

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Land Use Committee Meeting on Tuesday, December 6, 2016

Emanuel Housing

818 South 3rd Street, Green Room, Minneapolis, MN 55415

I. Call to Order and Introductions

DMNA Board Member Carletta Sweet called the LUC meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Other LUC members in attendance were:

Kevin Frazell, Zenith Lofts
Stephanie Hill, Metropolitan Lofts
Denise Holt, Park Avenue Lofts
Randy Manthey, The Carlyle
Tom Novak, American Trio Lofts
Thomas Schmidt, Washburn Lofts
Tyler Schow, Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition, Downtown West resident
Joey Senkyr, Xcel Energy in Downtown West
Joe Tamburino, Metropolitan Lofts
Dianne Walsh, Bridgewater Lofts
Dale White, RiverWest Condominium

Project presenters included:

Laura Boyd, Alcohol Compliance Services
Max Holdhusen, Community Outreach and Engagement, Metro Transit Orange Line
Brian Kirk, Director of Real Estate Management at Greater Twin Cities YMCA
Tom Lander, Vice President at Mortenson Development, Inc.
Shane LeFave, Director of Multifamily Development at Sherman Associates
Bob Lind, Special Projects, Minneapolis CPED
Brad Lis, Director of Real Estate Development at Mortenson Development, Inc.
Jason Merritt, Randle's Restaurant
Emily Roland, Senior Advisor at Cresa Minneapolis

II. 205 Park Avenue South Update

Shane LeFave explained he is taking over for Brent Webb who accepted a position at another company. Since Sherman Associates last presented before the DMNA LUC on Tuesday, September 6th, they have been negotiating the Term Sheet with the City; they are investigating the flexibility of the fire lane and service access easement to the east of the property and whether they could shift the building onto that easement. In order to accomplish this will require approval by the owner of St. Anthony Mills Apartments adjacent to the site at 720 Washington Avenue South which would reduce the size of their exit onto Washington Avenue. Otherwise, the TS is consistent with the Request for Proposal. SA expects to sign the TS within the next 2 weeks and then it will be go before the Planning Commission and City Council in January 2017 for approval. Thereafter, SA will begin the design process in earnest.

Randy Manthey explained the basis for moving the easement line started with the DMNA's position statement, i.e., provide a more green edge along Park Avenue through the redesign of the building by moving it to the east because it currently does not mirror Park Avenue Lofts to the west across the street as the DMNA Board would have preferred. He reiterated that the purpose of the LUC is to get pass the pettiness of land development and get down to what's best for the neighborhood for

the long term. He also reinforced the fact that the DMNA Board had sent a letter to SA stating its principles on this project. The DMNA is here to work with SA, step up to the Planning Commission as partners and, as SA goes through this process, if the DMNA can check things midstream it would be appreciated. Lastly, Manthey emphasized they want the design to stand out on its own, be unique and of interest, not a reproduction of historic artifacts as was in the first rendition.

III. YMCA Signage at Gaviidae Common

Emily Roland advised the Downtown Minneapolis YMCA is relocating and consolidating its headquarters from the 117,000 square feet of space it owns at 30 South 9th Street in the LaSalle Plaza and 2125 East Hennepin Avenue to the Gaviidae [family of loons] Common building it purchased at 651 Nicollet Mall. It will occupy floors 3, 4 and 5 and lease space on floors 1 and 2 for a total of 106,000 square feet. The new space will include administrative offices, fitness area, gymnasium and five workout studios, a four-lane lap pool, and gathering space for community partners, nonprofits and social-good entrepreneurs. HGA Architects and Engineers has been hired as the designer and RJM Construction as the general contractor and they anticipate having the design completed by the end of 2016.

Roland noted that Steven Dorgan (<https://www.cresa.com/sdorgan>) had forwarded the application for the signage height variance (see links on LUC agenda) for two signs; one for the Nicollet Mall side of the building and the other for the South 6th Street side. The signage will have a perforated, brushed stainless finish with back LED illumination that drew inspiration from the new design work for Nicollet Mall. This application will go before the Zoning and Planning Committee on January 5, 2017 and they are seeking a letter of support from the LUC to accompany it. And once they have considered other illuminated signage options that could bring vitality and energy to the three windows on Nicollet Mall, they will return to the LUC for review of that application.

