



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2024
6:30 PM**

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick Blees called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Chair

Andrew Wise, Vice-Chair

Absent

Arthur Alvarez, Jr., Commissioner

Stephanie Kane-Burback, Commissioner

Elizabeth Gadbois, Commissioner

Cameron Muhic, Commissioner

Jim Rathe, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison

Absent

Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Blees asked for a motion to adopt the January 4, 2024 meeting agenda.

M/Rathe, S/Muhic.

Motion carried 6-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of December 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Blees asked for a motion to approve the December 7, 2023 meeting minutes.

M/Alvarez, S/Rathe.

Motion carried 6-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VI. PRESENTATION

a. 17th and Delaware: High Pointe

Representatives from High Pointe were not present.

b. 17th and Delaware: K&T and Andrus

Representatives from K&T and Andrus presented their development proposal for the 17th Ave and Delaware Ave site. The developer stated that there is bad soil on the property and it will cost a fortune to make it buildable, thus it is not feasible for 12 lots to be developed. The developer stated their latest design fronts both 17th Ave and Delaware Ave and matches the neighborhood. Aside from the twin homes, a pond would be constructed for proper drainage. The design of the buildings would be one level with a full basement. The reason for having a basement is that the foundation of the house must reach below the bad soil on the site. The developer stated that there is a clear need for one level townhomes in North St. Paul, and the houses would run in the \$400,000 range.

The representatives stated that other plans in the packet were drafts, but the plan presented at the meeting is what they have fallen on due to a large variety of conditions. Blees asked if they have contacted Ramsey County to determine if they would approve the driveway access to 17th Ave E. The developers stated they have gotten an unofficial nod to do so. Rathe clarified that there would be two entrances off of Delaware Ave and three off of 17th Ave. Muhic stated his concern about the larger driveways at the front of the units and how that would affect appeal of the neighborhood. Muhic asked if queuing from the school would affect driveway access. Kane-Burback stated she has not seen queuing stretch as far as this location. Muhic stated he would like to see a sidewalk along Delaware Ave. The Planning Commission thanked the developer for their presentation.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Blees called for nominations for Chair.

Rathe nominated Blees for Chair.

There were no other nominations.

On motion by Muhic, seconded by Rathe, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to close the nominations for Chair.

On motion by Alvarez, seconded by Gadbois, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to elect Patrick Blees as the 2024 Chair of the Planning Commission.

Chair Blees called for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Alvarez nominated Wise for Vice-Chair.

There were no other nominations.

On motion by Rathe, seconded by Muhic, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to elect Andrew Wise as the 2024 Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission.

b. Consideration of Proposals for 17th and Delaware Property

Howe presented the proposals for the 17th Ave and Delaware Ave property. The City received unsolicited interest from three parties. To fairly evaluate the proposals, the City issued an RFP in May 2023. The City received two complete proposals, and both parties were invited to speak to City Council in July 2023. At the August 2023 meeting, the City Council reviewed the proposals and directed staff to look into using the site for student-built housing. Staff provided the presentation to City Council in November. At that the November 2023 meeting, Council decided to not move forward with the student-built housing program at that site and instead to look into selling the property to a developer. Both K&T and Andrus and High Pointe Group were invited to present at the January 4, 2024 Planning Commission meeting.

Howe stated the site is 2.4 acres and is located in the R-1 Single Family zoning district. The site is across the street from Richardson Elementary. The first proposal from K&T and Andrus is to build 5 twin structures across 10 lots. One acre would be developed, and 1.5 acres would be used as greenspace. High Pointe's proposal consists of 6 twin structures across 12 lots. 1.5 acres would be developed, and 1 acre would be used as greenspace. Howe reviewed the housing goals of the Comprehensive Plan. K&T and Andrus meets the zoning ordinance. High Pointe's proposal has a density that is a bit higher than



what is allowed in the district. Because both proposals are twin unit projects the flexibility of a PUD can be utilized and would be an appropriate approach for either proposal.

Blees asked Howe to clarify the density, and stated that it looks like the project with 12 units is less dense than the project with 10 units. Howe stated the calculated density accounts for the space that would actually be developed. Alvarez asked what criteria the City follows when determining what proposals to recommend approval. Howe responded that the Planning Commission looks at how the proposals fit within the broad goals of the Comprehensive Plan such as providing and offering more choices of housing within the City. This property was previously noted as a unique opportunity for medium density.

Muhic stated that he likes the High Pointe plan in terms of the driveways and the size of the units. However, K&T and Andrus showed up to the meeting, and that weighs heavily. Blees agreed. Alvarez stated if High Pointe has not done this investigative work into the property and the City would require it, then they might pull out. Alvarez indicated that he was previously employed by High Pointe, and he will abstain from voting.

Blees called for a motion to make a recommendation to City Council.

On motion by Rathe, seconded by Gadbois, with Muhic, Kane-Burback, Rathe, Blees and Gadbois voting aye and Alvarez abstaining (5-0-1), motion carried to recommend to City Council approval of the K&T and Andrus proposal due to the thorough investigation by the developer and consideration of a number of options for development.

VIII. REPORTS

Blees welcomed new members Kane-Burback, Gadbois and Alvarez to the Planning Commission.

Howe stated there will be an open house on January 23 and 24 at City Hall for commissioners and City Council to meet with and speak to City staff and departments.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Blees asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 PM.

M/Rathe, S/Alvarez.

Motion carried 6-0.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, February 4, 2024 at 6:30 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

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