

Oct. 12 Continued Public Hearing

650 Pelham appeal - speak in support of existing
site plan

Name

Address

~~AAA~~

✓ Ted Davis

✓ Mike Zupko

✓ Zach Schwartz

✓ Kelly Jameson

✓ John Allen

650 Pelham appeal - speak in support of appeal

Name

Address

✓ Mark Smith 1671 Laurel Ave.

✓ Mat Curran 609 Eustis Street

✓ Jack Maloney 580 Otis Ave

Glen McCluskey or ~~Ken~~ Sarah Kidwell

✓ Ray Bryan

Geoffrey Warner 856 Raymond Ave
Alchemy Architects

Tom Beach - Pelham Site Appeal

From: "Roger J. Purdy" <Roger.Purdy@lhbcorp.com>
To: "ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us" <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/5/2011 1:21 PM
Subject: Pelham Site Appeal
CC: Lauren Fulner <lauren@sapcc.org>, "carla@unionparkdc.org" <carla@unionpa...>

Council Member Stark –

I am not able to attend the Appeals Hearing tonight regarding the Pelham site due to a prior commitment. I hope you will accept my comments as follows –

As Chair of the District 12 Land Use Committee, I have been very involved with the Pelham/ Wabash site and its proposed redevelopment. While I support the mission of the Port Authority of creating jobs, I would simply say that this particular development is the wrong building type for this site.

At our first meeting with the PA, we noted that our District Plan favored a TN zoning for this area, with an emphasis on Mixed Use developments that would support residential with possible commercial / light industrial uses. We wanted developments that would anchor corners, minimize parking and relate strongly to pedestrian, bike and light rail transportation. We wanted developments that become vital parts of a residential and Artists community that we see developing at the corner of Raymond and University as per our Creative Enterprise Zone efforts. As we said in meetings with the PA, we want all of this area to be “more natural, more urban and more connected.”

While we were never asked to vote on this site plan, as a variance was never requested, we did express our displeasure at the meetings and in written communications with Tom Beach.

The plan presents a suburban type, car oriented development in an urban setting. It presents a sea of asphalt at the Southern gateway to our community. It encourages car traffic and lower density on the fringe of a Transit Oriented area.

To their credit, I think the PA has made some efforts to mitigate the impact of the development (added sidewalks and landscaping). The building itself would be appropriate in another (suburban) location. But at this site there is simply no way this can be dressed up enough to make it work and fit into the fabric of our neighborhood.

I hope that the appeal is given serious consideration.

Roger Purdy, LEED AP – Construction Administrator
250 Third Avenue North, Suite 450, Minneapolis, MN 55401
Direct 612.752.6957 | Cell 612.239.2856
LHBcorp.com

LHB, Inc. | PERFORMANCE DRIVEN DESIGN.

Tom Beach - 650 Pelham

From: Alan Knaeble <knaeb001@umn.edu>
To: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 9/30/2011 2:51 PM
Subject: 650 Pelham

Dear Mr. Beach,

Please add the following comments to the public record for the hearing at City Council concerning development at 650 Pelham:

The above property that is slated for development is a concern for me. I live south of the neighborhood but work in the area and bike along Pelham Blvd in my commute. I feel that the Port Authority should address the concerns that the local district councils have with the project. The people who live near this area will be most directly affected by the development and must have a voice in the outcome. Rezoning an area to meet a developers wishes but ignoring the concerns of the neighborhood is not acceptable. A community is composed of both businesses and residents and both should have input into any development. Both the Port Authority and the developer should recognize and respect this premise and work with the community.

sincerely,

Alan Knaeble

resident of St. Paul

Tom Beach - Appeal of Site Plan for 650 Pelham Blvd.

From: "Mike and Benita" <warns@pclink.com>
To: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/5/2011 1:07 PM
Subject: Appeal of Site Plan for 650 Pelham Blvd.
CC: <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, <ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Please enter this e-mail message into the official record for today's public hearing on the Union Park District Council's appeal of the site plan for 650 Pelham Avenue in St. Paul. I support the appeal for several reasons.

