

Tom Beach - Re 950 Pelham Appeal by Union Park

From: Anne White <awhitepho@gmail.com>
To: Jon Commers <commers@donjek.com>, <pconnolly@visi.com>, <ajf@anthonyfern...>
Date: 9/1/2011 5:53 PM
Subject: Re 950 Pelham Appeal by Union Park

To all members of the Planning Commission:

As you review Union Park's appeal of the site plan approval for 650 Pelham Blvd, I would ask you to carefully consider the message that will be sent to supporters of St Paul's Development Strategy if this suburban style low density development with surface parking in front is approved for one of the prime gateway sites connecting the Desnoyer Park residential community to the historic Raymond Station Area. I would also like to point out what I believe are some inaccuracies and misleading information in the staff report on the appeal. (Staff statements are in **bold**.)

The 650 Pelham project site is outside of Raymond Station Area Planning Boundary as shown on Figure 2.3 of the Raymond Station Area Plan. (*See p 9, 14 & 15 of the point-by-point Staff Response to the appeal*)

This is not accurate. Almost half the site falls within the Raymond Station Area. (*See Figure 2.3 on p 13 in Raymond Station Area Plan*) Yet the staff denies the validity of several Union Park claims with this response.

The City Council unanimously decided to have the 650 Pelham site remain I-1. (*See p 2, 3, 17 & 24 of the point-by-point Staff Response to the appeal*)

This is misleading. A fuller explanation by staff of this City Council vote reveals that when the Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study was done, "the original recommendation ... was to rezone this site to T4, and the land north to University Avenue to T3 and T4. ... When the Planning Commission considered whether to change the zoning from I1 to T4, the property owner testified and requested that the property remain I1. The Planning Commission recommended that the site remain I1 and the City Council voted unanimously on 4/6/11 to keep this property I1 while rezoning the properties to the north to T3 and T4. ... Union Park was not aware that the zoning was kept as I1 and assumed it had been rezoned to T4." (*See p 2 of the Zoning Committee Staff Report, 3rd bullet point*) Given that Union Park had no knowledge that the T4 recommendation was being reversed at the request of the property owner, of course no one spoke against this request, the Planning Commission voted to recommend an I1 zoning designation, and the City Council agreed, having heard no opposition. Essentially, this return to I1 was enacted with no opportunity for community response from the neighborhoods most directly affected. Then, to make matters worse, the I1 zoning for the 950 Pelham property was actually used to justify a last minute amendment by the City Council to make the property across the street I1 as well.

It was determined during the site plan review process that there were no crime prevention through environmental design (CEPTED) issues.

It is widely recognized that one of the best crime prevention techniques is to have "eyes on the street".

Given that Pelham Blvd is the primary route for pedestrians and bicyclists coming from the south to the Raymond Station, the proposed site plan should be designed to increase the sense of safety for walkers and bicyclists on Pelham. Instead, with the building set way back from the street and surface parking in front, there will be no eyes on the street. Does this not represent a crime prevention issue?

Thank you for your consideration of the issues set forth in the appeal and of these additional concerns. Fulfilling the vision of St Paul's Development Strategy will not be easy. But I believe it is critical to set a good example up front, as we move toward denser, more transit oriented development along the Central Corridor.

Anne White

1731 Portland Avenue



August 25, 2011

Mr. Jon Commers, Chair
Planning Commission
City of Saint Paul
2500 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55114

RE: Saint Paul Port Authority Comments: Planning Commission Zoning Committee Regarding Meridian Industrial Project, 620 Pelham Boulevard

Dear Chair Commers:

The Port Authority appreciates this opportunity to provide you with our input regarding the Meridian Industrial project, the appeal by the Union Park District Council, and the approval by the city zoning staff of the site plan for this proposed office/warehouse development.

