CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2019
6:15 P.M.

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Barton called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Elaine Barton, Commission Chair	
Michael Stahlmann, Commissioner	
Tom Sonnek, Commission City Council Liaison	
Chris Bathurst, Commissioner	Absent and Excused
Rick Gelbmann, Commissioner	
Trisha Hamm, Commission Vice Chair	Absent and Excused
John Wahl, Commissioner	
Allan Worm, Commissioner	Absent and Excused

STAFF
Erin Perdu, City Planner
City Manager Scott Duddeck
City Engineer Morgan Dawley
Olivia Boerschinger, Planning Secretary

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion to adopt agenda by Commissioner Stahlmann, and seconded by Commissioner Gelbmann, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to adopt the September 5, 2019 Agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AUGUST 15, 2019

Chair Barton requested the following correction to the minutes:

-Page 7, first sentence, insert “not” after “dependent”

Commissioner Gelbmann requested the following correction to the minutes:

-Page 7, fourth paragraph, last line, replace “what the Planning Commission wants to accomplish” with “what the Planning Commission’s responsibilities are”

Motion to approve Minutes by Commissioner Wahl, and seconded by Commissioner Stahlmann, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to approve the August 15, 2019 regular meeting minutes as amended.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Don Bieniek, 2146 Belmont Lane E, stated there is a misprint on the meeting minutes in tonight's meeting packet, which should read August 15, 2019.

Mr. Bieniek stated there was a misprint in the public notice in the newspaper on August 21, 2019, which should read 2546 5th Avenue E and 2544 5th Avenue E.

Planning Secretary Olivia Boerschinger thanked Mr. Bieniek for pointing out the corrections.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Old City Hall Site Redevelopment (NSP Apartments)

City Planner Erin Perdu stated a public hearing is required for 2 items related to site plan approval that was granted in July 2019 for the North St. Paul Apartments development. She added the developer is requesting that 2 parcels at the southern end of the site be re-zoned from R-3 multi-family residential to MU-1 mixed use downtown, to bring the entire parcel under the same zoning category of MU-1. She noted this was a requirement of site plan approval.

Ms. Perdu stated a public hearing is required for the vacation of right of way on the site at 5th Avenue, as well as a portion of the public alley where the proposed building will be located.

Ms. Perdu stated the rezoning is consistent with uses for the area in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. She added there are no uses in the alley that would prevent it from being vacated. She noted no conditions are being requested for either public hearing and City Staff recommends Planning Commission recommendation of City Council approval on both items.

Ms. Perdu stated the public alley runs parallel to 7th Avenue E and would be directly under the proposed building. She added the 5th Avenue right of way is between the location of the proposed building and Margaret Street, and the public alley behind the properties on 4th Avenue would not be affected. She noted improvements to the alley as part of this project would not be assessed to residents.

City Council Liaison Sonnek asked why the re-zoning is necessary as an apartment building is permissible in the existing R-3 zone. Ms. Perdu stated City Staff recommends that the lots that are being combined into one parcel should be zoned MU-3 for consistency and to avoid split zoning.

Commissioner Gelbmann asked whether the 2040 Comprehensive Plan guides the entire site for mixed use. Ms. Perdu confirmed this.

City Council Liaison Sonnek stated since the 2040 Comprehensive Plan designates this area MU-1, re-zoning would be necessary within 9 months in any case. Ms. Perdu confirmed this.

Chair Barton opened the public hearing at 6:26 p.m.

A property owner asked how the development will affect the alley, and whether the continuation of 5th Avenue will be vacated. He added the alley is directly behind his building. He asked whether the alley will have access to Margaret Street, and whether it will be plowed in the winter.

City Manager Scott Duddeck stated the vacated alley will become a parking area with access from Margaret Street.

Brad Mccord, 2531 4th Avenue, asked whether the utilities in the alley will be changed or improved behind the two properties north of 4th Avenue and south of the site. He asked who will plow the alley.

Mr. Duddeck stated the alley will be improved, as it is currently unimproved, and the City will take over maintenance and plowing of the alley.

Jim Winkels, Amcon Construction, stated he represents the developer of the site. He added the alley will be improved once it is vacated. He noted two stormwater holding vaults will be constructed underneath the property, which will improve stormwater drainage from what is there now.

Mark Ziebel, 2537 4th Avenue E, stated his property is across from the alley. He asked whether a trench will be dug for sewer and utilities, and whether his electrical service will be interrupted. Mr. Ziebel asked whether there will be restricted access to the alley from Margaret Street.

