



**NORTH
LOOP**
NEIGHBORHOOD

**North Loop Neighborhood Association
Planning & Zoning Meeting Notes
August 22, 2018
6:00 P.M.**

Heritage Landing Community Room, 415 1st Street North

1. August Planning & Zoning Meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M.
2. Eleven of fifteen committee members were in attendance: Kris Lang, Jackie Peacha, Irina Brown, Jo Vos, David Miller, Alice Eichholz, Jerrit Bromley, Mark Huting, Joshua Stein, Eric Mahn, and Joe McErlane.
3. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Mark, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve the July 2018 Meeting Minutes with no changes.**
4. Commutator Foundry Building at 117, 121, 123, and 125 N 1st St – David Wilson, John Gross, Andrew Commers
 - a. Commutator LLC is looking for a letter of support from the Committee to waive the Public Works ordinance that does not allow for outdoor stairways. David, John and Andrew acquired the four-parcel Commutator Foundry Building on the corner of 2nd Ave and 1st St in September 2017. The project has been fully entitled with the city since January 2018. They are working with the 2018 Institute of Architects on architecture for the building and have obtained approval from the Historic Preservation Commission to restore the historic outdoor stairway to its original state. The Public Works ordinance is the last barrier in their efforts to restore the outdoor stairway.
 - b. The Commutator Foundry used to be the American House Hotel, so they are exploring the idea of restoring the building to a boutique hotel with a wine cellar/bar, which would be beneficial to them economically. However, commercial use of that space depends on the stairway because they cannot obtain permitting unless they have two exits. If they can restore the stairway, it would serve as a second exit. Construction is scheduled to start in 2019.

- c. Q + A: They intend to add greenery between the curb and sidewalk in front of the building. Snow plan for the staircase is to keep it shoveled and salted. There is precedence for this outdoor stairway - Renaissance on the River, Pearl, Marvel, and several other businesses in the area have outdoor staircases.
- 5. Duffey Paper Building at 528, 520, 508 Washington – Dominion Development
 - a. Dominion is looking for a letter of support for the Duffey Paper Building. HPC and the National Park Service approved new construction on the parking lot next to the historic section of the property. The height of the new construction building is going to be the same as the highest building on block. The new construction will contain 201 units of affordable housing. Occupancy of these units will follow the federal LIHTC Income Averaging legislation, which means people falling in the range of 30-80% AMI will live here. As such, units will range from approximately \$500-\$2,000/month and will therefore be attainable for a wide population of people. Unit mix will include studio, 1, 2, and 3-bedroom apartments. Parking is planned below-grade, underneath the new construction building. The parking ratio will be just over 0.6:1. No city or local funding is required for the project as they are able to move forward with federal and state funding. Construction is set to start early 2nd quarter of 2019.
 - b. Q + A: Access in and out of the parking garage is located in the alley behind the project, giving access from 5th and 6th Streets. There will be no vehicle access from Washington Ave. The project is pure affordable housing with no retail or restaurant space. 130 units are contained in the historic structures and 70 units are contained in new construction. There will be no outdoor space for residents, but there will be rooftop space on the largest historic building that will accommodate the whole project with tables, chairs, and greenery, etc. The project will allow dogs and they are looking into designing a pet area. All 4 buildings are interconnected through hallways. Community amenities like workout rooms will be located on the lower level of the new construction building. The project will not remain affordable in perpetuity. Based on city requirements, there will be a sunset potentially in 20 years from construction completion. The historic crane will be preserved with expansive view points.
- 6. Belami Lounge at 400 3rd Ave N– Ashley Stepney
 - a. Ashley is the creator and owner of Belami Lounge. She is hoping to open her club the second week of September and is looking for a general letter of support from the committee. Ashley has extensive work experience in security services and in the military. She noticed people have stopped coming to downtown nightclubs because they don't feel safe. Ashley wants to bring back a fun and safe environment with a focus on jazz, EDM, fashion shows, and rock. By offering different music than is found at most clubs, Ashley intends to avoid the "bad" clientele that frequent other downtown clubs.
 - b. Q + A: There are concerns about the location of the club. Buildings on that block tend to experience rapid turnover due to the clientele in the area. For security,

Ashley will install high-definition 1080p cameras that face the establishment at the front and back. There will also be cameras located at the front door to prove, in the case of an incident, that the “bad” client did not come from her establishment. Her club will remain family-friendly during the day with food and televisions, and turn 21+ at night. As an example of the types of activities at her club, Ashley plans to host live jazz bands on Sunday evenings 6pm-12a.

