



City of Duluth
Planning Division

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City of Duluth
Planning Commission
January 8, 2013 Meeting Minutes
City Council Chambers - Duluth City Hall

I. Call to Order

President Digby called to order the meeting of the City Planning Commission at 5:00pm on Tuesday, December 11, 2012, in the City Council Chambers.

II. Roll Call

Attending: Henry Banks, Marc Beeman, Drew Digby, Terry Guggenbuehl, Patricia Mullins, Heather Rand, David Sarvela, Luke Sydow and Zandra Zwiebel

Staff Present: Keith Hamre, Charles Froseth, Nate LaCoursiere, Steven Robertson, John Kelley, Jenn Reed-Moses and Cindy Stafford

III. Public Hearings

(Item C. moved up in the agenda)

C. PL 12-170 District Plan Adoption by Saint Luke's Hospital

Staff: Jenn Reed Moses introduced St. Luke's proposal for a District Plan that includes parking, signage, lighting, sidewalk locations, and traffic calming for the campus. Parking lot changes include minor modifications and some new lots. Plan must meet stormwater and landscaping requirements per the UDC. Grounds garage (20' x 20') location in corner of parking lot (South 5) must meet setback requirements. Door will face parking lot; therefore, no impact to the neighbors. Signage schematics show three types of signs: directional sign, parking entrance sign, and building identification sign. No sign permit needed for these. They also list the location of monument signs, which will need sign permits. Building identification signs will be consistent to what they have now. For traffic calming and lighting they request concept approvals only. District boundaries, proposed uses, and the district plan concept are consistent with the comprehensive plan and the MU-I zone district. Staff recommends approval of the District Plan with the following conditions:

- 1) Parking lots must provide stormwater treatment and landscaping per UDC requirements.
- 2) Grounds Garage must meet property line setbacks in place at the time of construction.
- 3) All lighting must meet UDC standards.
- 4) No sign may be erected in public right-of-way or in violation of the view obstruction provisions of UDC Section 50-25.2.M

5) Directional, Parking Entrance, and Building Identification signs meeting standards in the Plan may be approved in additional locations by the Land Use Supervisor.

6) Any alterations to the approved plans that do not alter major elements of the plan may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor without further Planning Commission approval; however, no such administrative approval shall constitute a variance from the provisions of Chapter 50.

Public: No speakers.

Commission: Banks – brings up questions on walkability and parking. How many parking spaces? Will the campus qualify for DTA credits? Moses: Walkability is part of overall concept. Parking question deferred to applicant. Yes, will qualify for transit line/DTA credits. Ron Franzen (St. Lukes) – approximately 375 new parking spaces. Employees are now parking on the street. They would like to give the streets back to the neighbors. Guggenbuehl – questions connection between walkability and signage. Are the signs oriented towards drivers? Moses – signs are geared towards both. Walkability component involves finding your parking space and finding your clinic with easy access. Sydow – is there a limit on signage? Moses – condition for land use supervisor to approve additional signage; therefore streamlining the process for large amounts of sign requests. Digby – questions the use of the district outside of St. Lukes District Plan. Is there a long-term plan by the City to not make it not part of the medical district? Moses - boundaries are consistent with comprehensive plan. Any additional development would require plan review in accordance with the MU-I district. Digby – does the space include all of St. Lukes controlled property? Moses – lower left of map not included. Franzen – this is the emergency room parking lot. Sarvela - question on traffic calming. Will this divert traffic to other streets? Moses – will be looked at by City Engineering. Sarvela – asked about pedestrian sidewalks. Moses – these are employee parking lots and will be directing staff towards the hospital. Franzen – 98% of staff is female. Hospital is focusing on safety, and a broader district. Building A is the center of their campus. St. Lukes would like a modern urban health care center and respect the neighborhood at the same time. They would like to meet the needs of the community, patients and employees. Beeman – where are employees parking now? Franzen – on the street. Guggenbuehl questioned the consistency of labeling of the campus buildings. Franzen – St. Lukes will use the alphabet for building identification. Digby – Brings up topic of 1st street traffic change. Does the plan address this? Franzen – long term goal is to have emergency entrance on 2nd Street. Sydow is pleased to see pedestrian bump-outs on 1st Street. Hamre – In 2016/2017 the City is considering changing 1st Street to a 2-way street. Digby thanked St. Lukes for their efforts and investments back into Duluth.

MOTION/second: Guggenbuehl/Rand. Planning Commission recommends approval of the District Plan with conditions as submitted.

VOTE: (9-0)

A. PL 12-177 Change Future Land Use Along the 800 Block of East 1st Street from Urban Residential to Medical District by the City of Duluth

Staff: Kelley reviewed the map amendment from Urban Residential to Medical District from North 8th Ave. E. to North 9th Ave between East 1st St. and East 1st Street alley. Comprehensive plan will be consistent with current zoning. Based on findings, staff recommends approval.

Public: No speakers.

Commission: Mullins – is this a St. Lukes campus expansion? Kelley – St. Lukes already has ownership on this site and is currently using it as a parking lot. Proposal is to bring zoning in line with the comprehensive plan.

MOTION/second: Zwiebel/Beeman proposes acceptance of the change in future land use from Urban Residential to Medical District.

VOTE: (9-0)

B. PL 12-178 Rezone Areas from North 9th Avenue East & North 12th Avenue East and between East Superior Street and East 3rd from Mixed Use-Neighborhood (MU-N) and Residential-Urban (R-2) to Mixed Use-Institutional (MU-I) by the City of Duluth

Staff: Kelley reviewed the proposed rezoning as noted above. City staff recommends approval.

