

## Saint Paul Planning Commission

### **Notice to Commissioners and the public:**

The chair of the Planning Commission has determined that it is not practical nor prudent for the Planning Commission and its Committees to meet in-person or pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.02. In light of the COVID-19 health pandemic, it is not feasible for any member of Planning Commission to be present at the regular location, and all members of the Planning Commission will attend this meeting by telephone or other electronic means.

It is also not feasible for members of the public to attend the meeting at its regular location due to the health pandemic and emergency. Accordingly, no meeting will be held in City Hall Conference Center Room 40 at 15 W. Kellogg Boulevard.

### **Minutes July 24, 2020**

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, July 24, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. via skype or conference call.

**Commissioners Present:** Mmes. Anderson, DeJoy, Grill, Mouacheupao; and Messrs. Baker, Edgerton, Hood, Lindeke, Perryman, Rangel Morales, and Vang.

**Commissioners Absent:** Mmes. \*Underwood, and Messrs. \*Khaled, \*Ochs, \*Oliver, and \*Risberg.  
\*Excused

**Also Present:** Luis Pereira, Planning Director; Ya Ya Diatta, Department of Safety and Inspections, Bill Dermody, Josh Williams, Mike Richardson, Kady Dadlez, Tony Johnson, Menaka Mohan, Michael Wade, Samantha Langer, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

#### **I. Approval of minutes March 6<sup>th</sup> and May 15, 2020.**

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Grill moved approval of the minutes of March 6, 2020. Commissioner Vang seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.*

**and**

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Grill moved approval of the minutes of May 15, 2020. Commissioner Vang seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.*

#### **II. Chair's Announcements**

Chair Rangel Morales had no announcements.

#### **III. Planning Director's Announcements**

Luis Pereira announced at City Council they voted to establish a Climate Justice Advisory Board consisting of 13–17 members, focused on overseeing implementation of the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP). A description of the board’s purpose on the City Council’s web site isto advise the Mayor and City Council on the development of policies and programs related to the City of Saint Paul’s Climate Action and Resilience Plan. The boards focus is to ensure that the cost and benefits of new programs and clean energy, energy efficiency, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilience are equitably distributed, and to address the challenges faced by our most vulnerable populations and neighborhoods. The application process is forthcoming.

Also, we have three new commissioners that have been appointed at City Council for the Planning Commission they will be joining us soon. Tram Hoang, Garrison McMurtrey, and Omar Syed are the three.

Mayor Carter announced a new director of Planning and Economic Development (PED) Ms. Nicolle Goodman. Ms. Goodman is currently Vice President of Operations and Redevelopment programs for the alliance for Economic Development of Oklahoma City, a nonprofit contracted by the city to manage economic development programs and projects, such as the city’s tax increment financing districts and other programs. She recently managed a land use and strategic development plan for Oklahoma City innovation district. More information about Nicolle Goodman is located on the City web site.

Mr. Pereira thanked PED’s Interim Director Kristin Guild for her excellent leadership during this challenging time. Ms. Guild intends on returning to her role as Deputy Director.

#### **IV. Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee**

RM Zoning Study – Review comments from public hearing and consider resolution making a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. (*Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617*)

Bill Dermody, PED staff, gave a power point presentation which can be viewed on the web page at: <http://www.stpaul.gov/planningcommission>

Commissioner Baker said he applauds this committee for being very bold in this zoning proposal. What was the thought process in going from 3.0 to 3.5 on the RM3 Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

Mr. Dermody said the thought process for increasing the maximum FAR was to allow one of the districts to have a high enough FAR to accommodate the most intense residential development that might be desired. Especially in new rezonings such as along the Riverview Corridor. What has been seen in recent history is that there certainly is market demand along the Green Line for FAR’s above 3.0 - certainly in the high 3’s and one example in the high 4’s. The attempt was to increase the FAR to accommodate that kind of development where we may want it. 3.5 is an attempt to set it in the right place where it’s higher but also retains an incentive to use the affordable housing bonus with which you could go up to 4.5 FAR. From his point of view they are in the ballpark where the affordable housing bonus truly operates as a bonus, while also accommodating the growth they want to seek.

Commissioner Baker said that he wants to make sure it is an incentive and he knows they have to

try to make that right balance. There was a part in the zoning study where it talked about COVID-19 and the overall concern around greater density and the impact that that would have on the overall pandemic. He agrees with that portion of the study in not wanting to change direction at this time away from increasing residential density, based on what we're seeing now with COVID-19. We still need more residential housing, period. He also likes the idea that we should not be compared to New York City based on their level of density. He is in overall agreement with continuing this way forward in increasing density.

Commissioner Grill said that a lot of the comments from Commissioner Baker really do stem from what the chair pushed for and what the staff reacted to. She wanted to point out that there were a lot of people pushing for this. This does look like a combination of some things that people have requested.

Chair Rangel Morales thanked staff for hearing our concerns and putting in the extra time to rework the proposal. He applauds staff for giving them something that is in the middle while they work on the Inclusionary Zoning Study. Commissioner Baker has asked for tools for when these types of applications come before the Zoning Committee and then the Planning Commission, Chair Rangel Morales can say definitively this is a tool that he will use when someone wants to go bigger or wants to build on more of the lot. There will be the question of why someone would request a variance instead of following this process for an affordable housing bonus. He thinks they still have a long way to go and this only takes care of some of the properties in Saint Paul.

Commissioner Lindeke commends staff for all the work put into this and knowing how difficult it is to change the zoning code. He hopes that they keep track of whether this is working or not, so maybe in a year or whenever to report back to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Edgerton thanked staff for the work they put in and also thank you to the chair and commissioners for pushing this. This is great and he's happy to see this as a step forward.