7. 1st Street Apartments at 102-120 N 1st St – Sharon Cohn and Snow Kreilich
 - a. Katie Myhre is the architect and project manager of the building from Snow Kreilich. The developer, Sharon Cohn, is based out Colorado. Katie is presenting the design of this mixed-use multi-family project on Sharon’s behalf. They are looking for a general letter of support as they begin the City approval process. The project contains six floors and will feature 8,000 square feet of retail space (intended to be divvied up between five retailers) on level one as well as common space for tenants. The other levels of the building will contain a total of 152 market-rate residential units. The units will trend smaller and more accessible with primarily studio units but some 1-bdr and 2-bdr units as well. There will be 2-3 levels of below-grade parking with access from the alley. They are trying to be considerate about the scale of the building and are referencing similarly scaled historic buildings in the area like Aria, Williams Hardware Building, and Colonial Warehouse. They will pull the property back eight feet on each side to be respectful of the smaller neighbors on either side of the building.
 - b. Q + A: The primary façade of the building is hand-laid brick designed to maintain the 19th century character of neighborhood. Primary pedestrian/resident access is on 1st St. There will be a level-two exterior terrace but they do not have plans for a rooftop. To mitigate parking capacity issues in the area, they are hoping to maintain some parking stalls for the public with a public-only elevator vestibule. Dogs are allowed in the building and a pet area will be designed. HPC’s feedback questions the scale of the building and the design differentiation of the base, middle, and top. In response, they are not going to bring in extra materials, but will use striking as a technique for variation. They are also going to update their renderings to bring the character and scale of the building into better context. The committee requests that they bring in their own trees and irrigation system instead of relying on the City for subpar greenery. The committee also requests that they continue the design element of arched windows and doors that are characteristic of the rest of the neighborhood.

8. Committee Business
 - a. **A motion is made by David Miller, seconded by Jerrit Bromley, and unanimously approved by the Committee to write a letter of support for the Commutator Foundry Building to waive the Public Works ordinance that does not allow an exterior stairway.**
 - b. **A motion is made by Jo Vos, seconded by David Miller, and approved by the Committee to write a general letter of support for the Duffey Paper**

Building with a request that they present at another Committee meeting with more information about the height of the rooftop structures, the incorporation of a dog area, additional programming and amenities, and efforts to explore higher quality materials. The motion was opposed by Irina Brown, Jerrit Bromley, and Joe McErlane.

1. The Committee wants more information all around. There is a general dislike of the materials – they look cheap. The Committee also doesn't like that there's no commercial retail space, however, the challenges associated with including commercial retail space in affordable housing structures needs to be taken into consideration.

c. **A motion is made by Eric Mahn, seconded by Joe McErlane, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve a general letter of support for the Belami Lounge.**

d. **A motion is made by David Miller, seconded by Jerrit Bromley, and unanimously approved by the Committee to approve a general letter of support for the 1st St Apartments with a request that the architects come back to present if there are any significant design changes.**

1. There are concerns about height and character of the building and some Committee members feel that the building does not fit in with the neighborhood. Specifically, the design is not modern enough to contrast the existing neighborhood character. But it is acknowledged that they are bringing in nice materials and have been thoughtful about doing neighborhood research for context.

e. At the Board-level, NLNA is asking developers to add signage to their projects that give more information to neighborhood residents.

f. Kris will work to ensure that meeting announcements are publicized in resident newsletters.

9. Neighbor Comments

a. There are no neighbor comments.

10. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 19, 2018.

Adjourned at 7:36 P.M.