

## **DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

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

**Minutes December 9, 2022**

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, December 9, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

**Commissioners Present:** Mmes. Grill, Kantner, Starling, Thomas; and Messrs. Hackney, Holst, Hood, Moore, Ochoa, Rangel Morales, Reilly, Risberg, and Syed.

**Commissioners Absent:** Mmes. \*Mitchell, \*Pressley, \*Underwood; and Messrs. \*Khadar, \*Taghioff.

**Also Present:** Luis Pereira, Planning Director; Tia Anderson, Ashley Skaarda, Department of Safety and Inspections, Kady Dadlez, Tony Johnson, Karoline Finlay and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

#### **I. Chair's Announcements**

Chair Rangel Morales announced that staff was looking into the possibilities of doing hybrid meeting options. He is encouraged that staff continues to look for ways for commissioners to appear remotely from other areas.

#### **II. Planning Director's Announcements**

Luis Pereira announced that staff is looking at new technology that would allow us to both record the audio and video for these meetings. This is a priority because our current equipment is out of date and we're not sure how much longer it will last. This would also provide for hybrid options in the future. Thinking mainly about for members of the public; there are conditions for commissioners to be remote. We hope to have the new tech in place next year. A proposal has been put together for zoning and application fees. This was put together in conjunction with staff from the Department of Safety and Inspections. We hope to have that on the zoning agenda in the new year.

We are aiming to hold a Comp and Neighborhood planning meeting on December 21, 2022. Director Pereira would like as many commissioners on that committee as possible to attend the meeting to begin the one-to-four-unit housing study; phase 2. This is likely to continue into the new year. [Note: this meeting was postponed on 12/20/22 to 1/4/23].

#### **III. Zoning Committee**

Commissioner Reilly reported to the commission that there are no more Zoning Committee meetings for the remainder of 2022. Staff member Kady Dadlez clarified

that only the December 15, 2022, Zoning Committee meeting is canceled. There are zoning cases still to be heard for 2022 and the next Zoning Committee meeting is scheduled for December 29, 2022.

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

## **NEW BUSINESS**

#22-110-671 981/983 Fuller Avenue Rezoning – Rezone from R4 one-family residential to T2 traditional neighborhood. 981-983 Fuller Avenue, NW corner of Chatsworth Street North and Fuller Avenue. (*Tony Johnson, 651/266-6620*)

Commissioner Reilly gave the report. Tony Johnson was not present at the Zoning Committee meeting. Allan Torstenson was present during the meeting in his place. There were two letters in support of the rezoning and one letter in opposition of the rezoning. Staff recommendation is to approve the rezoning.

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Rangel Morales moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#22-104-395 0 Madison Street (North of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St.) Variance – Variance for residential development on a steep slope with significant regrading, tall retaining walls, and creation of trough-shaped yards between new building and the new retaining wall. 0 Madison Street (North of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. at W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. & Paul Avenue) (*Kady Dadlez, 651/266-6619*)

Commissioner Reilly gave the report and summarized the committee discussion. There was public testimony at the public hearing. Four people spoke in opposition to the project and there were six letters in opposition and one letter in support of the proposal.

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Rangel Morales moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the variance with conditions. The motion carried 11-1 (Moore) on a voice vote.*

#22-116-859 0 Madison Street (North of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St.) Site Plan Review- Site plan review for a new multi-family residential development for seniors with 36 dwelling units and 7 structured parking spaces to be accessed via a private street on the adjoining property at O Madison Street (north of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. at W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. & St. Paul Avenue. (*Ashley Skarda, 651/266-9013*)

Commissioner Reilly gave the report. There was one letter in support of the proposal and there were four people who spoke in opposition and six letters. Commissioner Ochoa asked several questions regarding the trough shaped yards, steep slope, and overall livability of the project given that some residents' views would be toward a retaining wall. Planning Commission Chair Commissioner Rangel Morales answered commissioner Ochoa's questions. Commissioner Reilly also addressed the livability concern. The design does incorporate light and air flow for lower-level units. Commissioner Hackney asked questions regarding the safety of and erosion of the bluff due to the bluff being mostly shale. Commissioner Reilly answered his questions, noting that the required engineering report is expected to be submitted to DSI soon and

that DSI will review the report to determine if revisions to the site plan are needed to address slope stability or erosion issues. Commissioner Reilly reminded commissioners that geotechnical reports are a part of the conditions for the variance site plan review. Commissioner Hackney asked who would enforce the conditions if the bluff were not stable. Commissioner Reilly responded that the developer would work through that with DSI staff.

**MOTION: Commissioner Rangel Morales moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the site plan review with conditions. The motion carried 11-1 (Moore) on a voice vote. Commissioner Moore voted against.**

#22-104-315 0 Madison Street (North of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup>. St.) Rezoning – Rezone from R1 one-family residential to RM2 medium density multiple-family residential. 0 Madison Street. (North of 2319 W. 7<sup>th</sup>. St. at W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. & St. Paul Ave.) (Kady Dadlez, 651/266-6619)

Commissioner Reilly gave the report. Commissioner Ochoa asked about the specifics of rezoning that came up at the public hearing. Commissioner Reilly responded that primary concerns were the variance and site plan review. The safety and stability of the bluff are among the primary concerns. There were other concerns regarding the rezoning for a tall building that requires being built into the bluff. It was noted that the proposed project site is a lot of record. It was also noted that the lot is outside the boundary of the study area in the “Shepard/Davern Small Area Plan.” The chair commented that this lot was originally platted and was buildable at some point. There was a general discussion around the view of the proposed apartment building from the home on top of the bluff.

**MOTION: Commissioner Rangel Morales moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.**

Commissioner Reilly acknowledged that we are building on land that has been stolen from the original occupants. Commissioner Risberg asked if an archeological study was required? Commissioner Reilly stated that is not a requirement. Commissioner Reilly also, announced that the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, December 15, 2022, is canceled.

#### **IV. Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee**

Commissioner Holst announced that the last meeting was canceled. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, December 21, 2022. Planning chair asked if there were questions about the 1-4 Unit Housing study? Commissioner Hood asked for a status update and timeline for the study. Planning Director Pereira stated we are starting the study process and it is likely going to be spread over several meetings. There will be several staff reports. Potential for adding a special meeting. Director Pereira also stated that there is the possibility this meeting could be held as a hybrid meeting. Commissioner Grill stated that non CNPC commissioners are welcome to come to the meeting. Planning Commission Chair also stated that this is Phase 2 of the study and the most impactful in terms of determining how to regulate city for zoning. There was general discussion about location and time for the meeting.

#### **VI. Transportation Committee**

Commissioner Risberg reported the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2022, on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall Annex at 4:30 p.m. There is only one agenda item and that is the Front Ave. mill overlay for design and recommendations for pedestrian safety improvements at targeted intersections.

## **VII. Communications-Nominations Committee**

Planning Director Luis Pereira reported the committee is reviewing applications for three Planning Commission vacancies. There are draft recommendations for the Mayor's Office. We're working on finalizing that now and hope to have some appointments very soon. There is an outline for the 2022 annual report. Should have a draft shortly for the committee to look at and offer feedback so that the report can be finalized. Director Pereira also stated that it would be helpful to have additional members on this committee. Commissioner Underwood, who is the chair, will be "termining out." We need two or three new members as well as a new chair.

## **VIII. Task Force/Liaison Reports**

Planning Chair Rangel Morales state that Commissioner Underwood is the task force liaison for the Riverview Corridor and will need a replacement. Director Pereira concurred and stated that they have talked about her continued involvement without wearing the "commissioner hat." Director Pereira has not spoken to our colleagues at the county about this matter.

Director Pereira reported that that the community advisory committee for the Anti-displacement & Community Wealth-building Project met and has released a survey that went live on December 8, 2022. The director reported that there is a lot of community engagement happening. Commissioner Moore's questions for the consultancy firm HR&A Advisors (they work nationwide) was that he wanted to know what surprised them by looking at our data? What stood out for the analysts was the level of disparity between African Americans and the dominant culture. Commissioner Moore was hoping they could layer the data over the neighborhoods so we can look and see how the "enclaves" are being affected by this displacement. There will be more granularity when the results are reported. Commissioner Reilly asked Director Pereira when the deliverables will be available? Director Pereira stated that intent with the CAC process is to have them vet everything first. CAC has looked at the landscape analysis and thinks maybe it can be posted and maybe do an informational presentation. Tony is the project manager, and we could work with him on that. Director Pereira suggested that once the engagement results (survey results) are in along with the landscape analysis that they should be presented together in February. The next deliverables will be the technical reports.

## **IX. Old Business**

None.

## **X. New Business**

Director Pereira took time to honor the career of Sonja Butler who is retiring as the Planning Commission Secretary. Sonja has been in this position since 2006. Director Pereira wanted to take time to honor her and let her know that she will be missed. The commissioners gave her a standing ovation. The Commission Chair also recognized Sonja.

**XI. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at time 9:30a.m.

Recorded and prepared by  
Karoline Finlay, Planning Commission Secretary  
Planning and Economic Development Department,  
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

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

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Luis Pereira  
Planning Director

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Nieeta Presley  
Secretary of the Planning Commission