

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

Minutes April 1, 2011

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, April 1, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Halverson, Merrigan, Perrus, Reveal, Thao, Wencl; and Messrs. Commers, Connolly, Fernandez, Gelgelu, Kramer, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver Schertler, Spaulding, Ward, and Wickiser.

Commissioners Absent: Mmes. *Porter, *Wang, and *Young.
*Excused

Also Present: Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Patricia James, Luis Pereira, Christina Morrison, Kate Reilly, Sarah Zorn, Jessica Rosenfeld and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes of March 4th and March 18, 2011.

Chair Commers requested that page 2 of the March 4th minutes include a note that Commissioner Wencl assumed the Chair for discussion and voting on the Greater Frogtown CDC case.

MOTION: *Commissioner Merrigan moved approval of the minutes of March 4, 2011 as amended. Commissioner Kramer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

MOTION: *Commissioner Thao moved approval of the minutes of March 18, 2011. Commissioner Reveal seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Commers said that one of the items on the agenda is the review of CIB proposals for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. He had a meeting earlier in the week with the current STAR Board Chair, Kari Antrim and with Deann Lesch, who is the CIB Committee Chair. They talked about how the three committees can be working more in concert together. He hopes this will be an ongoing area of enhanced communication.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that she had sent out an email about possible membership in the American Planning Association (APA) for planning commissioners. The APA offers a special rate for planning commissioners. Interested commissioners should give a check to Ms. Drummond by the next Planning Commission meeting, payable to the APA in the amount of

MOTION: *Commissioner Kramer moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re-establishment of legal nonconforming use subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

#11-103-193 Red Dog Holdings LLC – Conditional Use Permits for a pawn shop, two fast food restaurants with drive-thru service, and an auto specialty store. 1891 Suburban Avenue, NW corner at Burns. (Penelope Simison, 651/266-6554)

Commissioner Kramer reported that the Zoning Committee laid this case over to the April 7, 2011 meeting.

Commissioner Kramer announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, April 7, 2011.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Merrigan reported that they had met on Tuesday, and discussed the Hamline, Victoria, and Western plans and the comments from the public hearing on February 18th. They took the staff's recommendations and made a few modifications and passed them forward for review. A date has not been set for the committee's next meeting.

VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee and Transportation Committee

Review of CIB Proposals for Comprehensive Plan Conformance - Approve resolution to transmit the Planning Commission's review to the CIB Committee and its task forces for consideration in the 2012-2013 CIB Process. (Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591, Jessica Rosenfeld, 651/266-6560, and Christina Morrison, 651/266-6546)

Commissioner Wencl, chair of the Neighborhood Planning Committee said the committee made some revisions to the staff's recommendations and moved the resolution on behalf of the Neighborhood Planning and Transportation Committees.

Commissioner Perrus thanked the staff who spent a lot of time putting this together, responding to the committee's questions, and making this easy to read and understand.

Commissioner Spaulding, chair of the Transportation Committee, commented on that committee's review of the Streets and Utilities proposals.

Commissioner Kramer said that the comments regarding items 28 and 29 talk about improving safety and reducing crashes, but also include comments about decreasing pedestrian friendliness by increasing pedestrian crossing distances. Those comments do not reveal the whole story at either of those intersections. Both are very busy intersections and by adding turn lanes they will be able to control the left turns. This increases the crossing distance for pedestrians but by controlling turns pedestrian safety is increased. So, those comments are not entirely useful.

Chair Commers asked if Commissioner Kramer sees a basis to change the committee rating.

Commissioner Oliver noted that it is not necessarily historic preservation versus other chapters, but that the argument seems weak as a historic preservation issue: that it's likely inconsistent with the design guidelines and that it might conflict with the Historic Preservation Chapter. Commissioner Oliver stated that improving pedestrian safety and improving walkability are clear goals. He felt the rating was not justified and that the project is fully in line with an important portion of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Oliver asked what the other ratings were available requesting a rating that is more favorable than "directly conflicts."

Commissioner Spaulding stated that the conflict could be resolved if the project was revised to be made in conformance with both the Historic Preservation and Transportation Plans. Commissioner Spaulding stated that he was not aware of what portion of the CIB proposal triggered Heritage Preservation staff's comments and if it is resolvable.