First, the community has overwhelmingly expressed desires for specific types of development. There is no reason to deny this request. The building is being built in the hope that the developer can then find and sign a tenant. Given that there is no one currently committed to occupying the building, there are no hardships to a business that wants to occupy this building, once built.

Second, and most importantly, the site falls inside a special zoning district created to maximize investment close to the Central Corridor LRT. The plan for the Raymond Area Station was created with a great deal of community input, and was adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan for this building does not meet the specifications of this plan. Why did the City spend so much time and taxpayer money to develop a plan, and why did the community participate in the plan, if the City chooses to ignore the plan any time it is convenient? The plan is supposed to guide development, but isn't doing so in this case.

I ask that you grant the appeal of the Union Park District Council and associated groups and don't approve any plan for this site that doesn't meet the specifications spelled out in the Raymond Area Station Plan.

Benita Warns
1440 Lafond Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-641-1037
warns@pclink.com

Tom Beach - Please support the Union Park appeal of 650 Pelham

From: "Roe, Toni L. (MN10)" <toni.l.roe@honeywell.com>
To: <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/11/2011 7:22 AM
Subject: Please support the Union Park appeal of 650 Pelham
CC: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Dear Council Member Stark:

My name is Toni Roe and I live at 554 Otis Avenue, Saint Paul. Although I have already signed a petition requesting you support the Union Park appeal of the 650 Pelham site I am writing this note in the hoping you will understand my strong support of this appeal. I have lived in my Desnoyer Park home for 17 years. This is a wonderful community. Please help us preserve it with your appeal.

Thanks you.

Toni Roe

Toni Roe - Common Process & Systems (CP/S) Super User - Honeywell Building Solutions
Daytime Phone #: 651-647-4466
Cell: 763-234-5257
Email: toni.l.roe@honeywell.com



Tom Beach - 650 pelham

From: jeff chermak <chermajf@hotmail.com>
To: <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/10/2011 9:25 PM
Subject: 650 pelham

Council member Stark,

This email is to notify you that I support the appeal for the design of 650 pelham. As a resident of Desnoyer Park and an affiliate of Desnoyer Park Improvement Association I feel as though it is necessary to take time out of a busy day to compose a letter to you regarding the questionable zoning and design of the building proposed for this location. As a proponent of mass transit and biking and walking I am a little confused by your support of this project. The design of this development does not fit into the character of a high density urban transition between residential and industrial property. Nor does it fit into any of the guidelines I have seen in regards to development in and around light rail stations with even miniscule allowances made for future foot or bike traffic.

This sort of development is lowest common denominator all the way. It has no soul. It has no purpose. This sort of project does not create jobs it only shifts them around. This sort of design to the letter of the code and nothing more belongs in the suburbs not a major transit route. There has been a lot of positive development in this area with the refurbishment of several buildings in anticipation of the traffic and access that light rail will bring. I don't want to overstate myself but this sort of development would destroy whatever sense of character this little corner of st paul is building. I encourage you to go over there and take one last walk about. Look at what the other people have been doing with refurbishing the old buildings, and demand a more appropriate design for this plot. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeff Chermak

Tom Beach - 650 Pelham

From: <Eng2gbr@aol.com>
To: <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/10/2011 9:36 PM
Subject: 650 Pelham
CC: <ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, <Tom.Beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

I support the Union Park Appeal of the 650 Pelham site plan. It is very important to preserve the character of our community.

George Richter
2016 Merriam Lane
55104

Tom Beach - I support UPDC in the appeal against the site plan at 650 Pelham

From: "Stephen Mastey" <stephen@landarcinc.com>
To: <ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/10/2011 9:12 PM
Subject: I support UPDC in the appeal against the site plan at 650 Pelham
CC: <ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>, <Tom.Beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Dear Council Member Stark & Council Member Melvin Carter,

I **strongly support** UPDC in the appeal against this site plan at 650 Pelham.

A couple points I would like to stress: the site has over 100 more cars spaces than what we would like to see be allowed on a site with this many transit opportunities and density. Additionally, there is an excess of paving for a very non programmed site plan that is extremely wasteful and environmentally irresponsible.

