



**NORTH
LOOP**
NEIGHBORHOOD

**North Loop Neighborhood Association
Planning & Zoning Meeting Notes
January 17, 2017
6:00 P.M.**

Heritage Landing Community Room, 415 1st Street North

1. January Planning & Zoning Meeting called to order at 6:05 P.M.
2. Ten of fifteen committee members were in attendance: Fred Dawe, Jerrit Bromley, Francesco Parisi, Jo Vos, Zackery Schaaf, Mark Huting, Erik Mahn, Jackie Peacha, Kris Lang, and Joe McErlane.
3. **A motion is made by Francesco, seconded by Fred, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the agenda.**
4. **A motion is made by Francesco, seconded by Fred, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the November 2017 Meeting Minutes.**
5. Third Street Apartments (747 N 3rd Street Project) – Katie Anthony, Schafer Richardson and David Miller, UrbanWorks
 - a. This is an informative presentation; Shafer Richardson is not requesting approval.
 - b. The site is currently a surface parking lot and part of the Basset Creek Business Center. Schafer Richardson is proposing to re-plat the land and develop a six-story, mixed-use building with retail in one corner, underground parking, and 145 units of rental housing. The project is targeted toward the millennial renter. The unit mix will feature mostly smaller units ranging up to 2 bedrooms. Though it will also feature some micro units, which are typically 250 square feet, the project will have most of its units in the 400-square foot range. Monthly rent for the micro units is approximately \$1150. There will be some first floor walk out units and some of the upper level units will feature balconies.

- c. Amenities include: 24/7 fitness center, community room, perhaps a pool, likely a roof deck on the 6th floor, package storage, etc. There is also consideration for having a dog run.
- d. Exterior materials would include metal paneling, composite materials that look like metal, and wood or wood-like paneling to give it a more natural feel that ties in with the greenspace. Jerrit suggests using hand-laid brick or precast brick.
- e. The Basset Creek tunnel creates an offset in the building that must be accommodated. UrbanWorks is in the process of figuring out how the building will sit (elevation-wise) because it is so close to groundwater. There is no way to relocate the tunnel.
- f. The ideal tenant (though one is not lined up right now), is a restaurant or coffee shop. Parking would enter off third with some for retail and some for the residents.
- g. The area is zoned D4N; it is not in the historic district, but SR will be attentive to the historic details. SR would like to come back for approval in February. Francesco inquires as to what the relationship is between this building and those subject to the HPC guidelines, as the HPC wants consistency among neighboring structures. Francesco suggests thinking about this more in the coming months and applying the guidelines to this building (despite HPC not applying). David indicates that it is something that is heavily considered and that it is a balance to incorporate those considerations.
- h. There is roughly 35 feet between this building and 720 Lofts; 720 Lofts will face the new courtyard. Kris mentions one big concern and referenced a lawsuit with the Paxon regarding the orientation of the building and how it lends itself to noise pollution from the social areas of adjacent buildings bleeding into Paxon space. Katie acknowledges that this is a good question and an ongoing concern – and that the design hasn't progressed enough yet to answer Kris' question at present. Kris suggests that this could create a situation where people who could afford 720 Lofts are hearing the noise of the millennials living in this project and asks if the building can be oriented differently in an effort to reduce noise transference.
- i. The Committee inquires about security measures for the property, as there had been an attack in that alley, which is not lit at all. Katie mentions that they haven't reached that level of design detail, but that is a great point and that appropriate lighting will be incorporated there, especially if there are amenities in that area. There are also talks of making the alley more pleasant in general. Mark suggests artistic down-lighting and mentions that the back alleyway is a connection route in the downtown service plan. David highlights that that building has units on all corners, so that, along with more pedestrian traffic and better landscaping, will go a long way. A dog run there would also be very helpful.
- j. Mark informs David of the availability of boulders, volunteers his help designing a formal walkway, and indicates his willingness to work with David on this area.
- k. Regarding the potential park nearby: David mentions that the team wants the designs to interface with each other as much as possible; Katie says that the goal is for the property is to run right into the public park and interact with it, if

that park is developed, which is unknown at this time. It is important for SR to create a good edge on that side regardless of whether a park will happen.

