

December 4, 2019

Attachment to Zoning Appeal Application
Project Name: Luther Seminary, South Campus
File No. 19-015-088

Grounds for appeal: The site plan is not consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance relative to section 61.402. Specifically, it is not consistent with the seventh bullet point: "the **safety** and convenience of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic both within the site and in relation to access streets, including traffic circulation features, the locations and design of entrances and exits and parking within the site". We are asking the Planning Commission to disapprove the expansion of the Branston Street parking lot component of the Site Plan for Luther Seminary due to the **SAFETY** of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic on Branston Street (Branston).

Description: Site drawings are attached. Following is a description of Branston Street on the south side of Hendon. Given that Luther's drawings/site plan omitted any mention of the immediate neighborhood in which Luther Seminary's Branston Street parking lot is located, we felt that the Commission should know all of the facts.

Branston Street, on the south side of Hendon, is a cul-de-sac. A children's park is located in the center of the cul-de-sac on a hill (see attached photos). To access housing on Branston there is a narrow one-way street going south into the cul-de-sac, and a narrow one-way street going north out of the cul-de-sac. Currently there are six children who live on Branston, ranging in ages from 2-14, three of whom are children of Seminary students. Many more neighborhood children and grandchildren (we have seen as many as 10-12 kids and their parents/grandparents at one time) play at the park on the swings and slide and other equipment. There is also a picnic table in the park.

There are seven Seminary-owned houses and seven Citizen-owned houses who use Branston to access their homes. On the west and south side of the cul-de-sac are the Seminary-owned houses and on the east side of Branston are the Citizen-owned houses, where we live and have lived for 25 years. There is one more Seminary-owned house on the south side of Branston that seems to use the alley east of Branston for parking access. Our side of Branston (east side) has one hour parking during the week unless there is a permit for resident parking. The west side of Branston is unrestricted street parking so U of M students, Augsburg PA program students, as well as Seminary students will park there. There is space for about 12 cars on the west side of Branston.

Important facts to consider in this appeal:

Fact 1: On the proposed site plan, Luther Seminary shows 19 open air spaces. There are no garages. Currently there are six garages (two buildings that have three garage spaces each) and six open air spaces. (See attached pictures of garages.) We have lived here for 25 years and we have seldom seen six cars parked in the open air spaces. And most of garages are not used for parking ... it seems like the garages are used for equipment storage. The net increase in the parking space count according to Luther is about seven. However, that is misleading based on historical and current usage of the parking lot. In reality, this change could result in 12 or more additional cars coming onto Branston to park in the new lot, obviously an increased flow of traffic. The number of parking spaces projected will obviously result in an increased flow of traffic and increased **safety** issues for our children. Another way to look at this: the proposed new lot contains 19 spaces. It is reasonable to assume that the Seminary would not

be constructing 19 new spaces and only use 6-8 of them. If the proposed new lot is, on average, 90% full, the traffic flow into the Branston lot will increase almost three times from its current usage level.

Fact 2: Luther is changing the use of this Branston parking lot. This change is not obvious in Luther's proposal. Currently the lot is used by student residents who live on Branston and are usually here for 1-2 years, maybe three years. The students become neighbors and are part of our neighborhood. They understand who lives on the very small, narrow cul-de-sac. They have kids who play at the park and/or the adult students also enjoy the park. Michael Morrow, VP from Luther Seminary, indicated to us that the proposed expanded parking lot will be for staff/faculty and visitors, as well as students. This change means more traffic by people who don't know the neighborhood, likely are on a tight timeline to get to Luther, and will be focused on work and/or meetings and/or classes. Seems like the worst combination: the Kiddos playing at the park and busy people trying to get somewhere on time. And we haven't even mentioned the school bus stop on Hendon and Branston on the north east side of the park (not in the cul-de-sac, but right by the park).

