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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 12, 2013

TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Hilary Dvorak, Principal Planner
Jeff Handeland, Principal Professional Engineer
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SUBJECT: Minnesota Multi-Purpose Stadium – Design Plans

On May 14, 2012, Governor Dayton signed legislation related to the construction of a National Football League stadium in Minnesota. The legislation tasked the City of Minneapolis with establishing a Stadium Implementation Committee, which is charged with making recommendations on the design plans submitted for the stadium, stadium infrastructure and related improvements.

The legislation defines the stadium site as “all or portions of the current site of the existing football stadium and adjacent areas, bounded generally by Park and Eleventh Avenues and Third and Sixth Streets in the City of Minneapolis, the definitive boundaries of which shall be determined by the authority and agreed to by the NFL team.” The stadium project includes construction of the stadium and stadium infrastructure. Stadium infrastructure is defined in the legislation as “plazas, parking structures, rights of way, connectors, skyways and tunnels, and other such property, facilities, and improvements, owned by the authority or determined by the authority to facilitate the use and development of the stadium”.

On June 15, 2012, the Minneapolis City Council appointed the City of Minneapolis representatives to the Stadium Implementation Committee and on June 29, 2012, appointed the remaining representatives. On August 6, 2012, the Stadium Implementation Committee held its first meeting. On November 27, 2012, the Stadium Implementation Committee adopted a Stadium Implementation Committee vision and principles for purposes of establishing parameters for its review.

The Stadium Implementation Committee has forwarded a recommendation (attached) to the City of Minneapolis to approve a request by the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority to construct the Minnesota Multi-Purpose Stadium, a 1,500,000 square foot, 65,500 seat stadium, with expansion up to 73,000, for use by the Minnesota Vikings and other civic and community uses, and stadium related infrastructure, subject to conditions and mitigation measures, on property currently occupied by the

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existing football stadium and adjacent areas, bounded generally by Park and Eleventh Avenues and Third and Sixth Streets.

The Stadium Implementation Committee's recommendation is to be forwarded to the Minneapolis Planning Commission for an advisory recommendation and then to the City Council for final action in a single resolution. As mandated by Minn. Stat. 473J.17 subd. 6, "construction of a stadium within the development area is consistent with the adopted area plan, is the preferred stadium location, and is a permitted land use." Further, the City Council "shall not impose any unreasonable conditions on the recommendations of the implementation committee, nor take any action or impose any conditions that will result in delay from the time frames established in the planning and construction timetable or in additional overall costs." Failure of the City Council to act on the recommendation of the Stadium Implementation Committee within 45 days of the submission of the recommendation to the City Planning Commission is deemed to be approved.

At its meeting of July 25, 2013, the Stadium Implementation Committee acted to forward a recommendation to the City of Minneapolis.

Project Description

The primary exterior materials of the building include glass and metal. The primary metal on the building is a 1-foot tall by 12-foot wide zinc panel which will be staggered when installed. In addition, there is a stainless steel ribbon that wraps around the building. The northern half of the roof will be made out of PVC and the southern half of the roof will be made out of Ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE), which is a fluorine based plastic. The ETFE will be installed using a three-layer system. Frit will be applied to one or more of the ETFE layers which will help reduce the amount of ultraviolet rays entering the building.

The west side of the building has been designed to be the true front of the structure. Five, 95-foot tall pivoting doors line the southerly half of this façade which can be opened 180 degrees during events. When you enter these doors you walk directly into the main concourse level. Also, along the west side of the building is the large prow that rises approximately 272 feet above grade. The majority of this side of the building is glass. Between Chicago Avenue and the building is a 2 acre plaza. On average, the dimensions of the plaza are 198 feet deep and 425 feet wide. At this time, the plaza is proposed to be made out of gray concrete with a decorative scoring pattern that will be applied during construction. The scoring should be compatible with accessibility considerations. No other details about the plaza design, such as pervious materials, lighting, seating, trash receptacles, etc. have been provided. There is a large area of trees located on both the north and south ends of the plaza. Combined, the two areas of trees total 40,000 square feet. The edges of both tree areas are flanked with deep stairs that rise between one foot and 10 feet depending on the site grades. The trees have been arranged so people can walk between them and an appropriate surfacing material will be used in these areas for accessibility purposes.

The north and south sides of the building have entrances that allow one to access the main concourse level and the lower club level of the building. On the north side of the building, the lower club level is accessed from 4th Street South. On the south side of the building the lower club level is accessed from 6th Street South. Lower club level is approximately 16 feet lower than the main concourse level. There are staircases and ramps on both sides of the building that allow movement between the two levels on the

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exterior of the building. While these two sides of the building have large expanses of metal on them there is an abundance of glass, especially at street level.

The east side of the building is the least transparent. There is a 108-foot wide glass entrance that provides access to the main concourse level of the building. This expanse of glass tapers to 16 feet towards the top of the building. The remainder of this side of the building is metal. Given the grade change on the site, the main concourse level of the building is situated 16 feet above 11th Avenue South. A series of steps and a switchback ramp have been designed to provide access to the entrance. At street level there are entrances leading into the building for the players, media and for service purposes.