Mr. Winkels stated there will be no service interruption during construction. He added temporary lines are installed and work is done very quickly. He added there will be access to the parking area from Margaret, although it will not be a public parking lot.

Linda Ziebel, 2537 4th Avenue E, asked if there is a timeline for how long the project will take.

Mr. Winkels stated the plan is to begin construction this fall, between November 15-December 1, 2019, and will take approximately 12-13 months. He added the sewer line will be addressed in Spring 2020.

Chair Barton asked how residents can be kept updated. Mr. Duddeck stated a project notification link is being set up so residents can receive project updates.

Chair Barton closed the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

Commissioner Gelbmann thanked all the residents who came to the meeting and asked questions. He stressed the importance of ensuring that residents stay informed about this development and other projects in North St. Paul.

Motion by Commissioner Stahlmann, and seconded by Commissioner Wahl, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to recommend City Council approval of Vacation of 5th Avenue E and Alley Vacation for Old City Hall Site Redevelopment.

Motion by Commissioner Gelbmann, and seconded by Commissioner Stahlmann, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to recommend City Council approval of the rezoning of 2546 and 2544 5th Avenue E from R-3 to MU-1.

Chair Barton stated the City Council will review these recommendations at their September 17, 2019 Regular Meeting.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. Planned Unit Development – 0 Burke Avenue and 2120 5th Street N

Ms. Perdu stated the applicant for the Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 0 Burke Avenue is obtaining additional information related to this application. She added the applicant has requested to table this item to a date uncertain. She noted no action is required.

Commissioner Gelbmann asked whether this request is related to the developer taking the time to reach out to the community and nearby residents regarding their plans. Ms. Perdu stated the applicant is reviewing stormwater and engineering issues that were raised by the Planning Commission. She added public notice will be sent to residents within 350 feet when this application is reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Ms. Boerschinger stated public notice was sent to residents within 350 feet that the application is postponed until further notice.

VIII COMMISSION BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Change date of second September meeting from September 19th to September 12, 2019

Ms. Boerschinger stated a motion is required to change the Planning Commission meeting date from September 19, 2019 to September 12, 2019.

Motion by Chair Barton, and seconded by Commissioner Stahlmann, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to change the Planning Commission meeting date from September 19, 2019 to September 12, 2019.

IX. REPORTS FROM STAFF

a. Capital Improvement Plan, report presented by City Engineer Morgan Dawley

City Engineer Morgan Dawley presented the draft Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for streets and utilities for the Planning Commission's review. He added the CIP extends through 2024. The current CIP was adopted in 2013 but was not reviewed by the Planning Commission. He

noted City Staff recommends that the CIP be recommended to the City Council for their review and formal adoption.

Mr. Dawley presented a visual representation and map of project areas through 2024. He added the map represents areas that have already gone through the planning process as well as areas that are currently under construction. He noted City Staff's purpose is to confirm to the residents of North St. Paul that significant progress is being made, and road construction improvements are making a difference

Mr. Dawley stated the CIP identifies three new project areas: in 2020 - Casey Lake neighborhood and the section of 7th Avenue between 1st and 3rd Streets; 2022 – completion of streets reconstruction on the north side of the City; and 2024 – south of 19th Avenue to 18th Avenue between Helen and Century Avenue.

Mr. Dawley stated the CIP will be presented to the City Council with a table of estimated costs separated by types of improvements in each project area. These improvements include streets, sidewalks, water utilities, sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water quality improvements that meet the rules and regulations of the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District.

Mr. Dawley stated a feasibility study on the 2020 portion of the CIP is being prepared by City Staff, authorized by the City Council, to be presented at their September 17, 2019 meeting. He added two neighborhood Open Houses were held, details of which are included in the feasibility study. He noted the 2020 projects be must be reviewed and adopted by the City Council before public improvements are ordered.

Mr. Dawley stated public hearing is planned in October 2019 to facilitate an early bid process in 2020.

Commissioner Stahlmann requested clarification regarding temporary curbs on 7th Avenue E and Margaret Street N, at the City Hall redevelopment site.

Mr. Dawley stated the portion of 7th Avenue is 2 blocks west of the City Hall redevelopment site, between 1st Street N and 2nd Street N. He added redevelopment activities are not always reflected on the CIP, which focuses on existing infrastructure. He noted there may be a need for temporary curb or patching, but the goal will be to coordinate efforts to reduce delays.