Brian Kirk clarified that the leased spaces on the 1st and 2nd floors will remain retail from the inside, i.e., specialized training and health & wellness, respectively. The YMCA purchased half of floors 3 and 4 (Pohlad family-owned United Properties the other half) and all of floor 5 which steps back about 8' and in order to obtain the gymnasium box, the existing 5th floor will be bumped out to the original face of the building. Skyway access between City Center, IDS Center, RBC Plaza (formerly Gaviidae Common II) and Wells Fargo Center will remain; however, they are looking at removing the escalators and having stairs and elevators being the main point of access to the 3rd floor. And because of the amount of time required to walk around the atrium, they are putting bridges across it and are counting on the YMCA to reenergize the space due to the sheer number of people that have come in to use it; the foot traffic on the skyway level during the winter from where they are currently located compared to this new space is about 3 to 4 times greater during the time when everyone wants access to a treadmill.

Roland and Kirk then entertained questions from the audience, e.g., whether they would use the 4th floor skyway connection over South 6th Street to RBC Plaza. Although it would be a cool space to energize with activity, there are currently no plans to use it. Also, whether there will be a designated performance space akin to what takes place at the 92nd Street YMCA in New York (<http://www.92y.org/>). At the top of the escalators at the public access to the YMCA, there is an area called the forum, a large social responsibility area designated for working with the community. YMCA hours of operation will be 5:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Thereafter, the LUC agreed to have DMNA staff Christie Rock Hantge draft a letter of support for the signage graphics as presented.

IV. Randle's Restaurant Class B Liquor License Application

Laura Boyd advised she has worked with the McDermott Restaurants (<http://mrestaurants.net/>) ownership group on many different projects, the current being Ling & Louie's Asian Bar and Grill (<http://lingandlouies.com/minneapolis/>) located at 921 Nicollet Mall. Since they wish to change the concept to a sports-themed restaurant with a menu offering elevated beyond what a bar would provide, they are seeking a Class B "on sale" liquor license with Sunday sales and 2 a.m. sales on Fridays and Saturdays (https://www.municode.com/library/mn/minneapolis/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_TIT14LIBE_CH362LILI_362.30SALI). They would like to maintain the patio on Nicollet Mall and the rooftop deck as approved under L&L's; however, there are plans to expand the deck sometime in the spring. They currently possess a Class E "on sale" liquor license which prohibits live entertainment and dancing and came before the DMNA this past summer seeking a Class B which would allow a broad range of entertainment options and it was approved by the Board; however, they withdrew the request pending the change in concept, i.e., Randle's taken from former Minnesota Vikings John Anthony Randle with whom they are signing a license agreement to use his name.

Jason Merritt explained L&L's will be closing by the end of the year and then go into internal cosmetic construction at the beginning of next year with the goal of opening by mid February. Once opened, they will begin expanding the rooftop over Barrio's (<https://barriotequila.com/>) at 925 Nicollet Mall the ownership from whom they have received permission. This will increase their rooftop capacity by 65%. During the rooftop expansion, Randle's will remain open for business. With the renovation of Nicollet Mall, the new stadium and the Super Bowl coming, they thought it would be a good idea to have a themed restaurant with a local, well-known celebrity who is also a friend of theirs. Randle is ecstatic and will be helping to promote it; he already has been talking with the NFL and Hall of Fame about the grand opening.

Using a slide presentation, Merritt provided an overview of the 15,000 square foot venue describing the layout of the bar, lounge and dining area that will have nine 60" televisions that can formulate one picture or be distributed throughout the restaurant, images and bust of Randle; mezzanine; and rooftop with new soft seating. The dimensions for the basement private dining room will remain the same, but the service bar will increase. The menu is comprised of successful items from their other restaurant concepts.

After entertaining questions from the audience, the LUC agreed to have DMNA staff Christie Rock Hantge draft a letter of support for the Class B on sale liquor license with Sunday sales and 2 a.m. sales on Fridays and Saturdays.

V. Metro Transit Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit Project

Max Holdhusen explained his primary focus has been in the south metro; however, because the Orange Line BRT project (<https://www.metrotransit.org/orange-line-project>) terminates in downtown Minneapolis he is here to give a presentation. His role as the Community Engagement Coordinator is to focus on areas that have populations of 50% or more of color and 40% are over the poverty line to provide greater equity, thus downtown does not have a designated CEC.

Holdhusen then distributed a handout and provided an informational overview of the 17-mile, 12-station project. In downtown, the BRT runs on Marquette and 2nd Avenues in the existing transit only lanes, then heads onto a new bus-only lane on 12th Street and enters the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-35W. During rush hours there will be 10-minute service and 15-minute service all other hours for 20 hours per day, 7 days a week. I-35W is the busiest express corridor, but it does not have weekend or late evening service; this will provide all day service and opportunities for those who live in the central cities to commute to Richfield, Bloomington and

Burnsville.