Fact 3: This neighborhood playground with fairly steep side slopes is located about 30 feet from the parking lot entrance. All motorists parking in the lot must enter and leave the lot on Branston Street, driving right past the playground times two (entering and leaving). The playground is busy, designed for Kiddos under the age of 12. The playground is about 250 feet in length so there is a long distance whereby the motorist must exercise extreme vigilance in order to avoid hitting a child who may be chasing a ball, playing in the snow, riding a bike, and just being an excited little kid running to the playground. Motorists in a hurry and/or who are unfamiliar with the neighborhood might not even see the playground as they pass by it to park in the lot. The proposed expansion of parking spaces, along with the change in use of the lot (from residents to workers/visitors), significantly increases the chances of a terrible accident. Anyone who would visit the site (a City official, Council person, etc.) would immediately understand this concern.

Conclusion:

We wrote this appeal because we believe it is our civic duty to provide City officials with the facts about a huge **safety** situation. We are hopeful that after learning about the **safety** hazard the proposed change will create, the Planning Commission will step in and halt this portion of Luther's site plan. The lack of **safety** comments in the permit review documents that we have seen indicate that City staff may not have had appropriate information regarding the increase in traffic **safety** hazards. Luther Seminary, along with City permit review staff, seem to have overlooked the **safety** impact of this parking lot expansion. These **safety** hazards created by this proposed parking lot expansion were easily discernible by Branston Street citizens as evidenced by a letter and petition (with 27 signatures of concerned neighborhood people) to Luther Seminary dated October, 2018 (see attachment).

A few other items that don't seem to fit anywhere but should be highlighted:

- 1) This proposed change was brought to the St. Anthony Park Community Council (District 12) during the CUP process. SAPCC supported the CUP "if the parking on Branston and in the lot off Branston can be managed to limit traffic from the lot and slow traffic on Branston" (see attachment). We have heard nothing more about this.
- 2) In the Zoning Committee Staff Report, Zoning File #19-013-075 dated March 6, 2019, on page 2, it states: "there are currently 188 parking spaces on the south campus (including 22 spaces

shared with Zvago/Ecumen and spaces shared with Sunrise Bank)". It also states that the total campus parking requirement to handle the maximum projected enrollment over the next 20 years is 153 spaces. Luther Seminary's facts as stated here just don't fit with the requested increase in parking spaces in the Branston lot. **The safety of our children should not be jeopardized because of perceived needed parking spaces anytime but especially when the facts provided don't support the need for more parking.**

- 3) A compromise may be possible between Luther Seminary, the City and the Citizens on Branston. We have not spoken with all of our neighbors about this update as of the filing of this appeal. However, one solution that we would be willing to take to our neighbors is trifold: Luther agrees to hold the parking lot spaces at or under 14 with the garages removed; the City erects big alert street signs on Branston about speed and children playing, and the City restricts parking on the west side of Branston that matches the one-hour weekday restriction on the east side. We believe this might answer most of the Branston Street Citizens' **safety** concerns.

This appeal is based on errors in facts and/or findings. And, hopefully, this information will support a decision by the Planning Commission to disapprove the Branston Street parking lot section of Luther's Site Plan.

Our ONLY concern is **SAFETY FOR OUR KIDDOS!**

Please visit Branston Street soon!