***MOTION: Commissioner Grill moved on behalf of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee to approve the resolution recommending that the RM Zoning Study be adopted by the Mayor and City Council. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.***

## V. Zoning Committee

**SITE PLAN REVIEW** – List of current applications. *(Tia Anderson, 651/266-9086)*

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#20-038-244 Chet Funk et al: Rezone from R4 one-family to RM2 multiple-family residential. 1074-1096 James Avenue, between Lexington and 35E. *(Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621).*

Commissioner Baker said that he feels more comfortable moving the application forward because the City Council will be giving final approval and the Commission is advancing some tools that they can use in the future for making zoning recommendations. He also feels more comfortable with this application because of the recent movement on the RM Zoning Study.

Mike Richardson, PED staff, noted that the commission would need to pass the resolution for the rezoning prior to that requesting a review of the site plan.

Chair Rangel Morales said that means there are two motions to approve, the rezoning and the request to review the site plan.

**MOTION: Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

#20-33 Resolution – Requesting that any future multi-family residential project built on 1074-1096 James Avenue be reviewed by the Planning Commission pursuant to Sec. 61.202 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code.

Commissioner Lindeke asked what the process is for requesting a site plan review.

Luis Pereira, Planning Director, said the process by which the commission can request a site plan come to it or the Zoning Committee it is the same. The Zoning Committee can make a majority vote to call a particular site plan to the Zoning Committee for consideration and action or the Planning Commission can vote to request a particular site plan come to the Zoning Committee.

Chair Rangel Morales asked if they would need a formal vote every time.

Mr. Pereira said that is his understanding based on the 2004 Planning Commission resolution that speaks to this.

**MOTION: Commissioner Edgerton moved to approve resolution #20-33. Commissioner Lindeke seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

#20-046-742 1428 E 7<sup>th</sup> Rezoning – Rezone from split RM1/RM2 zoning to all RM2 medium-density multiple-family residential. 1428 7<sup>th</sup> Street East, South of E 7<sup>th</sup> & Birmingham Streets. (Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621)

**MOTION: Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

#20-046-757 1428 E 7<sup>th</sup> Variances – Variances for building height (50' max. allowed, 60' proposed), parking (86 stalls required, 60 stalls proposed), and number of units (48 units max. allowed, 60 proposed). 1428 7<sup>th</sup> Street East, South of E 7<sup>th</sup> & Birmingham Streets. (Mike Richardson, 651/266-6621)

**MOTION: Commissioner Edgerton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the variance subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

#20-047-173 Taco Bell Drive Thru – Conditional use permit for restaurant drive-thru reconstruction with building replacement. 565 Snelling Avenue North, SW corner at Edmund Avenue. (Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)

Josh Williams, PED staff, said that this is a case where the Zoning Committee made a recommendation different from the staff recommendation. Based on that they need extra time to make sure that the resolution in this case for denial of the application fully articulates the basis for that decision. They will be working with the maker of the motion to make sure that the resolution accurately reflects that motion. Staff's recommendation is to have this laid over to allow for that process to occur.

Chair Rangel Morales said do we have the time within statute to do that?

Mr. Williams said the 60-day deadline on this particular application is August 24, 2020. Should the Planning Commission choose to lay it over, it would be the next meeting on August 7, 2020. That would give the Planning Commission time to act within the 60-day clock and preserve the second 60 days as an extension in the event of an appeal, which is standard practice.

***MOTION: Commissioner Lindeke moved to lay this case over for two weeks to review the findings for denial. Commissioner Edgerton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.***

Commissioner Edgerton announced the items on the agenda at the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, July 30, 2020.

## **VI. Transportation Committee**

Resolution of support for Rush Line 15% plans – Recommend approval of draft Planning Commission resolution. (*Bill Dermody, 651/266-6617*)

Commissioner Lindeke said at their last meeting they heard from Ramsey County on a few issues. The Rush Line will be a bus rapid transit project that runs from Saint Paul north to White Bear Lake. Ramsey County asked them for a resolution in support of the project. Their discussion included how to make sure there is pedestrian and bicycle safety as part of the project through the route, such as on Pennsylvania Avenue which is north of the State Capitol – an east-west street that is one of the few links between the East Side and North End. The committee asked Ramsey County to include a sidewalk or bicycle connection (or both) on Pennsylvania. The committee passed the resolution to support the plan.

***MOTION: Commissioner Lindeke moved the Transportation Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.***

Bill Dermody added that this will go to the City Council who has received a resolution from the Parks Commission as well, then the City Council will speak for the City. He thanked the Planning Commission for their vote on this resolution.

Commissioner Lindeke announced that the next Transportation Committee meeting scheduled on Monday, July 27, 2020 is canceled.

## **VII. Communications Committee**

No report.

**VIII. Task Force/Liaison Reports**

Commissioner DeJoy announced that the Hillcrest Redevelopment Master Plan Community Advisory Committee met on July 21<sup>st</sup>, it was their ninth meeting. The first agenda item they spoke about community engagement plans. They have a virtual event coming up on August 18<sup>th</sup>. Access to that information is on the city's web site. The other thing reviewed were the initial development alternatives. They briefly reviewed the community engagement phase one, they identified 20 community priorities, then they went into the development alternatives. Web page link: <https://www.stpaul.gov/hillcrest>

**IX. Old Business**

None.

**X. New Business**

None.

**XI. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

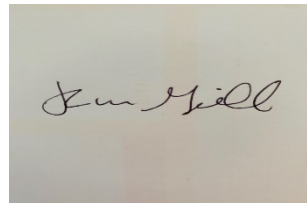
Recorded and prepared by  
Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary  
Planning and Economic Development Department,  
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Approved January 8, 2021  
(Date)



Luis Pereira  
Planning Director



Kristine Grill  
Secretary of the Planning Commission