**Union Park District Council**

**MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development**

**Monday, June 17, 2024 6:30–8:30 p.m.**

*Zoom Meeting*

***Co-chairs: Dean Cummings and Mark Morrow***

**Committee meeting minutes submitted by:** Mark Morrow

**Committee members present:** Scott Berger, KC Cox, Dean Cummings, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Lisa Nelson, Kelly Vinson-Taylor, Paul Toman, Austin Wu

**Staff present:** Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Finnian Falvey, Caroline Fitzpatrick

**Guests:** Mike Hahm (United Village)

**Media:** Jane McClure

1. **Welcome and Introductions; Consent Agenda**

Mark Morrow, co-chair of the Union Park District Council (UPDC) Committee on Land Use and Economic Development (CLUED), welcomed committee members and members of the community. The June 17, 2024 meeting agenda and the May 20, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

1. **United Village Update by Mike Hahm**

Mr. Hahm provided an update on United Village.

1. **Playground: The playground is nearing completion. On June 20, 2024 at 3:30 PM there will be light refreshments in the Grand Casino Brew Hall, and at 4:00 PM there will be a brief program followed by the ribbon cutting.**
2. **Loon sculpture: Construction of the infrastructure is underway. It is hoped that the loon sculpture will be installed in mid to late July.**
3. **Demolition: The building east of McDonald’s will be demolished in the near future.**
4. **Restaurant pavilion, office building, hotel: Agreements with the City are being finalized. It is hoped that construction will begin late this year.**

1. **1450 University Avenue West – Sign Variance (Store Closing – At Home)**

**Action: SUPPORT the requested variance**

No representatives from At Home Group, Inc. nor Kraus Anderson Incorporated were present to discuss their request for a variance for a temporary sign (store closing) at 1450 University Avenue West

(date sign to be put up: July 9, 2024 [if variance is approved],

date sign to be removed: August 23, 2024] ).

The submitted application states:

“The banner is temporary and will be removed immediately after the sale has ended and the store is closed.”

Sign variance:

Required: Wall signs cannot exceed 32 square feet

Proposed: 4 ft high x 40 ft wide = 160 square feet (variance 400%)

Front wall dimensions: 35 ft high, 225 ft wide

UPDC discussion:

Pros: sign will only be up July 9, 2024 through August 23, 2024, the sign does not face University Avenue, the size of the sign fits the scale of the building

Cons: not a good look for the neighborhood

UPDC position: The committee voted to SUPPORT the requested variance for the temporary sign

Public comment: through July 5, 2024 at 2:00 PM

Public hearing: Board of Zoning Appeals July 8, 2024 3:00 PM City Hall room 330

1. **Presentation: Draft CLUED Overview / Welcome to CLUED document**

Mark Morrow presented a draft of a CLUED Overview / Welcome to CLUED document for the second time (previous presentation May 20, 2024), focusing on the descriptions of variance and rezoning requests.

The draft document will be reviewed at the July CLUED meeting, focusing on the description of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

1. **Discussion: Draft Variance Request Template and Draft Rezoning Request Template**

Mark Morrow presented a draft of a variance request template and a rezoning request template. The goal of the templates is to improve CLUED’s impact on decisions by the Board of Zoning Appeals, the Zoning Committee, and the Planning Commission. The templates will be used on a trial basis before requesting formal approval by CLUED. Committee members were encouraged to submit comments and suggestions to the Committee Chairs.

The templates sparked a discussion of new construction in Union Park that has not received CLUED input.

1. **Staff Update by Leah Timberlake Sullivan**

Our summer interns again introduced themselves to the Committee:

Finnian Falvey is from Dellwood, MN, and is a senior at St. Olaf College, majoring in Political Science and Race & Ethnic Studies.

Caroline Fitzpatrick is from San Francisco Bay Area, and is a Junior at Macalester College, majoring in Geography and minoring in Political Science and French.

Leah Timberlake Sullivan informed the committee that the District Council will also have 2 Right Track interns this summer – Abby Heil and Theoto Hatley.

Board update: On June 5, 2024 the Board approved 2 new members:

Lisa Nelson, At large (replacing Amy Gage)

Yvonne Hundshamer, Grid 8 (replacing Henry Parker)

Joint meeting with Hamline Midway Coalition and Como Community Council:

On June 6, 2024, Hamline Midway Coalition hosted a joint meeting with Como Community Council and UPDC for a question and answer session with the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) Director Angie Wiese. Multiple participants provided examples of considerably more lenient enforcement of code compliance for commercial properties compared with residential properties. Director Wiese was responsive to all questions and receptive of community feedback.

Transportation Committee: The Committee hosts clean ups along University Avenue monthly during the summer (second Saturday of the month, 10:00 AM at the CVS parking lot [University and Snelling].)

Neighborhood Sustainability and Vitality Committee: Parks & Recreation has allotted money in its budget for improvements at Merriam Park. UPDC will assist in forming a 15-member Merriam Park Design Advisory Committee.

1. **Open Forum**
2. **Announcements**

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