

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

Minutes January 11, 2019

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, January 11, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Anderson, DeJoy, Mouacheupao, Reveal, Underwood; and Messrs. Baker, Edgerton, Fredon, Khaled, Lindeke, Ochs, Oliver, Rangel Morales, Risberg, and Vang.

Commissioners Absent: Ms. Lee, and Mr. *Perryman.

*Excused

Also Present: Luis Pereira, Planning Director; Dr. Corrie, Planning and Economic Development Director, Ya Ya Diatta, Safety and Inspections, Hannah Burchill, Lucy Thompson, Bill Dermody, Josh Williams, Kady Dadlez, Mike Richardson, Alena DeGrado, Michael Wade, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes December 14th and December 28, 2019.

MOTION: *Commissioner Fredson moved approval of the minutes of December 14, 2018. Commissioner Underwood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

and

MOTION: *Commissioner Fredson moved approval of the minutes of December 14, 2018. Commissioner Underwood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Reveal had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Luis Pereira announced that the Ryan Companies will be holding a community wide public open house about the Ford Site Master Plan Amendments and Zoning Study on January 19, 2019, 11:00 a.m. at Central Baptist Church, 420 N. Roy Street, Saint Paul, MN 55104.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING: 2040 Comprehensive Plan – Item from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. (*Lucy Thompson, 651/266-6578*)

Link to the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/CSP_2040_CompPlan110218PHDraft_Reduced.pdf

Lucy Thompson, PED staff, made a brief presentation summarizing the work that staff, the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee (CNPC) and Planning Commission have done since 2015 to get to today's public hearing. The CNPC has been instrumental in maintaining a city-wide perspective and helping staff reflect the community's vision for 2040 in the draft Plan. The six city-wide chapters – Land Use; Transportation, Parks, Open Space and Recreation; Housing; Water Resources Management; and Heritage and Cultural Preservation – are the subject of today's hearing. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area chapter will come to the Commission in approximately two months. Commissioners got comments to-date in their packets; comments received since January 4 are at their places. It is staff's intention that the record will be kept open until Monday, January 14, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

Chair Reveal read the rules of procedure for the public hearing.

The following people spoke. The key points of their remarks are summarized below.

1. Terri Thao, 1492 Clarence Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106, speaking on behalf of the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL). CAAL has more than 1,600 members working on community priorities to ensure equity is achieved for Asian Minnesotans. CAAL advocates for the best ways to support the economic health of Asian Americans in Saint Paul, they acknowledge that their communities are not monoliths and reflect a wide range of experiences. In Minnesota, the racial category of "Asian" includes over 40 different ethnic groups, with a higher proportion being immigrants and refugees relative to the native-born Asian population. The Asian population continues to experience economic, housing, and educational disparities at alarming rates. Ms. Thao made the following points: 1) the City should dis-aggregate data for sub-categories within the Asian category; 2) the definition of homelessness should be expanded to include "houselessness;" 3) the City should contract with Asian-based community organizations to broaden its community outreach.
2. Jeanne Lee, APAC, (No address given) Ms. Lee made the following points: 1) more needs to be done with housing choice so that people can age in place; 2) there is a potential negative impact from code enforcement on seniors and those in poverty; 3) the City needs flexibility in housing planning, production and architecture; 3) aging housing stock needs funding and education to maintain affordable housing.
3. Zack Mensinger, 1226 Englewood, Saint Paul, Mn 55104. Mr. Mensinger spoke in favor of the plan, esp. H-48, which supports more housing types and choices in areas designated as Urban Neighborhoods. He supports the Neighborhood Nodes concept, and would like to see more of them, including Snelling/Minnehaha, and along the A-Line and Green Line transit corridors. In LU-13, he would like the policy to recommend eliminating – not just reducing - parking minimums. Mr. Mensinger noted that parking is an extremely inefficient use of land in a built-up city, and it can be a cost burden for small businesses.

4. Peter Berglund, 2028 Grand Avenue, Apt. 11, Saint Paul, MN 55105. Mr. Berglund is a strong advocate for high density and the use of mass transit. He supports the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Transportation Goal #4 to shift away from single-occupant vehicles toward other modes. Mr. Berglund sent a letter to the Villager newspaper, which he will submit after his testimony today. He advocated for better “regular” bus service (not streetcars, BRT and light rail), including more and better bus shelters that serve the average bus rider.

Chair Reveal asked if he thinks the situation has improved in the last decade or so.

