

**District 6 Planning Council
Land Use/Housing Committee
Tuesday September 26, 2017**

Welcome & Introductions

Present: Amanda Cade, Ethan Osten, Renee Holst, Cheryl VanKampen, Matt Sletten, Betti Ingman, John Jungwirth, Noel Nix, Rich Holst, Patrick McGuire

A motion to approve the Agenda with the addition of Purpose Statement and Structure was M/S/A

A motion to approve the August 2017 minutes with John Jungwirth reminding members of the correction in July 2017 meeting minutes was M/S/A

Purpose and Structure of the Land Use and Housing Committee

Land Use reports to the Board of Directors and the purpose and structure needs to be reviewed by the committee. Mr. Holst went over how the meetings will be run. Land Use is not an autonomous board anymore it is now a committee due to by-law changes. Under non-profits, work committees need to be under the Board. Confusion on the term of service contract-the Board will review membership yearly. Membership could automatically be renewed. The threshold to get involved is lowered, only one meeting needs to be attended. New members need to attend one meeting then be eligible to apply-the committee could make the recommendation to the Board. It would take two months to become a member. A motion to approve the purpose and structure with changes; that “the Board will review the application with the recommendation of the committee” was M/S/A.

Action Item: Krungthep Thai LLC 1141 Rice Street license application for wine on sale, malt on sale (strong) The restaurant will open in January and they are requesting a beer/wine license. They will close before midnight. Food is the majority of their sales. There is no bar area. They will have thirteen parking spaces; Auto Zone will have a shared parking agreement and Saint Bernard’s could be looked at for additional parking The seating is 92 seats in the restaurant with an event center in the basement. The hours are still being discussed. A motion to recommend approval of the request was M/S/A

Action Item: Koehler: Wild River Services –request for support of a 16-bed facility service for women with substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders-1394 Jackson is zoned for up to 16 residents a conditional use permit or variance is not required. Ramsey County in turn requires programs planning to open in St. Paul to request a letter of recommendation from the local Planning District Council indicating support or non-support for the program as part of their

review process. Their current location is in Capital Heights and there is a waiting list of fifty. Volunteers Of America currently owns the building and it has been empty for four years. They apply for a rule 31 from the State and the county has them come to the local planning district to request support. Once D6 gives a recommendation-they meet rule 31. District 6 approved the 16-bed facility five years ago. A vast majority of clients comes from probation, and could be homeless.

The building will be locked-the living facility is on the third floor. They have security in place. The severity of the conditions could be high-mental health providers are on staff-they do not dose methadone. High intensity- they do not leave without pre-approval. They are allowed to leave with staff approval and after dinner, no one is allowed to leave. Staff to client ration is 4 to 1. There are twenty full time staff. Probationary status is it court ordered? It is not a large number but some part of probation. Overnight staffing there are two staff but shifts overlap. The State dictates the staffing requirements. In an emergency will be 911, it is a little out of the way. They will be buying the building. Space will be leased and there are current tenants. There are two residential centers in the North End. A motion to support the facility was M/S/A.

Action Item: Consider the Transportation Committee recommendation to support the North End Development Teams memo to Ramsey County regarding Rice Street reconstruction

Public Comment: Craig Sweet is a representative from the North End Development Team. This is the draft position from NEDT-it is in two areas, the overall goals were thought of- neighborhood front as well as businesses it helps to unify our community-currently Rice Street just moves traffic-traffic counts stay the same throughout the day. Parking for businesses, pedestrian safety-there are schools along the corridor as well as a library-Rice Street needs to function as a neighborhood street. Pedestrian safety is of utmost importance. The memo is about the overall goal. There would be a conversion towards University and turn lanes where appropriate. The NEDT is made up of the Ward offices, D6, North End Business Association and residents.

How much research was done? In 1997, a conversion was done and it was a nightmare. It was turned back in weeks. Twelve businesses were confused as to the lanes, they thought that designated parking was not a parking lane. There are concerns on Rice/Maryland. The memo sounds good but may not be practical. People avoid 35E. There is capital traffic as well. There should be a full stoplight at Rice and Cook and additional greenspace. The SPPD support a light at Cook and Rice.

It includes Safe Routes to School for Washington and respect to history and it is exciting to try again-it may work this time. Traffic has increased-there could be a plan B. There is no mention of decreasing the speed limit -north of Hamernicks it goes to 35 MPH. Could the speed be reduced to 25 MPH? There could be more to the memo-it may be limited-reducing the lanes makes it uncomfortable. There is worry about pedestrians and young kids.

