

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, April 21, 2025 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, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, David Guetschow, Joe Hughes, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Bill Richtman

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Ward 1 Councilmember Anika Bowie, Cathy Capone Bennett (Twin Cities Housing Alliance), Kevin Incitti, Noelle Jacquet-Morrison

Media: Jane McClure

1. Welcome and Introductions; Consent Agenda

Dean Cummings, co-chair of the Union Park District Council (UPDC) Committee on Land Use and Economic Development (CLUED), welcomed members of the committee and members of the community. The March 17, 2025 meeting minutes were approved. The April 21, 2025 meeting agenda was approved.

2. Discussion of the City Council's Proposed Amendment to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance presented by Dean Cummings, Ward 1 Councilmember Anika Bowie, Twin Cities Housing Alliance Executive Director Cathy Capone Bennett

ACTION: OPPOSE the proposed amendment to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance;
SUPPORT repeal of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Dean Cummings presented a summary of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, and the City Council's proposed amendment to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

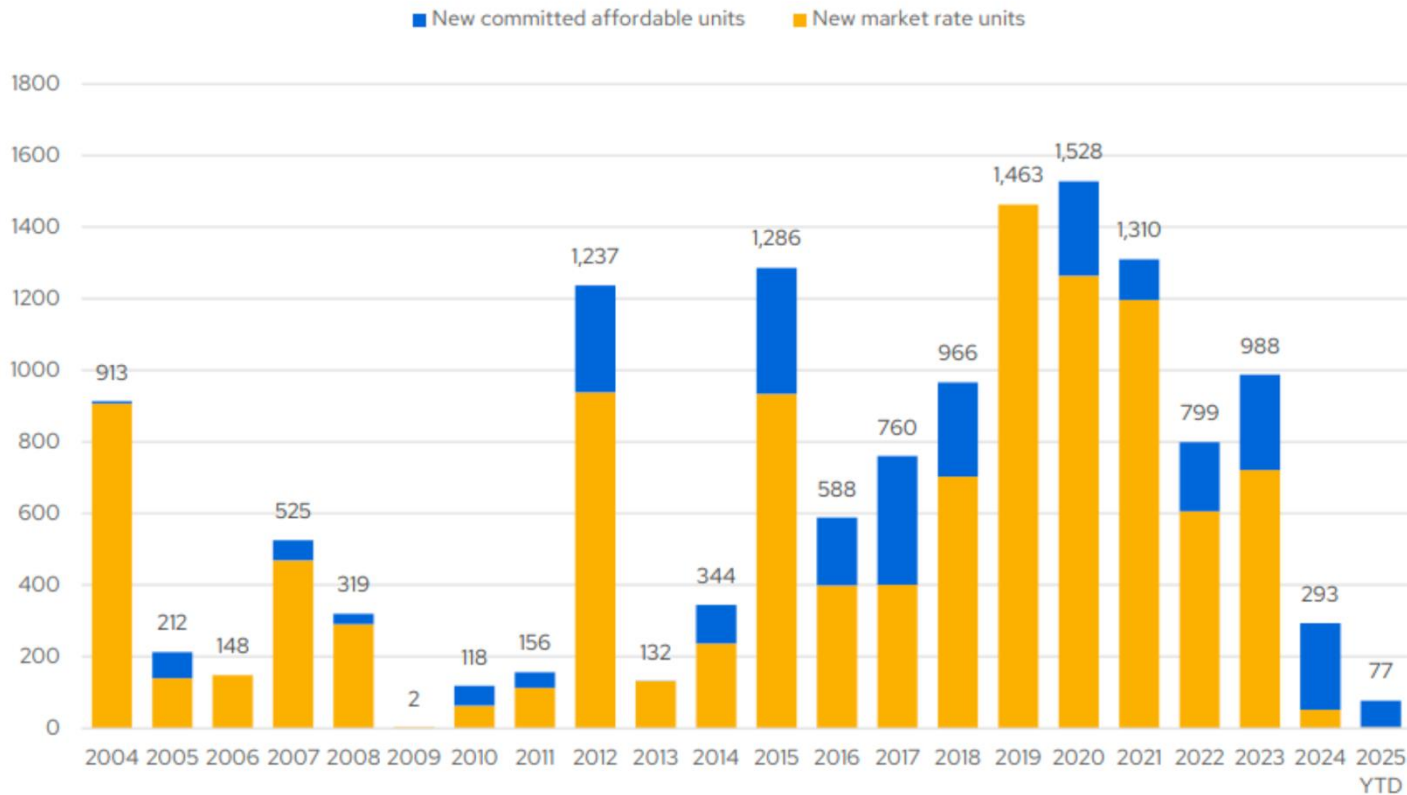
Ward 1 Councilmember Anika Bowie described her relationship with housing and with the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. She has been a renter, and has had periods of homelessness. She is now a homeowner (duplex) and landlord. She supported the 2021 Rent Stabilization ballot measure.