Respectfully submitted,

Meri Hauge / Don Hauge
Meri and Don Hauge

1478 Branston Street

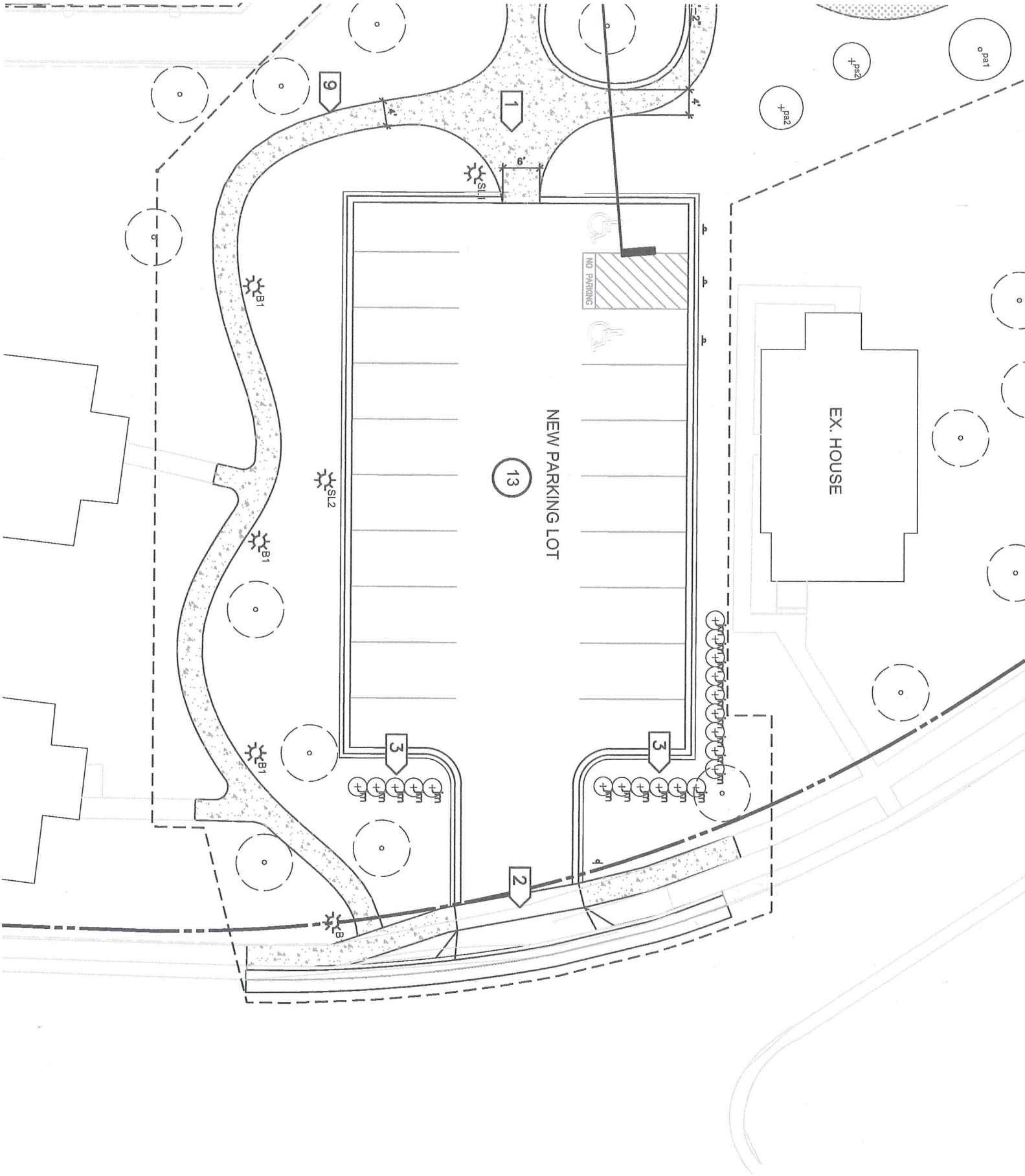
St. Paul, MN 55108

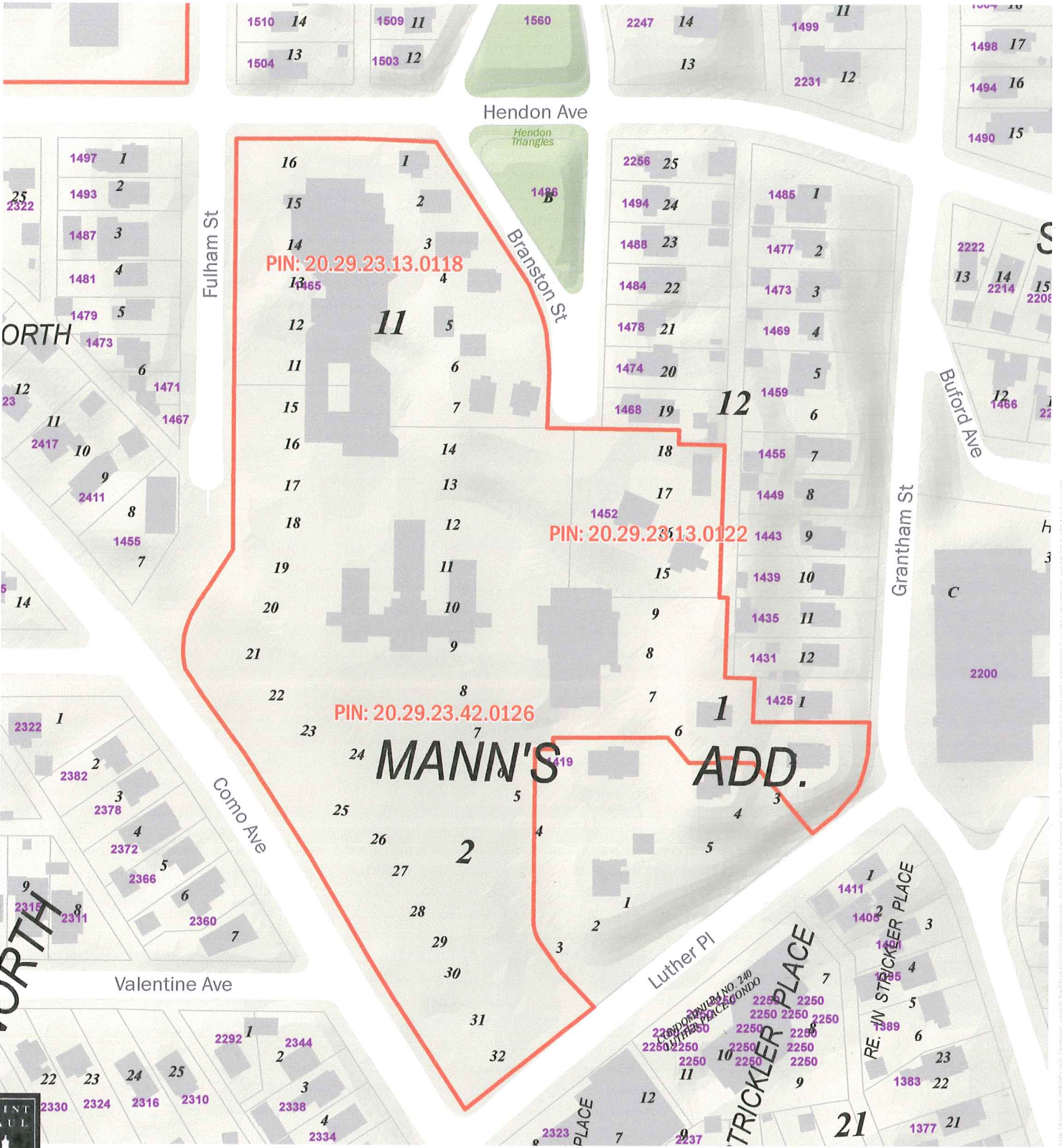
651-356-1952

merihauge@gmail.com, donhauge@gmail.com

cc: Michael Morrow, VP Finance, Luther Seminary

Attachments: Luther Seminary Site Drawings and CUP boundary map
March 7, 2019 draft meeting minutes from St. Anthony Park Community Council Land Use Committee
October 12, 2018 Neighborhood Petition Opposing Luther Seminary Proposed Branston St. Lot Changes
Photo copy of the Luther Seminary parking garages and lot
Photo copy of the children's park on Branston Street looking north from south end of cul-de-sac
Photo copy of west side of Branston Street when entering from Hendon onto one-way
Photo copy of east side of Branston Street when exiting from the south end of the cul-de-sac heading north