As you know, this site is zoned industrial, and both the Planning Commission and the City Council reaffirmed the appropriateness of this zoning during its Central Corridor deliberations and final decisions. This site had been a polluted, underutilized industrial parcel formerly used for 50 years as a truck terminal. The Port Authority acquired this 5.2 acre site in 2010 from the owner who wished to sell this property.

In fulfillment of the Port Authority's mission and objectives of job creation, business growth, and neighborhood revitalization of distressed industrial properties in the city, it entered into a purchase agreement with a developer, John Allen, owner of Industrial Equities. Since almost a year ago, Industrial Equities has planned to develop an approximate 68,000 square foot office, flex, warehouse building on this site. This new facility will be a multi-tenant building, which will greatly enhance this site, both visually and from an economic development perspective.

Regarding improvements to the site plan, based upon staff and others' input, the Port Authority and the developer have agreed to changes to the original site plan, which incorporate the following pedestrian connections and design features:

- Fencing along Pelham Boulevard and Wabash Avenue: 16" square 5' high brick piers to match building with 4' high ornamental metal fence. Landscaping along the fence to provide a buffer from parking lot.
- Lantern-style street lights along Pelham Boulevard and Wabash Avenue – make and model to be determined by City.
- Public sidewalk along east side of Pelham Boulevard.
- Shifting the entrance along Pelham Boulevard so does not interrupt pedestrian connection to an entrance.
- Bicycle parking at a rate of one bike parking space per 20 car parking spaces.
- 35' landscaped setback between the parking lot and Pelham Boulevard curb.
- Pelham Boulevard additional boulevard trees approximately 40' on center and a second row behind the sidewalk staggered with the boulevard trees at 40' on center.
- Sidewalk along the front of the building between building entrances.
- Pedestrian connections crossing the parking lot from the public sidewalk to front building sidewalk.
- The area of landscaping within the parking lot equals more than 15% of the paved area of the parking lot.

The Port Authority and the developer are providing a significant amount of additional equity to this project to provide visual, landscaping, and pedestrian enhancements to this project.

Chair Commers, you may recall that the Port Authority provided a few months ago to you and your colleagues on the Commission a powerpoint/video presentation of the proposed development, its significantly industrial surrounding, and the very impressive appearance improvements to this site that Industrial Equities will bring to this community. And as your staff report indicates, the surrounding land uses include railroad tracks and industrial to the north, industrial to the east (Rock Tenn), an interstate freeway to the south with single-family housing beyond that, and industrial to the west.

As to the economic development improvements regarding this project, please note that this 68,000 square foot building will provide a private-sector investment of approximately \$5 million, job creation of at least 68 jobs (although actual job density could be greater) and additional tax base from that provided by the trucking terminal of 225%.

Chair Commers, this project has undergone multiple stages of review and opportunities for public comment and input. The Port Authority very much appreciates all of the hard work of your zoning staff in reviewing this proposal, as well as the time and effort provided by both the Planning Commission and the City Council to review the appropriateness, and to ultimately approve the continuance of the underlining industrial zoning for this property.

Chair Commers, we urge the Zoning Committee and the full Planning Commission to reject the appeal of this light-industrial development project by the Union Park District Council, and allow the Port Authority and Industrial Equities to move forward on this highly valuable project, of which the Planning Commission and the citizens of Saint Paul can be very proud.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Louis Jambois, President
Saint Paul Port Authority

cc: Mayor Chris Coleman
Sarah Kidwell, Union Park District Council
Annie Johnson, Union Park District Council
Ranae Hanson, South St. Anthony Park Delegation
John Allen, Industrial Equities
Councilmember Stark, Ward 4
Tom Beach, DSI
Paul Williams, Deputy Mayor
Ann Hunt, Mayor's Staff
Amy Sparks, St. Anthony Park Community Council
Carla Olson, Desnoyer Park Improvement Association
Lorrie Louder, Saint Paul Port Authority
Kelly Jameson, Saint Paul Port Authority