Councilmember Bowie noted that St. Paul's Rent Stabilization Ordinance has received national attention. She mentioned that, on a recent flight, she happened to be seated next to an economist. When the economist learned that she was from St. Paul (and without knowing that she is a Councilmember), he told her many reasons that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance needed to be changed.

Councilmember Bowie acknowledged that all landlords are experiencing rising costs. However, she noted that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance created a process for landlords to request an exception to the rent increase limit based on the right to a reasonable return on investment. Councilmember Bowie noted that there have been only 3 renter appeals of rent increase exceptions (which the Council hears), though she did not know the total number of rent increase exception requests (which the Department of Safety and Inspections processes), nor the number of those requests that were approved.

Councilmember Bowie noted that the City needs to increase the supply of housing, including deeply affordable housing. She also noted that the City needs to grow revenue. Councilmember Bowie acknowledged that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance has suppressed the development of new rental housing.

New rental housing units identified by Certificate of Occupancy by first building permit issue date and affordability | through March 22nd, 2025



Source: slide presentation by Melanie McMahon, Deputy Director Department of Planning and Economic Development, to the City Council April 9, 2025

Because the Rent Stabilization Ordinance has suppressed the development of new rental housing, Councilmember Bowie is one of the sponsors of an amendment to the Ordinance which would extend the exemption for property with a first certificate of occupancy of 2004 or after from the current 20 year exemption to a lifetime exemption. This amendment is in keeping with a proposal from Mayor Carter's 2024 budget address. Councilmember Bowie stated that she does not view the amendment as the complete answer to St. Paul's housing challenges, but as one tool to increase the housing supply. Councilmember Bowie mentioned other tools, including the emerging developers program and the designation of \$18 million to develop new affordable housing.

Councilmember Bowie acknowledged that, despite the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, housing instability remains a problem. Because of this, the City designated \$2 million for emergency assistance for those who are late on their rent.

Councilmember Bowie discussed enforcement of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. She clarified that exemption status is determined by the date of a property's first certificate of occupancy, rather than the date of the property's most recent certificate of occupancy.

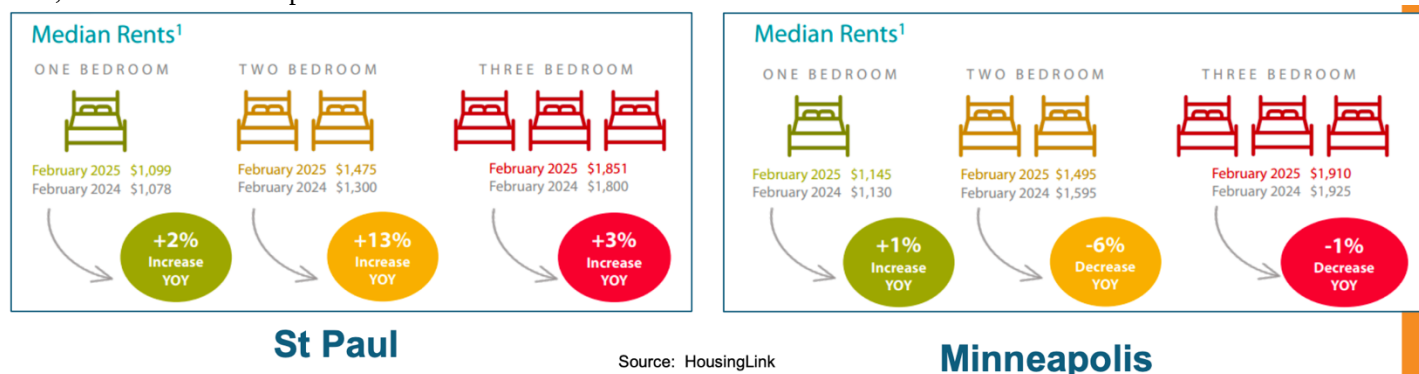
Comments from attendees included a concern that the City is not monitoring the results of its policies, and a request for a data-driven discussion of the impacts of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

The Committee expressed appreciation to Councilmember Bowie for her presentation and discussion.

Cathy Capone Bennett, Executive Director for the Twin Cities Housing Alliance, presented their concerns about the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. The Twin Cities Housing Alliance was created in 2022 and has over 110 members, with representation across the region's housing continuum. It advocates for local and regional housing policy to ensure that there is adequate safe and quality housing for all.

