



**NORTH
LOOP**
NEIGHBORHOOD

**North Loop Neighborhood Association
Planning & Zoning Meeting Notes
May 24, 2017
6:00 P.M.**

Heritage Landing Community Room, 415 1st Street North

- I. May Planning & Zoning Meeting called to order at 6:06 P.M.
- II. Eleven of fifteen committee members were in attendance: Jo Vos, Alice Eichholz, Fred Dawe, Jerrit Bromley, Francesco Parisi, Mark Huting, Neil Reardon, Aiyana Ruggiero, Erik Mahn, Kris Lang, and Jackie Peacha.
- III. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Jackie, and approved by the Committee to approve the April 2016 Meeting Minutes, amended as follows:**
 - a. On page one, under section IV, “March” had been misspelled.
 - b. On page two, under VI.F., “underwater” should be replaced with “underground.”
 - c. On page three, VIII. B. should read “unanimously approved.”
- IV. Target Field Mixed Use Project – United Properties, Evan Jacobsen, Tushie Montgomery Architects
 - a. The project is an exciting, new vision for the parcel at the corner of 6th Avenue and 5th Street North. United had presented an 11-story office concept to the Committee over two years ago, but since that time there had been no traction in the office market, even after extensive marketing. There were, however, lots of calls from hotel operators and entertainment venues. United has engaged with Live Nation and the Lion Hotel Group, which will operate the Element by Westin hotel that will be developed.
 - b. The project’s exterior architecture largely will feature brick and metal panels. The 6th Street entrance for the hotel will have brick, as well as aluminum and clear anodized (not painted) metal panels. The base of the building will have two-stories of glass on both street sides. There will also be an outdoor patio for dining, which will feature metal and wood-pattern accents. Jo asks if the brick will be flush with the metal panels: no, it will project out a bit. There will be lots of recycled materials used, but no stucco. United is currently analyzing pre-cast and hand-laid brick options for the exterior. Trees will be planted along 5th

Street and there will be landscaped areas along 6th Avenue; however, there is a gas line present there that will need to be accommodated. Francesco suggests conditional approval with a greenery requirement. United notes that the City wants 12-foot wide sidewalks, but that such a width makes it difficult, with the 4 feet of gas lines, to do a lot of planting. Certainly any existing trees damaged would be replaced, and there will be a green roof and lots of greenery on the guest patio area.

- c. Many of the hotel guest amenities will be located on the second floor. There will be a large lobby and lounge area with 16-foot ceilings, as well as breakfast service for guests and a convenience market, but no full-size restaurant in the hotel, nor any need for a liquor license. There will be a full-service restaurant and bar in the Live Nation venue, which will be open to the public. The hotel will have meeting space and special event space for corporations, holiday parties, non-profits, etc. It will also have approximately 160 “extended stay” rooms with kitchenettes, designed to be very appealing for 2-night stays for families who want to access the downtown. Rooms will also have common living room space and there will be larger, multiple-bedroom suites. Room bays are a bit different in size from the normal hotel format, but they work very well with the site. They are employing the top suggestions provided by hotel market survey.
- d. Live Nation, a public company and one of largest concert promoters in the industry with 165 venues around world, will be operating the Fillmore Theatre. The restaurant is the Live Nation House of Blues, which will pay homage to the local vibrant and growing music scene. The theatre and restaurant will employ 15 full-time and 40-50 part-time employees. The general manager will be key connection to the community and wants to be a good neighbor. The venue has a 2,000-person capacity, will host 130-150 shows a year, and will provide both standing room and seats for guests. There will also be room for smaller, local shows, VIP showings, after-show parties, etc. The venue will also host 30-40 special events a year, like holiday parties and corporate events.
- e. Parking will be handled professionally. The hotel entrance space can accommodate 300-400 people; additional queueing will occur by Caribou and then a third overflow spot will be along the street. Live Nation is estimating 20-30 sold-out shows a year and will work with neighbors to make sure crowds are not impacting normal operations of the area. There will be security and line control. Taxi and Uber drop-offs are intended in the plaza area, where there will also be valet service. There will be 40 parking spots underneath the building and United is contracting an additional 250 stalls within the Target Field ramp.
- f. This is not a chain restaurant; there is no other Live Nation House of Blues. It will be designed especially for this area, specifically to respect the neighborhood. United wants the site activated all the time. The market study says that the project should appeal to everyone – not just a boutique crowd.
- g. The specific designs are not yet entirely refined. In Philadelphia, Live Nation worked with local designers and artists to reflect the local heritage and art. The project is trying to strike a balance for its location, which is in a transitional intersection near a contemporary transit station while incorporating traditional elements of the North Loop, like punched windows, brick, etc. Jackie mentions that the current design is more suitable for Block E.
- h. Neil suggests that there is a great opportunity for a green wall along 5th Street; United is very receptive to the suggestion. He also mentions that the Target Field lighting is iconic and asks if there are any plans to tie into that aesthetic.