MIDWAY CHAMBER of COMMERCE



**Building A
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Developers

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Equity Services of
St. Paul
Park Midway Bank
Warners' Stellan
Wellington
Management, Inc.
Xcel Energy

Architects

American Engineering
Testing, Inc.
Anchor Bank
Hamline University
JB Realty, Co.
McDonald's
NAI Welsh
Companies
Pioneer Press

Builders

Associated Bank
Hubbard
Broadcasting, Inc.
Mintahoe Catering
& Events
St. Paul Port Authority
Western Bank

August 25, 2011

Dear Jon Commers:

My name is Paul McGinley. I am the chairperson for the Midway Chamber of Commerce. I am writing on behalf of the Midway Chamber of Commerce to express our strong support for the Saint Paul Port Authority's plans to redevelop an existing industrial site to create new jobs in the Midway area.

This project gives Saint Paul an important chance to make better use of valuable industrial property and attract new investment at a time when our local economy faces significant challenges. We urge you to approve the plan as presented and allow this project to move forward.

The Midway Chamber has been part of this community for 92 years. Although the backbone of the Twin Cities has evolved and changed over the years, one thing has remained consistent – the Midway Chamber supports jobs and the companies needed to provide economic opportunities for families. This project continues this tradition by making an incredibly valuable five-acre site more attractive to businesses while ensuring Saint Paul realizes the benefits.

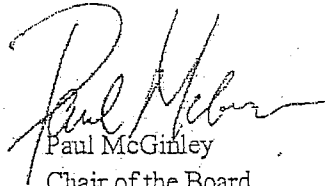
This project, which is located close to highways and near the Central Corridor, leverages transit investments to improve the availability of jobs for the greater community. The site plan fits into the overall zoning and land use approach the city has recently updated. When the zoning study for the corridor was conducted, with extensive input from the community and local businesses, this site was fully examined and it was decided by staff and by the Planning Commission to leave it zoned Industrial expressly for the purpose of accommodating this type of opportunity. The site is immediately adjacent to the Rock-Tenn facility; the zoning is consistent with surrounding uses; and the proposed single-story structure will help create a transition to other parts of the community.

The Midway area is a special place because there is a broad mix of land uses. It's what makes this a special place. The extensive work done, over many years to create plans around the Central Corridor station areas took all of this into account, as did the recent changes to the zoning for the area. In the Development Strategy and the Comprehensive Plan it was concluded that Industrial uses, especially at this station area in question, should be maintained if not directly on the Corridor (which this site is not). The plans before you have been thoroughly reviewed. The Port Authority's involvement will ensure successful completion of the plan and that the community will benefit from the new jobs and investment in the site.

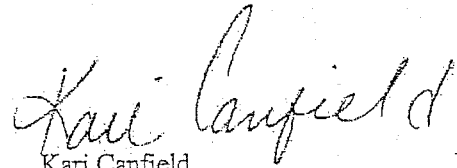
Saint Paul competes with other communities throughout the metropolitan area and the country to keep the jobs we already have and bring more into the city. It can be challenging to find locations within the city that can help us keep our city economically strong. This five-acre site is in the vicinity of light-rail, near interstate highway access, and close to the people who need jobs, within a city that needs new tax revenue, is the right plan in the right location at the right time.

Thank you for your time and your consideration. We again urge you to support the project and together we can take an important step forward for Saint Paul.

Thank you.



Paul McGinley
Chair of the Board
Midway Chamber of Commerce



Kari Canfield
President/Executive Director
Midway Chamber of Commerce

St. Anthony Park Community Council/District 12
890 Cromwell Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55114
651/649-5992 TEL 651/649-5993 FAX www.sapecc.org



August 24, 2011

Planning Commission of the City of St Paul
15 W Kellogg Blvd
St Paul, MN 55102

Re: Site Plan 10-906716, Union Park District Council's Appeal of Site Plan for Meridian Industrial Center at 650 Pelham Boulevard

The St. Anthony Park Community Council supports the action taken by the Union Park District Council to appeal the site plan for the Meridian Industrial Center. As stated in previous letters sent to the Mayor, Councilmember Stark, and City staff regarding the site plan, the St. Anthony Park Community Council's land use plan for the site envisions a multi-story, multi-use building at this pivotal building location, a gateway to two neighborhoods and a rapidly developing light rail transit corridor.

