



**DOWNTOWN
MINNEAPOLIS
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

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May 22, 2019

Council Member Steve Fletcher
City of Minneapolis
350 South 5th Street, Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Council Member Fletcher:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with DMNA Land Use Committee members Randy Manthey and Tom Schmid on May 15, to discuss the DMNA's continuing concerns with the Ironclad development and the 9th Avenue public realm. This letter is in follow-up to your request for the DMNA to provide an itemized list of our observations of the discrepancies.

From our perspective, there are three interdependent issues. First, there are substantial differences between the completed project and the plans that were presented to us and approved by the Planning Commission, and we believe these differences significantly diminish the project's public realm contribution. Second, the increasingly active 9th Avenue/McGrew Place pedestrian passageway between U.S. Bank Stadium and Washington Avenue presents a number of public realm problems that require City and neighborhood attention. Some, but not all, of these problems are directly associated with Ironclad. Third, we are asking for greater transparency to the CPED approval process, regarding Ironclad in particular but also as a matter of general policy, so that we can remain engaged in discussions on how the built environment affects our neighborhoods and the downtown public realm.

The comments below are referencing the CEPD Staff Report prepared for the City Planning Commission, CPC Agenda Item #6, February 21, 2019, PLAN3636.

A. Ironclad Project Related Comments:

The following comments are related to the Site Plan Review approved conditions, as shown in the CPED staff report:

1. All site plan improvements shall be completed by February 21, 2019 unless extended by the Zoning Administrator. As of May 22, 2019 the improvements are not complete.
2. ***CPED was to have reviewed and approved the final site, landscaping and lighting plans before building permits were issued. What was shown and approved on these final plans? How do the final approved final plans differ from what was approved by the Planning Commission on February 21, 2018 and what the DMNA wrote a letter of support for?
3. Blank, uninterrupted walls on the south elevation shall not exceed 25 feet in length (Section 530.120 of the zoning code). What was built does exceed 25 feet in length of blank wall. Vine plantings were

shown on the planting plan but the entire length of this wall is concrete paving and there are no vines planted.

4. First floor windows of the nonresidential portion of the building shall have clear or lightly tinted glass. The perforated window system windows shown on the approved elevations were not installed on the northeast and east elevations. The northeast building elevation near the transformers was built as a big blank wall with no windows. Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #1 states that there is "a blank wall issue. The project team is work to remedy this issue." What is the remedy? The east building elevation was built with black non-light transmittance louvers in place of the aluminum perforated window system. Why was the perforated window shown on the approved elevations if they are not allowed? Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #1 states that, "The existing openings are not less than what the Planning Commission granted alternative compliance for". How and when was this alternative compliance granted. Were there drawings submitted for approval? And how can changing from see-through windows to a louver that one cannot see through be considered a "minor" change and not a major change.
5. The historic retaining wall shall be incorporated along the Chicago Ave. and Washington Ave. as indicated on the plans. The Planning Commission approved plans show a historic piece of the wall to be used as a bench. As of this date this work has not been started. What will be constructed?
6. Ornamentals grasses and perennials shall be planted along inactive portions of building wall facing 9th Ave. As of this date this work has not been started. What will be planted?

B. In addition to the Site Plan Review Approved Conditions shown above there are additional Ironclad related comments:

1. Slope of Pedestrian Walk Route: The slope of the pedestrian walkway near the transformers on the north side of the building is steeper than is shown on the grading plan. Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #4 states that, "An ADA accessible route is required." What was constructed looks to be steeper than what is allowed for an ADA accessible route in the state of Minnesota, which is 5%.
2. Concrete Pavers Not Installed: The Site Plan (Sheet C3.0) shows concrete pavers to be installed the entire length of the "enhanced" pedestrian walkway along the north side of the building and at the end of 9th Ave. What was installed is cast in place concrete with a broom finish. Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #3 states that, "There is not a requirement for pavers to be installed." If the approved site plan shows concrete pavers than why are they not considered required to be installed. Why is the Planning Commission's approved site plan not being implemented? Did CPED approve a different site plan with changes prior to the issuance of a building permit?
3. The approved site plan shows heavy duty bituminous to be installed the entire length of 9th Ave. to the 3rd Street intersection. Please confirm that this is being done. This new street paving will give a badly needed fresh and new appearance for the "enhanced pedestrian zone and vehicle entrance to the project and neighborhood beyond. The existing paving is in very bad shape.
4. Unscreened Transformers: There are three transformers on the northeast side of the building that are clearly visible from the public edge at Washington Avenue. Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #5 states that, "A perforated metal screen is proposed to be installed that will fulfill the screening requirement." Confirm that this is a requirement and will happen.

We believe that the changes noted in A & B above are significant, and that the response that "the changes were approved unintentionally" (Janelle Widmeier email, May 10, 2019) is inadequate.

C. Non-Ironclad related comments:

1. Pedestrian Sidewalk Gap at Property Line on 9th Ave: Janelle Widmeier's email dated May 10, 2019 item #6 states that, "Public Works has been consulted and a solution worked out". What is the solution?

2. South Property Line Gap Between New Building wall and Neighbor's Existing Fence. There is a concern about the activity that is occurring in the newly created "no man's land" gap between the new south building wall and Emanuel House's existing chain link. Litter and human vomit has been observed. For safety and security it is suggested that small gates be installed at each end of the gap to prevent access.
3. 9th Ave Street Lights: What type of street lights will be provided on this now heavily traveled pedestrian link from U. S. Bank Stadium to the Uber/Lyft pick up locations, restaurants and parking on and north of Washington Avenue?
4. 9th Ave. Removed Trees: There are three trees on the west side of 9th Ave that were cut off. Will these three trees be replaced with new trees. If so, when?
5. Dumpsters Parked on Public Sidewalk: There are two dumpsters parked continuously on the east side of 9th Ave.. Can the user of these dumpsters leave them on the public sidewalk or do they need to be stored on private property? Unfortunately with the dumpsters left in the open unsightly illegal dumping continually occurs. Some people attending the major events at the stadium dispose of beer bottles and cans around and on top of the dumpsters. These fall off and break leaving glass on the sidewalk. By moving the dumpsters onto private property this behavior will cease.
6. 9th Ave. Trash Containers: New street side public trash containers are needed to collect the trash that is generated by people attending major events at U. S. Bank Stadium.

(Note: More comments may be provided to CPED as the site construction continues and more concerns are identified.)

We appreciate your interest in these concerns, and we look forward to hearing from you about them.

Regards,

Kevin Frazell
Land Use Committee Chair

cc. Council Member Lisa Goodman
Joe Tamburino, DMNA Board Chair
Christie Rock Hantge, DMNA Neighborhood Coordinator