



City of North St. Paul
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda

January 5, 2023
6:30 PM

The Planning Commission Meeting will be conducted on **January 5, 2023** at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, located at 2400 Margaret St., North St. Paul.

The Planning Commission also meets via interactive TV under Minn. Stat. 13D.02. Members of the public interested in attending remotely can log in with the following information:

The **January 5, 2023 Zoom meeting can be accessed via:** <https://tinyurl.com/NSPplanning> (from a PC, Mac, tablet, iPhone or Android device)

Meeting ID: 821 4097 2224 | Password: 362656 or by phone at 1-929-205-6099

*Participants accessing the meeting by phone please use the following meeting ID:
87556902183*

**You can also watch the meeting on our YouTube channel
here:** <https://tinyurl.com/NSPYouTube>

The Planning Commission Zoom meeting will be 'open to the public to listen in, but will be muted from contributing at all times with the exception of the Public Forum or a Public Hearing.

Please join the meeting early to test your audio and video settings. If you join via a device and your audio is not working, you may need to use the dial-in phone number option in order to be heard.

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Commissioner

Erik Brenna, Commissioner

Cameron Muhic, Commissioner

Andrew Wise, Commissioner

Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison

STAFF

Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

Chris Cherne, Planning Commission Secretary

III. Adopt Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of 12/01/2022 Planning Commission Minutes

V. Meeting Open to the Public

This Open Forum is an opportunity for persons to address the Planning Commission on items not on the agenda. A completed public comment form should be presented to the staff liaison prior to the meeting. Comments will be limited to 3 minutes per person. While the Commission may ask clarifying questions of the speaker, no formal action by the Commission or discussion will be held on these items.

VI. Public Hearings

A. Amendment to the Sign Ordinance

VII. Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

A. Chair and Vice-Chair Election

VIII. Old Business

IX. Reports from Staff

X. Reports from Council Liaison

XI. Reports from Commissioners

XII. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting is Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 6:30 pm.



To

Planning Commissioners

Date

January 5, 2023

Agenda Placement #

Approval of Minutes

Subject

Approval of 12/01/2022 Planning
Commission Minutes

Background/Facts

Recommended Action

Staff recommends the Planning
Commission approve the 12/01/2022
meeting minutes.

Attachments

1. 12-01-2022 PC Minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Brandy Howe, Community Development
Director

**CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, December 1, 2022
6:30 P.M.**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Barton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Elaine Barton, Commission Co-Chair

John Monge, Commission Co-Chair

Patrick Blees, Commissioner

Eric Brenna, Commissioner

Rick Gelbmann, Commissioner absent

Andrew Wise, Commissioner arrived at 6:38 p.m.

Cameron Muhic, Commissioner

Lisa Wong, City Council Liaison

STAFF

Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion to adopt agenda by Commissioner Muhic, and seconded by Commissioner Blees, with all present voting aye (5-0). Motion carried to adopt the November 3, 2022 agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Co-Chair Barton requested reference to the Community Center under the Reports paragraph from Council Liaison.

Council Liaison Wong requested the clarification that the “Snowy Project” is not partnering with the Business Association, but they are looking at funding alternatives.

Motion to approve minutes by Commissioner Blees, and seconded by Co-Chair Monge, with all present voting aye (6-0). Motion carried to approve the November 3, 2022 regular meeting minutes as amended.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings scheduled.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Consideration of an Amendment to the Sign Ordinance

Community Development Director Brandy Howe reviewed and explained the proposed amendments to the Sign Ordinance. The Planning Commission discussed public hearings for amendments made to the Sign Ordinance, sign use as it applies to the zoning code, off street parking, and land use. Commissioner Muhic inquired if Ms. Howe had looked at how neighboring communities manage signs. Ms. Howe stated she discussed this with City Attorney Mattick and he stated the Sign Ordinance belongs in the zoning code. Ms. Howe provided her opinion stating the Sign Ordinance is a land use and she would like a public hearing and for the Sign Ordinance to be pulled out of the Zoning Ordinance and stand alone.

The Planning Commission agreed with this recommendation and was in favor of a public hearing for the amendment changes. Co-Chair Barton inquired about the decision to make a motion or not. The Planning Commission had a robust discussion surrounding the public hearing process and requirements and agreed to schedule a public hearing and then make a recommendation to City Council regarding the Sign Ordinance amendments. Commissioner Blees suggested the process of amendment changes should be written to create a possible policy.

B. Recognition of Outgoing Commission Members

The Planning Commission congratulated Co-Chair Monge on his Mayoral election win. Co-Chair Monge thanked the Planning Commission.