Design standards and community input for this project are essential to creating a successful transition property. However many pivotal standards and concerns were not acknowledged in the development of the existing site plan. The following design standards for such transition industrial properties set forth by the St. Paul's West Midway Task Force, including:

- facade articulation
- doorway close to street and emphasized architecturally
- pedestrian sidewalk (or connection) to main entrance
- screening fence
- windows facing street (and showing activity inside)
- windows and texture to break up facade along street
- appear to be a 2-story building
- parking in rear
- built up to street
- parking lot landscaping
- street trees

These standards allow a property to remain as an industrial use while being pedestrian/bike friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and promoting safety in important transition areas between land uses. They are also in line many of the goals of the Creative Enterprise Zone task force to establish the Raymond-University area as a place for artists, artisans, and other creative enterprises.

The St. Anthony Park district plan supports the concept of these design standards :

L3. Design Standards. Institute commercial mixed-use design standards that reinforce human-scale buildings, promote sustainable design, promote quality in exterior materials and construction, reinforce a pedestrian oriented streetscape, promote green design, manage storm water retention, reduce impervious surfaces and visually screen surface parking.

The choices made in development of this site will set the stage for future development of the surrounding properties. Building an industrial unit without proper design standards and community input that take into account the location of the site- both the proximity to Desnoyer Park residences on the South and the TN zoned properties immediately adjacent to the site on the North- would reduce the likelihood of unified, pedestrian and bike friendly development of other nearby sites in the future. The Chittenden and Eastman building at 2410 University Ave is already in development as residential units, and it is reasonable to assume that residential density along the corridor will only increase as light rail construction nears completion, making a pedestrian focus for development even more vital.

The City has spent countless hours and dollars developing the Central Corridor light rail project and standards for the surrounding developments, from housing to business to industrial. These first few new developments beginning with the Meridian Industrial Center will set a noticeable precedent for the standards and considerations of future development. It is the hope of the St. Anthony Park Community Council that these developments will build toward a St. Paul that is a strong, vibrant and connected 21st century urban community.

Sincerely,



Lauren Fulner-Erickson
Community Organizer
St. Anthony Park Community Council

CC: Tom Beach, Councilmember Stark, Union Park District Council

Tom Beach - Support the Union Park District Council Appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard Site Plan

From: Debbie Meister <dmeister.mmc@gmail.com>
To: Jon Commers <commers@donjek.com>, <ajf@anthonyjfernandez.com>, <RJFKrame...>
Date: 8/24/2011 2:38 PM
Subject: Support the Union Park District Council Appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard Site Plan
CC: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, Carla Olson <carlamarieco@yahoo.com>, Eric ...

To The Zoning Committee:

I am writing in strong support of the Union Park District Council appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard site plan approval by City staff.

As a City resident and member of the Union Park District Council Land Use Committee, I am most concerned with this proposed development being inconsistent with City plans including the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, St. Anthony Park Community District Plan, Merriam Park Master Plan, Central Corridor Development Strategy, Raymond Station Area Plan, Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan, West Midway Task Force, and Mississippi River Corridor Plan.

