**UNION PARK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 7:00-9:00pm**

**Minutes taken by Allen Saunders, Board secretary.**

**Members present: Allen Saunders, Sarah Dvorak, Claire Warren, Dan Elenbaas, Dean Cummings, Lisa Nelson, April King, Chris, Dean Commings, Mark Morrow, Mark Morrow, Reece Johnson, Leah Timberlake-Sullivan, Scott Berger, Kent Treichel, Tim Flanagan**

**7:00 pm Call to Order and Welcome** Sarah Dvorak

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm

**7:05 pm Consent Agenda** Sarah Dvorak

* *Approve the agenda for this meeting*
* *Approve February minutes*

**Motion to approve agenda and Feb. minutes made by Lisa Nelson and seconded by Claire Warren; approved unanimously.**

**7:10 pm Open Forum**  Sarah Dvorak

No items were brought to the floor.

**7:20 pm Topics for Discussion**

* Neighbors for Responsible Livable Development Tim Flanagan
  + *Action Item*
    - Group seeks support for letter requesting a moratorium be implemented immediately on issuing permits within the Student Housing Overlay District for 3-6-unit housing types in order for a reconciliation to be done between the H1:H2 zoning adopted in October

of 2023 and the existing Student Housing Overlay, which was not adequately taken into consideration when the H1:H2 zoning was adopted.

Discussion: Tim is returning from the meeting in February. Asking for an endorsement of the letter that was written regarding zoning . He proposed a small change to the student housing codes. Tim discussed the contents of the letter and the proposed changes requested by his group. This letter is about housing in order to limit student density in college areas such as St. Thomas. Mark suggested that the letter be adjusted to say that it is important to state that it is multi-generational.

Lisa suggested that the word “moratorium” not be used but that the city should take it under consideration. Tim used the word “moratorium” in order to pause for a time in order to consider the question of student density and change from 1-6 to 3-4 students per property. Sarah said that moratorium is not a complete hold but is a temporary hold for 60-90 days until it comes to an understanding of what is being built and who it is being built for. The unintended consequence of the zoning ordinance is that it doesn’t give families an equal opportunity to build.

Scott said that it is a very difficult issue. Scott said that requesting a moratorium is premature at this time.

Mark asked if there could be a change. It should be about supporting multi-generational housing for students. There will be a future discussion with CLUED regarding other issues, but the only place that there is an impact is right around St. Thomas.

Reece Johnson was concerned about the letter because of the need for increased housing in St. Paul. It should be more specifically about the type of housing around St. Thomas and not to be against increased density of housing in St. Paul.

Leah had a meeting with Emma Brown and that she said that there is a competitive advantage to certain housing types. She felt that it needs to be very specific. Perhaps the Board may need to make their own letter to give to the city regarding what we believe.

Kent believes that the word “moratorium” should stay in the letter because it will cause the city to act.

April commented by asking why we want to promote multi-generational housing. Tim suggested that it is not a matter of multi-generational housing but perhaps a multi-generational neighborhood.

Sarah stated that when she moved into the neighborhood it was more of a 50-50 mix of students vs. families. Her fear is that the percentage of students in the neighborhood is growing too large and there needs to be a limit.

Dean said that he & Tim met with Jerome at St. Thomas. He said that St. Thomas intends to build a great deal more on-campus student housing.

Kent recommended that we give them 7 days. Tim sent numerous emails and most were not responded to. He generally received little or no response. Mark said that they have been aware of this problem for quite some time. He said the city has been very much aware since December. Dan Elenbaas said that we need to send the letter now.

Lisa moved that UPDC draft its own letter to the city asking them to clarify specifically about the student overlay and the 1-6 housing ordinance and resolve discrepancies. Scott seconded the motion. UPDC needs to request that the city respond to the question and provide their clarification. The city needs to respond to this letter within 30 days. MOTION PASSED. 12 yays, 3 nays and one abstention.

**7:50 pm Committee Reports and Updates**

* Land Use & Economic Development (CLUED) Dean Cummings

Discussion: The majority of the meeting covered Tim’s letter on zoning and student overlay. Also discussed was the United Village by Bill McGuire. An event center was added to the plan along with additional open space. Mark said that “no bathrooms” was a particular issue at the meeting. Mark told Mike Halm that safety is utmost an issue with CLUED and Mark requested an open channel for communication for creative solutions to problems. Dean said that restaurants will be locally based. He said that we somehow need to support Cub foods because we don’t want to lose them. “Break-Away” will be back for the next meeting and he requested that April King be present at the meeting if available. The CLUED meeting with “Break-Away will be held on March 17 and April indicated that she would attend.

* Transportation Lisa Nelson

Discussion: Lisa discussed grant applications in process.

* Neighborhood Sustainability & Vitality Committee (NSVC) Yvonne Hundshamer

Discussion: Leah suggested that neighbors be more involved in Park advocacy, particularly Merriam Park. Committee leadership were not present at this meeting to present further information.

* WSNAC Jerome Benner

Discussion: The time for WSNAC was spent on Tim’s letter.

Snelling/University Task Force Kirsten Fryer

Discussion:

Leah and Lisa talked about the grant to create some shared space and there is hope that we receive the grant. Leah stated that Lisa Nelson has provided leadership with on this issue and has demonstrated alacrity on both the grant and issues involved.

**8:40 pm Staff Report** Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Leah-stated that we will be working with Ameri-Corp this year. She shared about the United Village meeting and said that Sarah Dvorak was exceptional in talking about the district councils and our effort with United Village. There was no discussion of garbage on the grounds which shows definitely progress. Abby highlighted Episcopal Homes in the March Newsletter and Leah suggested that perhaps we could get more involved with them in the future. It was a great article in the UPDC Newsletter. Sarah Dvorak stated that Episcopal Homes was very gracious in allowing UPDC to hold our meetings at that location several years ago. Sarah stated that she was present at meetings at the Episcopal Homes site along with Dan Elenbaas.

**9:00 pm Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by April King and seconded by Reece Johnson ; it passed unanimously.