Luther Seminary South Campus CUP Boundary

March 2019



 Campus Boundaries

St. Anthony Park Community Council

2395 University Avenue West, Suite 300E
Saint Paul, MN 55114



City of Saint Paul
Dept. of Planning & Economic Development
Zoning Section – Michael Wade, Planner
1400 City Hall Annex – 25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1634

March 11, 2019

Dear Mr. Wade,

The St. Anthony Park Community Council (SAPCC) supports the conditional use permit revision to adjust the Luther Seminary campus boundary with the caveat that the parking on Branston and in the lot off Branston be managed to limit traffic from the lot and slow traffic on Branston. Per the recommendation of our Land Use Committee, the SAPCC Executive Committee voted unanimously to support the site plan and CUP revision at our meeting March 11, 2019.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn Murray".

Kathryn Murray
Executive Director

cc: Michael Morrow, Luther Seminary

ST. ANTHONY PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MEETING OF LAND USE COMMITTEE
JENNINGS COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (JCLC)
2455 University Ave W | ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2019 7PM -9PM

DRAFT Minutes

Present: Karen, Sherman, Ray, Roger, Nate, Carol, Walker, Amanda

Guests: David Miller, Jayna Paquin, Roger Paquin, Danielle Smith, Misha Dashevsky, Michael Morrow, Tayna Bell, Sara Weiner, Paul Schroeder, Ted Davis, John Carmody, Dick Gilyard, Irene Opsahl, Cathrine Reid Day.

Introductions, approve agenda, minutes of January meeting

Minutes: Walker's and Nate's, names need to be corrected. January minutes approved as corrected.
Agenda approved with no additions.

Raymond Station development update

- Presented by David Miller – Urbanworks Architecture
- Submitted design to HPC. Hoping to be on agenda on March 25. Will combine 4 parcels for the project. Current buildings do not have historical significance. Plan to have 127 apartment units and 10,000 sq ft commercial space. They expect 2 tenants in the commercial space - one office, one restaurant. There will be 27 surface parking spots behind the commercial space. There will be some residential parking on level one, enclosed. Underground parking is cost prohibited because of high water table and pollution, so one full floor of parking on second level. Small studios at 350 sq ft to 2 bedroom at 1000 sq ft. 60% of units will be at 80% AMI, mostly efficiency and one-bedroom. There will be about 25 2-bedroom units.
- Parking ratio is at 0.7. 86 parking stalls for residents. Tenants will pay utilities. Roof is solar ready but they are not planning to install solar..
- They are not seeking variances, but need CUP for height. Would like a letter of support for the CUP. Karen moved letter of support. Appreciates the commercial. Ray second. Passed 7 yes, 1 no. Opposition was due to not meeting the objective of 30% affordable at 60% AMI or lower. CUP request will probably be next week.

Luther Seminary Upper Campus Plans

- Michael Morrow & Tanya Bell
- CUP revision to adjust campus boundary (hearing 3/14), site plan review for modifications to Olson and Gullixson Halls (SPR 3/12).
- Looking for letters of support. Technically expanding the campus boundary because a mistake was made in 1986 and all of Olson is not included, so needs Planning Commission and City Council approval for the CUP. Amendment to get the boundary lines consistent with the existing boundary. The new CUP will just be the south campus including the area that was missed in 1986. Bockman is included in the campus boundary. Bockman is currently used for temporary housing, if that changes it will be addressed separately.
- Parking. Currently 188 spaces, proposed 177 spaces, required by city 144 spaces. Neighbors have concerns about a new parking lot off Branston if it increases traffic. They believe the parking will be used differently than current parking at that location. Currently has garages

used for resident parking. 12 spaces today including garages, 21 space surface parking lot proposed. There are many children who play at monkey island and in the streets around it. Branston currently has permit parking on one side, but not on the other.