With a nearly billion-dollar investment in light rail, it is not only in the City's interest, but in our region's interest, to make land use decisions that will help the light rail corridor be successful. Specifically, we need to transition to a higher density transit-oriented development (TOD) in areas within a 1/4 mile of a light rail station. Given that the 650 Pelham property is within a 1/4 mile of the Raymond Avenue Station, and is located on the primary bike/walk route to University Avenue from the Desnoyer Park residential neighborhood to the south, I believe it is very important that it conform with the goal of moving toward more urban, mixed use development with 2-4 story buildings close to, and facing on the street, in this case Pelham and Wabash. In fact, the Raymond Station Area Plan envisions this property as part of a "Prestige Employment Hub...geared primarily to employment, hospitality, convention, entertainment, and related ancillary services." In addition, the Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan cites Pelham/Raymond as an important connector to the light rail station that would benefit from future investments to provide a safe, pleasant pedestrian route and "transform it into one of the city's premier bikeways".

This development (with no committed tenants) should not go forward. I ask that you vote to approve the Union Park Community Council's appeal.

Sincerely,

Debbie Meister

1312 Portland Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55104

Tom Beach - Support for Union Park District Council appeal of 650 Pelham site plan

From: Anne White <awhitapho@gmail.com>
To: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, Jon Commers <commers@donjek.com>, <ajf@anth...>
Date: 8/22/2011 1:24 AM
Subject: Support for Union Park District Council appeal of 650 Pelham site plan
CC: Carla Olson <carlamarieco@yahoo.com>, Eric Molho <ericmolho@yahoo.com>, ...

To Tom Beach & Zoning Committee members:

I am writing in support of the appeal of the Union Park District Council to the City staff's approval of the site plan for 650 Pelham Boulevard. Please enter this into the record for the public hearing on August 25, 2011, since I will be out of town at that time.

I was a member of the Task Force that created the Central Corridor Development Strategy, and I also sat on the Steering Committee for the Central Corridor Station Area Plans, including the Raymond Avenue Station. I am currently on the board of the Union Park District Council, and on the Land Use Committee.

The Development Strategy and Station Area Plans both emphasize the importance of transitioning to higher density transit-oriented development (TOD) in areas within a 1/4 mile of a light rail station. Given that the 650 Pelham property is within a 1/4 mile of the Raymond Avenue Station, and is located on the primary bike/walk route to University Avenue from the Desnoyer Park residential neighborhood to the south, I believe it is very important that it conform with the goal of moving toward more urban, mixed use development with 2-4 story buildings close to, and facing on the street, in this case Pelham and Wabash. In fact, the Raymond Station Area Plan envisions this property as part of a "Prestige Employment Hub...geared primarily to employment, hospitality, convention, entertainment, and related ancillary services."

The site plan approved by the City staff is completely contrary to this vision, with its unadorned suburban style industrial building set far back from the street, and a sea of surface parking in front. It would be a travesty if this development were to go forward, and would send a message to community members like myself, who worked so hard on the Development Strategy, that the City's adopted plans for Central Corridor are meaningless. Although I myself was not at the community meeting with the Port Authority, I understand that they had no interest in working with the Desnoyer Park, Union Park and Saint Anthony Park community councils to even make some improvements to the plans so that they would be somewhat more acceptable to the community. Also, the fact that there is currently no signed tenant means that this building might well sit empty and become a deteriorating eyesore on this highly visible site at the junction of Desnoyer Park and the Raymond Avenue Station Area and Creative Zone.

I strongly urge you to grant the appeal of the Union Park District Council and reverse the approval of City staff for the proposed Port Authority plan this site.

Thank you for your consideration.

Anne White
1731 Portland Avenue
UPDC board member & representative to the District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis



UNION PARK DISTRICT COUNCIL
1570 Concordia Avenue, Suite LL100, Saint Paul, MN 55104
p 651-645-6887 | f 651-917-9991 | e info@unionparkdc.org | w
www.unionparkdc.org

August 22, 2011

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

On August 1, 2011, the Union Park District Council filed an appeal against the St. Paul Planning Commission's approved site plan of 650 Pelham Blvd., at the corner of Wabash and Pelham in St. Paul. We find the St. Paul Port Authority's proposed development and the subsequent City Council's zoning decision are not consistent with several City approved and adopted Comprehensive Plans including: St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, St. Anthony Park Community District Plan, Merriam Park Master Plan, Central Corridor Development Strategy, Raymond Station Area Plan, Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan, West Midway Task Force, and Mississippi River Corridor Plan.