There have been additional traffic officers on Rice, one officer wrote 56 tickets in one day. Pedestrian safety crossing four lanes leads into the double threat. With so many tickets, traffic calming is a concern. Rice does not work, as it is now-it would with the additional enforcement but administration does change. Cut down traffic on Rice it will spread out on two-three blocks of residential streets.

Board comment:

The Maryland Avenue conversion has been positive-it is easier to cross Maryland, Maryland has huge amounts of traffic-this is worth a try and a great opportunity for Rice Street.

NEDT submitted this to the county, he hasn't heard from NEDT about other projects, NEBA doesn't represent all the businesses, NEDT is relying on traffic counts, there are a lot of the same people on multiple committees and he questions the degree of diversity of thought, when the boundary changed no funds should go west of Front-we have too much affordable housing, there is not an investment of jobs, no police station, the city dropped development there are junk yards, there are other development issues, so don't blame it on Rice Street. Limiting turn lanes will cause issues-the county has done modeling. There will be gridlock on Rice Street. If kids cannot cross at a signal, they are lazy. At Saint Paul Music Academy 95% kids are bussed in. We need to move traffic out of the City. Businesses rely on drive by businesses. He doesn't think a road diet is needed

This is a wonderful thing for Rice, on Maryland serious crashes have gone down 80% .

Public Comment: A lot of traffic has gone down there is too much traffic on Park and Sylvan, in the past there was too much neighborhood traffic. There is little speeding on Rice-everyone she has talked to is against this-some businesses may move because it will affect them adversely.

A member thinks about the kids on her block-she does not want them to grow up afraid of Rice Street. She may not agree with everything in the letter but we need to have a voice-if we do not the county will do what they want to do-we can't play the victim card. She likes the Safe Routes for School. Traffic volumes may not change but the traffic needs to be managed. Habits could change-on principle she would support the letter to give us a voice.

A member appreciates the letter, police can assist in decreasing speeding, she goes to Payne Avenue to eat-there are a lot of empty business on Rice. When you think about streets that work well, there is on street parking and pedestrian safety-new restaurants and investment on Rice-this is the start of a conversation-let's make it better and continue to have the conversation.

Is there conversation about test runs? Maybe that would help. Farrington neighbors are young or older the consensus is people don't walk to Rice Street because they don't feel safe-they drive to the library because it's not a safe place to walk, adding permanent parking for the businesses that are there.

Testing out ideas is a good idea. At Maryland, there is a two to three-week learning curve for drivers then people figure it out. Chair comments to recap:

State statute locks the limit at 30 MPH. There will be a test no matter what. Side traffic needs to be addressed as an engineering level, we value safety, there is worry about congestion, and at the listening session, the discussion congestion was discussed. The street limits what possibilities there are. A motion to support the NEDT letter passed with the following votes:

Betti Ingman: yes

Renee Holst: -yes

Cheryl Van Kampen-no

Patrick McGuire=yes

John Jungwirth-no

Noel Nix- yes
Ethan Osten- yes
Amanda Cade-: yes
Matt Sletten- no

Old Business:

John Jungwirth mentioned he had a conversation with Eric King, CURA intern after the last meeting and stated that he does not think McDonough Homes was included. Eric will be contacted.

983 Marion Street-Alliance Wellness Center-Yussaf Shafie-Variance for proximity to a like businesses-supported housing with 24/hour seven days/week staffing four to six residents. The BZA denied the request but zoning staff will be looking into other options it may be possible they could apply for a Request for a Reasonable Accommodation which allows properties exceed the number of 4 unrelated adults in a household.

New Business

1530 Albemarle

The applicant requested a major variance of 1,464 feet the zoning code states that the lot has to be 9,000 square feet to convert a duplex to a triplex. Historically District 6 has denied such requests, as was the case this time. The hearing was yesterday and staff just noticed it on the agenda so a letter was sent requesting denial. The BZA denied the application

Housing Committee

There is another intern from CURA assist with door to door assessment housing assessment- the area is Rice-Maryland-Sylvan-Front. There are strengths as well as areas of improvement in the area. On October 21, 10:00 AM the assessments will be done and a BBQ after at the office. If there are volunteers, please contact the office.

Since the October 24, 2017 Ramsey County Rice Street Safety meeting is the same date as the Land Use-Housing committee, the committee meeting will move to Monday October 23, 2017 or Wednesday October 25, 2017 or cancel the meeting if there is little on the agenda.

The committee needs a chair and a secretary-Matt Sletten was nominated as chair and declined. The Secretary reviews the minutes and takes the minutes if staff is absent, John Jungwirth declined the nomination and Amanda Cade will think about being secretary.

Adjourn