Like the LRT, each station area (“C” for southbound, “E” for northbound) will have a ticket machine, card reader, and information about the arrival of the next bus. And because there isn’t a lot of room to add new fixtures or shelters, they will probably recommend going from the 8’ up to a 13’ pylon. The new buses will be as long as the articulated ones with three doors and passengers may enter at each. It is proposed that between 11th and 3rd Streets in downtown will be a free fare zone because there aren’t a lot of riders and it costs more to provide the ticket machines and card readers.

The proposed lane configuration on the 12th Street Transit Ramp connection between I-35W and transit lanes on Marquette and 2nd Avenues (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-188889.pdf>) includes the bus-only lane heading towards 2nd Avenue from the freeway, the bus-only ramp heading southbound, and preserving the left turn onto 4th Avenue and the Hennepin County Service Center. This recently received municipal consent (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/WCMSP-189608>).

Holdhusen then entertained questions during which he explained idling policy (it is temperature based) and layover times (usually 10% of total travel time); he’ll forward information regarding each.

For more information, Holdhusen can be reached by phone at 612-349-7409 or email at max.holdhusen@metrotransit.org.

VI. 800 Washington Avenue South Update

In deference to those unfamiliar with the project, Tom Lander gave a brief overview of the site plan and ran a video by the American Academy of Neurology in support of the project; it provides an exciting community restaurant, quality guestrooms for AAN doctors, and expansion meeting space, all of which is a true investment in the community.

Then he explained when the project was originally conceived there were 8 floors of hotel with 1 floor of office space on top for AAN and structured to allow for an additional floor on top for AAN expansion. Since this structure would be built within the DH Downtown Height Overlay District (https://www.municode.com/library/mn/minneapolis/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=MIC00R_TIT20ZOCO_CH551OVDI_ARTXIDHDOHEOVDI), they have always anticipated and referenced in their proposal a Conditional Use Permit to address the fact that they are building more than 8 floors. Unlike in an office building where the floor-to-floor height may be 12-16’, a typical hotel guestroom is 10’ floor-to-floor, therefore it is easy to get additional floors within the 112’ and maximize the economics of the site.

As they progressed with the project (1) AAN decided they only want 1 floor and don’t want to incur the cost of upgrading the whole building for future expansion; and (2) the finance community has gotten more conservative and Mortenson is now facing a 4% escalation in construction cost. Thus, instead of an expansion floor for AAN they are adding an additional floor for hotel guestrooms, i.e., 9 floors for the hotel and 1 floor for AAN, all of which will not exceed the 112’ maximum. It is a meaningful change and when they go back through the City process they will change the CUP to 10 floors. Because this change is occurring within the hotel structure, the exterior design will be very similar and they hope the DMNA will continue to support the project with this modification.

Brad Lis advised this change was submitted to the Committee of the Whole out of which they received a number of comments on building features; nothing significant but they wanted the DMNA to be aware. In the meantime, they have been advised another COW presentation is not

necessary as long as they stay within the 112'; they'll go before the Planning Commission and finally to the City Council for approval by the end of March.

Lander and Lis then entertained questions from the audience during which Manthey emphasized we can't let Public Works standards drive the public realm being designed around this project; it's not the right approach because it is the gateway/promenade to the Mill City Farmers Market and riverfront. Then he recommended they investigate the innovative and forward thinking designs within the Downtown Public Realm Framework Plan (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-180843.pdf>) that Principal Urban Designer Lacy Shelby helped develop.

Thereafter, the LUC agreed to have DMNA staff Christie Rock Hantge draft a letter of support for the new CUP reflecting the adjustment in the configuration of floors.

Discussion ensued regarding the City's planning process and its lack of support for the concept of a partnership between developers and the community. Thomas Schmidt then recommended reading two recent MinnPost articles related to the topic; he'll forward links to them for the LUC's convenience.

VII. Announcements

Tyler Schow plugged an open house on Monday, December 12th, 5:00-7:00 p.m., co-sponsored by the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition and the DMNA to push for more improvements on Washington Avenue South in the short term. This will take place at Open Book's 2nd Floor Meeting Room, 1011 Washington Avenue South.

VIII. Next LUC Meeting

The LUC agreed to determine when Manthey returns from vacation and then schedule a kickoff meeting in January 2017 to focus on its public realm mission.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, Sweet adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.