

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, August 18, 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, Rachel Callanan, K. C. Cox, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Bill Richtman

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Sean Ryan (Eclective Creative Collective), Jeanne Weigum (Scenic Saint Paul)

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 July 21, 2025 meeting minutes were amended to note that Jim Marti was an excused absence. The amended minutes were approved.
The August 18, 2025 meeting agenda was approved.

**2. Update Regarding United Village
presented by Dean Cummings (on behalf of Mike Hahm)**

Mr. Hahm submitted a written update on United Village:

○ Phase 1 – Construction Update:

Mortenson and subcontractors are actively working on the restaurant pavilions and the office building.

**3. Update Regarding 1984 Marshall Avenue
presented by Dean Cummings**

Stephen Moriarity was invited to provide an update on 1984 Marshall Avenue, but was unable to attend. The City has approved the site plan for 1984 Marshall Avenue. Mr. Moriarity shared with Mr. Cummings that the site review process was slow, challenging, and frustrating.

4. Discussion of University of St. Thomas Off Campus Housing

The University of Saint Thomas did not accept our invitation to discuss off campus housing at this time, but will hopefully attend a future CLUED meeting to discuss off campus housing.

**5. Discussion of Billboard Rules Change
presented by Mark Morrow**

ACTION: Union Park District Council STRONGLY OPPOSES RES 25-1135, and STRONGLY OPPOSES the use of the consent agenda (which provided no opportunity for public comment) to consider this resolution.

Union Park District Council STRONGLY URGES the City Council to REPEAL RES 25-1135.

Union Park District Council urges the City to use its existing tools, including inspection and enforcement of the sign ordinance, to accelerate the pace of billboard removal.

Union Park District Council urges the City Council to reach out to the district councils to update the list of billboards that each district council finds to be “contrary to the goals of protecting and improving views, aesthetics, community pride and investment, and the visibility of local business”.

In 2010, as the result of extensive public input including the input of all 17 district councils, the City Council (including Councilmember Melvin Carter) approved RES 10-161. This resolution established a list of billboards that the Council found to be “contrary to the goals of protecting and improving views, aesthetics, community pride and investment, and the visibility of local business”. The resolution created a credit for the removal of billboards from the designated list that could be used to build new dynamic display billboards. Billboards not on the designated list were only eligible for the credit after all of the billboards on the designated list have been removed.

Jeanne Weigum of Scenic Saint Paul discussed the history of this ordinance, including the inclusion of all 17 district councils in the creation of the list of billboards designated as contrary to the goals. She informed the committee that Scenic Saint Paul was not in favor of dynamic billboards, but the elimination of all billboards had been a losing battle. The credit system was accepted as a compromise to achieve a reduction in the total number of billboards in exchange for an increase in the number of dynamic billboards.

Following Saint Paul’s implementation of the sign ordinance, the State implemented a statute that prohibited laws to eliminate billboards.

Since 2010, Saint Paul has had a 38% reduction in the total number of billboards, and a 40% reduction in the number of designated billboards.

St. Paul Billboards – The Numbers	
Highest number of billboards ² :	650
Current number of billboards ² :	400 (38% reduction of the total number)
Per RES 25-1135 ¹	
Designated signs which must be taken down first:	53 (8% of the total number of billboards)
Current number of designated billboards:	32 (40% reduction of designated billboards)
Per Scenic Saint Paul ²	
Designated signs which must be taken down first:	91 (14% of the total number of billboards)
Current number of designated billboards:	55 (40% reduction of designated billboards)

Despite the advantage given to the designated billboards, the percentage of non-designated billboards that have been removed is nearly the same as the percentage of designated billboards that have been removed.

RES 25-1135 appeared in the July 23, 2025 City Council consent agenda (which provided no public notice and no public comment). RES 25-1135 eliminated the advantage that the designated billboards had been given.

Committee members shared their thoughts about RES 25-1135, and the process that the Council used to consider it, including:

- It is highly desirable to accelerate the pace of removal, but high priority billboards need to remain high priority billboards.
- It is inappropriate to use a process that provided no public input to eliminate the impact of a list that was created through extensive public input.
- The City has other tools that it should be, but is not, using to accelerate the pace of billboard removal.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved (unanimously) to oppose RES 25-1135, oppose the use of the consent agenda (which provided no opportunity for public comment) to consider this resolution, urge the City Council to REPEAL RES 25-1135, urge the City to use its existing tools, including inspection and enforcement of the sign ordinance, to accelerate the pace of billboard removal, and urge the City Council to reach out to the district councils to update the list of billboards that each district council finds to be “contrary to the goals of protecting and improving views, aesthetics, community pride and investment, and the visibility of local business”.