Thanks for listening to the community on this very important matter!

Sincerely,
Stephen Mastey, Dist 12 community council member, land use committee member,
environment community member
2350 Bayless Place (Residence)
St. Paul, MN 55114

Sincerely,

Stephen Mastey, ASLA, CLARB, LEED AP
Landscape Architecture, Inc.
856 Raymond Avenue, Suite C
St. Paul, MN 55114
651.646.1020 office
651.246.1151 mobile
internet: www.landarcinc.com
e-mail: stephen@landarcinc.com

Tom Beach - 650 Pelham parcel appeal

From: raycomp <raycomp@visi.com>
To: <Tom.Beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/12/2011 8:35 AM
Subject: 650 Pelham parcel appeal

Mr. Beach, below are comments sent to Councilman Stark:

I hope that you will recall that we in district 12 objected to the current plan not conforming to our district plan for transit oriented and urban density design standards (which we thought that the T4 zoning would require - except that with _no_notice_to_our_council_ - this parcel's zoning was suddenly and surreptitiously removed from the zoning changes).

We said then that we want jobs for that parcel and that 68 is far too sparse for such an excellent urban parcel.

This argument that because this is industrial land so it has to be developed like this is Fridley or Moorhead is strictly a bogus smoke-screen. If this developer can't or won't make their plan suit the urban design standards then we need to find a developer that will. There is no need for this huge rush to develop this parcel now.

This corner of the district is not a back-side to be treated like it wears diapers but this is the shining gateway to our commercial industrial district and must get the appropriate design that behooves such a gateway; whatever is built will be with us for a long time either to shame or glorify our legacy.

The Port Authority spokes person seemed to misunderstand the SAPCC position on this proposal for 650 Pelham at the public hearing when she said that district 12 had approved of the that current plan. We never did. We always have maintained the position that 650 Pelham could have a higher density of jobs and a more transit oriented, urban design (meeting T4 design standards with buildings up to sidewalk line with parking handled in a creative and urban friendly approach). We had asked that a possible bike connection, from Glendale to the potential future rails to trails Greenway extension behind & south of the site, be incorporated into their plan.

We are trying to think things through for future development informed by our district plan and the plans of the LRT corridor.

Pelham is part of the St. Paul answer to Minneapolis's "Grand Round"; our St. Paul Bike Classic bike tour route (long main loop) passes right by this. A block north from 650 Pelham we have the Avalon school, a block east across from Rock-Tenn is Update's latest renovation and both of these are right up to the sidewalk.

In past you have espoused transit orient development and good urban design as goals for St. Paul and Ward 4, what makes this parcel at 650 Pelham averse to those goals? Even if the most appropriate use for 650 Pelham is light industrial, is the building design put forth by the Port Authority the most appropriate design for this environment?

-- Ray Bryan

--

|Raymond C. Bryan 651-642-9890 vox | The battle is sometimes |

|Raymond Computer 651-642-9891 fax
|2306 Robbins St. -email: raycomp
|St Paul MN 55114 _at_visi_dot_com
|USA Amiga - Commodore
<http://www.raymondcomputer.com>

| to the small for |
| the bigger they are |
| the harder they fall. |
| -- James Thurber -- |

Tom Beach - 650 Pelham

From: Barbara LaMotte <lamotte.barbara@gmail.com>
To: <tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: 10/12/2011 8:35 AM
Subject: 650 Pelham

I'm writing to ask you to reconsider the site plan for 650 Pelham. I ride my bicycle to work from Mac-Groveland to Raymond/University every day past that site and it really strikes me that we are putting in a suburban style project that is short sighted and does not account for long term vision for that part of the city. This area may look tired now, but it has great potential with its proximity to light rail and convenience to both downtowns. Please reconsider this.

Thank you.

1900 Landmark Towers
345 St. Peter Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota
55102-1661



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October 7, 2011

Council President Kathy Lantry
320-C City Hall
15 Kellogg Blvd., West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Meridian Project, 650 Pelham Boulevard

Dear Council President Lantry and Members of the Saint Paul City Council:

I am writing to provide you with additional information regarding the Port Authority's response to Union Park District Council's appeal to the City Council.

