

SUBDIVISION STAFF REPORT

FILE # 16-028-353

1. **FILE NAME:** MLS Stadium Development **HEARING DATE:** August 3, 2016
 2. **TYPE OF APPLICATION:** Preliminary Plat
 3. **LOCATION:** Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site (400 N. Snelling Ave. *temporary address*)
 4. **PIN AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** See subdivision documents for existing and proposed legal descriptions.
 5. **PLANNING DISTRICT:** District 13/District 11 **PRESENT ZONING:** T4
 6. **ZONING CODE REFERENCE:** §69.301; §69.304; §69.406; §69.511
 7. **STAFF REPORT DATE:** July 25, 2016 **BY:** Jake Reilly
 8. **DATE RECEIVED:** April 19, 2016; **DEADLINE FOR ACTION:** N/A
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- A. **PURPOSE:** Preliminary Plat for MLS Stadium Development to create 3 (T4) Traditional Neighborhood lots and 3 outlots.
- B. **PARCEL SIZE:** The development site for the soccer stadium project is approximately 16 acres in size, and is comprised of several existing parcels. Site area for this development includes a vacant parcel (9.8 acres) owned by the Metropolitan Council (formerly the site of a Metro Transit bus garage) and an additional adjacent parcel (approximate 6 acres) north and east of the Met Council parcel which is owned by RK Midway LLC (owners of the Midway Shopping Center). The total area of the plat is 22.59 acres. It should be noted that most of the soccer stadium site is on the 9.8 acre parcel owned by the Metropolitan Council which is not part of the preliminary plat.
- C. **EXISTING LAND USE:** The soccer stadium development site is part of the larger 34.4 acre Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site, that includes the Midway Shopping Center and a vacant parcel formerly used as the Metro Transit bus facility (demolished in 2001). The shopping center is a mixed commercial use and occupies the northern portion of the property. The vacant site of the former Metro Transit facility occupies most of the southern portion of the Snelling Midway site, with the exception of an approximately five-acre surface parking lot, immediately east of the Metro Transit property, owned by the shopping center owner (RK Midway). The subject property is bordered by two major arterial roads, Snelling Avenue on the west and University Avenue on the north. The southern side of the area is bordered by St. Anthony Ave. (a westbound frontage road to Interstate 94) and the eastern side is bordered by Pascal Street.
- D. **SURROUNDING LAND USE:**

North: A variety of commercial uses along University Avenue (T2 north side, T4 south side).
East: Big box retail uses in a T4 district.
South: Interstate I-94, one and two family residential uses in an RT1 district and a variety of commercial uses along Snelling Avenue in a B3 district across I-94.
West: A variety of commercial uses in T3 and T4 districts along Snelling and University Avenues and residential uses in an RM2 district.
- E. **ZONING CODE CITATION:** §69.301 states that platting is required when a subdivision (1) creates five or more lots or parcels each of which is 2½ acres or less in size, or (2) requires paved streets, alleys and other public improvements, or (3) is previously unplatted land. §69.304 lists conditions for lot splits and adjustments of common boundaries. §69.406 provides criteria for review of subdivision applications. These criteria are covered below under "Required Findings." §69.511 regulates parkland dedication.
- F. **HISTORY/DISCUSSION:** The Metropolitan Council's 10-acre "bus barn" property at the Snelling-Midway site was announced in October, 2015, as the preferred location for a new Major League Soccer stadium by the Minnesota United FC. The balance of the superblock, bounded by I-94, Snelling and University Avenues, and Pascal Street, is owned by RK Midway and contains the Midway Shopping Center and several smaller commercial buildings. RK Midway indicated its intention to work with Minnesota United FC on a master plan for redevelopment of the entire

superblock. S9Architecture from New York City was hired as the master plan designers and Populous from Kansas City was hired as the stadium architecture firm. The applicant is proposing a 20,000 seat Major League Soccer stadium which will be home to the Minnesota United MLS soccer team, along with new streets (including utilities), open green spaces, 132 permanent off-street surface parking spaces, and 220 additional off-street spaces on two surface lots, intended for temporary use as parking until the land is redeveloped. The stadium will have retail space associated with team merchandising. In addition to stadium food service, the stadium may include a craft brewer with taproom. The soccer stadium development site will occupy the southern half of the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site. This site is included in the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site Master Plan and will be designated T4M (Master Plan) upon approval of the master plan by the City Council.