Mr. Berglund said not much in terms of bus shelters. He emphasized the greatest need for more bus shelters but said that bus shelters with walls and heating would be welcome as well. Mr. Berglund also spoke in support of lower parking maximums.

Commissioner Baker noted that Metro Transit is responsible for the number, placement and design of bus shelters.

Lucy Thompson, PED staff, said that staff will pass these comments along to Metro Transit.

5. Carol Kist, 195 Palace Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105. Her biggest concern is a pond at St. Kate’s that overflows and floods the sidewalk on Cleveland Avenue whenever it rains. With a new parking lot at St. Kate’s, there seems to be even more water flowing toward Cleveland. Regarding walkability, it would be nice if the sidewalks were shoveled in the winter. She spoke in favor of Cleveland and Cretin being a one-way pair from Marshall to Ford Parkway; she believes this would improve pedestrian safety.

Commissioner Lindeke said that it is possible to report unshoveled sidewalks through a web site called Saint Paul Connect. You can send a photo via your smart phone; the property owner receives a letter; and two days later an inspection is done.

6. Rick Varco, 2265 Youngman Avenue, Apt. #208, Saint Paul, MN 55116. He thinks that Saint Paul should follow the lead of Minneapolis and use the Saint Paul 2040 Plan to set the stage for a broad comprehensive upzoning of the city. A city-wide upzoning would address the three most important challenges facing us as a city: 1) income and equality - there is nothing you can do more for low wage and moderate-income people than make housing cheaper. 2) climate change - single-family zoning forces people to commute; upzoning can help us go a half to a third of the way towards meeting our carbon reduction standards just by eliminating excess commutes. 3) racial disparities – by allowing housing choice throughout the city, prosperity is available in more neighborhoods and to more populations.

The 2040 draft is a great start but suggested a few changes/additions: 1) more Neighborhood Nodes, especially in Mac Groveland, Highland and Summit Hill; 2) clarity on what it means to be a Neighborhood Node; 3) eliminate parking minimums; 4) ensure that H-48 applies to all parcels in Urban Neighborhoods.

Commissioner Ochs asked Mr. Varco to repeat the third point in his opening comments.

Mr. Varco said there has been broad recognition that, while Saint Paul is a prosperous city,

we have vast racial disparities in income, education and health outcomes. One way those disparities were created was through restrictive zoning that concentrated poverty and people of color in certain sections of the city. One way to alleviate disparities would be to reverse that policy and allow multi-family homes that low income and people of color can afford in the more prosperous areas in the city; like Highland, MacGroveland and Summit Hill.

7. Pat Thompson, 1496 Raymond Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108, she is a board member on the St. Anthony Park Community Council, and Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee, but is speaking on her own behalf about climate change and equity. Saint Paul needs to lead on climate change mitigation (through density, transit and more Neighborhood Nodes) and adaptation (through housing more people). There should be more Neighborhood Nodes, especially along existing and projected transit routes. Equity involves breaking down the single-family zoning cost barrier.
8. Jack Byers, Executive Director of the Payne Phalen Community Council, 567 Payne Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55130. His comments are in the spirit of suggestions not complaints, with the hope that when going forward, District 5 can collaborate more closely with Planning and Economic Development (PED) and the Commission to help realize this plan. Mr. Byers made the following points: 1) It is very important that every map in the plan includes the ACP50 boundary. 2) The City needs a strong and unifying employment and economic development set of policies in the plan. He's concerned that the policies that relate to economic development are too diffuse. 3) On page 7, the last sentence of the last paragraph should be the City's "marching orders" for the next couple of decades, but it is difficult from the Plan to tell how this will be implemented. 4) The Plan circles around the critical nexus between where people live, go to school or work and how they get between the two. An economic development employment chapter or strategy could help. The Land Use and Transportation policies leave out consideration of where opportunity and access to job opportunities are for a population that doesn't have high educational attainment and has a hard time getting a job. The source of employment opportunities that might help raise people out of poverty are in the business parks, but transit does not serve them because they don't have a strong intensity of residential uses or employment.
9. Michael Russell, one of the Co-Chairs on the St. Anthony Park Community Council, 1480 Chelmsford Street, Saint Paul, MN 55108. Mr. Russell applauds the forward-looking, progressive perspective of the Plan. The specter of global climate change requires energy conservation, transit, food access and the increasing resilience of communities. Climate change will disproportionately affect the poor, so the Plan needs to look at affordable rental and ownership option. He also spoke in favor of reducing hurdles for new businesses, supporting the creative economy and allowing more land uses in industrial areas.
10. Bob Morrison, a board member of the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association, 1649 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105. He said that he has been following the evolution of the 2040 Plan for a few years and he thinks we're in a good space in terms of what has come together. Specifically, the departments seem to be communicating with each other with an intent to continue that into the future. He asked what process has been established to monitor and measure the results of the plan and suggested an annual feedback session. He noted that Map T-8, page 69 shows a proposed transitway down Summit and Grand avenues that is not in the (regional) 2040 Transportation Policy Plan.