Ms. Howe stated she has not heard from Commissioner Gelbmann on whether he will seek another term and Co-Chair Barton stated she will not be returning.

Ms. Howe referenced a notice regarding open positions on the Planning Commission that can be put in a variety of outlets in order to create as a diverse pool of applicants as possible. Co-Chair Barton suggested the Planning Commission look at term limits for members. Co-Chair Monge suggested putting the notice on the website, town paper, and at Century College as a way to increase advertisement and to potentially add younger members. Council Liaison Wong added there will be openings on other commissions also.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

IX. REPORTS FROM STAFF

There were no reports from staff.

X. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON

Council Liaison Wong noted the swearing in of the two new City Council members will be January 3, 2023. The Truth in Taxation meeting will be next week and the City's levy is approximately 8.4% which is reasonable percentage compared to other municipalities.

Commissioner Muhic inquired about the EDA levy. Council Liaison Wong believes the HRA and EDA did not levy and stated 30% of property taxes go back to North St. Paul.

XI. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commission members congratulated Co-Chair Monge on his Mayoral election win and also expressed their appreciation for the hard work of Co-Chair Barton as she steps down from the Planning Commission.

Co-Chair Barton mentioned an article regarding Stillwater's downtown parking and the housing shortage with the elderly population. She also mentioned the toy shelf is always looking for donations and stated her work on the Planning Commission has been a pleasure and she will miss everyone.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion to adjourn by Commissioner Brenna, and seconded by Commissioner Muhic, with all present voting aye (6-0). Motion carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.



To	Date
Honorable Mayor Furlong and City Council	January 5, 2023
Agenda Placement # VI.A	
Public Hearings	
Subject	
Amendment to the Sign Ordinance	
Background/Facts	
See enclosed staff report.	
Recommended Action	
Recommend approval to City Council an Ordinance to amend Chapter 157: Sign Ordinance of the Municipal Code.	
Attachments	
1. PC Sign Ordinance Memo 01-05-23 2. Sign Ordinance Amendment PH Draft 01-05-23	
Respectfully submitted, Brandy Howe, Community Development Director	

City of North St. Paul

Planning Commission Staff Report



Agenda Section: Public Hearing

Agenda Item: Sign Ordinance Amendment

Prepared By: Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

Meeting Date: January 5, 2023

PROPOSED ACTION

Recommend City Council approval of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 157: Sign Ordinance of the Municipal Code.

OVERVIEW

In July 2021, the City Council approved a complete update to the sign ordinance in the Municipal Code. Since that time, three potential revisions have been discussed by the Planning Commission to improve administration and to clarify the sign ordinance. These include 1) setbacks for nonpermanent signs, 2) regulations for multitenant signs, and 3) definition of sign face.

ANALYSIS

1. Setbacks for Nonpermanent Signs

In early September, it was brought to staff's attention that a city-sponsored sign had been placed in the right-of-way in violation of the updated sign ordinance. The sign (pictured right) was placed closer to the right-of-way than permitted by §157.008(C)(6), which requires all nonpermanent freestanding signs to be setback at least 10 feet from a curb or the street.



The Planning Commission discussed the above violation and considered options to remedy the issue, including amendments to the sign ordinance. At its November meeting, the Planning Commission determined that the appropriate direction to address the issue is twofold, 1) educate city staff on new ordinance requirements, and 2) amend the setback requirements for nonpermanent signs to allow for signs that are 4 square feet or smaller to be placed within 2 feet of a curb or street.

2. Regulations for Multitenant Signs

At the October 6, 2022, meeting, staff brought it to the Planning Commission's attention that regulations related to multitenant signs in the updated sign ordinance are not clearly enforceable and contradictory. For example, §157.007(B) infers that the surface area on each individual sign on a multitenant building cannot exceed the maximum square footage requirements per §157.005(C). However, §157.005(C) specifically states that dimensional requirements relate to the maximum aggregate square footage of all signs on the site. This language creates confusion as to which standard signs on multitenant buildings must adhere to.

The Planning Commission discussed multiple options to amend the multitenant sign regulations at the November meeting. After much discussion the Planning Commission agreed on an approach that would allow up to one wall sign per building face for each tenant's leasehold area. Each of these signs would be

limited to no more than 20 percent of that leasehold wall area of that façade. All other signage on the site would be subject to the zoning district standards.

In addition to the above listed changes, the Planning Commission agreed with staff's recommendation to eliminate the master sign plan requirement which has been difficult to enforce given frequent turnover in tenant spaces and ownership of buildings.

