



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

Minutes February 17, 2023

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, February 17, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

- Commissioners Present:** Mmes.: Grill, Kantner, Mitchell, Presley and Thomas
Messrs.: Holst, Houmas, Khadar, Martinson, Rangel Morales, Risberg, Ochoa, Ortega, Syed and Taghioff
- Commissioners Absent:** Mmes.: Starling and
Messrs.: Hackney, Hood, McMurtrey, Moore and Reilly
- Also Present:** Sheri Moore; City Clerk, Luis Pereira; Planning Director, Karoline Finlay; Planning Secretary, YaYa Diatta; DSI, Kady Dadlez and Spencer Miller-Johnson

I. Swearing in of New Commissioners

New Planning Commission members Ianni Houmas, Brian Martinson and Luis Enrique Ortega were sworn in by Shari Moore, City Clerk. After the new commissioners were sworn in Planning Commission Chair Luis Rangel Morales started a "round robin" of introductions for the new commissioners. Each commissioner took their turn introducing themselves; their ward and how long they have been on the Planning Commission.

- Planning Chair Luis Rangel Morales is a resident of Ward 3 in the city's Mac-Groveland neighborhood and he has served on the commission since 2017.
- Commissioner Holst is a resident of Ward 5 in the city's North End neighborhood and chairs the Comprehensive Neighborhood Committee and has been a Planning Commissioner for a year.
- Commissioner Kantner is a resident of Ward 1 in the city's Summit/University neighborhood and has been on the commission for a year.
- Commissioner Taghioff is a resident of Ward 2 in the city's Summit Hill neighborhood. He is involved with District Council 16 and chairs the zoning and land use committee.
- Commissioner Risberg is a resident of Ward 1 in the city's Lexington/Hamline neighborhood. He has been a member of the Planning Commission since 2017 and chairs the Transportation Committee.
- Commissioner Ortega is a resident of Ward 2 on the city's West Side. He is new to the commission and has a background in education and community research.

- Commissioner Mitchell is a resident of Ward 7 on the city's east side.
- Commissioner Houmas is a resident of Ward 6 in the city's Greater East Side. He serves as the president of District Council 2 and is the Chair of the Purple Line.
- Commissioner Khadar is a resident of Ward 6 in the Payne/Phalen neighborhood. He serves as the co-director of the Housing Justice Program at the East Side Freedom Library
- Commissioner Thomas is a resident of Ward 6 on the city's east side and has been on the Planning Commission for about a year.
- Commissioner Ochoa is a resident of Ward 4 in the city's Hamline/Midway neighborhood, and he also serves on the Zoning Committee.
- Commissioner Syed is a resident of Ward 1 in the Summit/University neighborhood and he serves on the Zoning Committee as well.
- Commissioner Grill is a resident of Ward 3 and is the Planning Commission's Vice Chair. Commissioner Grill lives in the West Seventh neighborhood and she serves on the Zoning Committee and Comprehensive Neighborhood Planning Committee.
- Commissioner Martinson is a resident of Ward 4 and is a new commissioner. He is a semi-retired sociologist and the only non-motorized member of the Met Council's Transportation Advisory Board.

Planning Director Pereira also introduced himself. Director Pereira has been the Planning Director for four years now. Previously he served as a Planner for the City of Saint Paul. Planning Secretary Karoline Finlay has been a city employee for seventeen years. She served the previous eight years in the Fire Department prior to coming to PED and before that she served nine years in the Police Department.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 3, 2023

The minutes from the February 3, 2023 Planning Commission meeting were not available for review. They will be reviewed at the March 3, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

III. Chair Announcements

The chair noted that with commissioners leaving the Planning Commission (Com. Underwood) that there are opening on the various committees under the Planning Commission umbrella. Specifically he mentioned the Communications-Nominations Committee and the Transportation Committee. The Chair said he would be reaching out to current commissioners to fill open committee spots.

IV. Planning Director Announcements

Director Pereira shared with the commission that PED leadership team had a strategic workshop last week. To discuss department priorities and constraints. Next workshop will focus on workplans and collaboration. With the goal of developing strategic priorities.

Director Pereira echoed the chair in regard to filling open committee spots. Especially the Transportation Committee. It is a unique committee that has both Planning Commissioners and citizens who form the committee. He appreciates the willingness of commissioners to step and participate.

V. Zoning Committee

SITE PLAN REVIEW

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Syed reported that the Zoning Committee met on February 9, 2023. There were three items on the agenda. The first item was a rezoning at 271 Snelling Ave. N., SW corner of Snelling and Iglehart. District 13 made no recommendation and there were no letters in support or opposition of the rezoning. The Zoning Committee voted unanimously to approve.