- Roger approved support of the CUP if the parking on Branston and in the lot off Branston can be managed to limit traffic from the lot and slow traffic on Branston. Nate second. Unanimous approval.
- Roger moved support for site plan for changes to the Luther Seminary campus. Karen seconded. Unanimous approval.

1155 Raymond Avenue variance application (hearing date 3/11)

There were no concerns or issues raised regarding the variance request. Roger moved support, Ray second. Unanimous approval..

Lot line adjustment, zoning changes between Wycliff and Hampden (hearing is 3/14).

- Minor lot line adjustments due to railroad spur abandonment. Zoning makes the new lots have consistent zoning the same as the previous lots before the lot line adjustments.
- There were no objections. It was not felt that a motion of support was necessary.

Liquor license for The Lab.

- We gave general support previously. The license application has the specifics of what they are requesting. Hearing is in April.
- There were no surprises in the license request, it included what they had discussed with us before. Sherm moved we send a letter of support for the license hearing. Nate second. Unanimous approval.

Unified Design Standards (2/12 revision)

- Roger Purdy & John Carmody

- Guidelines and standards are at the heart of the values of the neighborhood. These standards have been developed by a group with representatives from Prospect Park Association, Towerside Innovation District, Creative Enterprise Zone and Saint Anthony Park Community Council. Roger Purdy and Bob Straughn were SAPCC representatives on the group.
- John showed a map of the four participating groups and the overlap between them. The standards are unified standards so that projects in overlapping districts have the same standards.
- Discussion was around the proposed technical committee that could help a developer with information on how the standards could be met in a successful development, whether there was any priority implied in the order of the standards, and making a stronger statement of the centrality of equity in the purpose. Responses to questions were that the technical committee is a work in progress and needs more fleshing out, there is no intended priority in the ordering of the standards and while it is important to state the importance of equity, it is more important to build it into the standards in a way that can be measured.
- Action on the draft standards was tabled until the next meeting. Roger stated his hope that we can approve a version of the standards at that meeting.

Land Use Committee 2019 Goals.

- Sherm Eagles
- We ran out of time to discuss goals. The committee members were asked to review the 2018 goals and the draft 2019 goals, and come prepared to discuss the draft goals and identify any additional goals that should be included.

Agenda items for next month

- Draft unified standards
- Draft 2019 committee goals
- City comments on SAP draft 10-year plan.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05

October 12, 2018

Dear Branston Street Neighbors, Friends and Interested Persons,

Re: Petition Opposing Preliminary Proposed Luther Seminary Plans for Additional Parking Spaces on Branston Street

On September 26, 2018, Don and I met with Michael Morrow, Vice President, Finance and Administration, Luther Seminary to discuss proposed plans regarding changes that were presented at a community meeting on Wednesday, September 19 at Olson Hall. Don and I couldn't be at the September 19 meeting so Michael agreed to meet with us on the 26th, at our home.

Two concerns have surfaced for Don and me. The selling of Breck Woods is one concern, but this concern has a group of people already looking at alternatives. The concern that is of utmost importance to me is preliminary proposed plans for the parking lot and garages directly across from our home at 1478 Branston Street. While the garages have never been very attractive from our point of view as we walk out of our home, I was hopeful that Luther would be able to mitigate the "ugliness" of those garages with changes being proposed.

While I was initially encouraged when Michael Morrow stated that they were considering removing the garages, my encouragement quickly moved to upset when he stated that they are potentially looking at adding an additional 12-15 surface spaces that would replace the garages (currently it looks like there are 6-7 spaces, so they are talking a total of about 22 spaces). While this change could affect the value of our home, my biggest concern is the SAFETY of our children who use Monkey Island for playing, as well as the safety of several families who bring their children to Branston Street to learn how to ride bikes, etc. I absolutely love seeing these wonderful children and grandchildren on our street. They laugh, play, rough-house and enjoy the safety of being on our cul-de-sac street. We also have had several "Wiffel" ball games at the end of Branston.

