

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number 23-08
date February 17, 2023

WHEREAS, Rosenblum Family Limited Partnership, File # 23-007-517, has applied to rezone from IT transitional industrial to I1 light industrial under the provisions of § 61.801(b) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, property located at 271 Snelling Avenue North, Parcel Identification Number (PIN) 33.29.23.44.0110, legally described as vacated street accruing and Lots 1 thru 3, Block 9, College Park Addition; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on February 9, 2023, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of § 61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. The applicant owns the property on Snelling Avenue and requests to rezone it from IT to I1. The applicant operates Co-operative Plating, a manufacturing plant at 1605 Iglehart Avenue, which is in an I1 district immediately north of the subject property. Co-operative Plating has been operating at this location for more than 50 years and employs more than 115 people. They are planning a 7,700 square foot expansion of their existing 38,000 square foot manufacturing facility to improve efficiency and potentially increase employment. In addition to the request to rezone property on Snelling Avenue to I1, the applicant submitted a separate application to rezone property at 1598 Carroll Avenue, from T2 to I1, to expand its existing employee parking lot immediately to the west at 1602-1606 Carroll Avenue.

In 2022, at the request of Co-operative Plating, the city vacated the portion on Iglehart Avenue between 1605 Iglehart and 271 Snelling Avenue. The request was made to create space for Co-operative Plating to expand its existing plant south towards the railroad tracks; a city owned tract of land in the area was also purchased to create space for the expansion. Since the portion of Iglehart Avenue vacated to Co-operative Plating in 2022 shares zoning designations with both 1605 Iglehart Avenue (the manufacturing facility zoned I1) and 271 Snelling Avenue North (the company's offices zoned IT) the applicant is requesting rezoning of 271 Snelling so that both properties will be zoned I1. Planning and DSI staff suggested, for development purposes, that it may be preferable to have consistent zoning for the Co-operative Plating properties to avoid potential conflicting zoning regulations with development on differently zoned parcels.

The applicant states that the additional parking spaces proposed for the property on Carroll

moved by Syed

seconded by _____

in favor Unanimous

against _____

Avenue are needed to replace the parking spaces that will be lost when the company's existing plant at 1605 Iglehart Avenue is expanded onto an area currently occupied by surface parking. This would result in replacing parking on a one for one basis, not an increase in parking overall. The company operates three shifts at the plant five days per week: first shift has 54 employees; second shift 22; and third shift 14.

2. The proposed zoning is consistent with the way this area has developed . The property is used for company offices for a manufacturing plant located on property in an I1 district immediately to the north. Immediately to the south and west is railroad right of way in IT and I1 districts and to the east across Snelling Avenue is an electric transformer station. There is an I1 zone west of Fry Street as well. The manufacturing plant to the north has been in operation at that location for more than 50 years. The area immediately surrounding the property proposed for rezoning has changed little in the past 20+ years, though areas further north and south along Snelling Avenue have seen increases in residential density and development in anticipation of, and subsequent to, the A Line BRT on Snelling Avenue and the Green Line on University Avenue. In addition, increases in residential densities along Marshall Avenue near Snelling Avenue have occurred in anticipation of B Line BRT.

Sec. 66.512 of the Zoning Code states the I1 light industrial district is intended to accommodate wholesale, warehouse, and industrial operations whose external physical effects are restricted to the area of the district and in no manner affect surrounding districts in a detrimental way. The I1 district is intended to permit, along with other specified uses, the manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, assembly, or treatment of finished or semifinished products from previously prepared material.

Plating is a use first permitted in an IT transitional industrial district. While an IT zoning classification would be sufficient to allow the plating use, the applicant is requesting rezoning to I1 to make the zoning classification on Snelling Avenue consistent with the zoning of its I1 properties to the north. It is reasonable in this case for the property to be rezoned to be consistent with the zoning to the north given the recent street vacation and plans for expansion onto the vacated area, part of which is zoned IT and part I1.

3. The proposed zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Goals of the land use plan include "Economic and population growth focused around transit", "Efficient, adaptable and sustainable land use and development patterns and processes", and "Quality full-time jobs and livable wages". Policy LU-6 calls for fostering equitable and sustainable economic growth by: 1) facilitating business creation, attraction, retention and expansion; 2) growing Saint Paul's tax base in order to maintain and expand City services, amenities and infrastructure; and 3) supporting business, real estate and financial models that keep more money locally, such as locally-owned businesses, local-prioritized employment, employee-owned businesses and commercial land trusts. Co-operative Plating is an existing locally owned business seeking to remain in its location and expand.

The 2040 future land use map guides the property for mixed use. Mixed use areas are primarily along thoroughfares well served by transit. The main distinguishing characteristic is a balance of jobs and housing within walking distance of one another. This balance of jobs and housing already exists in the area. The property abuts an existing industrial land use to the north that has been in place for many years and that seeks to expand its facility and potentially its employment. The property also abuts railroad right of way and is near property guided for industrial use along the railroad and to the west. The industrial land use description in the land use plan states that the intent is for this land use type to remain adaptable, relevant and supportive of well-paying jobs with low barriers to entry and a growing tax base. Industrial Policy LU-45 calls for supporting and encouraging development

that maximizes tax base, job creation and/or job retention. Industrial Policy LU-47 calls for preserving the long-term tax base by evaluating the impact of tax-generating industrial land, as well as compatibility with adjacent land uses and infrastructure.

The future land use map is a long-term vision that anticipates changes in land use over time as uses change. The future land use map is required to be specific and identify land use on a lot-by-lot basis so the Metropolitan Council can perform various analyses. Planning staff prefers a more nuanced approach to future land use planning, one that looks at future land use at a higher level, focusing on areas rather than specific lots, and where land use boundaries are vague and defined generally by area and not by property lines. The land use plan goal calling for efficient and adaptable land use supports existing land uses, which are consistent with the comprehensive plan, and minor changes and fluctuations in future land use. While the future land use plan calls for mixed use along and near Snelling Avenue, this vision is not intended to discourage or prevent minor changes or fluctuations in existing land use in the area, especially for uses that have been in place for many years, intend to remain in place, and expand modestly.

Union Park Community Plan Strategy LU4.3 calls for encouraging development in industrial areas that increases the number of job opportunities in Union Park.

4. The proposed zoning is compatible with surrounding uses including the uses in the I1 district immediately to the north where Co-operative Plating's plant and employee parking are located, and to the south where there is railroad right of way and bridge over Snelling Avenue in an IT district. Industrial uses in an I1 district abutting the north side of the railroad tracks extend four blocks to the west. Across Snelling Avenue to the east is an electric transformer station.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission recommends to the City Council that the application of Rosenblum Family Limited Partnership to rezone from IT transitional industrial to I1 light industrial property at 271 Snelling Avenue North be approved.