Ms. Capone's presentation included mention of a May 2022 economic research paper found that rent control caused property values to fall by 6-7%, for an aggregate loss of \$1.6 billion. Ahern, Kenneth R., and Marco Giacoletti. "Robbing Peter to Pay Paul? The Redistribution of Wealth Caused by Rent Control." National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper No. 30083, May 2022. Accessed December 20, 2024. Available at: https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w30083/w30083.pdf

Ms. Capone also presented data from HousingLink which found that, from February 2024 to February 2025, rents fell in Minneapolis but rose in St. Paul.



Source: slide presentation by Cathy Capone Bennett, Executive Director Twin Cities Housing Alliance to Union Park District Council Committee on Land Use and Economic Development April 21, 2025

The Alliance opposes rent control because:

- rent control diminishes investment in new housing supply / investment goes elsewhere, which decreases the number of construction jobs
- rent control increases the public subsidy necessary to move key projects forward
- the rent increase exception process is onerous, which deters maintenance of existing housing supply, which accelerates displacement through demolition
- rent control disproportionately impacts smaller providers (1-2 properties)
- rent control lowers the value of rental properties, which shifts the tax burden to homeowners and other businesses
- rent control is ineffective against predatory practices

Ms. Bennett noted that property owners have, on average, a profit margin of 3%.

The Alliance supports:

- incentives, rather than regulations
- increasing the supply of all housing to bring down average rent
- rent assistance targeted to the financially vulnerable

Comments from attendees included a request for ongoing support and advice from the Twin Cities Housing Alliance to facilitate the growth of affordable housing, and to expand the options for affordable housing including affordable units within larger market rate apartments (new and existing).

Ms. Bennett noted that developers seek to build what the City wants. Developers do best when there is a clear, consistent vision, and when there is transparency, consistency, and collaboration through the entire process.

The Committee expressed appreciation to Ms. Bennett for her presentation and discussion.

The Committee discussed the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, and the proposed amendment to the Rent Stabilization ordinance.

- It was noted that housing instability is traumatic, and that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance was created to address housing instability. It is, therefore, disturbing that the City has not provided data on its impact on housing instability. We know that housing instability remains a problem, but we do not know whether housing instability has decreased or increased since the Rent Stabilization Ordinance went into effect.
- There was discussion of the continued need to increase the supply of deeply affordable housing, and possible strategies to address the continued shortage (density bonuses, inclusionary zoning, public ownership of affordable housing, taxes on housing profits).
- It was noted that the negative effects of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance that we are experiencing at this time are very much in line with economic analyses and forecasts available at the time that the Ordinance was under consideration, and which lead to UPDC's opposition to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.
- A question was raised about the Council's ability to repeal the Rent Stabilization Ordinance because it was approved by a ballot measure. It is the Committee's understanding that, after 1 year, a ballot measure can be repealed.

A motion to OPPOSE the proposed amendment to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, and SUPPORT repeal of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance was approved.

3. Discussion of Modifications to the Noise Regulation Notification Requirements presented by Mark Morrow

Due to the late hour, this discussion was held over to the May 19, 2025 CLUED meeting.

**4. Request for the City of St. Paul to develop and implement standards for off-street temporary parking (supported by CLUED 03/17/2025) –
Board discussion held over to the 05/07/2025 Board meeting**

**5. Staff Report
presented by Leah Timberlake Sullivan**
See announcements below.

6. Announcements

- The City is considering amendments to the Traditional Zone regulations.
CLUED will discuss these May 19.
Planning and Economic Development (PED) staff will be hosting 2 virtual community engagement sessions to provide an overview of the Zoning Study, discuss proposed text amendments, and answer questions. (Both workshops will provide the same information / you are welcome to attend either.)
Tuesday, May 13, 6:30pm-8:00pm - [Registration Link](#)
Wednesday, May 14, 6:30pm-8:00pm - [Registration Link](#)
Additional information is available at:
<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/planning/current-activities/tdistrict>
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Tuesday, May 13, 6:30pm-8:00pm - [Registration Link](#)
Wednesday, May 14, 6:30pm-8:00pm - [Registration Link](#)



Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, January 27, 2025 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: Paul Bakke, Scott Berger, KC Cox, Dean Cummings, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam

Committee member excused absence:

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village), Alejandro (Alex) de la Mora, Tim Flannigan, Cristen Incitti, Bill Richtman

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, February 24, 2025 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, Sarah Dvorak, Tim Flanigan, Reece Johnson, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence:

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village), Amy Gage, Bill Richtman

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, March 17, 2025 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: Paul Bakke, Scott Berger, KC Cox, Dean Cummings, Sarah Dvorak, Tim Flanigan, Joe Hughes, Reece Johnson, April King, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Lisa Nelson, Ben Quam, Deanna Seppanen, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence:

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village), Jarrod Fucci, Amy Dunn (Breakaway Festival), Thomas Fischer, Brennan Bonon, Seamus Healy, Tim Tibesar (2054 Laurel / Woodstock UST), Kathy Duffy