On the southeast corner of the site there is a 190-space surface parking lot. On Vikings game days the parking lot will be utilized by players and coaching staff. The parking lot will be enclosed with a fence and the driveways leading into it will be gated. Between the parking lot and the east property line there will also be an off-street loading zone. The loading zone will be accessed off of 11th Avenue South. On Vikings game days the loading zone will also be utilized by media trucks. Landscaping is proposed along the south and east sides of the parking lot and loading bay for screening purposes. There is also a 30-inch high wall located on these two sides of the parking lot. The wall provides screening for the parking lot and also serves as a security barrier.

Stadium Related Infrastructure

Plaza

At this time, the plaza is proposed to be made out of gray concrete with a decorative scoring pattern that will be applied during construction. The scoring should be compatible with accessibility considerations. No other details about the plaza design, such as pervious materials, lighting, seating, trash receptacles, etc. have been provided. The recommendation from the Stadium Implementation Committee related to the plaza states that the detailed plaza design incorporate a pervious paving system, a summer shade system, lighting, seating, trash receptacles, etc. and be coordinated with City of Minneapolis staff.

Parking garages and skyways

Two new parking garages are proposed on the north side of the stadium site. The parking garages would be connected to the stadium via a series of skyways. The design of the parking garages is still being discussed. While the stadium and related stadium infrastructure are not subject to the zoning code regulations, there was concern that without any standards in place to help influence the design of the parking structures that they will be visually unappealing. The recommendation from the Stadium Implementation Committee related to the parking garages states that the stadium design team continue to work with the City of Minneapolis staff to meet the design standards of the zoning code related to building design and parking garages with the exception that the parking garages be allowed to be constructed above ground.

Skyways are proposed to connect the two new parking garages on the north side of the stadium site and an existing parking garage on the south side of the stadium site. The design of the skyways is still being discussed. The recommendation from the Stadium Implementation Committee related to the skyways states that the design and operation of skyways be consistent with the *Minneapolis Skyway System*

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Standards and Procedures Manual, which was approved by the Downtown Council’s Skyway Advisory Committee in 2006.

In addition, the Stadium Implementation Committee recommended that the design of the parking garages and skyways be compatible with the design of the stadium and the surrounding environment.

6th Street

The vacation of 5th Street, between 11th Avenue and Chicago Avenue, requires that the existing 6th Street be redesigned. The existing Jersey barrier between 5th Street and 6th Street will be removed, which will allow pedestrians to access the stadium more readily from the south. Proper intersection control along 6th Street will be important once the Jersey barrier has been removed. The recommendation from the Stadium Implementation Committee related to the design of 6th Street states the conceptual roadway changes to 6th Street between Park Avenue and 11th Avenue, should include the west-bound automobile lane and off-street bicycle path as shown in Exhibit E be approved. In addition, the Stadium Implementation Committee recommended that a full signal system should be installed at the intersections of 6th Street and both 9th Avenue (Carew Drive) and 10th Avenue.

Downtown East Light Rail Transit Station

The Downtown East Light Rail Transit Station is located directly across Chicago Avenue from the 2 acre plaza and the main entrance into the stadium. No changes are being proposed to the station as part of the stadium design. It has been identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that the amount of queuing space at the LRT station during events is inadequate now and that event transit ridership will continue to increase, as additional LRT lines become operational. Therefore, the LRT station will be even more inadequate to accommodate queuing and loading of event LRT riders in the future. For these reasons it will be important to modify the LRT station area to accommodate these large increases in LRT ridership. The stadium design team must address connections from the stadium to the LRT station in order to provide safe and orderly passage to accommodate event day crowds. The recommendation from the Stadium Implementation Committee related to the Downtown East Light Rail Transit Station states that an adequate design of the station needs to be coordinated with the City of Minneapolis Public Works Director and the Director of Metro Transit.

Environmental Impact Statement

The project triggered a state mandated EIS. The Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority was authorized by statute as the Responsible Government Unit. The final EIS is currently being reviewed. While the EIS addressed a wide variety of potential environmental consequences, issues related to transportation and parking were analyzed most extensively. The ballpark site offers excellent opportunities for fans to arrive by multiple modes. The final EIS identifies a range of potential mitigation measures and notes that a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed by representatives from a range of stakeholders, including the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority, the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Metro Transit, local business groups and nearby residents.

Changes to Approved Plans

Given that the stadium legislation did not address a procedure for reviewing changes to the project following the Stadium Implementation Committee recommendation, the Stadium Implementation Committee adopted an alternative process allowing the City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Director and Public Works Director to determine whether changes are substantive enough to require the committee to reconvene. The solution does not address the issue of changes to the plans following completion of the stadium. Staff recommends that it be made clear that such future changes (e.g., additions to the facility) will be subject to applicable City regulations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Planning and Economic Development Department and Public Works Department recommend that the City Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the City Council to **approve** the recommendation of the Stadium Implementation Committee, with the following additional recommendations:

1. Following completion of the improvements referenced in the action of the Stadium Implementation Committee, subsequent changes will be subject to the City's zoning ordinance and all applicable City regulations.