G. **DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION:** District 13 Union Park had not commented specifically on the plat documents at the time the staff report was prepared. The district council did provide a statement during site plan review and during the master planning process. That statement may be found in Zoning File #16-042321

H. **REQUIRED FINDINGS:** §69.406 of the Zoning Code requires that all of the following findings shall be made prior to approval of a subdivision:

1. *All the applicable provisions of the Legislative Code are complied with.* City staff has reviewed the proposed plat and has determined that all applicable provisions of city codes are met.
2. *The proposed subdivision will not be detrimental to the present and potential surrounding land uses.* The proposed plat is consistent with the surrounding land uses, and will not be detrimental to present and future use of surrounding land.
3. *The area surrounding the subdivision can be planned and developed in coordination and compatibility with the proposed subdivision.* The area surrounding the proposed plat is already developed and compatible with the proposed plat.
4. *The subdivision is in conformance with the comprehensive plan.* The subdivision is in conformance with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan. The Snelling Station Area Plan (SSAP), part of the comprehensive plan, and the Land Use, Transportation, and Parks and Recreation chapters of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan were consulted to make this finding.

Snelling Station Area Plan (SSAP)

- The site is identified as an area of change in the SSAP, an area where change is welcome and should be encouraged whether through gradual infill and/or intensification or comprehensive redevelopment, page 13.
- The site is located in the mobility enhancement area in the SSAP, an area where a higher level of pedestrian activity is anticipated and a high quality pedestrian environment is key. A minimum of 14 foot wide sidewalks should be established in the mobility enhancement area, page 19.
- The vision of the SSAP calls for a vibrant commercial center, both a city-wide destination and local needs hub that successfully hosts and connects a multitude of uses. These could include corporate headquarters, retail stores, community services, local businesses, residential development, and cultural and entertainment destinations – all structured within a pattern of streets, blocks, and green gathering spaces that promote safer, more active streets and balanced options for movement and increased economic vitality, page 14.
- The SSAP notes that future retail will include a significant entertainment component, possibly at the bus barn site, page 12.
- The SSAP calls for a string of gathering places connected by an improved hierarchy of public streets and development blocks that could improve the accessibility and connectivity of these spaces to surrounding neighborhoods, page 19.

- The SSAP adds that a green open space might support development of a significant new employment center, research park, institutional campus, urban format retail center, hotel, or entertainment uses on this site, page 19.
- The bus barn site is a strategic parcel that could lend itself to a variety of uses including an expanded retail area, major corporate employment hub, hotel or conference facility, residential development and entertainment uses, page 26.

Citywide Comprehensive Plan Chapters – The Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the redevelopment site as a neighborhood center located along a mixed use corridor; the bus barn site is identified as an undeveloped opportunity site. The Transportation chapter notes that when redevelopment opportunities become available, the traditional street grid pattern should be reinstated to increase neighborhood connectivity. The Parks and Recreation chapter calls for: 1) ensuring convenient and equitable access to parks and recreation facilities; 2) ensuring attractive, functional, and engaging four-season public spaces; 3) requiring that location and design of parks, open space, and trails be an integral part of large-scale redevelopment projects; and 4) utilizing storm water as a sustainable resource when parks are constructed or redesigned.

5. *The subdivision preserves and incorporates the site's important existing natural features whenever possible.* The site is in a fully-developed part of St. Paul with no remaining natural features.
 6. *All land intended for building sites can be used safely without endangering residents by peril from floods, erosion, continuously high water table, severe soil conditions or other menace.* The site is a flat, fully developed area with no flooding, erosion, or high water table.
 7. *The subdivision can be economically served with public facilities and services.* The subdivision can be economically served with public facilities and services from surrounding streets.
- I. **PARKLAND DEDICATION:** §69.511(a) *Parkland dedication requirement* provides that for platting of land for residential, commercial, or industrial development the City may require dedication of a reasonable portion of the buildable land for public use for parks and open space needed as a result of the plat, to a maximum of 9% of the total acreage of new lots for new residential or mixed-use development and to a maximum of 4% of the total acreage of new lots for new commercial or industrial development. §69.511(b) *One-time basis of parkland dedication requirements* provides that, “once parkland has been dedicated or conveyed to the City under this section to meet the needs for parkland created by the plat, there shall be no further parkland dedication requirement under Sec. 63.701 at the time of building permits.”