Much of the testimony and statements from those supporting the appeal expressed concern over the appropriateness of this building and whether the property should be industrial. The fact brought forward in the Planning Commission's denial of this appeal is that the Planning Commission and the City Council both voted to retain the I-1 zoning for the property and not change it to TN4. A highlighted copy of relevant facts from the Planning Commission resolution is attached.

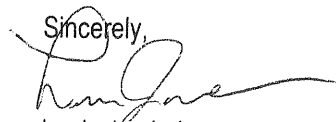
The vote to keep this property zoned I-1 was premised on the very development that is being appealed today, but with additional enhancements to respect community concerns regarding pedestrian experiences on Pelham and Wabash. The addition of these enhancements was the outcome of numerous meetings the Port Authority and the Developer had with the District Councils and the community.

When this site was operating as a trucking terminal, before the Port Authority purchased the property, there were more trucks than people at this site and they entered and accessed the property from both Pelham and Wabash. In the new site design, the truck entrance is off of Wabash, near the Rock-Tenn truck entrance. Today there are no trees on the property. This site plan adds 43 trees, 302 shrubs and 675 perennial plants. Several pedestrian connections have been added to the site, and upon completion sidewalks will extend along Pelham and Wabash.

Nothing in the zoning code, whether I-1 or TN, would have stopped the previous owner from selling to a new trucking operator to continue to operate the same business out of the same buildings. The Port Authority's investment and Industrial Equities private investment in this site increases the density of building on this site 230% from its previous use and increases the density of jobs 567% from its previous use, assuming the minimum number of jobs is attained. With Industrial Equities experience and reputation, actual job creation could be much higher.

We ask that you support the Planning Commission's sound and fact-based recommendation to allow this site plan to move forward. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Louis Jambois
President

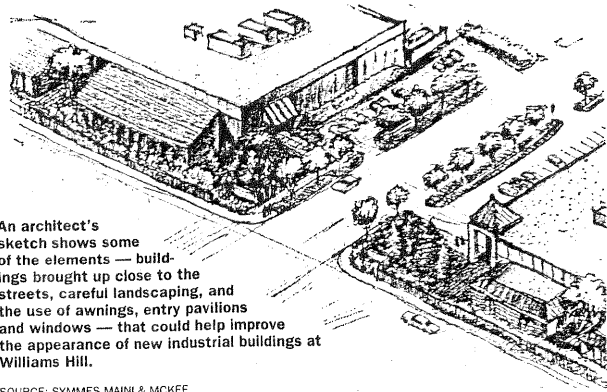
Attachment

Dear City Council Members-

I wanted to submit this article for your review regarding the 650 Pelham appeal. A couple of quick points:

- 1) The community has been trying to work with the Port Authority on better industrial building design that is in better coordination with the rest of our city/plans for quite some time. So our site plan complaints and requests should have been of no surprise to the Port Authority.
- 2) Although not all was done that should've been done at Williams Hill, the Port Authority did take steps they aren't taking at 650 Pelham, why are they going backwards especially in light of our comprehensive & sub-area plans that actually now compel these types of better coordinated designs.
- 3) New Urbanism has gone from "on the fringes" in 1998 to being widely accepted & practiced in our urban cores, especially in Midway type areas. New Urbanism principles are the keys to helping the 650 site plan fit, as required by city zoning code, with our comprehensive & sub-area plans.

Thank you for your consideration!
JOHN SCHATZ, 535 Glendale Street, ST. PAUL



An architect's sketch shows some of the elements — buildings brought up close to the streets, careful landscaping, and the use of awnings, entry pavilions and windows — that could help improve the appearance of new industrial buildings at Williams Hill.

SOURCE: SYMMES MAINI & MCKEE ASSOCIATES/WINSOR FARCY

It's hard to argue with the basic idea behind the Phalen Corridor Initiative, which is an ambitious plan to create up to 2,000 jobs by developing new industry along an underused rail line on St. Paul's East Side.

