



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2024
6:30 PM**

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Chair
Andrew Wise, Vice-Chair
Arthur Alvarez, Jr., Commissioner
Stephanie Kane-Burback, Commissioner
Elizabeth Gadbois, Commissioner
Cameron Muhic, Commissioner
Jim Rathe, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison
Riley Grams, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Blees asked for a motion to adopt the December 5, 2024 meeting agenda.
M/Wise, S/Rathe.
Motion carried 7-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of November 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes
Blees asked for a motion to approve the November 7, 2024 meeting minutes.
M/Rathe, S/Muhic.
Motion carried 7-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Adult-Use Cannabis Ordinance Public Hearing
Grams presented the staff report on the adult-use cannabis ordinance item. The State Legislature recently approved legal adult-use cannabis consumption in the State of Minnesota. The Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) is expected to begin issuing licenses in early 2025. Cities will retain a limited role in dictating available locations where cannabis sales, production, etc. can operate, particularly in the areas of land use. At their November 19, 2024 workshop meeting, City



Council discussed available options and provided staff with direction. The proposed ordinances can be viewed in this meeting's packet. Grams continued to overview the following points:

Prohibition: Cities cannot ban or prohibit the possession, transportation, or use of cannabis or hemp products [MN State Statute 342.12(a)] and cannot ban the operation of businesses licensed under the cannabis act. Cities may only enact "reasonable" restrictions and must ensure that they are not effectively banning these operations through local zoning controls.

Zoning: Staff recommend the City prohibit cannabis operations in all zoning districts except for the MU-2 Transitional Mixed-Use and MU-3: Corridor Mixed-Use zoning districts. Cannabis operations would not be allowed in the MU-1: Downtown Mixed-Use zoning district due to its historic nature. There appear to be sufficient properties in the MU-2 and MU-3 zoning districts to allow for cannabis operations. Staff recommend the Planning Commission discuss whether a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) should be required for cannabis operations, which would give the City an additional layer of review and approval.

Minimum Distance from Schools and Parks: Based on Council direction, staff recommend the City impose a 750-foot minimum distance from schools and a 500-foot minimum distance from daycares, residential treatment facilities, or park attractions.

Hours of Operation: State law allows for cannabis operations to operate between 10am-9pm and that businesses cannot operate between 2am-8am. Staff recommend that the City mirror existing liquor store operations as much as possible. The recommendation is to allow operations on Monday through Saturday 10am-10pm and on Sunday 10am-9pm.

Number of Registrations: There are a total of six different available state-issued licenses for cannabis operations. Cities may limit the number of registrations for three: cannabis retailers, microbusinesses, and mezzo businesses. Registrations for these three licenses may be capped at not less than 1 per 12,500 residents. Based on Council direction, staff recommend the City cap the number of cannabis registrations at two.

Other Considerations: Staff recommend the adoption of more specific definitions for "enclosed," "locked," and "public view" as zoning controls in residential districts relating to homegrown requirements and the prohibition of outdoor seating and smoking areas at cannabis businesses.

Chair Blees opened the Public Hearing at 6:44 PM.

There were no public comments.

Chair Blees closed the Public Hearing at 6:44 PM.

Muhic stated he is curious to see what exact areas in the City cannabis operations would be able to operate with the proposed regulations. Gadbois asked what the local alcohol regulations are and if there are caps on businesses such as liquor stores. Rathe stated his concerns about available parking for cannabis businesses and a concern of greatly increased traffic. Muhic asked if there could be a regulation to restrict cannabis businesses' proximity to each other. Grams stated there is the option to restrict businesses from being located within 500 feet of each other, but Council and staff agree that that regulation would further limit the available locations.

Rathe asked if there is a difference between home growing or commercial growing. Nordby stated the City can only regulate cannabis retailers, microbusinesses, and mezzo businesses. The Planning Commission had a robust discussion regarding potential future parking issues and drive-throughs. Wise



indicated that he would like to see the City treat cannabis businesses in a similar manner as alcohol businesses and questioned whether a CUP should even be required as they are not required for liquor stores. The Commission discussed allowing cannabis businesses in the MU-1 zoning district.

Chair Blees asked for a motion to recommend approval to City Council of an Ordinance Enacting Chapter 125 of the North St. Paul City Code Concerning Cannabis and Lower-Potency Hemp Edibles Businesses and an Ordinance Amending Chapter 154 of the North St. Paul City Code Concerning Cannabis Businesses with the recommendation that a Conditional Use Permit need not be required for cannabis operations.

M/Wise, S/Alvarez.

Motion carried 7-0.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no items of business, action, or recommendation.

VIII. REPORTS

Muhic asked if the City will be writing a letter to Metro Transit regarding the changes on the transit routes. Grams indicated the City is currently having discussions about it.

Blees encouraged everyone to check out North St. Paul small businesses.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Blees asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 PM.

M/Rathe, S/Muhic.

Motion carried 7-0.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 6:30 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

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