

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:

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Abby Heil

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

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 members of the committee and members of the community. It was determined that a quorum was not present, so no voting occurred. The February 24, 2025 meeting agenda was reviewed.

2. Update Regarding United Village Update presented by Mike Hahm

Mr. Hahm provided an update on United Village:

- Construction:
Construction of the restaurant pavilions will hopefully begin in March, with construction of the office and the hotel later this year.
- February 20, 2025 Community Update Follow Up:
On Thursday, February 20, 2025, the United Village development team, UPDC, Hamline Midway Coalition, Ward 1, and Ward 4 held a meeting at Allianz Field to update the community on plans for the development of United Village. Dr. McGuire presented an overview of goals, barriers, accomplishments, and plans. He answered questions from the community.
Observations from those who attended last Thursday's meeting included:
 - Dr. McGuire was direct and pointed in his assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our neighborhood, and our City's administrative processes. Neighborhood safety and administrative processing time were at the top of his list of concerns.
 - Dr. McGuire strongly encouraged the community to support existing businesses, including Cub Foods, as an essential component to strengthening our neighborhood.
 - Dr. McGuire stated that local support for financing has been strong. He specifically mentioned Sunrise Bank's role in securing financing.
 - Dr. McGuire stated that the rent stabilization ordinance has been a barrier to obtaining financing, though not an insurmountable barrier.
 - Dr. McGuire stated that, at this time, parking is necessary for the success of businesses and residences. He also stated that the current cost of structure parking and underground parking has become a challenge to development.
 - Though initial plans included public restrooms, Dr. McGuire stated that safety issues (drug use in particular) have forced him to remove public restrooms from the plans.
(Though members of the Committee share Dr. McGuire's concerns about safety, Mr. Hahm was asked to encourage Dr. McGuire to continue constructive problem solving with the community.)

3. **Neighbors for Responsible & Livable Development (NRLD) request for a pause on new construction or remodeling permits within the Student Housing Overlay District presented by Tim Flanigan**

Tim Flanigan, a member of CLUED and a co-founder of Neighbors for Responsible & Livable Development, sought feedback on and support for NRLD's letter to the St. Paul Planning Commission requesting a moratorium on permits within the Student Housing Overlay District for 3-6 unit dwellings.

Background:

St. Paul municipal code VIII Zoning Code, Section 67 Article VII Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District, Section 67.702 states:

“Within the SH student housing neighborhood impact overlay district, a student dwelling is a one- or two-family dwelling requiring a fire certificate of occupancy in which at least one (1) unit is occupied by three (3) or more students. For the purposes of this article, a student is an individual who is enrolled in or has been accepted to an undergraduate degree program at a university, college, community college, technical college, trade school or similar and is enrolled during the upcoming or current session, or was enrolled in the previous term, or is on a scheduled term break or summer break from the institution.”

https://library.municode.com/mn/st._paul/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIILECO_TITVIIIIZOCO_CH67ZOCOVEDI_ARTVII67.700.SHSTHONEIMOVDI_S67.702STDW

Prior to November, 2023, dwellings in the Student Housing Overlay District were limited to 1 or 2 units – therefore, “one- or two-family dwelling” was applicable to all dwellings in the Overlay District.

On November 26, 2023, zoning amendments allowing 1-6-unit housing types in Saint Paul's residential districts went into effect. The Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District, which has been in effect since 2012, does not address 3-6 unit dwellings.

Mr. Flanigan spoke with City staff, and no one expressed awareness that Ordinance 23-43 1-6 Unit Housing would have an impact on the Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District.

[See UPDC CLUED minutes 12/16/2024:

“1-6 Unit Housing Ordinance Presentation by Emma Brown, St. Paul Planning & Economic Development”

“Ms. Brown acknowledged that the City did not study the impact of Ordinance 23-43 on the student overlay.”]

Neighbors for Responsible & Livable Development is requesting a moratorium on issuing permits within the Student Housing Overlay District for 3-6 unit dwellings to provide time for the City to consider a revision of VIII Zoning Code, Section 67 Article VII Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District, Section 67.702.

NRLD's suggested revision:

“Within the SH student housing neighborhood impact overlay district, a student dwelling is ~~a one- or two-family~~ **any one to six-plus unit housing type** dwelling requiring a fire certificate of occupancy in which at least one (1) unit is occupied by three (3) or more students.”

Comments regarding NRLD's moratorium request and zoning code revision included:

- Concern was expressed that a moratorium would result in a delay in or a loss of additional housing capacity to our area.
- Concern was expressed that the City did not appear to consider the impact of the 1-6 Housing Ordinance on the existing Student Overlay District.
- Amy Gage, a former Director of Neighborhood and Community Relations for St. Thomas, stated that she is a staunch advocate for the Student Overlay District's restrictions on student dwellings. She acknowledged that the student dwelling restrictions could be perceived as NIMBY, anti-student, anti-density, or anti-

affordability. However, her support for the student dwelling restrictions is based on her experience that the students benefitted from residing in and exposure to a multigenerational neighborhood.

- It was noted that housing projects near St. Thomas have been predominately market rate and have had very little impact on affordability for student and non-student residents of this neighborhood.
- It was noted that, with the University of St. Thomas' addition of new dormitories and the requirement that freshmen and sophomores live on campus, off-campus student housing capacity is more than adequate.
- It was suggested that the moratorium be limited to student dwellings so that a moratorium would not result in a delay in or a loss of additional housing capacity to our area.

As noted above, it was determined that a quorum was not present, so no voting occurred.

4. **2025 CLUED Work Plan
presented by Dean Cummings**

Dean Cummings presented a draft of the 2025 CLUED Work Plan. As noted above, it was determined that a quorum was not present so no voting occurred.

5. **Staff Report by Leah Timberlake Sullivan**

Due to the late hour, the staff report was postponed to the March CLUED meeting.