My intent is NOT to be an alarmist about the possibility of more surface parking spaces across from my home. Michael Morrow assured me these are "preliminary" ideas. However, I want to alert all of you to this possibility and perhaps "head Luther Seminary off at the pass" and ask them to develop other possible parking solutions. I totally understand that they have some critical financial issues that need addressing. However, the SAFETY of our children comes ahead of any financial issues in my mind. I have contacted both Mitra Jalali Nelson, our City Council representative, and Matthew Graybar, the City of St. Paul person who would provide Luther with the rules on parking (Matthew sent me a link to the parking rules which are not easy for my understanding).

PETITION TO LUTHER SEMINARY:

Please, for SAFETY of our children, find an alternative to the preliminary proposal that increases parking spaces in the lot on Branston Street in St. Paul. Please cease and desist with your current thinking! We are confident of your creativity and that there is something else out there that will work for your student and faculty parking.

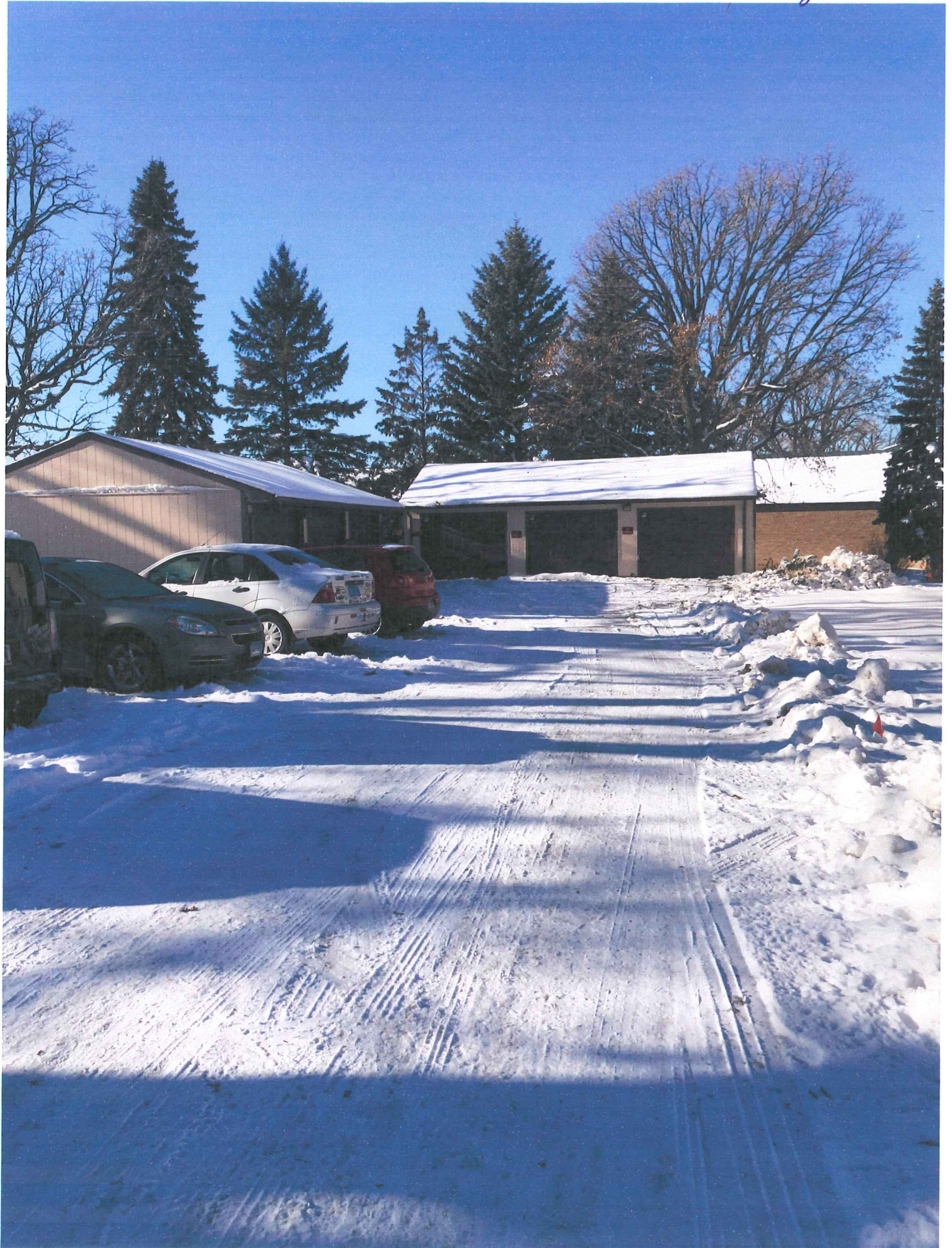
Name	Address/Email/Phone Number
Michael Tounley	1543 Alvantham St. St. Paul MN 55108 (Michael Tounley)
Brennan Tounley	1543 Grantham St. St. Paul, MN 55108 (Brennan Tounley)
Susan Webster	1463 Grantham St. Paul, MN 55108
Meredith Staessel	1540 Branston St St Paul MN 55108
Kelly Sherman-Conroy	1483 Branston St St Paul, MN 55108
Jonathan Schroeder	1545 Branston St St Paul MN 55108
C. SOPHIA ALBOTT	1494 BRANSTON ST. PAUL MN 55108
MICAH EISBERMAN	1467 BRANSTON STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55108
Roger & JAGRA PAQUIN 1484 Branston St.	1484 Branston St. St. Paul, MN 55108
Abigail Gouse	1545 Branston St. Saint Paul, MN 55108
Alexis Lorenz	2279 Hoyt Ave W. Falcon Heights, MN 55108
Danielle Westhoff Smith	1510 Fulham St St. Paul MN 55108
Kristin Madsen	1558 Fulham St St Paul MN 55108
Anna Skovholt	1473 Grantham St Paul, MN 55108
Aven Skovholt	1473 Grantham St St Paul MN 55108

