



HDC Resolution to Support Language Updates to Consent Petition Process

WHEREAS on May 17, 2022 the Highland District Council (HDC) Development Committee discussed the proposed language changes to the Consent Petition process in the City of Saint Paul Zoning code; and

WHEREAS A consent petition is a prerequisite for some zoning applications that requires signatures from two-thirds of homeowners within 100 feet of the subject property; and

WHEREAS Applicants and would-be applicants occasionally experience difficulty obtaining consent petitions because of nonresponsive and hard-to-contact property owners, nearby condominiums that significantly increase the number of signatures required on the petition, concerns about potential competition, and other motivations to oppose legitimate projects resulting in underdevelopment and underinvestment in historically underserved neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS The petition requirement is currently waived by mayoral emergency executive orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with no apparent issues; and

WHEREAS The petition requirement creates insurmountable obstacles for community members with limited English proficiency and/or for under-resourced entrepreneurs starting a business to build wealth, both of whom are often people of color, recent immigrants, and/or people of moderate to low income; and

WHEREAS The time it takes to satisfy this requirement often results in a delay in completing the project, which leads to an increase in costs and affects entrepreneurs' interest and ability to open a business in Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS Notice of a public hearing is required to property owners within 350 feet of the subject property, which allows the opportunity for owners to participate and be heard; and

WHEREAS Waiving the consent petition supports City of Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies, which allow more housing, increased residential density, a mix of uses, and the opportunity for all residents, including under-resourced communities, to build wealth; therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Community Development Committee of the Highland District Council supports the proposed language changes to the City of Saint Paul Zoning code, with the permanent elimination of the consent petition requirement.

Approved June 10, 2022

By the Highland District Council Board of Directors

Resolution 2022-05D