3. Definition of Sign Face

The Planning Commission directed staff to provide clarification on the meaning of "sign face" in the ordinance. The definition for sign face was included in §154.004(B)(3) as it relates to the area measurements of signs. This section has been modified to remove the definition from the regulation and to instead place it in the definitions section of the ordinance.

NEXT STEPS

The Planning Commission considered the above-discussed ordinance amendment at its December 1, 2022 meeting. At that meeting, it was discussed that with the recently updated sign ordinance being pulled out of Chapter 154: Zoning Code, there is no longer definitive direction on the review and approval process for amendments to the sign ordinance. After some discussion, staff and the Planning Commission agreed that as a policy any amendments to the sign ordinance should go through a public hearing procedure similar to what would occur for zoning ordinance amendments. The Planning Commission is thus scheduled to hold a public hearing on the enclosed ordinance at its January 2023 meeting prior to said ordinance proceeding to City Council for review and action.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends City Council approval of the enclosed Ordinance to amend Chapter 157: Sign Ordinance of the Municipal Code.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance Amending Chapter 157 of the Municipal Code

**CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL
ORDINANCE NO. ____**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 157 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Add the following definition to § 157.002 Definitions.

SIGN FACE. The sign face is that portion of a sign upon which the message, advertisement or similar display is presented, as distinguished from the structural members.

SECTION 2. Modify § 157.004(B)(3) as follows.

B) Sign Area Measurement.

4. Each side of a double-faced sign shall be considered in determining the total display surface area. ~~The face shall be that portion of a sign upon which the message, advertisement or similar display is presented, as distinguished from the structural members.~~

SECTION 3. Modify § 157.007 Multitenant Buildings as follows.

§ 157.007. Multitenant Buildings

A) Multitenant wall signs.

1. Tenants may install up to one wall sign for each building façade per leasehold area.
2. Wall signs shall be limited to no more than 20 percent of the leasehold wall area on which the sign is to be erected.

B) All other signage related to multitenant buildings shall be allotted to and not exceed the maximum square footage requirements per Section 157.004(C).

~~A) The property owner shall be responsible for allocating the allowable sign area among the tenants of multi-tenant buildings. If the owner does not allocate the sign area, the city may do so based on the relative floor area or tenant frontage.~~

~~B) The total surface area of all individual signs on the buildings shall not exceed the maximum square footage requirements per Sections 157.005(C).~~

~~C) Master Sign Plan. A master sign plan is required to control total sign area and sign placement to help eliminate incongruities as tenants/occupants change.~~

~~1. No permit shall be issued for an individual sign per Section 157.003 without a submittal of a master sign plan as part of the permit application.~~

~~2. A master sign plan shall contain the following information:~~

~~a. A scaled site plan showing location of buildings, parking lots, driveways and landscaped areas and an accurate indication on the site plan of the proposed location of present and future signs of any type, whether requiring a permit or not.~~

~~b. Scaled color drawings clearly showing the location of the sign on the site or building elevation.~~

~~c. Dimensions of each sign per the plan including a summary table with said dimensions.~~

~~d. The plan shall bear the signature of all owners or their authorized agents in such form as required by the city or as a part of applicable and active restrictive covenants.~~

~~e. A master sign plan may be amended by filing administratively a new master sign plan that conforms to all requirements of this chapter.~~

- ~~f. After approval of a master sign plan by the zoning administrator, no sign shall be erected, placed, painted, or maintained, except in conformance with approved master sign plan and such plan may be enforced in the same way as provisions of this chapter.~~

SECTION 4. Modify § 157.008(C)(6) related to standards for nonpermanent freestanding signs as follows.

C) Specific Regulations by Type of Nonpermanent Sign.

6. Freestanding. The sign shall be set back no less than 10 feet from the curb or street. If four square feet or smaller, nonpermanent freestanding signs shall be set back no less than two feet from the curb or street.
- ~~a. The top of the sign shall not extend more than 6 feet above ground level.~~
- ~~b. The sign shall be set back no less than 10 feet from the curb or street.~~

SECTION 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2022, by the City Council of the City of North St. Paul, Minnesota.

CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL

BY: _____

Terry Furlong, Mayor

ATTEST:

Brian Frandle, City Manager/City Clerk

Summary published in Review: _____



To	Date
Planning Commissioners	January 5, 2023

Agenda Placement #

Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

Subject

Chair and Vice-Chair Election

Background/Facts

Per Chapter 32, Section 32.08 Organization. At the first regular meeting of the calendar year, the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson from among its appointed members, each for a term of one (1) year. No person shall serve more than three (3) consecutive one-year terms as Chairperson of a particular Commission, unless a challenge is not present, then the existing Chairperson may remain for an additional term.

Recommended Action

Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Cherne, Planning Commission/EDA Secretary