

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number 12-20
date March 23, 2012

GREATER LOWERTOWN MASTER PLAN SUMMARY

WHEREAS, there has long been interest in the downtown community in updating the *Historic Lowertown Plan*, adopted in 1994 as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the *Downtown Station Area Plan* was adopted in 2010 as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and addresses development opportunities and issues related to the construction of light rail transit through downtown, starting at Union Station in Lowertown; and

WHEREAS, the *Downtown Station Area Plan* called for a Lowertown Master Plan to address outstanding issues that were beyond the scope of the *Downtown Station Area Plan*, and recommended that the Lowertown Master Plan be guided by a community-based task force representing Lowertown's residential, commercial, entertainment, arts and cultural communities; and

WHEREAS, after discussion with City staff, Lowertown community members decided to prepare a small area plan on their own, hiring a consultant team that would report directly to a community task force; and

WHEREAS, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force was created in 2009 to craft a Scope of Work for the Greater Lowertown Master Plan, issue a Request for Proposals, interview consultant teams and select a consultant team; and

WHEREAS, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force raised nearly \$200,000 from the Lowertown Future Fund, Central Corridor Funders Collaborative and The Saint Paul Foundation to hire a multi-disciplinary consultant team led by the Cuningham Group; and

WHEREAS, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force worked from 2010-2011 to prepare the Greater Lowertown Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, City staff attended all task force meetings, participated in several focus group sessions, advised the task force on consistency with City policy, reviewed drafts of the Plan and helped write some of the language in the final draft; and

WHEREAS, in October 2011, the CapitolRiver Council Board voted to support the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan* at a vision, goal and conceptual level, and recommended it for approval by the Planning Commission and City Council; and

moved by Thao
seconded by _____
in favor Unanimous
against _____

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission released the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary* for public review on January 13, 2012; and set a public hearing date for February 24, 2012; and

WHEREAS, notice of the Planning Commission public hearing was published in the St. Paul Legal Ledger on January 30, 2012; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission reviewed the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary* on February 9, 2012 and forwarded its comments and recommended changes to the Planning Commission, finding the *Summary* consistent with the City's policy to protect and promote Saint Paul's heritage, and to preserve its architecturally and historically significant structures; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary* on February 24, 2012, and the public record was held open until 4:30 p.m. on February 27, 2012.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission finds that the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary* is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, and recommends adoption of the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary* as an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan with the following changes/additions:

1. A statement should be added to the *Summary* discouraging new skyways within the Lowertown Historic District, consistent with current adopted City policies.
2. The *Summary* should recognize the need for accommodating surface/tailgating parking for the regional ballpark, should it be built. The likely location for this parking is the area between the Lafayette Bridge and Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, which will remove some land from the area proposed for urban agriculture.
3. A statement should be added to the *Summary* that detailed soil contamination studies should be conducted to determine how and where the urban agriculture vision between the Lafayette Bridge and Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary can be implemented.
4. Text should be changed in the *Summary* to clarify that the interior layout of the northerly Diamond Products building may limit its suitability for indoor recreation and/or large-scale art production.
5. Text should be added to the *Summary* to recognize that part of Lowertown is located in the 100-year floodplain, and encourage the neighborhood to work with the City's Department of Public Works to determine the appropriate system(s) to protect the neighborhood from future flooding.
6. Text should be added to the full *Plan* regarding the suspected level of soil contamination along the south side of Prince Street east of Broadway.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission recommends the *Historic Lowertown Plan* (1994) be decertified upon adoption of the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary*; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission thanks the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force for its excellent work in preparing the *Greater Lowertown Master Plan* and engaging the Lowertown community in visioning for its future.