In addition to the zoning issues, the appeal stems from the initial and continued lack of a community design process and neighborhood input for development of the site. This project is of major significance, being only ¼ mile from the Central Corridor's Raymond Station and the first redevelopment in the area. The design, function and appropriate use must be considered carefully for the site to be advanced to its maximum potential and full benefit for this historic transit development and the surrounding community. This is the reason the Comprehensive Plans were adopted initially; the St. Paul Port Authority's proposed development clearly violates those plans.

To facilitate the redevelopment of the Central Corridor, the Comprehensive Plans encourage the original zoning of I1 or "light industrial" to be changed to TN4 or "traditional neighborhood". TN zoning allows appropriate design standards, higher density, and a better mixed use of the site; including retail, office, and commercial space. This promotes an "urban village" and "transit-oriented" design which is the preferred and approved plan, in contrast to the St. Paul Port Authority submitted "suburban style" and "automobile-encouraging" plan. This plan would also interfere with the designated use of Pelham Avenue as the primary biking and walking route to get to University Avenue and the light rail from East River Drive and the Desnoyer Park residential neighborhood. The Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan cites Pelham/Raymond as an important connector to the light rail station that would benefit from future investments to provide a safe, pleasant pedestrian route and "transform it into one of the city's premier bikeways".

The Raymond Station Area Plan, which was adopted in 2008 by the City Council, includes the 650 Pelham site as part of a proposed "Prestige Employment Hub" to be "geared primarily to employment, hospitality, convention, entertainment, and related ancillary services". The land to the north of the site is zoned TN4 to allow for this type of higher density mixed use development. However, the City Council voted to approve the Port Authority site without TN zoning in the Central Corridor Overlay, and passed an amendment to the site immediately across Pelham to remain I1, which also clearly violates the City Comprehensive Plan, among others.

The Union Park District Council, in agreement with the St. Anthony Park Community Council and the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association, find the St. Paul Port Authority's intentional action of

disregarding the needs of the neighborhoods surrounding the site and the city-approved long-term plans coordinated by hundreds of St. Paulites, and their countless hours of dedication and volunteer time to drafting said plans, most unproductive, detrimental, and a disturbing lack of protocol. This approach sets a negative and damaging precedent for all future and further development in the Central Corridor Overlay Zone. After community meetings and discussions with Port Authority and City Council officials, and no resolution or compromise accomplished, the Union Park District Council must pursue the appeal process.

We appreciate your time and consideration on this extremely important issue. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carla Coyle Olson, Board Chair
Desnoyer Park Improvement Association
Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave., Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104
651-645-6887 p
651-9179991 f
Carla@unionparkdc.org

Annie Johnson, Community Organizer
Union Park District Council

Sarah Kidwell, Executive Director
Union Park District Council

Eric Molho, Chair, Land Use Committee
Union Park District Council

Tom Beach - Support the Union Park District Council Appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard Site Plan

From: Debbie Meister <dmeister.mmc@gmail.com>
To: Jon Commers <commerz@donjek.com>, <ajf@anthonyjfernandez.com>, <RJFKrame...>
Date: 8/24/2011 2:38 PM
Subject: Support the Union Park District Council Appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard Site Plan
CC: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, Carla Olson <carlamarieco@yahoo.com>, Eric ...

To The Zoning Committee:

I am writing in strong support of the Union Park District Council appeal of the 650 Pelham Boulevard site plan approval by City staff.

As a City resident and member of the Union Park District Council Land Use Committee, I am most concerned with this proposed development being inconsistent with City plans including the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, St. Anthony Park Community District Plan, Merriam Park Master Plan, Central Corridor Development Strategy, Raymond Station Area Plan, Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan, West Midway Task Force, and Mississippi River Corridor Plan.

