

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:

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

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

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.

The February 24, 2025 meeting minutes were approved.

The March 17, 2025 meeting agenda was approved with the following modifications:

- The United Village update was deleted from the agenda because Mr. Hahm was unable to attend.
- An announcement regarding Allianz Field + Minnesota United FC's request for a sound variance May 9, 2025 was added to the agenda.

2. Request for the City of St. Paul to develop and implement standards for off-street temporary parking (an addition to Article VIII Zoning Code Section 63.300 Off-Street Parking Facility Standards and Design) presented by Mark Morrow

ACTION: SUPPORT a request that the City of St. Paul to develop and implement standards for off-street temporary parking

Last year UPDC became aware that the City does not have a separate set of standards for temporary off-street parking lots. Because of this, City staff are required to use the same standards for temporary off-street parking lots as they use for permanent off-street parking facilities, including standards for paving materials and landscaping. The concerns are that the use of these standards for temporary off-street parking facilities is wasteful (financially and environmentally), and increases the likelihood that a short-term parking facility will become a long-term parking facility.

A motion was approved to SUPPORT a request that the City of St. Paul to develop and implement standards for off-street temporary parking.

3. **Announcement that a sound variance has been requested by Allianz Field + Minnesota United FC for May 9, 2025 / public hearing April 2, 2025**
presented by Mark Morrow
(information only item)

Mr. Morrow informed the Committee that Allianz Field + Minnesota United FC has submitted a request for a sound variance for an event to be held on the Great Lawn on May 9, 2025 from 6:00 PM to 10:30 PM. The request is for up to 95 dBA measured 50 feet from all sound sources. A public hearing has been scheduled for April 2, 2025. For those who are unable to attend this City Council meeting, comments must be submitted by noon on Tuesday, April 1, 2025.

4. **Breakaway Music Festival June 6 and June 7, 2025**
presented by Jarrod Fucci and Amy Dunn

On November 18, 2024, Jarrod Fucci, president of Breakaway, discussed the June 2024 Breakaway Music Festival and received feedback from the community. Following completion of the 2024 Festival, Breakaway Festival staff have been in conversations with the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) and the St. Paul Police Department (SPPD) to assure that all concerns are addressed. Based on feedback from festival attendees, the community, DSI, and the St. Paul Police Department (SPPD), Mr. Fucci stated that the following changes will be implemented for the 2025 Breakaway Music Festival:

- Mr. Fucci and other Breakaway staff have made themselves available for community meetings, and will continue to make themselves available.
- Notice of the June 6 and June 7, 2025 Breakaway Music Festival will be distributed to the surrounding community.
- Attendance will be limited to 15,000 attendees each day (an increase of 3,000 attendees per day).
- Rather than orienting the stage to the Southwest (toward Cub), the stage will be oriented to the Southeast (toward Allianz Field) (so that the stadium can absorb some of the sound).
- The subwoofers will be stacked in a manner to decrease the spread of low frequency sound beyond the perimeter.
- Each day of the event will begin with a lower decibel limit, with a gradual increase in the decibel limit.
- The equipment will be wired to restrict the output to no more than the maximum level allowed for each period of time.
- In addition to sound monitoring within the event site, sound will be monitored around the perimeter. Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to the monitored sound levels.
- Breakaway Festival will pay for DSI staff to be present onsite to assist with sound monitoring. Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to DSI instructions.
- A feedback line will be clearly identified. Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to the feedback.

CLUED attendees shared the following questions and concerns with Mr. Fucci and Ms. Dunn:

- Why did last year's festival generate 300 noise complaints, and why should we expect this year's festival to be less disruptive for the community?
Mr. Fucci stated that last year the festival did not receive feedback / complaints in real time. This year's festival will add perimeter sound monitors, DSI staff onsite, and a feedback line so that adjustments to sound levels can be made in real time.
- Are the sound technicians aware of, and adjusting for, the natural frequency of house windows?
Mr. Fucci stated that their sound technicians are aware of, and are adjusting the sound system for, the natural frequency of house windows.
- Will Breakaway monitor and record the sound levels throughout the event?
Mr. Fucci stated that sound levels within the event space and around the perimeter will be monitored continuously and will be recorded at the frequency that DSI requests.
- Will Breakaway Festival share the results of the sound level monitoring?
Mr. Fucci stated that Breakaway Festival is happy to share the results of the sound level monitoring.
- Is the promoter willing to promote local restaurants and businesses?
Mr. Fucci stated that Breakaway recently hired a person who is specifically responsible for the promotion of local restaurants and businesses, and will be happy to promote our local businesses.

Mr. Fucci stated that Breakaway is finalizing their application for a sound level variance for the 2025 festival. Because the sound variance level application has not yet been submitted, the Committee determined that there was insufficient information to support or oppose an application.

Mr. Fucci stated that he would share the application for a sound level variance with UPDC after it has been submitted.

5. Woodstock UST Application for a Sound Level Variance presented by Thomas Fischer, Brennan Bonon, Seamus Healy, and Tim Tibesar

ACTION: OPPOSE the request for a sound level variance for Woodstock UST on Friday May 2, 2025 or Friday May 9, 2025.