4/7/98

But there is something worth arguing about when it comes to how the proposed industrial corridor, which is being developed by the St. Paul Port Authority, should be designed.

Much of the argument is coming from Brian McMahon, an architectural historian who is also project manager for the North East Neighborhoods Development Corp. in St. Paul.

McMahon thinks the Phalen Corridor Initiative is so important to the East Side and all of St. Paul that it deserves the same close attention to design that has gone into riverfront and downtown planning.

He's particularly concerned about the first and most visible phase of the initiative — the Williams Hill Business Center, an industrial park being developed by the St. Paul Port Authority on a 32-acre site near Mississippi Street and Interstate 35E. Up to four companies are expected to locate at the park, bringing in hundreds of new jobs.



LARRY MILLETT ARCHITECTURE CRITIC

"It's an unbelievable opportunity," McMahon says of Williams Hill, which is likely to prove especially attractive for development because of its location close to freeways and railroad tracks.

What McMahon has in mind for Williams Hill and the rest of the corridor is a radical departure from the sprawling "industrial park" model used for years in St. Paul and most other American cities.

The elements of this model are numbingly familiar: big, nearly windowless one-story industrial boxes served by wide suburban-style access roads and acres of asphalt parking, all set within vast expanses of chemically treated lawn augmented by the usual collection of nondescript trees and shrubs.

This box-in-the-lawn formula offers certain ruthless efficiencies, but it is also profoundly anti-urban because it fails to provide any connection between industrial work, so vital to society, and the larger community it serves.

Yet this dreary model has now come to seem almost inevitable, as though handed down on stone tablets by the gods of industrial development.

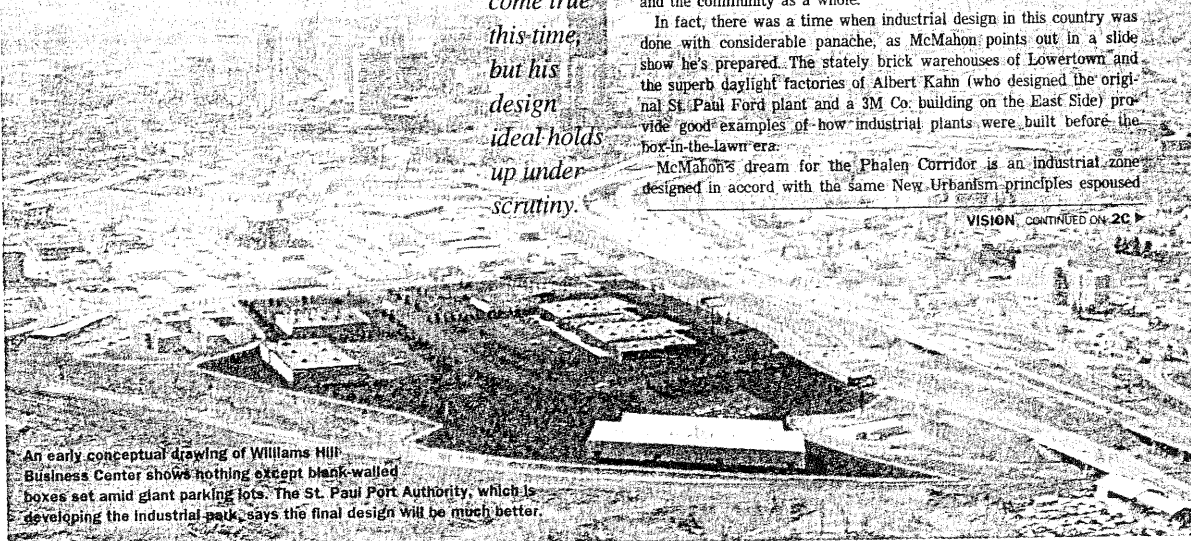
The truth, of course, is that there are other ways to create industrial complexes, ways that in the long run can benefit workers, owners and the community as a whole.