Commission: Zwiebel – In regards to Jefferson School what are the implications? Kelley – we are not creating any non-conforming uses.

Public: Penny Clark (2120 E. 4th St.) Past President of Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), is currently a board member of the Duluth Preservation Alliance (DPA), and worked on comprehensive plan for 1 ½ years. She is concerned about Jefferson School. She mentioned overlays and they are not to be rigid borders. She reviewed the guiding principles in comprehensive plan, including adaptive reuse of existing buildings. New institutional expansion should not divide historical neighborhoods. Concerned if you zone it as institutional the owner is going to sell it, and the building will be gone. She would like to take this area out of the rezoning.

Glen Filipovich (1331 E. 7th St.) Current President of DPA is also concerned about Jefferson School. He feels it should be adaptively reused as it is now. Questions why Jefferson School is inconsistent with the way it is zoned now. If St. Lukes buys the property, do they plan to raze the building or have an adaptive reuse? Franzen – no plans today nor in the future to redevelop it. Would like to see it part of the comprehensive plan. Filipovich – suggested a covenant to force adaptive use to current and future owners of Jefferson Square.

Commission: Banks would like clarification from speakers - is this building listed as a landmark historic building? Clark – many structures should be deemed as landmark

structures. At present HPC can't designate landmark status without the owner's approval. Digby is concerned that mixed use institutional doesn't allow for some things envisioned by comprehensive plan for example townhouses. Keith would like to work with St. Lukes in considering residential options including townhouses, live/work areas and housing for employees. The City would like the flexibility to amend their plan for different types of uses. Regarding Jefferson School – multi-family is allowed. If we're not going to rezone it mixed use institutional we should change future land use map to urban residential. Digby – is MU- I the right designation? For example grocery stores would not be allowed.

MOTION/second: Guggenbuehl/Rand moved for approval to change to Mixed Use Institutional. Rand – rezoning doesn't threaten Jefferson School and feels this is a wise change.

VOTE: (9-0)

C. See Above – 1st item discussed.

D. PL 12-167 Special Use Permit for Additional Telecommunications Equipment at 2011 West Second Street by Charles Beisner of Selective Site Consultants

Staff: Robertson reviewed the request. Not constructing a new site, but adding to an existing site. Applicant will install a screening fence to hide the cabinets. Staff recommends approval with conditions listed in staff report.

Public: No speakers.

Commission: Sydow asked the standard removal question. Is there an old one to take down? Steven – not on this site, but the City is requiring a bond.

MOTION/second: Rand/Banks. Commission recommends approval of the special use permit with conditions as listed in the Staff Report.

VOTE: (9-0)

E. PL 12-179 Variance from Maximum Size of Wall Sign at 4600 Stebner Road by AAR Corporation and QT Sign, Inc.

Staff: Moses introduced the proposal for a sign variance for AAR located at the airport. Maximum is 630 sq ft, and proposal is a 1,193 sq. ft. sign. Larger sign is to help pilots navigate to the maintenance facility. Staff finds that:

- 1) The need for relief is unique to the needs of an airport maintenance facility.
- 2) The use of property is reasonable, and is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- 3) Granting the variance will not alter the essential character of the area.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- 1) The project be limited to, and constructed according to the submitted drawings.
- 2) Any alterations to the approved plans may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor.
- 3) The sign meet all FAA requirements.

Bill Chase of QT Signs, representing the applicant, asked if the Commissioners have any questions.

Public: No speakers.

Commission: Rand – Wondering if the faded American flag will be replaced? Chase – yes, the flag will be changed in conjunction with putting new letters on the building. Sydow questions the need for a larger sign. Digby wondered if the old Northwest logo on the rooftop be removed/replaced. Chase – it may already be gone, but the issue will be addressed.

MOTION/second: Rand/Guggenbuehl approve with conditions as noted in Staff Report. Rand stated the City owns the facility and will be making roof improvements. This is a large building and believes that scale does help direct aviation traffic. Scale of building is directly related to the size of the sign. Pleased to be (hopefully) supporting this motion. Banks – brings up comparison between airport and the Amsoil arena. He doesn't feel there is a hardship in this situation.

VOTE: (8-1, Banks opposed)

F. PL 12-183 Appeal of a Land Use Supervisor Decision (Definition of Reconstruction Value)

Withdrawn by applicant/No action required.

IV. Consideration of minutes – December 11, 2012

MOTION/Second: Guggenbuehl/Sarvela

VOTE: (9-0)

V. Communications

Froseth, Land Use Supervisor asked if anyone has any questions on the Monthly Report. None.

VI. Old Business

N/A

VII. Reports of Officers and Committees

Commissioner Mullins gives brief overview of the HPC December 18. The HPC is looking for new members and are considering changes to quorum requirements for meetings.

VIII. New Business

N/A

IX. Other Business

Land Use Supervisor – Froseth there is a regular Planning Commission Meeting in February along with the Annual Meeting to be held on February 19th, 5:30 p.m. at Dubh Linn's. Elections will be held that night. Currently Commissioner Guggenbuehl is the Vice-President. Digby asked if a committee is needed. LaCoursiere – last year nominations were at the meeting. He presented the bylaws and noted there is an option of having a nomination committee if needed. Digby asked if a member is interested in being on the committee or being an officer, please see him. He will be approaching Planning Commissioners as well.

X. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Froseth', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'C' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Charles Froseth, Land Use Supervisor