Thomas Fischer, Brennan Bonon, Seamus Healy, and Tim Tibesar discussed their plans for Woodstock UST, and their request for a sound level variance. Mr. Fischer, Mr. Bonon, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Tibesar are students at the University of St. Thomas, and reside at 2054 Laurel Avenue.

Background: On October 11, 2024 from 8:00 PM to 10:59 PM, Mr. Fischer, Mr. Bonon, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Tibesar hosted an event which featured University of St. Thomas student musicians at their residence. They called the event “Woodstock UST”. They estimated that attendance for that event was approximately 200.

Mr. Fischer has submitted an application for a sound level variance for another music event on Friday May 2, 2025 or Friday May 9, 2025 (depending on weather) from 6:00 PM to 11:30 PM with a pre-event sound check on the day of the event from 10:00 AM. They plan to use a lower level of sound from 6:00 PM to 8:00 or 8:30 PM, and a higher level of sound from 8:00 or 8:30 PM until 11:30 PM. The event is being organized and staffed by University of St. Thomas students and will feature University of St. Thomas student musicians. The event is free, and is being promoted primarily to students at the University of St. Thomas.

Though they are calling the event “Woodstock UST”, Mr. Fischer stated that the event is not sanctioned by the University of St. Thomas.

Based on concerns raised about the October 11, 2024 event, Mr. Fischer, Mr. Bonon, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Tibesar are making the following modifications for their May, 2025 music event:

- Trespassing
 - They will surround their back yard (the event space) with orange fencing, with a single entry / exit point.
 - They will provide a volunteer security team, led by a person described as having experience providing security for music events.
- Public urination
 - They will provide a portable toilet in their back yard.
- Noise
 - One of the hosts has sound technician experience, and will monitor the sound levels.
 - They will use a lower level of sound from 6:00 PM to 8:00 or 8:30 PM, and a higher level of sound from 8:00 or 8:30 PM until 11:30 PM.
- Alcohol
 - They will not provide (permit?) alcohol.
- Littering
 - They will provide trash bins.
 - They will clean up the neighborhood after the event and the following morning.

Attendees shared the following questions and concerns with Mr. Fischer, Mr. Bonon, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Tibesar:

- A neighbor pointed out to the organizers that their home is 25-30 feet from the stage.
- A neighbor informed the organizers that there is a neighbor who starts work at 6:00 AM, and other neighbors who are school age children.
- A Committee member requested that they use the Noise Regulations’ time of 10:00 PM rather than 11:30 PM.

- A neighbor reported that, during the October 11, 2024 event they tried to shoo away event guests who were urinating in their yard, and were yelled and sworn at.
- Neighbors reported that, at the beginning of the October 11, 2024 event, there was an announcement that it was OK to drink and smoke. The organizers disputed that characterization of the announcement, and offered to play a recording of the announcement.
- Neighbors reported that there was a golf cart with a case of beer that drove around the event. The organizers stated that the golf cart wasn't driven by one of them.
- The organizers were asked if the event will be insured. They stated that it will not be. Attendees encouraged the organizers to consider obtaining event insurance.
- The organizers were encouraged to consider a ticket service, such as Eventbrite, to gain control over the number of people who will be in and around their yard.
- The organizers were asked about the type of music. They stated that there will be country and rock.
- The organizers were asked if they had approached the University of St. Thomas for an on-campus venue for this event. They stated that they have asked about other events without success, and that is why they decided to host this event in their back yard. However, they stated that they had not asked the University about a venue for this event.
- The organizers were told that outdoor concerts in front yards and back yards have occurred throughout St. Paul, and that these have been important venues for community building – however, the other outdoor concerts were not as long, not as late, and not as loud as their previous event. It would be possible for the University of St. Thomas musicians to share their talents with other University students indoors without concern for sound levels, or outdoors without exceeding the sound level limits. However, when sound levels exceed the limits outdoors, the sound spreads through the neighborhood. This imposes the event on neighbors, taking away their use of their residence for the duration of the event. The neighbors only option not to participate is to leave their home.

A motion was approved to OPPOSE the request for a sound level variance for Woodstock UST on Friday May 2, 2025 or Friday May 9, 2025.

6. Announcement that CLUED will form a Housing Task Force presented by Reece Johnson

Reece Johnson, one of the UPDC At-Large Board Directors, presented his vision for a Housing Task Force to update UPDC's 10-year-plan. UPDC seeks to host a deep discussion with a group of individuals with varied experiences and perspectives, including tenants, homeowners, small-scale property owners, to identify the best path forward to improve housing in our community. Committee members were invited to contact Mr. Reece or Ms. Timberlake-Sullivan if interested.

7. Zoning code amendments presented by Dean Cummings

Mr. Cummings informed attendees that a City Staff member has proposed several changes to the City zoning codes. (The proposed amendments were included with the meeting invitation.) Mr. Cummings encouraged everyone to review the proposed changes, and to contact him if they identified any concerns.

8. Vacant Building Fees Task Force presented by Dean Cummings

Mr. Cummings informed Committee members that a task force will be formed to develop proposals to the City to incentivize the redevelopment of vacant properties.

One of the attendees recommended a website for suggestions on how to address vacant properties:
<https://communityprogress.org>

9. **Staff Report presented by Leah Timberlake Sullivan**

- Ms. Timberlake Sullivan Tenant Protection engagement opportunities