Bill Dermody, PED staff, acknowledged that the Summit-Grand proposed future transitway is not in the regional Transportation Policy Plan and would have to be studied if approved as part of the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan.

11. Shirley Erstad, Executive Director at Friends of Parks and Trails of Saint Paul and Ramsey County, 1660 Laurel Avenue, Saint Paul, Mn 55104. She made the following points: 1) The Comprehensive Plan should make note of the no-net-loss provision of the City Charter. This provision is highly relevant to all development decisions involving our parks system. 2) There is currently no official map of the city's parklands making the goals of maintenance and asset management challenging. They recommend the city make mapping parkland a priority. 3) The current Comprehensive Plan calls for a parkland zoning designation and that designation has yet to occur. They suggest the City make creating a zoning designation for parks a priority. 4) Ms. Erstad recommended several specific wording changes in PR-1, PR-24, PR-26 and PR-29. The specific changes are noted in the letter submitted by the Friends.
12. Jake Reilly, 1220 Earl Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106. He thanked staff for developing a plan that listened to people and is consumable by everyone who lives, works and plays in this community. Map LU-5, Community Designation, must be revised to show Saint Paul in context with surrounding communities, and the Plan must state that the minimum residential density for an urban center is 20 units per acre. Mr. Reilly urged the Commission to incorporate a policy or an element of the Implementation Plan that examines how to collaborate, coordinate or support efforts to bring people who are not participating in the labor force at all to move into the workforce. Many of our employers in Saint Paul could solve their workforce shortage issues with those already living here in Saint Paul. This is both an equity and human rights issue. Mr. Reilly asks the Planning Commission to revisit two elements of the Housing Chapter: 1) Consider a "housing first" policy to ensure that all people living in Saint Paul have a place to live in; and 2) regarding Policy H-32, he discouraged the City from being too rigid about the 10-10-10 split for affordability in City-funded projects. He hopes that the City thinks about how to be accountable to those engaged in developing the Plan and to those who are yet to come.
13. Tom Darling, a board member of the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA) 445 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55107. He said that Summit Avenue is special and needs protection. One impediment for protecting Summit Avenue is the fact that it spans at least four district councils. There is no official City group that speaks for the entire avenue. SARPA fills that role, but it is not sanctioned by the City in the way that district councils are. He believes SARPA should have the same status as the district councils, so that there is one organization looking out for the entire stretch of Summit Avenue.

Commissioner Fredson inquired about Mr. Darling's reference to Summit Avenue becoming like Park Avenue.

Mr. Darling said in Minneapolis, Park Avenue is an area of beautiful mansions, but it has no soul now. It's not the vibrant place that hundreds and thousands of people used to enjoy. He does not want this to happen to Summit Avenue.

14. Kathleen Kelso, 2155 Jefferson Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105, representing the Saint Paul Advisory Community on Aging (ACOA). ACOA supports the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Their report, *Reframing Aging: Opportunities for Aging in Community*, recommends

that the themes Aging in Community and Healthy Aging be given critical attention as we prepare for a demographic shift that will require new housing models, new transit models, and broad-based connectivity. This demographic shift means fewer people in the workforce, increased need for health and social services, increased demand for affordable and accessible housing and transit, walkable community environments and educational services. All of this comes at a significant cost to local governments, educational agencies and non-profit organizations. This demographic shift and consequent increase and demand for services compels local government to facilitate community-based planning and services that will promote health and vital aging, and maximize contributions of our older population, while minimizing expenditures. They are confident the implemented Comprehensive Plan will become regionally and nationally recognized for its intentional work and results in creating an intergenerational city that embraces aging in community.