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

Commissioner Syed reported that District Council 5 made no recommendation regarding the rezoning at 869 Arkwright St. from RT1 two-family residential to RT2 townhouse residential. The Zoning Committee did not receive any letters in support or opposition of the rezoning. After the review and discussion the Zoning Committee voted unanimously to approve the rezoning at 869 Arkwright St.

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

Commissioner Ortega asked the Chair if he could abstain as he is a new member and not quite up to speed. The Chair explained that he could. Commissioner Ortega then abstained.

Commissioner Syed reported that District Council 13 made no recommendation for the rezoning of 1598 Carroll Ave. There were no letters in support and four letters in opposition. After the Zoning Committee reviewed the application and discussed the matter they voted unanimously to approve the rezoning at 1598 Carroll Ave. The Chair asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Holst asked if it was correct that the owners want to use the property for parking? Commissioner Taghioff explained that the owner is adding additional capacity to their site. Which is a triangular corner. By increasing their industrial capacity they are losing some parking. There are two parcels to the west that are already parking and they want to use the last chunk by the road as parking. The reason for the rezoning even though it is going to be used for parking is because it is parking for an industrial plant. The zoning needs to match the purpose. The Chair asked about the letters of opposition. Commissioner Grill summarized that some of the neighbors had concern about the additional parking not being used for parking as well as other changes to the site. Commissioner Holst asked why the Zoning Committee chose the I1 zoning over IT? Commissioner Grill responded that after staff testimony and reading the letters in opposition they felt this was the most appropriate. Zoning the parcel I1 matched the zoning for the current industrial complex. Commissioner Ochoa commented that it's the same ownership. Commissioner Taghioff further explained that the site is in a residential area. Zoning 1598 Carroll Ave. as I1 versus light industrial is the least intensive zoning designation.

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

Commissioner Kantner shared what she finds helpful to fully grasp items coming before the Planning Commission is to go to the Zoning Committee webpage and review the materials that are online prior to the Planning Commission meeting. She especially pays attention if there is split vote in the Zoning Committee. The Chair commented that the city has done a great job of posting materials online. In the past when he started with the Planning Commission they were mailed to the commissioners.

VI. Comprehensive Neighborhood Planning Committee

Commissioner Holst gave the report for the Comprehensive Neighborhood Planning Committee. The committee has been meeting for the past four weeks to discuss the 1-4 Unit Housing Study Phase 2 which has three parts. The purpose of the study is to evaluate and update the residential zoning in the city. The committee is releasing the study to the Planning Commission to move forward with a public hearing. The committee is including in their release questions they would like answered by the public. The committee recognized that there is always public feedback around public hearings but they have specific questions that they would like answered. Planning Chair Rangel Morales commented that this study is similar to the study that was done in Minneapolis that was fairly controversial. The Chair encouraged all commissioners to review the materials. He stated that Commissioner Kantner did a great job summarizing; including what and how to prioritize. He asks that commissioners who maybe have an idea for an alternative approach reach out to staff.

Commissioner Holst commented their next meeting will be on March 1st. With the intent to release it to the Planning Commission to set a public hearing date. Director Pereira responded in the affirmative that the next Comprehensive Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting is on March 1.

Commissioner Taghioff asked what materials if any will be included beyond the study? He gave the example of the Summit Ave. Regional Bike Plan how there was a 10-minute YouTube video presentation. Planning Chair Morales responded that staff is working to create a condensed report. Planning Director Pereira also commented that staff is working on a presentation that will consolidate the information. There are also new FAQs on the 1-4 Unit Housing Study webpage. Staff is also planning additional public engagement. There will be two webinars held in mid-March. Staff is also going to be reaching out to different community organizations.

Commissioner Ortega asked about information being release in other languages both written and orally. Director Pereira responded that currently there are no materials translated into other languages. He stated that Spanish, Hmong and Somali are the most commonly spoken languages in St. Paul. Director Pereira pointed out that we need to “distill” very technical zoning language and policy changes into more accessible formats. That he can work with PED communications personnel on this.

There was general discussion regarding how to find information on the study ([1-4 Unit Housing Study | Saint Paul Minnesota \(stpaul.gov\)](https://www.stpaul.gov/1-4-Unit-Housing-Study)), how to get the information out to the public and how to engage the public as well as the timeline. Director Pereira responded to the discussion by stating that the committee’s recommendation will probably be presented to the Planning Commission at the next meeting (March 3, 2023) and then a public hearing date will be set. Usually about thirty days from then. Once a date for a public hearing has been set that is when the community engagement would be set in motion.

