

## Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)

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**From:** Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2016 1:11 PM  
**To:** 'Richard Birdoff'; Bill McGuire (bill.m@mnunitedfc.com); John Clifford (j.clifford@s9architecture.com); Bruce Miller (Bruce.Miller@populous.com); Kobi Bradley (Kobi.Bradley@populous.com); Hirotaka Hayakawa (h.hayakawa@S9Architecture.com); Jeff Shopek (JShopek@loucksinc.com) (JShopek@loucksinc.com); ljk@sppa.com  
**Cc:** Sage-Martinson, Jonathan (CI-StPaul); Beckmann, Kristin (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** RE: Staff Reports and Recommendations for the Stadium Site Plan and Master Plan

Rick - Thank you for stating your concerns with the staff recommendations. We will forward to the Planning Commission for their consideration at tomorrow's meeting, along with our initial staff responses to these concerns (see red below). As you know, the Planning Commission's decisions are recommendations on to the City Council, which will make the final decisions. Please let me know if you have further questions or comments. Donna



### Donna M. Drummond

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**From:** Richard Birdoff [<mailto:RBirdoff@rdmanagement.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 06, 2016 5:32 PM  
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**Cc:** Sage-Martinson, Jonathan (CI-StPaul); Beckmann, Kristin (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** RE: Staff Reports and Recommendations for the Stadium Site Plan and Master Plan

Donna – set forth below are concerns/problems that I have with the Staff Recommendations for the Master Plan:

- **Minimum FAR:** The current T4 zoning requires a 1.0 FAR. This is relatively new zoning that was enacted in light of the Green Line and the desire to have a TOD at the site. The recommendation for a minimum 2.0 FAR is too aggressive. We are not downtown St Paul and Minneapolis. We have a lot of acreage. In addition in that this site will be developed in sections must each section comply? **FAR is calculated only on the portion of the site that is needed for the specific building being proposed, not on the whole site. We think a 2.0 FAR is achievable for these reasons: 1) The master plan is not showing any surface parking at all, and it is surface parking that really drives down FAR; and 2) the soccer stadium should boost development interest in this site, and considering recent developments along the Green Line have exceeded 2.0 FAR we think that is a reasonable minimum to establish. If a project comes in that does not meet the 2.0 but has other desirable benefits then the Planning Commission and City Council can consider whether to modify that requirement.**
- **Minimum/Maximum Development:** You may not be able to get any office uses, let alone the 250,000 sq ft minimum. I am not sure if this provision provides for a maximum on retail and residential or any other uses – it should not. We need flexibility to determine the uses based on the market demand, not artificial benchmarks. **The AUAR analysis establishes the maximum uses that would be allowed on the site (or if**



exceeded, there would need to be an update of the AUAR). Regarding the minimums, the City's adopted station area plan calls for a mix of uses here and the master plan shows that. In addition, the stadium is relying on office uses to share parking with when the temporary parking lots west of the stadium along Snelling are developed. If only residential and retail end up being proposed for the site, this whole issue would need to be relooked at. Again, as with any of the master plan requirements, this could be modified by the Planning Commission and City Council if a case can be made for it.

- **Street Level Residential:** Street level entrances should not be required. Entrances should be allowed from an interior corridor. Security issues? The master plan is not showing any all residential buildings. Each residential building is shown with first floor retail. We thought it was reasonable to allow an all residential building if there is not a market for first floor retail in every building, but in order to maintain activity and interest along the streetscape having first floor residential units with patios or stairs with access to the sidewalk would achieve a similar result. We have required other residential buildings to have first floor units with exterior access and there are a number of examples of recent projects where this has been done (examples include West Side Flats across from downtown Saint Paul, new residential developments in downtown Minneapolis by the Guthrie).
- **Surface Parking:** Retailers will not accept only 20 spaces per development block. As long as the 1.0 FAR requirement is met, there should not be a restriction on the # of surface spaces. The existing T4 zoning and the adopted station area plan both encourage minimal surface parking. The master plan is not showing any surface parking and states that retail parking will be served by one level of underground parking. We feel a small amount of surface parking is reasonable for handicapped accessibility and some convenience parking which is why we recommended 20 spaces.
- **Public Realm:** The Master Plan should be a guide. We should not be locked into that configuration. Flexibility to adapt is imperative; Establishing a public realm (where the streets and park spaces will be built) is a basic purpose of a master plan and really establishes the basic character of the area. If there are changes needed to this, a plan modification could be applied for.
- **Affordable Housing:** Is staff recommending that the residential units MUST have affordable housing per the formula? Can we have a 100% market rate project? May not be feasible to meet the requirements for affordable as set forth in the recommendations; The intent of the language is that only projects receiving City/HRA financing assistance would need to meet the affordability requirements. A market rate residential development that did not receive City/HRA financing assistance would not be required to include affordable units.
- **Height and Setback Requirements:** Buildings over 75' tall require 1:1 setback above 75' OR a Conditional Use Permit that requires 1:2.5 over 75'. Our current plan does not do this it would require that the tallest tower at University and Snelling be set back 86' off both streets above a 75' podium. Is there other relief to this? (we have setbacks just not so large) Mixed-use buildings in T4 have a 0 ft. required setback from property lines on all sides of the building. Buildings up to 75 ft. do not need a conditional use permit. Yes, buildings over 75 ft. would need a conditional use permit, plus the portions of the building over 75 ft. must be stepped back one foot for every 2.5 ft. of height over 75 ft., so you are reading that requirement correctly. However, a master plan cannot waive (be less strict) than the underlying zoning for anything except the design standards in Sec. 66.343. So, a building that didn't meet this requirement would need to apply for a variance.
- **Entrance Location:** Report states that each "building" shall have entries off all abutting streets. I don't think they meant the residential buildings will have 4 entry lobbies, same for office. Can this be clarified? The intent for an all residential building would not be to require entrance lobbies along every street it fronts if first floor units have exterior entrances. We can clarify this. Other buildings should be designed to have an entrance along any street it fronts on. There are ways to accomplish this architecturally that can work, including putting an entrance at the corner of an intersection, for example.

These are the major issues we take issue with. In order for this project to be successful we need to have flexibility to modify the plans and not be too restricted.

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**From:** Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul) [<mailto:donna.drummond@ci.stpaul.mn.us>]

**Sent:** Friday, July 01, 2016 5:48 PM

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**Cc:** Sage-Martinson, Jonathan (CI-StPaul); Beckmann, Kristin (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Staff Reports and Recommendations for the Stadium Site Plan and Master Plan

Hi Bill, Rick and all – Attached are the stadium site plan and master plan final staff reports and recommendations for the Planning Commission’s July 8 meeting. These plus all the various attachments have been mailed and posted today on the City’s website – [www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission](http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission) under the July 8 meeting. Your attendance is not required at the meeting but you are welcome to come and observe. Please let me know if you have any questions about these materials. Thanks, and have a great holiday weekend! Donna



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