



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Date: October 29, 2014
To: Saint Paul Planning Commission
From: Neighborhood Planning Committee
Re: Shepard Davern Area Plan – Public Hearing Review and Recommendations

On October 17, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on the draft Shepard Davern Area Plan. There was a separate hearing held for the zoning study. For the draft Plan:

- Five emails from individuals were received prior to the public hearing as written testimony on the draft Shepard Davern Area Plan
- One letter and one resolution was received from the Highland District Council
- Five individuals spoke at the public hearing

The public testimony was generally supportive of the draft Shepard Davern Area Plan. There were a few comments that proposed additions or changes to the draft. Those proposed strategies or changes are below, with the number of comments supporting that change, and staff recommendations. The attached draft of the plan includes the recommended changes.

- Make McDonough Park an “alternative park,” and make it a high priority in the plan. (5 comments)
 - Recommendation: Change existing strategy PR2.1 to PR8, and change “alternative” uses to “public” uses.
 - **PR2.1 PR8: Explore alternative public uses for McDonough Park.**
 - Keep the existing Low priority for PR2, and give the new PR8 a Medium priority.
- Include property owners living close to the railroad spur (the “Ford spur”) in all task force or study groups looking at alternative future uses for the tracks and property. (5 comments)
 - Recommendation: Keep existing strategies related to the Ford spur and relevant studies as they are (see below). Both are High priorities.
 - T1.1 Work with City and County staff and other stakeholders during upcoming transportation studies to further the goals of the immediate community. Participate in public hearings, workshops, and open houses, and encourage neighbors to engage as well.
 - T8. Study the Canadian Pacific rail spur for bicycle and pedestrian trail use, and actively engage and seek meaningful input from neighborhood stakeholders, adjacent property owners and tenants. Community members should be active participants in the process.

- Recognize that there will be a future need for a school in the neighborhood or elsewhere in Highland. (2 comments)
 - Recommendation: Potential future school needs should be addressed in broader district and citywide plans.
School needs will be an important consideration in Highland, and for the City of Saint Paul. Saint Paul Public Schools is developing their 10-year Facilities Master Plan, and City staff and neighborhood representatives are on the plan committee. The existing but disused Homecroft School may be a consideration for that committee, but is outside the purview of this small area plan.
- Include strategies that will support increased densities of seniors and children in the neighborhood.
 - Recommendation: This is addressed by numerous strategies.
Strategies for improved pedestrian and transit facilities (T1, T2, T4, T5, T7), supporting additional retail spaces (LU1, LU2) and a mix of housing types and tenures (H1, H3), and calling for a new neighborhood park and better park connections (PR1, PR5, PR6) will be beneficial to increased densities of seniors and children, and all demographics, in the neighborhood.
- Comment on the ongoing study of potential re-alignments for Highway 5 and Shepard Road.
 - Recommendation: This is addressed by strategy T1.1.
The study of potential re-alignments is ongoing. The City's Public Works department has employed the consulting team from Zan Associates to host an open house on the study, which will take place sometime at the end of 2014 or in early 2015.
- Comment on the ongoing study of potential transit routes as part of the Riverview Corridor Study.
 - Recommendation: This is addressed by strategy T1.1.
The Riverview Corridor Study has just begun, and will have numerous opportunities for comment from the public.
- Use signage to brand the neighborhood as a "Gateway to Saint Paul."
 - Recommendation: Include a new sub-strategy:
 - **LU6.1 Work with private property owners and local business associations to develop a branding and signage strategy for the 'Gateway to Saint Paul' area, to create a cohesive neighborhood identity and welcome people to Saint Paul.**
 - Priority level would be Medium, consistent with current priority level for strategy LU6.
- Include language supporting existing airport parking businesses that have made substantial investments in their properties.
 - Recommendation: No change to draft plan.
The existing airport parking businesses are legal non-conforming uses, will remain legal non-conforming uses in the plan, and nothing in the draft plan would limit their ability to make property improvements in the future.

Recommendation

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that:

- the draft Shepard Davern Area Plan be amended to the Comprehensive Plan as drafted with the addition of strategies PR8 and LU6.1 listed above.
- the Highland District Plan Summary be updated as drafted.
- the existing Shepard Davern Small Area Plan (1999) be decertified.