Christina Morrison, PED staff, noted that the CIB proposals were one-page descriptions, and that some projects were not described in great detail regarding design. Staff rated the projects with the best information available and that other safety measures should be explored which would not impact the historic significance. Ms. Morrison was not sure if the CIB process has a protocol for sending projects back to applicants to be revised.

Ms. Morrison also stated that the four different ratings used, which were given to them by the CIB staff are: 1) Significantly addresses specific goals of the Comprehensive Plan; 2) Generally addresses goals of the Comprehensive Plan; 3) Does not support goals of the Comprehensive Plan; and 4) Directly conflicts with a recommendation of the plan.

Commissioner Spaulding said if Historic Preservation concerns could be addressed to the satisfaction of staff, that this project would move into the rating of "generally addresses" or even "significantly addresses" specific goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Spaulding suggested changing the rating to "generally addresses goals of the Comprehensive Plan" and noting that in order to fulfill that rating it would need to go through or be given some form of approval by the Heritage Preservation staff or commission.

Commissioner Reveal made a friendly amendment suggesting that a comment be added stating that the project could be significantly in compliance with the plan if the design could be such that it addresses both the Transportation Plan and Historic Preservation Plan policies.

MOTION: Commissioner Spaulding moved the joint Neighborhood and Transportation Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution with the amendments discussed to the attached spreadsheet. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Wencil announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 6, 2011.

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, April 4, 2011.

VII. 2011 State Legislative Session Update - Informational presentation by Wendy Underwood, Government Relations, Mayor Coleman's Office.

being cut out of the 850 cities that receive LGA. All of the members from these other cities get it, they have been advocating to support LGA for years. The decisions to put this forward are coming from the suburbs. They receive the net benefit. Ms. Underwood could not say by numbers, but the votes on the tax bill were very partisan.

Commissioner Merrigan asked if these three cities generate more jobs than any other city in the state that the government wants to cut.

Ms. Underwood does not have that exact number but she is comfortable saying yes.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, asked if there has been any discussion about the amount of sales tax that is generated by these three cities.

Ms. Underwood said yes they send hundreds of millions in sales tax and property tax to the state. She also talked about the other issue in the handout involving Central Corridor. There is legislation that has had one hearing calling for cancellation of the bonds for Central Corridor, Como Zoo and Metro parks. They had a good hearing in which the cancellation of those bonds was withdrawn. Ms. Underwood mentioned a couple of other policy items of interest. The legislation to address the Minnetonka case about variances is moving forward. There have been hearings on the House side and negotiations are going on behind the scenes and the Senate side is waiting for that. Another issue relates to the Mississippi River Critical area. There is a bill that both repeals the authority for DNR to write the rules and the bill also eliminates the designation of the critical area. The City opposes the bill, but it did pass off the Senate floor and it has never had a hearing in the House.

Ms. Underwood said that she loves working on the regional ball park project. There was a good story at the beginning of the week on MPR with the House bonding chair quoted as saying it is a good project and it should get done. However, he also says there won't be a bonding bill this year. Site assembly is underway in the Lowertown site and the support at the legislature is great. The City's bonding request for the ball park is in the Governor's bonding bill for \$20 million out of the \$27 million requested. The Governor had a big public meeting this week around the need to pass a bonding bill this year. Should that be a part of the mix to avoid a government shut down, then they plan to be right firmly in the middle of these discussions.

Commissioner Schertler asked what the total development cost for the ball park is.

Ms. Underwood said the total cost is \$47 million, their request to the state is \$27 million, the team is putting in \$10 million and the City is assuming the remainder, which is site assembly and clean up.

Commissioner Spaulding said that the Legislature wants to use Livable Communities funds to help plug the gap in transit, but he expects the City wants to use those funds in a substantial way to further Saint Paul in some of the things we hope to accomplish, such as along the Central Corridor. Has the City taken any position on that?

Ms. Underwood said their partner organization Metro Cities, which lobbies the legislature, and the Metropolitan Council have that in their agendas and the City works with them. The City is opposed to that; we want those dollars to be coming to the City's economic development projects like they are intended.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by
Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary
Planning and Economic Development Department,
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

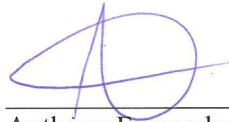


Donna Drummond
Planning Director

Approved _____

4-15-11

(Date)



Anthony Fernandez
Secretary of the Planning Commission