelson said his recollection is that the site was fully paved and parked-up for the US Bank use of the site.

Commissioner Thao asked about the status of the new Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Rules the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is working on.

Commissioner Nelson said the City's existing River Corridor Overlay District regulations are still in effect.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, said that the DNR's draft rules are expected to be released by the revisers office sometime this summer. For this particular site, we expect the draft rules to recommend a height limit of 65 feet (with a CUP provision for additional height), but the final draft rules are not yet out for public review.

Commissioner Thao asked how the proposed height compares to other buildings with this zoning in the River Corridor.

Commissioner Nelson said he believes that this would be the tallest building in that particular area, but there are taller buildings to the east. He noted that the site was recently zoned to T3, which allows an FAR of 3.0, and the proposed building would have an FAR of 1.26.

***MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the variances subject to additional conditions. The motion carried 11-1 (DeJoy) with 1 abstention (McMahon) on a voice vote.***

#15-007-994 Shepard Davern Mixed Use Development – Site plan review for Shepard – Davern mixed use development (2,000 sq. ft. commercial space, 211 dwelling units). 1475 Davern Street, NW corner at Shepard Road. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

***MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the site plan review subject to additional conditions. The motion carried 11-1 (DeJoy) with 1 abstention (McMahon) on a voice vote.***

#15-011-695 Highland Village Mixed Use Development – Site plan review for Highland Village mixed use development (19,000 sq. ft. commercial/office space, 53 dwelling units). 735 Cleveland Avenue South between Highland Parkway and Pinehurst Avenue. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

Commissioner Nelson summarized the project and public hearing, noting that concerns had been expressed about traffic and shadows. He said the committee recommends approval subject to six conditions, including conditions about landscaping and final approval of the traffic impact study by Public Works.

Commissioner Thao asked about the impact of the traffic impact study, and if it might affect the number of parking spaces allowed.

Tom Beach, Department of Safety and Inspections, Site Plan Review Administrator, said Public Works is basically okay with the traffic study and there are just a few minor details they need to tweak.

***MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the site plan review subject to additional conditions. The motion carried 13-0 with 1 abstention (McMahon) on a voice vote.***

#15-021-950 Freedom Works, Inc. – Conditional use permit for a transitional housing facility for up to 24 residents with modification of required lot area. 869 5<sup>th</sup> Street East, NW corner at Mendota. (Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617)

***Commissioner Nelson reported that the Zoning Committee laid this case over to the April 30, 2015 meeting.***

Commissioner Nelson also announced the items on the agenda at the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, April 30, 2015.

Commissioner Merrigan said she would like to recommend development of guidelines regarding

the definition of mixed use and to how to use shadow studies.

Commissioner Reveal concurred and said the West Side Flats Task Force recommended development of guidelines for view and shadow studies.

Chair Wencl asked if they needed to take any action in order to initiate a study.

Ms. Drummond said no, we don't need to take further action at this point. These are things they'll start to work on and bring to the Planning Commission.

## V. **Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Parkland Dedication Zoning Study – Approve resolution recommending adoption to the Mayor and City Council. (*Jamie Radel, 651/266-6614*)

Jamie Radel, PED staff, gave a brief overview, which can be seen on the web page at: <http://stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=3430>

Commissioner Reveal said at the time of platting, residential is up to 9% and commercial up to 4%. What is the City thinking about the criteria that will be used to approve less than 9% or 4%?

Ms. Radel said that it would be based upon a request being made by a developer or proposer identifying why it should be reduced from 4 or 9%; there would be some discussion that could happen. The reduction would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Reveal asked whether that would be done at the staff level.

Ms. Radel replied in the affirmative, noting that with platting there is a staff recommendation to the City Council and a public hearing is held at City Council where staff presents those recommendations.

Commissioner Ochs inquired about the slide with the square footage categories for warehouse and storage. In terms of calculating square footage for a building, there is a variety of intensities of land use between different types of users. For instance wholesaler like Costco and Home Depot might have more land use requirements, creating a larger parking area versus something like a RockTenn where there are larger buildings, but the amount of surrounding land use is minimal compared to the amount of building space. Is that taken into consideration for the calculation?

Ms. Radel said her impression is that Costco would fall under a commercial use; it is a retail store where individuals come to shop, buy items/products, and take them home versus a wholesale warehouse where one company is going to another company to buy products to take back to a commercial use to sell. She is not worried about a Costco, Sam's Club or Target as it relates to intensity of use and parkland requirement as those

are commercial uses so they would fall under those commercial use thresholds, which are higher than for storage/warehouse.

Commissioner Ochs said building square footage is used, but ideally he believes that the amount of land use required to operate the business might be a better consideration.

Ms. Radel said that she disagrees with that, because with parkland dedication the purpose is to make sure that one business or use is providing for the land to support the park needs of its employees and the people who visit there, which is really not dependent on the development size. It is about the use size when it comes to the need of an individual entity to provide parkland to support its use.

Commissioner Reveal thanked staff for all their work on this zoning study. This was not an uncomplicated issue, and it has come a long way since it was first discussed at Comprehensive Planning. She is pleased with the outcome and she will vote in favor.

***MOTION: Commissioner Merrigan moved on behalf of the Comprehensive Planning Committee to approve the resolution recommending adoption to the Mayor and City Council. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

Commissioner Merrigan announced the items on the agenda at the next Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2015.

#### **VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee**

Commissioner Oliver reported that they have no business before the Planning Commission today and their next meeting on Wednesday, April 29, 2015 has been cancelled.

#### **VII. Transportation Committee**

Commissioner Ochs announced that at their last meeting there were two items on the agenda. There was discussion of the Bike Plan implementation process with mill and overlay projects. Public Works will bring projects to the committee for a recommendation if they involve changes to on-street parking or the loss of a travel lane. The Transportation Committee's recommendation would be reported to the Planning Commission as an information only agenda item and then on to City Council public hearing.

The second item on the agenda was the Comprehensive Plan compliance review for CIB (Capital Improvement Budget) proposals for street and utilities projects. The committee asked staff to review some of the themes that applications were categorized under before forwarding to the Comprehensive Planning Committee.

The third item was brought up at the end, the Commuter Choice Awards for 2015 presented by Metro Transit. The City of Saint Paul received an award which was accepted by Hilary Holmes on behalf of the City. The award states:

“The City of St. Paul embarked upon a number of sustainable transportation initiatives in the last year, including the development of its first comprehensive bicycle plan, expansion of car-sharing options and providing young people transit passes during their first month of summer employment”. Also *Honorable Mention: St. Paul Public Housing Authority*.

Commissioner Underwood announced the items on the agenda at the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, April 27, 2015.

**VIII. Communications Committee**

Commissioner Thao had no report.

**IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports**

Commissioner Makarios announced that the Ford Site Planning Task Force will meet Thursday, April 30, 2015 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church from 7-8:30 p.m. for a public meeting on bicycles, pedestrians and transit.

**X. Old Business**

None.

**XI. New Business**

None.

**XII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Drummond  
Planning Director

Approved May 8, 2015  
(Date)

Daniel Ward II  
Secretary of the Planning Commission