

MINUTES OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 16, 2016 - 3:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard

PRESENT: Edgerton, Wickiser, Reveal, Nelson, and Wencil
EXCUSED: Merrigan, and Makarios
STAFF: Bill Dermody, Cherie Englund, and Peter Warner

The meeting was chaired by Commissioner Nelson.

Hmong Village - 16-041-863 - Rezone from R2 one-family residential to IT transitional industrial to expand parking lot into Johnson Parkway right-of-way, 1001 Johnson Pkwy, Area bounded by Phalen Blvd., Magnolia Ave., Johnson Pkwy., and Ames Ave.

Bill Dermody presented the staff report with a recommendation of approval for the rezoning. He added that District 4 made no recommendation, one letter in support was received, and there were no letters in opposition.

Mr. Dermody responded to Chair Nelson that Johnson Parkway is parkland and will be leased, with no movement of the property lines associated. He also added that the zoning district will not go the center of Johnson Pkwy, but just east far enough to encompass the proposed parking lot, as outlined on the aerial, land use, and zoning maps. In response to a question from Chair Nelson, Mr. Dermody said that usually the zoning goes to the midpoint of the right-of-way, but in this case it will be a jagged line that follows the parking lot. He noted that most of our right-of-ways are controlled by Public Works, or by a county or state entity. We only have a few roads that are parkways controlled by Parks.

The applicants, Yia Vang, 1001 Johnson Pkwy., and Keith Matte, BKBM Engineers, Project Engineer, 5930 Brooklyn Blvd., Minneapolis, addressed the Committee. Mr. Matte said that the rezoning for a parking lot is needed as this business is busy and very successful. He said when Hmong Village was built there was a land swap with Parks. Mr. Matte added that part of the land where they built the original parking lot is still zoned R2 and that never got taken care of, so this is going to clean this up also.

Chuck Repke, Northeast Neighborhoods Development Corp. (NENDC), 1321 White Bear Ave., spoke in support. Mr. Repke said this has been a long project, dealing with multi-levels of government. Ramsey County controls the parkway, even though it is Parks land. He noted that they had met with the District 4 Community Council on November 17, 2014 to get their approval. He pointed out where District 4, 5, and 2 are on the map. He stated that District 2 has been concerned about the parking situation in Hmong Village for some time, because if you can't find a parking space in Hmong Village, the most natural place to park is along Prosperity Ave. What he is hoping to do by the NENDC supporting this development project is to alleviate some of the parking issues, and encourage people to park onsite, as opposed to parking in the neighborhood on the other side of Johnson Pkwy. He said there have been recent discussions about the crosswalk near the entranceway to Hmong Village where people park on the other side of Johnson Pkwy. People cross at the crosswalk, as it is not a controlled intersection. He added that they are very concerned about people crossing Johnson Pkwy., as it is an extremely busy parkway.

Sage Holben, 705 4th St. E., St. Paul, spoke in support. At the time of the land swap of park property and pavement she said she was on the Land Use Committee with Dayton's Bluff. She said she is no longer on the Land Use Committee, but came today as a resident. She said that more parking is needed and added that the Hmong Village has been a very solid and welcome market. She suggested that green space be looked at very seriously and added she understands that this is part of the work that will be done, including trees or green space facing the boulevard area and the neighborhood. She made another suggestion that in not so many years forward more parking will be needed, and that we look at possibly two-tiered open parking, because she feels this business is going to continue to grow. She said she has never heard anything negative about the market and is in total support.

No one spoke in opposition, and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Wencil moved to approve the rezoning from R2 to IT, as stated in the staff report. Commissioner Edgerton seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

Adopted Yeas - 5 Nays - 0 Abstained - 0

Drafted by:

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Cherie Englund
Recording Secretary

Bill Dermody
Zoning Section

Gaius Nelson
Chair