The stadium site is 15.64 acres (5.84 acres of RK Midway property and 9.8 acres of Metropolitan Council land). Based on the 4% of new lots for commercial development requirement, the 15.64 acre stadium site requires 0.63 acres of parkland dedication. Outlot C is where parkland will be dedicated and developed and is 0.64 acres in size, thus slightly larger than the amount required for dedication. Note that the parkland calculation includes the Metropolitan Council property, though it is not part of the preliminary plat. The parkland dedication requirement was calculated using the Metropolitan Council property in order to determine the dedication of land amount at the time of platting rather than calculating a fee in lieu of dedication at the time building permits are issued for the stadium site development. Therefore, no fee in lieu will be required at the time building permits are issued for the stadium site development.

The parkland dedication calculation was based on proposed commercial use of property. If the portion of Metropolitan Council property that is temporarily planned for a surface parking lot is developed with residential uses in the future, a fee in lieu of land will be required at the time of building permits. The fee will be calculated based on the increment between the 4% assessed with the current plat and the 9% required for residential uses.

No parkland dedication is being required with this plat for the 12.81 acre parcel of Lot 1 Block 2, owned by RK Midway. This parcel shall be replatted in the future to allow for streets and right of way consistent with the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site Master Plan and Design Guidelines, City Council Resolution 16-239. The dedication of parkland for that parcel will take place at that time.

J. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Based on required findings 1 through 7, staff recommends approval of the preliminary plat for the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site (400 N. Snelling Ave. *temporary address*) subject to the following conditions:

1. Final plat must include any right of way or lease areas to be dedicated for widening of sidewalks on the east side of Snelling, if and where appropriate.
2. Final plat must include sufficient dedicated right of way in order to provide for two lanes of approach for eastbound Shields Avenue and three lanes of approach for Westbound Shields Avenue.
3. Final plat must include sufficient dedicated right of way in order to provide bike lanes on Shields, that are in line with requirements stated in the city's approved street design manual.
4. Final plat must include sufficient dedicated right of way in order to provide a five-lane roadway if needed in the future on Pascal Street.
5. Final plat must include sufficient right of way, easements, or lease area to provide public curb, boulevard, and sidewalk on the west side of Pascal Street between St. Anthony and University Avenues.
6. Final plat must include sufficient right of way, easements, or lease area to provide public sidewalks, street trees, street lights and other potential improvements in the public right of way located along St. Anthony Avenue.
7. Final plat must include sufficient right of way for roadways internal to the site to address traffic operations' impacts to roadways surrounding the site.
8. Final plat must include sufficient right of way for truck turning movements and emergency vehicle turning movements and access.
9. Final plat must retain the existing sewer easement shown on the preliminary plat for existing buildings to remain for the initial development phase for both the public to the east and private for the northwest.
10. Applicant or applicant's representative must submit drawings indicating utility and sanitary and storm sewer locations and grade. The expectation is that utilities can be located on Metropolitan Council-owned property.
11. Applicant or applicant's representative must submit a storm water management plan for all properties.
12. Applicant or applicant's representative shall provide any and all necessary easements for stormwater management in the plat area.
13. In cases where a building is proposed to straddle properties owned by different parties, the applicant or applicant's representative must submit document(s) in a form and substance approved by the City between all property owners, including all lessees, indicating that all property owners, including all lessees, are a responsible party for all life-safety systems and designs throughout all of the properties and have a duty to ensure these systems are maintained. The document(s) shall indicate that all parties involved have access to all properties for the purpose of maintaining all life-safety systems and designs.
14. The dedication of parkland of at least 0.63 acres is shown on the final plat. No parkland dedication is being required with this plat for the 12.81 acre parcel of Lot 1 Block 2, owned by RK Midway. This parcel shall be replatted in the future to allow for streets and right of way consistent with the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Site Master Plan and Design Guidelines, City Council Resolution 16-239. The dedication of parkland for that parcel will take place at that time.

15. Pursuant to Sec. 69.403. – Final Plat of the zoning code, the applicant shall file an application for the final plat within one year following the date of approval of the preliminary plat by the City Council. Said application shall contain all modifications as they may have been recommended during preliminary plat review as well as the following:
 - a. Survey, content of plats, and boundary data in the manner prescribed by Section 505.02, Minnesota Statutes, as amended from time to time.
 - b. Certification of dedication by the land owners and surveyor's certification as required in Section 505.03, Minnesota Statutes, as amended from time to time.

Attachments:

- Application
- Preliminary Plat
- Site Location Maps