

City of North Saint Paul
September 19, 2023
Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Monge called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Nordby arrived at 5:40 p.m.
Council Member Cole
Council Member Wong
Mayor Monge

Absent: Council Member Schweer

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, Assistant to the City Manager Jennie Kloos, Finance
Director Dan Winek, Accountant Mary Kay Heinen, Community Development
Director Brandy Howe, City Attorney Jack Brooksbank

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (3-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. TOPICS

A. Dobbs/Mulcahy Garage Condo Concept for Margaret Street Site

Community Development Director Brandy Howe stated this was discussed at a previous workshop meeting and noted easements would be retained for existing utilities. The EDA approved it and is looking for direction from City Council.

Councilmember Wong inquired on the extent of public benefit with this development.

Councilmember Cole voiced his concerns over the development noting it does not match with the downtown redevelopment master plan, 2024 comprehensive plan, or the living street plan and suggested tabling this item when a full council is present.

Mayor Monge noted the land has been vacant for a long time and believes it is a good fit for the land type.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (3-0), motion carried to table this item.

A. Tobacco Ordinance

Katie Engman, Program Director – Policy and Compliance with Association for Nonsmokers – MN, presented this item. She discussed the tobacco industry and impact on the community. She briefly described the state and federal updates and other policy information. She provided a multitude of statistics describing types, flavors, prices, school policies, compliance checks, and proximity of such businesses to schools, hospitals, and other places of concern.

Ms. Engman provided information on ordinances, regulation requirements and penalties for failed compliance checks. She also detailed the licensing process and the roles at the state and federal level

Councilmember Nordby inquired about where the responsibility lies if a compliance check fails. Ms. Engman stated the punishment would go toward the business owner not the employee.

Councilmember Wong inquired about required action for tonight. Mrs. Engman summarized the City Council's opinions and suggested further conversation on flavor, density, state and federal updates, proximity to youth related buildings and license capping.

This item will be back on the agenda at the next City Council meeting for discussion.

B. Adult Use Cannabis Legalization

City Attorney Jack Brooksbank discussed cannabis legalization and the roles of local government. He provided a high-level overview and described 3 main topics regarding the new legislation. He stated there has been no change to federal law. The new legalization permits adult use and possession but limits quantity. New legislation also stated approved locations. He briefed the Council on employee use, possible ordinance violations, and future legislation coming in 2025.

Mr. Brooksbank noted, currently, the Minnesota Department of Health is processing licenses but the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) will take over all regulation of recreational and medical cannabis beginning as a phased approach in 2025. There will also be some restrictions on the sale of cannabis in conjunction with alcohol or food products. March 2025 will be a popular date for most changes to occur.

Mr. Brooksbank explained that municipal regulation cannot ban use, possession, or transportation and will be subject to regular zoning requirements. Cities can impose setbacks and some restrictions over hours of operation. Cities are also allowed to impose fees for initial registration and renewal. The City would have the right to place a limit on how many cannabis retailers are allowed in a designated area. He added that appeals and complaints will go through OCM. The City is allowed to impose a 30-day suspension but then it moves to the state level.

Mr. Brooksbank recommended looking at general zoning regulations, business regulations, setbacks, training research, employee policy updates, and a list of proposed ordinances before the next Council meeting.

Mr. Brooksbank summarized the legislation and suggested reaching out to him with any questions or concerns.

V. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (4-0), meeting is adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

/s/ John Monge, Mayor

Attest

/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk