

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, January 26, 2026 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, K. C. Cox, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, Joe Hughes, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Bill Richtman

Committee member excused absence:

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Catherine Kane

Guests: Cole Hanson (Safe Homes Saint Paul), Brian Harrison (Red Maple Ventures), Mike Hahm (United Village), Joe Abraham

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 December 15, 2025 meeting minutes were approved.

The January 26, 2026 meeting agenda was approved with the following modifications:

- CLUED 2025 Work Plan assessment and 2026 development was added to the agenda.
- The sequence of presenters was adjusted to accommodate the presenters' schedules.

1. Introduction of Catherine Kane, Union Park District Council Intern

Leah Timberlake Sullivan introduced Catherine Kane, who is a UPDC intern this winter and spring. Ms. Kane is a senior at Macalester College, majoring in Geography. Ms. Kane is originally from Washington, D.C.

Ms. Kane will lead the Union Park Community Plan update process, including the collection and analysis of community input.

2. Right to Repair Ordinance Ballot Initiative

presented by Cole Hanson, Safe Homes Saint Paul Political and Coalition Coordinator

Mr. Cole presented an overview of the rationale for, and the process to adopt, a Right to Repair ordinance, modeled on the ordinance that was approved by Duluth in November, 2025.

The average age of St. Paul's rental housing is 76 years, with 57% built before 1930. Though many landlords respond quickly to repair requests from tenants, some do not. Delayed repairs can cause safety risks for the tenants (such as from unsafe stair railings) and additional damage to the buildings (such as damage from burst pipes).

Safe Homes Saint Paul is developing a Right to Repair Ordinance proposal, and will be collecting signatures through June 1 to get the proposal on the November, 2026 ballot.

<https://www.safehomessaintpaul.org>

Comments included:

There are existing laws that address maintenance requirements. The problem is not the requirements, but the lack of enforcement. Mr. Cole noted that St. Paul residents are unlikely to support the cost of increased enforcement.

There is no data on the effects of similar laws in other cities to understand the challenges, benefits,

and harms (Duluth's ordinance was approved by voters just 2 months ago).

There is no data on the challenges, benefits, and harms of administrative citations in Saint Paul, because this was approved by voters just 2 months ago.

There is evidence that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance is disincentivizing maintaining of older properties.

There is evidence that investors are losing interest in the Twin Cities area, and evidence that a contributing factor is the "never ending stream of policy changes". The Right to Repair law would be yet another reason not to invest in Saint Paul.

Mr. Morrow asked Ms. Timberlake Sullivan to reach out to the League of Women Voters to see if they would be interested in co-hosting a forum on this topic.

**3. Lot Split of 170 Pascal Street North
presented by Brian Harrison, Red Maple Ventures**

ACTION: SUPPORT the requested lot split

Brian Harrison presented his plan to split 170 Pascal Street North into 2 lots. Mr. Harrison lives in Saint Paul, and purchased this property a couple of years ago.

The lot is L-shaped. The north section (along Ayd Mill Road North) is zoned B2.

The south section (along Pascal and Hague) is zoned H2.

On the north section there is a warehouse. On the south section there is a parking lot.

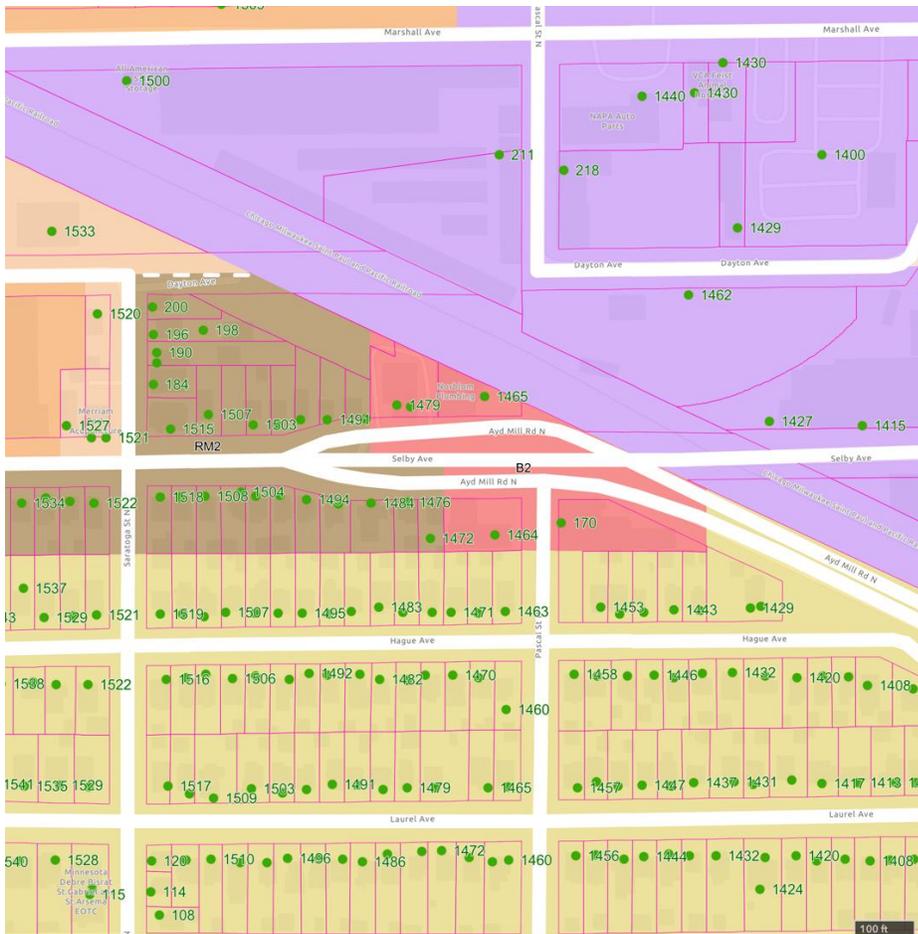
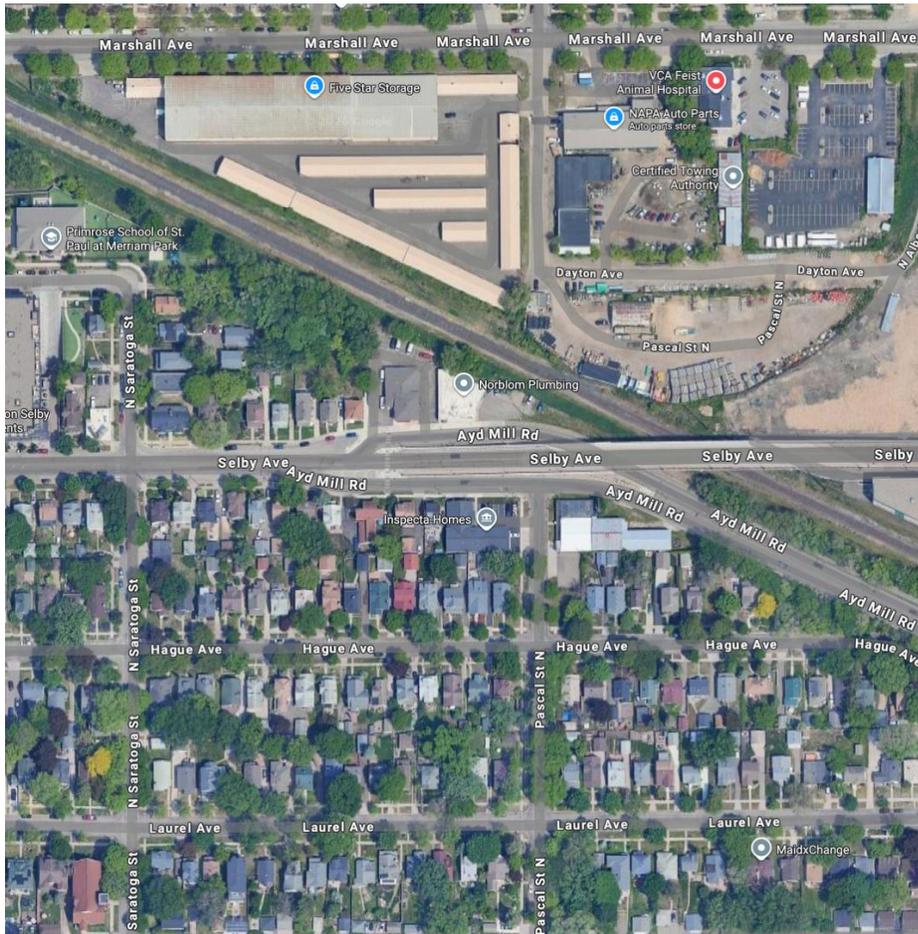
Mr. Harrison is seeking the flexibility to develop the north section separately from the south section. Mr. Harrison has submitted several proposals for the structure on the north side of the lot, including use as a gym, that the City has delayed or has not approved. He is continuing to explore options to return the structure to active use.

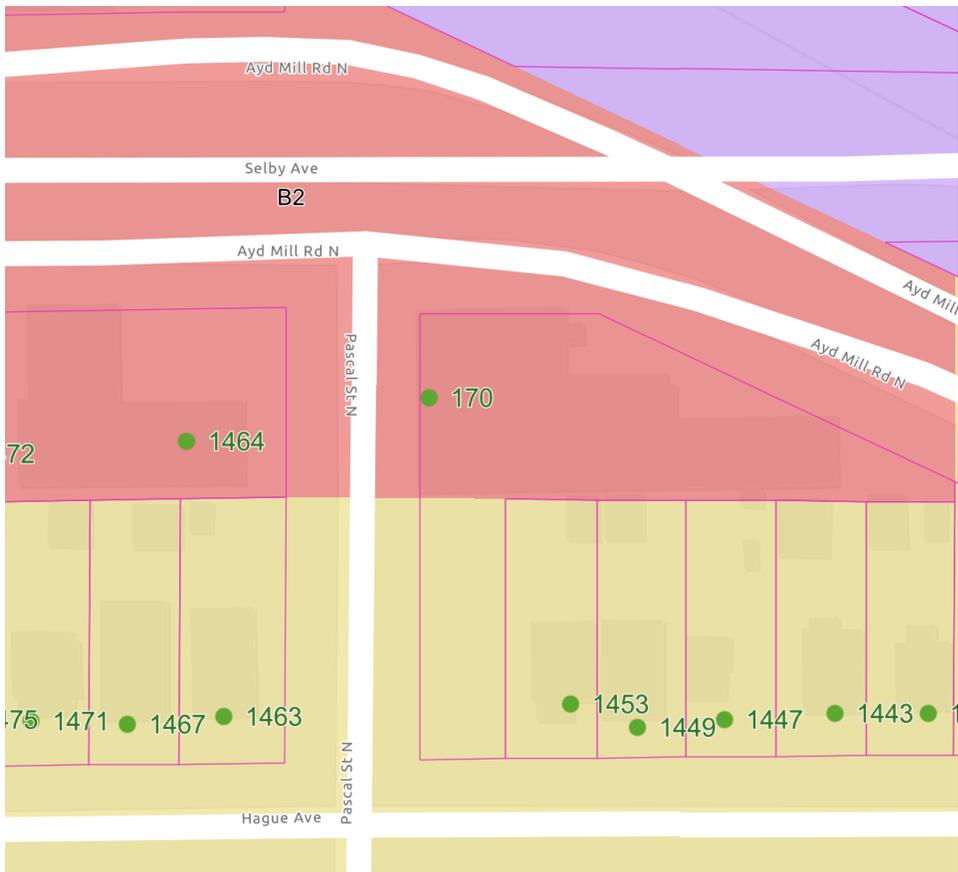
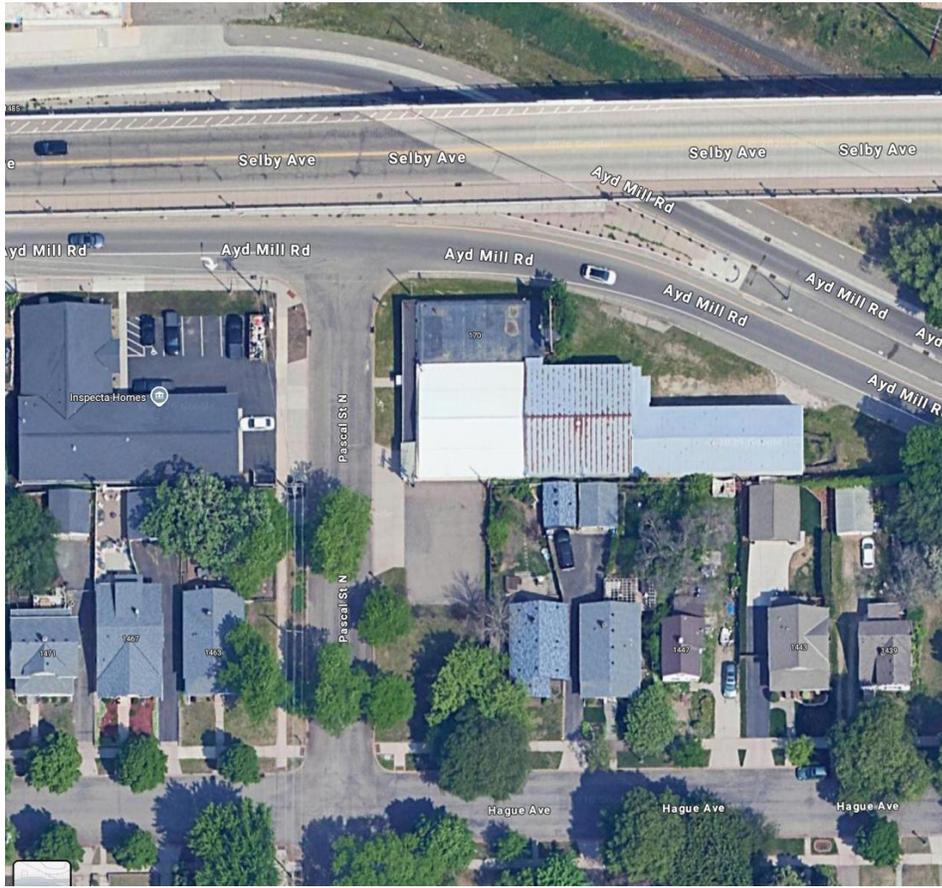
Mr. Harrison has no specific plans at this time to develop the south side of the lot, but believes that the current surface parking lot is not the best use of this land.

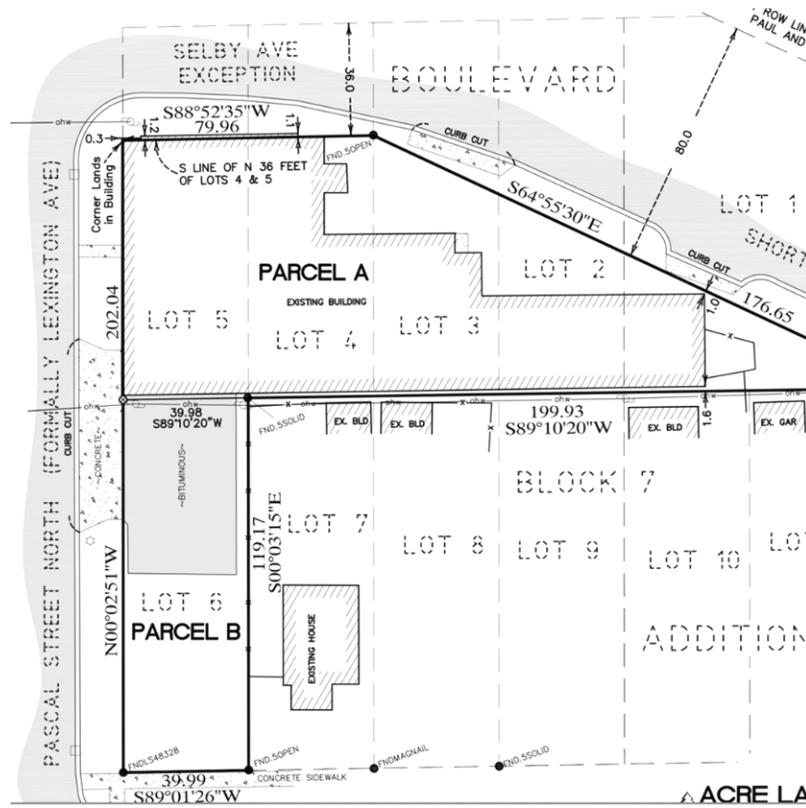
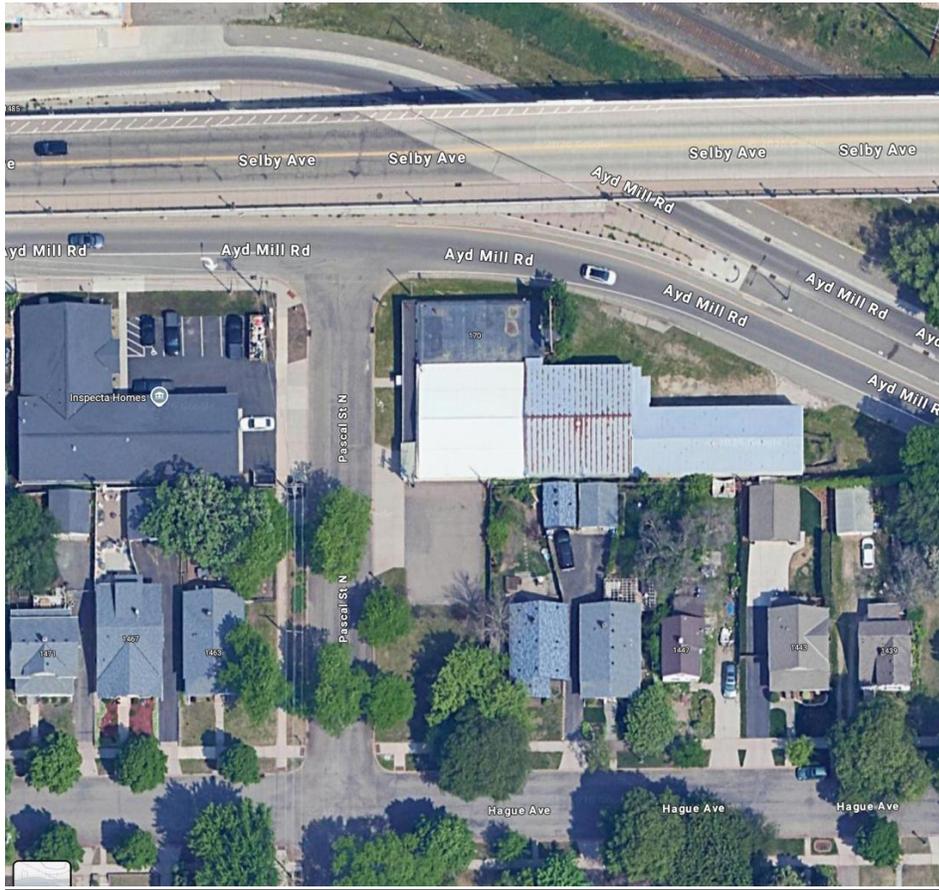
Comments included:

- At this time the property appears derelict, has numerous taggings, and is a public nuisance. Mr. Harrison agreed. He believes that the best long term solution is active use of the property. Mr. Harrison stated that he has submitted several proposals for development which the City has delayed or has not approved. He is continuing to explore options to develop the property. Mr. Harrison stated that he has enrolled the property in Saint Paul's graffiti removal program, but the city has not removed any. He has had the structure painted over several times, but new taggings have appeared shortly after repainting.
- Mr. Harrison was encouraged to remove the billboard on the property, which detracts from the appearance of the property and the area.
- There is a missing segment of sidewalk. Mr. Harrison was asked if connecting the sidewalks will be required when the property is redeveloped. Mr. Harrison stated that he has spoken to about 7 people about this very issue, and has been given about 4 different answers.
- Mr. Harrison was asked if he had spoken to any of the neighbors about the proposed lot split. He responded that he has not, but intends to. Scott Berger, who is UPDC's board member for this grid, offered to assist Mr. Harrison with contacting neighbors. Mr. Harrison accepted Mr. Berger's offer of help.

A motion to SUPPORT the requested lot split of 170 Pascal Street North was made, seconded, and approved.







https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/STPAUL/2026/01/21/file_attachments/3528911/170%20Pascal%20St%20N%20ENS.pdf

<https://cityofstpaulmn-energovweb.tylerhost.net/apps/selfservice#/plan/e069a2c9-f36c-4a6b-a441-5020f061748e>

4. **Variance Request for United Village Hotel presented by Mike Hahm**

ACTION: SUPPORT the requested variance

Mike Hahm presented a variance request for the United Village hotel north façade ground level window and door openings:

- length 43.1% (50% required), and
- area 23.3% (30% required).

Background related to the United Village hotel:

On 01/22/2024, Mike Hahm presented plans for the United Village hotel to our Committee on Land Use and Economic Development (CLUED).

On 02/26/2024, Mr. Hahm requested CLUED's support for 7 variances for the hotel, including:

- an entrance driveway of 322 feet (60 feet maximum permitted);
- west façade ground level window and door openings of 31% length (50% required) and 16% area (30% required); and
- west façade above ground level window and door openings of 8% area (15% required).

UPDC opposed the west façade ground level window and door openings variances, but supported the other variance requests.

On 03/15/2024, the Planning Commission approved all of the variance requests except for the entrance driveway.

- The Planning Commission added conditions to 2 of the variances, including the west façade above ground level window and door openings.
- The Planning Commission noted UPDC's opposition to the west façade ground level window and door openings variance, but approved this variance (#6) without additional conditions.

On 04/10/2024, the City Council approved the entrance driveway variance and removed the Planning Commission's additional conditions.

(Councilmembers Noecker, Jalali, Bowie, Johnson, and Yang voted yea; Councilmembers Kim and Jost were absent).

Additional background related to United Village Phase 1 projects:

On 05/15/2024, the City Council approved variance requests for the restaurant pavilions.

(Councilmembers Noecker, Jalali, Bowie, Johnson, Kim, and Jost voted yea; Councilmember Yang was absent).

During the Councilmembers' discussion, Councilmembers Bowie, Jalali, and Johnson expressed their confidence in and support for United Village's design team. Councilmembers expressed their intention to approve unspecified future variance requests should any arise.

Mr. Hahm provided updated architectural renderings, and discussed the rationale for the proposed window and door length and area:

- "Hotel and Parking Ramp can and do meet the requirements where retail or amenities are adjacent to public areas.
- To apply additional opening to restrooms and back of the house areas is impractical to achieve
- Hotel entrance is prominent feature and the north façade has intentional symmetry.
- Awnings at windows and doors introduce architectural articulation and visual interest.
- The stairwell transitioning the buildings exterior wall has a commissioned vertical public art mural. The mural has yet to be designed. The depiction in the renderings is a placeholder."

Comments included:

- Excitement that the hotel is being developed.
- Windows in the stairwells would make the stairwells an attractive alternative to the elevator, in addition to helping to meet the zoning code requirement.

A motion to SUPPORT the requested north façade window and door opening length and area variances was made, seconded, and approved (5 aye, 3 nay).

Note: The variance request will be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals on February 17, 2026.

5. **United Village Liquor License Preview
presented by Mike Hahm**

Mr. Hahm stated that each facility will submit its own request for a liquor license.

6. **United Village Update
presented by Mike Hahm**

Mr. Hahm provided an update on United Village:

- Phase 1 – Construction Update:
Mortenson and subcontractors continue to work on the restaurant pavilions and the office building. The development team hopes that the restaurant pavilions will be completed by summer 2026 and the office building by fall 2026.

7. **Announcement: Breakaway Festival at United Village June 25, 2025
presented by Dean Cummings**

Breakaway Music Festival has submitted a request for a noise variance for an event at United Village June 25, 2026.

Ms. Timberlake Sullivan will invite a representative from Breakaway Music Festival and a representative from The Department of Safety and Inspections to a future CLUED meeting to evaluate last year's noise containment methods and this year's noise containment plans.

8. **Announcement: Planning Commission Restructuring
presented by Mark Morrow**

On 01/07/2026, the City Council approved a restructuring of the Planning Commission. Currently, the Planning Commission consists of 14 Commissioners and 7 alternates. Commissioners must attend meetings for the Planning Commission and meetings for one of the subcommittees (Comprehensive & Neighborhood Planning Committee, Zoning Committee, Transportation Committee, Steering Committee, and Communications & Nominations Committee). The revised structure will have 7 Commissioners and 2 alternates. The only subcommittee that will remain is the Transportation Committee. Additional ad hoc committees will be used as needed.

The reduced number of subcommittees and the modification of processes will eliminate duplicate reviews. This will reduce the number of meetings that each commissioner must attend every month. The simplified processes will reduce the time to process an application by (28 days reduced to 21 days) and the time to implement zoning code and zoning map changes (126 days reduced to 82 days).

Mr. Morrow noted that the structural changes provide a well-deserved reduction in the time required to serve as a Planning Commissioner. However, he expressed disappointment that the Department of Planning and Economic Development did not provide information about the changes to the district councils nor seek input from the district councils. He also expressed disappointment that the Department of Planning and Economic Development did not address public notification, public education, and public discussion as essential components of the zoning application, zoning text amendment, and zoning map amendment processes.

9. CLUED 2025 Work Plan Assessment and 2026 Work Plan Development presented by Mark Morrow MD

Mr. Morrow reviewed elements of the 2025 Work Plan:

- Review the CLUED Work Plan every winter (approved by the end of February) and summer
- Facilitate diverse input to, and participation in, CLUED
- Collaborate with other UPDC Committees on land use and economic development issues
- Collaborate with adjacent District Councils on projects that impact more than one District
- Hold meetings of the Committee on Land Use and Economic Development (CLUED) open to the public which are scheduled regularly and occur at least 10 times per year
- Ensure timely notification of meetings, events, and other activities
- Provide visitors to CLUED meetings the attendance requirement to become a member or CLUED
- Monitor applications filed with the city for potential committee action; discuss pending actions and projects with city staff; communicate with applicants to prepare them for meetings; and share recommendations with city staff and decision makers.
- Develop a welcome packet for small businesses which identifies our mission, values, vision, expectations; and identifies resources
- Develop a set of questions / expectations for Class N License applicants
- Develop a letter template in order to expedite communication of CLUED's position regarding each Class N License request to the Department of Safety and Inspections
- Work with the Department of Safety and Inspections to better integrate District Council input into the Business Licensing process
- Work with the Audit Committee to better integrate District Council input into the processes of the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Planning Commission, using the revised DSI Business Licensing process as a model
- Use the Equity Scorecard, which addresses housing affordability, environmental sustainability, and local job creation, to evaluate development proposals
- Support deeply affordable housing initiatives in the district
- Connect people in our community seeking jobs through job boards, local workforce utilization in projects

Mr. Morrow encouraged members to submit feedback regarding progress on the 2025 work plan to Ms. Timberlake Sullivan. He encouraged members to submit modifications to and new goals for the 2026 work plan to Ms. Timberlake Sullivan.

10. Staff Report & Announcements presented by Leah Timberlake Sullivan

- Ms. Timberlake Sullivan welcomed new UPDC interns from Macalester College.
- Merriam Park neighbors will be surveyed about the park, including the no mow area.
- Capitol Improvement Budget (CIB) applications are now being accepted by the city. Scott Berger encouraged residents to consider this “tool not to be neglected” as a means to address local low dollar projects.
- The management of 1919 University Avenue West (who is also the management of the Spruce Tree Center) will likely be applying for a STAR grant to make the building more welcoming.
- The Snelling-Selby Business Association is in the process of rebranding to Selby West. Ms. Timberlake Sullivan has been meeting with them weekly. One of the businesses in this area is considering seasonally installing a bike corral to encourage visiting the area's businesses by bike rather than car.
- Lexington-Hamline Community Council and Common Bond continue to explore ways to support the residents of Skyline Tower as the residents are addressing damage caused by last year's fire and disruptions caused by current challenges.

11. Housing Task Force

presented by Reece Johnson

Mr. Johnson reported that UPDC's newsletter now includes a link to the Housing Task Force's housing survey. The task force will be meeting this Wednesday (January 28) to discuss methods to encourage completion of the survey, and to review and update the action plan.



**Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, December 15, 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, David Guetschow, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Mark Morrow, Bill Richtman, Deanna Seppanen, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence:

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests:

**Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, October 20, 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, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, Joe Hughes, Reece Johnson, Mark Morrow, Ben Quam, Bill Richtman, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Jim Marti

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Mike Hahm (United Village),
Beth Commers (Saint Paul Department of Human Rights & Equal Economic Opportunity (HREEO),
Deputy Director Human Rights & Labor Standards),
beth.commers@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Der Vue (Saint Paul Department of Safety & Inspections, Fire Safety Supervisor),
der.vue@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Reka Suranyi

Union Park District Council
MINUTES / Committee on Land Use and Economic Development
Monday, September 15, 2025 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Co-chairs: Dean Cummings and Mark Morrow

Committee meeting minutes submitted by: Dean Cummings

Committee members present: Scott Berger, Rachel Callanan, Dean Cummings, Tim Flanigan, Reece Johnson, Jim Marti, Bill Richtman, Paul Toman

Committee member excused absence: Mark Morrow

Staff present: Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Finley Roman (Intern)

Guests: Bill Dermody