Commissioner Gelbmann stated improvements along 7th Avenue will be a tremendous improvement. He added plans for 7th Avenue east of the 2020 reconstruction are not shown on the consecutive plans.

Mr. Dawley stated the pavement west of 1st Street is asphalt bituminous, and east of 1st Street is concrete. He added the concrete construction, which is costly and will require a different contractor, will be maintained but updated.

City Council Liaison Sonnek asked whether the section of 7th Avenue at Margaret Street in front of the new redevelopment will be reconstructed. He added it might seem odd to have a block of

roadway untouched between two newly paved areas. He asked whether that could be extended to Margaret Street.

Mr. Duddeck stated there could be potential redevelopment along that block to the west, which could involve roadway reconstruction. He stressed the importance of timeliness and efficiency regarding what may happen there in the near future.

Chair Barton asked how residents may be able to find out when their street will be due for improvements. Mr. Dawley stated the City website will be updated with information, project hotlines and registration for email notifications.

Commissioner Stahlmann asked whether there is still consideration of a roundabout at 3rd Street N and 7th Avenue E at South Avenue E. Mr. Dawley stated there have been discussions with Ramsey County regarding a roundabout at this location, as South Avenue E is a County road. He added the reaction to this proposal from the County has been favorable, and preliminary designs and traffic data have been requested.

Mr. Duddeck stated a review of the Anchor North Project will be provided at the Planning Commission's next meeting. He added an east/west roadway is proposed on the property that would provide traffic access from 7th Avenue E onto McKnight Road.

Mr. Dawley stated a new traffic signal at the south end of the interchange is proposed, near the Gateway State Trail bridge, which could be interconnected with other area traffic signals to coordinate and optimize signal timing. He added that will be a project that would be funded by Ramsey County.

Commissioner Wahl asked whether 5-G (cellular coverage) is being considered along with necessary utilities. Mr. Duddeck stated 5-G is addressed by Ordinance.

Commissioner Wahl stated he is concerned that lighting should be covered to improve visibility to the sky. He added that is something to keep in mind.

City Council Liaison Sonnek stated the concept of the 7th Avenue portion of the 2020 project area reflects the downtown master plan, curb to curb, and will give North St. Paul residents a feel for what the reconstruction of the downtown area will be like.

Mr. Dawley stated the downtown master plan was created as a guiding document that envisioned the character of the roadways entering the downtown area. He added the areas would be interconnected and identified end to end between McKnight Road and Century Avenue, with individual character from block to block. He noted the downtown master plan will continue to be used as a guiding document for redevelopment of this area.

Mr. Dawley stated the draft CIP will be presented to the City Council at their September 17, 2019 meeting for their review and adoption.

Council Liaison Report - Sonnek – **no audio recorded**

X. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Gelbmann stated he recently attended a family wedding reception at Casey Lake Park. He added the park facilities are very nice and he highly recommends using Casey Lake Park facility for functions.

Mr. Duddeck stated the audio-visual equipment in Council Chambers is scheduled to be replaced beginning the week of September 16, 2019. He added the Cable Commission will provide assistance for any meetings that occur during that time using remote equipment.

Chair Barton requested an update on the discussion related to amending the off-street parking section of the City Code, which was supposed to be on this evening's agenda. Ms. Perdu stated City Staff have not had a chance to make the updates but will provide a review at the Planning Commission's October 2019 meeting.

Chair Barton referred to a recent *Pioneer Press* article on tiny houses. She provided a copy for City Staff. She added most cities have a minimum livable area and tiny houses would be prohibited.

An audience member made a comment regarding a public hearing that was supposed to be scheduled for tonight's meeting. Ms. Boerschinger stated the public hearing was moved to September 12, 2019 to comply with the statutory 2-week notification period. She added the minutes reflect what was stated, and notice was sent to all properties within 350 feet of the subject property.

Chair Barton stated residents can sign up on the website to receive notifications. Ms. Boerschinger agreed, adding residents can be on a link to receive notices that go on the City website.

Chair Barton stated the Planning Commission's next meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2019 at 6:15 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion to adjourn by Commissioner Wahl, and seconded by Commissioner Gelbmann, with all present voting aye (4-0). Motion carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 6:15 p.m.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

Olivia Boerschinger
Planning Commission Secretary
651-747-2400
Olivia.boerschinger@northstpaul.org