United has a vision to have some sort of exterior perforated metal panel and soft glow lighting within it.

- i. The goal is to start construction this fall with an opening in spring or summer of 2019.
 - j. Aiyana voices her concern for the project design and mentions it is more appropriate for a suburban setting. Kris mentions her concern for congestion in the drop-off area extending into the street.
 - k. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Jo, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the project as presented, subject to further consideration of the drop-off area and of the installation of a green wall on 5th Street, and United's return to present once exterior designs are determined (Aiyana was not present for the vote).**
- V. 212 North 2nd Street, The Campbell-Logan Bindery – Falcon Ridge Partners, LLC, Elizabeth Gales, Hess, Roise & Co.
- a. This project was initially proposed as an office development, but most of the conversations regarding the property were with interested condo-brokers. Condo development is still fairly litigious, however, so instead, the developer plans to produce smaller boutique rental apartment units with condo-level finishes.
 - b. Designed by William Channing Whitney, the building was constructed in three phases – the first in 1885. It has masonry load-bearing walls and timber floors. Initially it housed a confectionery, then spice importers, then a shoe and boot warehouse, and then Baker Importing, which specialized in steel-cut coffee roaster and grinders in the 1900s. Baker was an early pioneer of instant coffee. Its sales in WWI allowed for an addition in 1918 that doubled the size of the building. It then was acquired in the 1960s and run out of business by Nescafé. The building then housed a furniture company; it is currently home to a book-binding business and artist live/work space, but the tenants are leaving.
 - c. The project will be financed with federal historic tax credits. The National Park Service Part II approval has already been secured. The certificate of appropriateness has been submitted to the City; the project is awaiting final feedback from the City. The City wanted an active use in the shed, so parking is no longer permitted there; the rendering's roof deck on top of the shed is an artistic liberty. The shed will house a commercial tenant. In front of the shed, the developer would love to have greenery; however, the HPC will favor the historic industrial nature of the space over greenery.
 - d. The building will have first floor retail; there will be three suites, two of which are leased. Mulberry's drop-off drycleaners station (no actual cleaning on site) will be one of the tenants; the other is retail, run by local husband wife team new to the neighborhood (but cannot yet be disclosed). There will be 21 units – three floors with seven units of residential apartments. Half of the 21 parking stalls will be provided by the surface lot; the other half will be in the garage in the back of building that has access through the alley. All parking will be for residential tenants. Rents will be approximately \$2,000 per month.
 - e. The projected completion date is one year from now.
 - f. Because of the electric vaults under the sidewalk and pavement and because there is no soil, adding trees in front of the property will be nearly impossible. There is opportunity for greenery near the parking area – perhaps box container and shrubs. It is important to note that there is a 5-year recapture

period for the historic tax credits and permanent plantings are heavily scrutinized, as the project is required to maintain an industrial feel for its exterior.

- g. The developer welcomes any suggestions for naming the property. Right now, “The Bindery” is at the top of the list. She is requesting a letter of support for the project.
- h. **A motion is made by Jackie, seconded by Jo, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the project as presented with the request to explore the addition of green elements to the streetscape.**