In fact, there was a time when industrial design in this country was done with considerable panache, as McMahon points out in a slide show he's prepared. The stately brick warehouses of Lowertown and the superb daylight factories of Albert Kahn (who designed the original St. Paul Ford plant and a 3M Co. building on the East Side) provide good examples of how industrial plants were built before the box-in-the-lawn era.

McMahon's dream for the Phalen Corridor is an industrial zone designed in accord with the same New Urbanism principles espoused

A Vision Worth Watching

Brian McMahon's dream for the new Phalen Corridor industrial park won't come true this time, but his design ideal holds up under scrutiny.



An early conceptual drawing of Williams Hill Business Center shows nothing except blank-walled boxes set amid giant parking lots. The St. Paul Port Authority, which is developing the industrial park, says the final design will be much better.

VISION, CONTINUED ON 2C

VISION

▼ CONTINUED FROM 1C

by the city's downtown development framework. The term "New Urbanism" is a misnomer, since it's actually a design philosophy that embraces traditional ways of place-making. In the case of Phalen Corridor, this would mean an emphasis on mixed uses (McMahon, for example, favors a blend of commercial, residential and industrial development), multi-story buildings, preservation of traditional street grids and mass transit, among many other things.

In the best of all possible worlds — which at last report this was not — the kind of organic, integrated industrial development favored by McMahon would be an everyday occurrence.

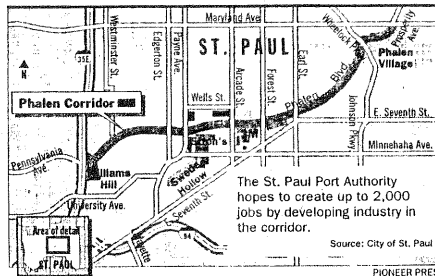
But in the case of Williams Hill, it isn't going to happen, although the Port Authority, to its credit, has taken steps to make the new business center more attractive than its many drab predecessors.

This will be accomplished through a series of design covenants requiring that new buildings at Williams Hill be located near streets, use high-grade exterior materials (instead of the ubiquitous concrete tilt-up panels found on many industrial buildings), and have at least a few windows.

But even with these covenants, Williams Hill will be nothing like the sort of industrial village McMahon has in mind.

From the Port Authority's viewpoint, the problem with McMahon's vision is that it collides head-on with the demands of real-world industry.

"Our customer is an industrial manufacturer," says Bill Morin, the Port Authority's director of real estate. "These businesses typically are not excited about



The St. Paul Port Authority hopes to create up to 2,000 jobs by developing industry in the corridor.

Source: City of St. Paul
PIONEER PRESS

Phalen Corridor

The city of St. Paul and East Side businesses are exploring and promoting construction of a new road, industrial development and a recreational trail in what they call the Phalen Corridor. They are banking on the plan to reinvigorate the East Side.

doing something different."

In other words, business wants to do business as usual, and that's why McMahon faces a steep uphill battle in his quest for a new industrial order.

The industrial "park" model he opposes is deeply entrenched in everything from architectural practice to zoning law, whereas the New Urbanism, despite all the publicity it has garnered in recent years, remains on the fringes of mainstream development. In fact, it is still widely (and, alas, in some cases, correctly) perceived as little more than a way for very rich people to exercise their taste for costly nostalgia.

This is not generally true, but New Urbanism and its kindred movements are, at bottom, efforts to change not just design but society's entire approach to development and place-making.

Given New Urbanism's revolutionary agenda, it is hardly surprising the Port Authority — which has

always seen itself primarily as a job-creation agency — prefers to stick to well-established modes of development.

Still, McMahon is doing the Port Authority, and the city as a whole, a favor by raising questions about the prevailing model for industrial development.

The first step toward change is always a recognition of new possibilities, the discovery that there is a different and maybe better way to do what needs to be done.

Williams Hill, which is located in what is already a heavily industrialized part of the city, will not be the place where the new order envisioned by McMahon takes root.

But elsewhere in the Phalen Corridor (perhaps around the old Stroh's Brewery complex) there may be opportunities to make some small first steps toward creating true industrial communities.

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