MOTION: Commissioner Mouacheupao moved to close the public hearing, leave the record open for written testimony until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, January 14, 2019 and to refer the matter back to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and recommendation. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Chair Reveal thanked everyone in the audience for coming out today and for sharing their thoughts. She especially wanted to thank Lucy Thompson, staff, Kathy Mouacheupao Chair of the Comprehensive & Neighborhood Planning Committee, and Jeff Risberg Vice Chair of CNPC for the work that has gone into this. She also thanked former commissioners Terri Thao and Paula Merrigan (who chaired this through the early part of the planning process before she died from cancer 1 ½ years ago).

V. Zoning Committee

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

One item to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, January 15, 2019:

- CP Retarder Tower Addition – Building addition at 1000 Shop Road. Patrick Mooney-CP Railway SPR# 19-000276

NEW BUSINESS

#18-132-440 Marshall Group LLC – Rezone from T1 Traditional Neighborhood to T2 Traditional Neighborhood. 1819 Marshall Avenue, NE corner at Fairview. (*Kady Dadlez, 651/266-6619*)

Commissioner Edgerton gave the report, stating that the applicant purchased and renovated a 10-unit apartment building, it has a certificate of occupancy for only 9 units, which is a legally nonconforming use in a T1 district that only allows 6 units. Increasing the certificate of occupancy to 10 units would increase the nonconforming use. The applicant wants to rezone to T2 which will allow the 10 units.

Chair Reveal said that the 10th unit is there and has been operating, it just was not included in the Certificate of Occupancy.

Commissioner Edgerton said that it has been operating as a 10 unit building with a certificate of occupancy for 9 units. They wish to increase it to 10, so they need to rezone.

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

Chair Reveal added that in the future when looking at things like the Marshall Avenue Zoning Study that they have a more explicit explanation of what's conforming and what is not. Because they did not know in this case that they had this issue with this building. So next time there is a zoning study she would like to see what impact it has on conformity or not.

Commissioner Edgerton announced the items on the agenda at the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, 17, 2019.

VI. Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee

Commissioner Risberg had nothing more to add.

VII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Lindeke announced that their last meeting on December 31, 2018 was canceled. But they are meeting on Monday, January 14, 2019 to discuss the Como Avenue Trail Project and TH 5, Arcade to 120, both will be presented by Public Works staff.

VIII. Communications Committee

Commissioner Underwood announced that they have signed off on the 2018 Annual Report. This report will be on the agenda at the next Planning Commission meeting on January 25, 2019.

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

Commissioner Ochs announced that he met with Walter Smith several times last week regarding Reconnect Rondo; in the meeting was Marvin Anderson, Tony Johnson, and Ross Currier. They discussed more about the overall picture and all the other players that are at the table from MNDOT to US Federal Highway Administration to the Governor's Office which seem to have a strong interest in the Rondo Land Bridge as well as some people from the Mayor's Office. One of the things they are struggling with is to get the City on board and identify where and how the City plays a role between the State and Federal governments and other agencies. There is a lot of momentum interest and they want to keep it moving. It's taken a while there's been a lot of lofty ideas and strategies floating around so they need to start sinking stakes into the ground.

Commissioner Rangel Morales has been thinking about the potential impact on the people who either work or live on top of a freeway system. When Mr. Anderson came and talked about it, one of the possible options was that it would be an area where people could live. He was wondering how much consideration was given to the people living over a highway and the pollution funnel that exists within a highway corridor. So, if you could keep that in mind when you have discussions with them.

Commissioner Ochs said that is one of the items that is how we address the health and

environmental impacts of housing, and businesses over a freeway. In fact, they are looking to bring forth innovative ideas that make this a unique situation so that it is more than just an extension of land over a freeway. Also, what is going to make this a worthwhile investment.

Commissioner Edgerton said that the Dale Street bridge over 94 is being redesigned so it is important to connect with that effort.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business


Commissioner Lindeke said that the Comprehensive Plan comment roundup is very interesting he has not seen this type of format before. Also, there's a lot where it says name not available and there is nothing there maybe those could be cut out in the future. But he really likes the format.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

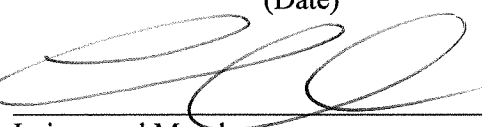
Recorded and prepared by
Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary
Planning and Economic Development Department,
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,



Luis Pereira
Planning Director

Approved 2/8/19

(Date)


Luis Rangel Morales
Secretary of the Planning Commission