- l. The current lot has 272 parking stalls; the new garage will have 356, so the people who park there during the day will be able to park in the garage.
 - m. The suggestion is made that people who reside in the 710 and 720 Lofts would push back on the proposal for all rental housing in this building and would prefer condos so that neighbors are homeowners. Katie responds that condo development has slowed if not stopped almost entirely in the Twin Cities, as current legislation poses an inherent risk to the developer, one that SR has directly experienced. She suggests that if condo development is an important priority to the Neighborhood Association, then it should go to the Legislature. Francesco asks if the development will meet the condo requirements in the event that the apartments could be converted to condos at a later date. David responds that the code is the same for both, although some of the perceived differences in quality of finishes may be what is being referenced. He contends that the potential for conversion is more about the project's ownership structure in contracts than the physical building. Katie iterates that conversion in the future may be feasible, but it depends on the debt structure.
 - n. Fred confirms that the Committee handles the majority of the details of a developer's project presentation and then provides a report to the Board chair. In order to err on the side of caution P&Z ask for a second presentation, but one with less detail, to the full Board, so that the members can see the project as presented and that there is another level of accountability.
6. Downtown Entertainment Billboard District Expansion – Jackie Peacha
- a. This issue has been tabled.

7. Committee Business

- a. Neighbor Comments
 - i. There are no neighbor comments.
- b. City Process
 - i. Francesco mentions the need to have a volunteer to go to the City to review what is coming up on the HPC agenda in order to ensure that the developers of those projects are coming to this group for approval as well. He volunteers Jerrit and the committee considers the option of making this an official subcommittee and agenda item. Fred mentions that this is part of what the group has tried to streamline this year, that they have discussed how to track it, and that it isn't just a P&Z issue, but that navigating the City government can be a confusing process. Francesco volunteers to work with Jerrit on this issue. Joe suggests developing a hierarchy chart or narrative of all the departments involved in the process so that P&Z knows who the players are and when they meet, so that P&Z can then we can follow up with them if they don't contact P&Z first. Kris iterates the need for a more formal system and volunteers to design it.

Francesco also mentions the need to know who besides the city planner P&Z needs to contact; Erik suggests adding this information to the checklist.

- c. Pro-condo Lobbying
 - i. Jackie suggests developing another subcommittee to analyze the condo laws concerns. Fred responds that, as an attorney (though not an expert in condo law), the ten-year warranty makes it easier to file lawsuits and law firms have been adept at encouraging larger groups to file together. Erik contends that there need to be better ways to address the lack of condo development, instead of just haranguing developers who develop apartments. Jackie poses the question, “What would we as a group think of this proposal if the developer were proposing affordable or low income housing?” Jo remarks that the group may appear very elitist, almost snobbish in rejecting people who want to live in the neighborhood. She contends that emphasis should be on the feel of the neighborhood, not the renter v. owner debate. Jackie suggests that it may be time to reevaluate priorities, as the neighborhood is not made up entirely of homeowners, including members of the Committee. Jackie also suggests that P&Z may default to an anti-renter stance because of the fear of turning into Uptown. Zack contends that we aren’t getting a diverse population, because the neighborhood is seeing the same type of buildings being developed. Jackie believes that the Committee is acting more reactively, rather than proactively, and if the Committee wanted to impact something perhaps it can become more proactive. Mark mentions that the checklist is the first thing to reference. Joe asks if there is any way to secure City money for creativity; Fred responds that yes, NRP funding is a potential source for that type of effort.
 - d. Jo is the neighborhood representative to the St. Anthony Falls Alliance, a group of 7 people, whose goal is to ensure that the Riverfront plan actually gets implemented. There is almost \$1 million to spend on this, so the Alliance has developed a set of guidelines for neighborhood associations as to how to use the development funds responsibly, not to rely on developers to come in with ideas, and instead to encourage associations to come up with their own ideas of how that money could be spent. Mark indicates that P&Z has done this, that there has been interest by groups to work on this project, and that plans were presented. Jo is going to e-mail the group.
 - e. Fred announces that the Board’s annual meeting will be held next week and requests that anyone who is interesting in still serving on the Committee let Jackie know because at that meeting the Board will have to put together a slate of people for the approval at the February meeting so that the new Committee can pick back up in March.
 - f. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 21, 2018.

Adjourned at 7:22 P.M.