6. Discussion of Notification from the City to District Councils and Renters presented by Mark Morrow

ACTION: Union Park District Council requests the following changes to improve communication with the City:

1. The district councils should be directly notified by DSI of public hearings for noise regulation variance requests in their district.
2. The district councils should be directly notified by DSI (rather than by the applicant) of amplified sound permit applications in their district.
3. Renters should be directly notified by DSI (rather than by their landlords) of public hearings for noise regulation variance requests within 300 feet of their residence, and of amplified sound permit applications within 300 feet of their residence.
4. The district councils should be notified of all applications that involve public hearings, public comment, or public awareness shortly after the city receives the application (notification early in the process rather than late in the process or not at all).

Note: The above requests were initially scheduled for discussion during the April 21, 2025 CLUED meeting. However, due to a very full agenda that evening, the discussion was held over to a future meeting.

Mr. Morrow presented a draft of the above requests.

Committee members shared their support for the requests.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved (unanimously) to support the above-noted changes.

7. Discussion of the Hamm’s Brewery Complex presented by Mark Morrow

ACTION: Express to the City our concern about the loss of local businesses including Cub Midway, express our support for the remaining members of our business community, including Robb Clapp and JB Vang, and request that the City support all of the members of our business community and work to attract new businesses to our community.

Mr. Morrow presented his concern that the Housing and Redevelopment Authority has, in the course of redeveloping the Hamm’s Brewery complex, created a situation that pits the needs of one developer against the needs of another. Mr. Morrow stated that, because the Hamm’s complex is outside of Union Park, he had not paid much attention to this issue until last month, when he learned that the 2 developers are Robb Clapp (Can Can Wonderland – warehouse converted to destination entertainment complex) and JB Vang (Twelve22 – casket factory converted to beautiful and deeply affordable apartment complex). Because each developer has made a significant positive contribution to Union Park, and because the success or failure of both developers will impact Union Park, Mr. Morrow requested a discussion by CLUED.

Sean Ryan (Eclective Creative Collective, Director Design Development) described their vision for the Hamm's complex, their needs for their portion of the Hamm's complex to succeed, their needs for their involvement in the Hamm's complex to grow, and their experience working with the City on the Hamm's complex.

Committee members shared their thoughts about the local developers, the Hamm's complex, and the City's relationship with businesses, including:

- A concern was raised that the Hamm's complex is outside of Union Park, and that we should not interfere with the recommendations of other district councils. A concern was also raised that one of the developers sued the City over this matter (reported in yesterday's Star Tribune). Because of these concerns, there was general agreement that CLUED should not make comments specific to the Hamm's complex.
- A concern was raised that each developer has made an important improvement in Union Park, and the success or failure of both developers will directly impact our district.
- A concern was raised that we have lost businesses in our district, and the City as a whole. It was noted that this impacts both the necessities and amenities that are available within our community, and the cost of living in our community (due to the shrinking commercial tax base).
- A concern was raised that, since the beginning of this year, several developers and entrepreneurs have independently raised concerns regarding the challenges working with the City, including the opaque and prolonged process to review applications, the lack of follow through, and the lack of communication. Those with experience beyond St. Paul describe their experience with St. Paul as worse than other communities.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved (Aye – 4, Nay – 3, Abstain - 1) to express to the City our concern about the loss of local businesses including Cub Midway, to express our support for the remaining members of our business community, including Robb Clapp and JB Vang, and to request that the City support all of the members of our business community and work to attract new businesses to our community.

8. Staff Report & Announcements presented by Leah Timberlake Sullivan

- August 19 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM Metro Transit will present information about their new “Safe & Strong on University Avenue” initiative at Bethlehem Lutheran
- September 20 Ice Cream, Peanut Butter, & Jam (Merriam Park).
Members were encouraged to sign up to assist with set up, event support, or tear down.
- October 4 Midway Peace Park Fall Fun Day.
- Metro Transit's B Line began service June 14. UPDC's promotion efforts provided information about this new transit service to more than 10,000 people.
- The Housing Task Force continues to develop its recommendations.
- The Bylaws Taskforce will present its recommendations at next month's meeting.
- The Board approved an initiative to improve support for our business community. A survey to identify their “pain points” is being created.
- Ms. Timberlake Sullivan is in the process of finalizing this year's financial reports.
- Council President Noecker sent an email to announce a new City program that will hire unsheltered persons to assist with City-wide clean up efforts. The workers will be paid \$20 per hour.
A recommendation was made to develop a pamphlet for unsheltered persons that lists available resources.



Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, July 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: Paul Bakke, Scott Berger, K. C. Cox, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, Reece Johnson, Mark Morrow, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Jim Marti

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village)

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, June 16, 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, Rachel Callanan, Dean Cummings, David Guetschow, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Lisa Nelson, Bill Richtman, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Tim Flanigan

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village), Nick Slade

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, May 19, 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, Rachel Callanan, K. C. Cox, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, David Guetschow, Joe Hughes, Reece Johnson, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam, Bill Richtman, Deanna Seppanen, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence:

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Chris Cosgrove (Park Liquor),

Jake de Vera , Karen Lue (Women's Advocates),
Mai Vue (Four Boys LLC 385 Lexington Parkway),
Kat Hughes, Mary Kay Palmer