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Name	Address/Email/Phone Number
Kyoko Katayama	14174 Branston St., St. Paul, MN 55108 Tenshin.kyoko@gmail.com
Bob Beck	2256 Hendon Ave, St Paul, MN 55108
Mary Beck	2256 Hendon Ave. St. Paul, MN 55108 mbeck@bitlaw.com 651-336-2816
C. SOPHIA AUBOTT	1494 BRANSTON ST. ST PAUL, MN 55108
Mary Lou Rossberg	1469 Grantham St. St. Paul, MN. 55108
Robb Duast	1469 Grantham St. St. Paul, MN. 55108
Becky Girdman	2222 Hendon, St. Paul MN 55108
Amy Eberman	1467 Branston St. St. Paul, MN 55108
David Christians	1468 Branston St. St. Paul, MN 55108
Michelle Christians	1468 Branston St. St. Paul 55108
Dann V May	1478 Branston St. St. Paul 55108
Mei E. Hauge	1478 Branston St. 651-356-1952

12/4/2019 Current Luther Sem. Branston St. Garages and Parking Lot



12/9/2019 - Branston Street South side of Hendon
Please note the narrowness of the street -
Both West and East sides.
Children's park in the center of cul-de-sac.

North
Hendon is on North



West

East

South
(end of cul-de-sac)

12/4/2019

East side of Branston

One way leaving the cul-de-sac
Citizen housing on left
Children's park at top of hill

South



East

West

Branston

North
Hendon

12/4/2019 West side of Branston St.

Luther Seminary student housing on right

Open street parking

Children's park at top of hill on left

South



East

West

← Branston

North
↓
Hendon