With a nearly billion-dollar investment in light rail, it is not only in the City's interest, but in our region's interest, to make land use decisions that will help the light rail corridor be successful. Specifically, we need to transition to a higher density transit-oriented development (TOD) in areas within a 1/4 mile of a light rail station. Given that the 650 Pelham property is within a 1/4 mile of the Raymond Avenue Station, and is located on the primary bike/walk route to University Avenue from the Desnoyer Park residential neighborhood to the south, I believe it is very important that it conform with the goal of moving toward more urban, mixed use development with 2-4 story buildings close to, and facing on the street, in this case Pelham and Wabash. In fact, the Raymond Station Area Plan envisions this property as part of a "Prestige Employment Hub...geared primarily to employment, hospitality, convention, entertainment, and related ancillary services." In addition, the Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan cites Pelham/Raymond as an important connector to the light rail station that would benefit from future investments to provide a safe, pleasant pedestrian route and "transform it into one of the city's premier bikeways".

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Sincerely,

Debbie Meister

1312 Portland Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55104

Tom Beach - Union Park District Council, Land Use Committee Appeal of Site Plan 650 Pelham Blvd.

From: <jmhuntjr@comcast.net>
To: <RJFKramer@aol.com>
Date: 8/23/2011 9:02 PM
Subject: Union Park District Council, Land Use Committee Appeal of Site Plan 650 Pelham Blvd.

Mr. Richard Kramer, Chair, Zoning Committee
City of Saint Paul Planning Commission
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Dear Mr.Kramer

I have written a letter to the Union Park District Council supporting their appeal against a Zoning Committee ruling on the property located at 650 Pelham Boulevard. The arguments in support of this appeal really are directed to you and the Zoning Committee, so I am also sending you this letter to you.

Please give some thought to the issues I raise. Others have voiced these issues. The Zoning Committee should not feel pressured to make a quick judgement. There is time for a careful re-examination of the situation.

As a 17-year resident of the Desnoyer Park neighborhood, residing less that one block off Pelham Boulevard, I support the District Council's appeal against the St. Paul Planning Commission's approved site plan of 650 Pelham Boulevard, at the corner of Wabash and Pelham in St. Paul.

The reasons for my support are three-fold. First, here has been inadequate involvement, bordering on negligence, of residents of Desnoyer Park and Merriam park neighborhoods in the process which led the St. Paul Planning Commission decision to retain light industrial zoning for this site and allow its development as an office-park style building with a parking lot for ca. 200 cars. The cartoon video shown at the only meeting I was aware of, and thus attended, on the site ends with a photographic pan up Pelham Boulevard into "nowhere". This "nowhere" happens to be Pelham Boulevard, going over I-94, and down toward my house and East River Parkway. This is preposterous and misleading. Further careful thought is needed to make this site neighborhood-friendly.

Second, the development of the 650 Pelham site as described at the meeting I attended appears to completely ignore the value of this land, with its proximity to light rail and to residential neighborhoods. I understand that turning over this property is viewed as a revenue-generator for the City of Saint Paul. This is short-sighted and unacceptable if that is all that is of concern to the City. No effort seems to have been put toward making the land use environmentally and culturally "21st century".

Finally, what Saint Paul does NOT need is an under-utilized industrial park sitting at less than 100% occupancy, on land that could be utilized more effectively through the diversity achievable with TN4 zoning. There are examples of vacant storefronts on University Avenue itself that will have to rebuild themselves to be environmentally green and provide services to the community. I would like to see this occur at 650 Pelham, and it will take further

work and planning. Thus, the appeal is a timely intervention to block thoughtless use a valuable parcel of land.

Sincerely yours,

John Hunt

John M. Hunt, Ph. D., D(ABMM)
Independent Consultant in Clinical and Public Health Microbiology
441 Desnoyer Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

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E-mail: jmhuntjr@comcast.net