VII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Risberg gave the report for the committee. They met on February 6 and the Public Works Director Sean Kershaw gave a presentation on the Mayor’s proposed 1% sales tax. The city has many critical needs when it comes to its streets; there are streets in the city have never received a mill and overlay. The new sales tax would add \$30 million dollars annually and would go to taking care of the city’s streets. The proposal is on its way to the legislature for approval. If approved by the legislature it would go on the ballot for voters to approve.

VIII. Communications-Nominations Committee

There were no updates from the Communications-Nominations Committee. Commissioner Kantner feels that the committee needs to meet regarding the release and engagement for the 1-4 Unit Housing Study. She will work with Director Pereira to schedule a meeting.

IX. Task Force/Liaison Reports

The Chair asked Commissioner Mitchell to give a report from the Anti-Displacement and Community Wealth-building Community Advisory Committee. Commissioner Mitchell reported that there is a lot of data and research. She reported that the study has given three definitions of gentrification. This led to a conversation regarding an opportunity to stop the gentrification of Saint Paul. Poorer residents are being pushed out of the city. However, we don't know where they are going. The study also has a focus on job creation and the importance of creating jobs for lower income residents and creating opportunities for them to increase their wages. The community advisory committee will continue to meet and there will be more community engagement. The discussion begins to focus on displacement versus gentrification.

Planning Chair Rangel Morales stated that the Planning Commission passed a resolution asking the city to study inclusionary zoning and this in turn led to the study. The Chair also commented that there are outside consultants who are performing the study and reporting to the city the study results. Director Pereira stated that the 1-4 Housing Unit Study has been directly informed by the anti-Displacement study as it relates to housing. The 1-4 Housing Unit Study is an anti-displacement tool. Single family housing can't continue the way it is and there is already a housing shortage. There was some general discussion regarding how the anti-displacement study and the city's efforts play into the Hillcrest/Heights development. Commissioner Mitchell stated that the St. Paul Port Authority met with the Comprehensive & Neighborhood Planning Committee but that they have a lot of questions that the Port Authority hasn't answered. Director Pereira stated that the St. Paul Port Authority owns the site and developed the City-approved master plan. It has now completed environmental review, and they are in talks with developers for the site. They have a workforce agreement in place to encourage the hiring of Saint Paul residents. That has gone from a requirement to an incentive program. For example, a required business's escrow payments could be returned to them over time based on the number of Saint Paul and neighborhood residents they hire. Commissioner Mitchell added that these jobs usually go to the low wage earners and not the managers and directors and that is who needs to be hired from the east side.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

Senior City Planner Spencer Miller-Johnson gave a presentation on minor amendments to the Highland Bridge/Ford site. The amendment is being proposed to meet HOURCAR's business model. Currently the master plan states that car sharing occurs on private property instead of the public right of way. The amendment would allow for car sharing in the public right of way matching the business model of HOURCAR and increasing access to car sharing. This amendment has been requested by Ryan Companies who is the owner and developer of the site. This change is consistent with the master plan. According to Minnesota State statute 15.99, the city must complete a review and appeals period by March 20, 2023. Public Works and the Parks Department support the draft decisions from PED and DSI. Ryan Companies was contacted on February 9, 2023 informing them of this. After this meeting a notice via ENS for a ten-day appeal period will be sent out. The Highland District Council and City Council member will also be notified.

Planning Chair Rangel Morales asked Spencer what the current car share parking space requirements are. Spencer reported that for residential development according to the master plan the requirements are laid out as follows:

- 0-49 Residential units there is no requirement for a car share parking space on private property.
- 50-200 Residential units there is a requirement of one car share parking space on private property.
- 201+ Residential units there is a requirement for two car share parking spaces on private property plus one space for every two hundred additional units.

The requirements for car share parking on private property for commercial purposes are based on the total number of parking spaces. The requirement is broken down as follows:

- 0-24 spaces there is no requirement
- 25-49 spaces one space is required
- 50+ spaces two spaces are required plus one for each additional forty spaces

These requirements are in line with the current master plan. However, since Hourcar will operate in the public right of way, these requirements are no longer necessary.

There was general discussion centered around the demand for this type of parking along with electric vehicle charging. Commissioner Grill asked Spencer to explain the difference between Planning Commission action and no Planning Commission action. Spencer explained the difference using the current zoning amendment as an example. With this decision since it is consistent overall with the Highland Bridge/Ford site master plan and because the change is less than ten percent of land use approving the minor amendment is an administrative decision. The Zoning Code has the necessary internal process for City staff review and approvals, which includes Director Pereira to signing off on it. Spencer also told the commissioners that public notification would be going out after the meeting through the early notification system (ENS). Director Pereira also pointed out the commissioners that most decisions that are made can be appealed by the public within ten-days of being notified.

XII. Adjournment

10 a.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved 3/17/2022
(Date)



Luis Pereira
Planning Director



Luis Rangel Morales
Planning Commission Chair