VI. 121 North Washington Avenue – Bank of America, Dean Dovolis, DJR Architects

- a. The project is the development of 950 square feet in the former Sinner’s strip club for a virtual Bank of America bank branch – the use of which is more difficult to categorize within the zoning code. It is currently considered an ATM, but the developer will be returning to City Council for it to determine the use’s official classification. The interior would look just like a normal bank – but rather than having in-person employees, there would be one or two managers physically present and all banking services would be done virtually with tellers in remote locations.
- b. Bank of America entered the Twin Cities market a few years ago; this will be the bank’s first location in the North Loop and its first virtual branch in Minneapolis. This concept has already been rolled out successfully in other large metropolitan markets.
- c. The exact hours proposed for the business are unknown, but it would operate just like an ATM. Entry access would be granted by card swipe (the card doesn’t have to be a Bank of America account card).
- d. Having Bank of America as a tenant in this space allows the developer to be able to provide some-less expensive retail space in the rest of the building – which is badly needed, as many smaller retailers are getting priced out of the area.
- e. The development actually falls within the purview of the downtown neighborhood association, which is supportive of it, as long as the block doesn’t become lined with a bunch of these uses. The developer wanted to be a good neighbor and consult the NLNA as well. It is seeking a letter of support to take to the City. It also would like to address the gap in the zoning code.
- f. Alice prefers two exits for the ATM area (building code will address issues of egress); the Committee voices that they would like to retain the brick finishes inside the building that are visible from the exterior.
- g. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Jo, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the project as presented, with the request to preserve as much of the existing historic architectural features inside the building as possible and with a request that the municipal zoning code be updated for this type of use.**

VII. Foundry Development – Foundry Apartments Project, Suzanne Johnson, Wenck Associates

- a. This one development features three projects: the restoration of the three-story Foundry building, its one-story extension, and the building that Roe Wolfe occupied; the construction of a 150-unit apartment building on a currently

vacant parking lot; and an outdoor courtyard area with significant alley improvements.

- b. The alleyways play a hugely important role in this project. There will be a public pass through to an active courtyard spaces, linking in all four directions from the street in a fluid way. The alley will encourage pedestrian use and also allow vehicles; pavers of different colors and styles will be used to highlight the distinct dual uses. The courtyard area, meant to be a very active space, will feature moveable seating and fixed benches. Attention will be given to avoid any slippery surfaces and rusting lighting components. Two large, mature trees existing on the perimeter of the site will be moved to the courtyard area. (10x10 landscape architects are working with arborists to move the trees, which will be replaced with same-sized trees if they do not survive the relocation). Boulevard trees will be planted as well, with fencing surrounds rather than grates.
- c. The project will feature a covered pedestrian tunnel that will run from 2nd Street to the courtyard area. The tunnel, 25 feet wide and retail-lined, will be made accessible and inviting through purposeful lighting installations. Apartment residents will also be able to access the building from this area.
- d. There will be retail uses on the first floor of the apartment building and parking underground. The intention is to have a very active street level. In the new building, hugging the Roe Wolfe building, there will be boutique office space on the upper floors and retail on the ground floor. Plans are to have a restaurant move in to building in the back of Foundry. The building adjacent to the Foundry will be set back so that the historic ghost sign remains visible. The Foundry exterior will remain, but needs to be sealed and restored so that it can be operational. The back end windows will be restored or replaced and there will be an entirely new roof structure on the one-story portion of the building, as it cannot currently carry the snow load.
- e. The apartment building that will be on the corner of 2nd Avenue and 2nd Street is currently a surface parking lot. The building will have glass and blackened steel at its base and then darker brick on the rest of its 6 stories. There will be a consistent rhythm of balconies, doors, and openings on the project, which will have all traditional hand-laid brick, subtle design details, and articulating of brick detail, including a double soldier course, variations in scale, proportion, and direction, and at the parapet, pronouncing to shift brick in order to pick up shadows. HVAC, at high cost, is not permeating the exterior, but rather running up to the roof: no dryer vents or magic packs will be visible.
- f. Concerns from the committee address color and windows – perhaps windows with true divided light would help with appearance, perhaps color could be added to balconies to try to break up the massing. Francesco iterates the massing issue, as he doesn't want to deceive the passerby with one large building depicted as faux smaller buildings.
- g. The project is hoping for a fall construction start; the construction period, for the entire project, is estimated at 16-18 months. The project will not be in phases.
- h. A letter of support for all three buildings is being requested. No variance is required.
- i. Additional concerns from the Committee: Jo finds the design too drastic; Jackie loves the design and finds it very thoughtful, especially as it is all brick, has no above ground parking, and adds more density; Neil thinks the design of the interior courtyard and boulevard is meaningful and that the presentation has already provided more detail than most developers do at this point; they will likely need to return after HPC involvement if any changes are required.

- j. **Motion is made by Neil, seconded by Alice, and approved by the Committee (7 voting in support) to approve the project as presented, with a request that the Committee is updated after other public process approvals; 3 Committee members opposed.**

VIII. Committee Business

- a. There is no committee business.

IX. Any additional concerns

- a. There are no additional concerns.

X. New Business

- a. There is no new business.

XI. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017.

Adjourned at 8:40 P.M.