

**Excerpt from the
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)**

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 9, 2014

TO: Zoning and Planning Committee

FROM: Jason Wittenberg, Manager, Community Planning & Economic Development – Land Use, Design and Preservation

SUBJECT: Planning Commission decisions of December 2, 2013

The following actions were taken by the Planning Commission on December 2, 2013. As you know, the Planning Commission's decisions on items other than rezonings, text amendments, vacations, 40 Acre studies and comprehensive plan amendments are final subject to a ten calendar day appeal period before permits can be issued.

Commissioners present: President Tucker, Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Huynh, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski – 10

Committee Clerk: Lisa Kusz (612) 673-3710

10. National Marrow Donor Program Headquarters (BZZ-6316 and Vac-1625, Ward: 7), 524 5th St N ([Hilary Dvorak](#)).

A. Conditional Use Permit: Application by Brandon Champeau with United Properties for a conditional use permit to allow 2 wall signs that are over 120 square feet and located higher than 28 feet on the building wall located at 524 5th St N.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the conditional use permit application to allow 1 wall sign that is over 120 square feet and located higher than 28 feet on the building wall located at 524 5th St N subject to the following conditions:

1. The conditional use permit shall be recorded with Hennepin County as required by Minn. Stat. 462.3595, subd. 4 before building permits may be issued or before the use or activity requiring a conditional use permit may commence. Unless extended by the zoning administrator, the conditional use permit shall expire if it is not recorded within two years of approval.
2. There shall be no sign located on the north building wall facing the Warehouse Historic District.

Aye: Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski

Recused: Huynh

B. Variance: Application by Brandon Champeau with United Properties for a variance to reduce the loading requirement from 3 large spaces to 1 large space and 1 small space for the property located at 524 5th St N.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the variance application to reduce the loading requirement from 3 large spaces to 1 large space and 1 small space for the property located at 524 5th St N.

Aye: Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski

Recused: Huynh

C. Site Plan Review: Application by Brandon Champeau with United Properties for a site plan review for a new approximately 293,000 square foot office building located at 524 5th St N.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the site plan review application for a new approximately 293,000 square foot office building located at 524 5th St N subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval of the final site, landscaping, elevation and lighting plans by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by December 2, 2015, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
3. First floor or ground floor windows shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of six-tenths (0.6) or higher.
4. As part of the floor area ratio increase authorized by Chapter 549 of the zoning code, the applicant shall provide information pertaining to the capital cost of the project, information pertaining to the art piece that will be located on site and information pertaining to where the art piece will be located prior to the issuance of building permits. The art shall be maintained in good order for the life of the principal structure.
5. The applicant shall continue to explore the use of metal instead of the smaller pieces of granite for inclusion along the ground floor and/or 1st floor facing 5th St N. If this is not possible CPED is recommending that the joint lines be of a depth that provide the appearance of movement along the building wall.
6. The illuminated translucent glass wall around the rooftop mechanical equipment shall not be used for signage purposes.

Aye: Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski

Recused: Huynh

D. Vacation: Application by Brandon Champeau with United Properties for a vacation (Vac1625) of the southwesterly 4 feet of the alley as dedicated in Block 7, Bradford & Lewis Addition.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the vacation application of the southwesterly 4 feet of the alley as dedicated in Block 7, Bradford & Lewis Addition, subject to the retention of an easement in favor of Xcel Energy.

Aye: Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski

Recused: Huynh

Staff Dvorak presented the staff report.

Commissioner Kronzer: Is there any proposed lighting along 5th St where we have the blank wall as 5th St drops away to the north and west? Do we have a lighting plan for that wall yet? Is there decorative lighting on that wall?

Staff Dvorak: Not that I know of, no.

Commissioner Kronzer: On the 6th Ave elevation it looks like there is a garage entry door and then four louver vents; is that what we're seeing there?

Staff Dvorak: Correct. The louvers are for the underground parking ventilation system.

Commissioner Kronzer: At the corner of 5th St and 6th Ave, the building sort of raises away from the street and there is landscaping; do you know if that's a raised landscaping bed or is that landscaping in the sidewalk itself?

Staff Dvorak: I don't believe there is a wall there. I believe it's at grade with the sidewalk.

Commissioner Kronzer: So pedestrians could use that whole space if there were tree grates there, right?

Staff Dvorak: There is denser landscaping around the perimeter of those trees to kind of hold the corner of the sidewalk.

President Tucker opened the public hearing.

Bill Katter [not on sign-in sheet]: I'm the Executive Vice President of United Properties. We took interest in the property about two years ago. We learned of the Interchange project at that time and our success with Ford Center...both of those things convinced us that this was a site that could be a headquarters for some major corporation. After two years of hard work that actually turned out to be the case. It took a lot of convincing. One of the most important things there was really the Interchange project. I want to give some credit to Hennepin County and the City for what is a great public project across the street. As Hilary said, this will bring over 1000 jobs to the neighborhood, a café and it will activate this Interchange project and validate the transit hub here. The parking stalls at the Interchange help us get away with less parking than we would normally feel comfortable with on a project of this size. We did present this project in multiple settings to the neighborhood group and they have supported the project. Those meetings went very well. It was a very tricky site to deal with because it's really exposed on all four sides. It's set up against the Ford Center which is ten stories of historic red brick and windows and then it's got a new stadium about a block away with a very different architectural expression. It's very complicated. It's a predominant expression of the building at the main entrance there at the corner of 5th and 5th. What you see there is a glass element leading up to a canopy overlooking the entrance and that was very important to the client to express the front door of the project. There is a ton of activity generating at this intersection with mass transit and the Ford Center. The lighter band of the material on the first two floors which are predominantly glass because they will have public meeting space there for their meetings and fund raising events is a kasota limestone and that material will match the ballpark. We tried to tie the ballpark into this design somehow. Floors four through seven, the use of a varying gray brick...we started with precast, the client has directed us towards brick because they felt the brick would best integrate with the warehouse district neighborhood which is almost all brick. There is lots of glass on this building. That glass is an uninterrupted glass system or a curtain wall glass system around the building. It's a very clean look. The elevation facing 6th St, we introduced this glass element around the corner to wrap it and break up that elevation. A third elevation there would be facing the overpass there. You'll see just a very minor architectural element in that upper left corner that could be a change in the color of the brick or it could be a metal panel of some sort. That carries down that façade of the building just to break up that elevation. The easterly elevation facing Ford Center you can also see in this shot and that has the glass on the corners. We did our best here to meet budget constraints for a charitable organization and also give the building various looks and set it in with the neighborhood.

President Tucker: You are in agreement with the recommendation that staff put forward?

Bill Katter: We'd like to address one issue. The staff report mentions that it does not support signage on the north elevation and we understand the reasons for that. The client has asked us this afternoon if they could substitute a lesser sized sign on the western elevation which faces 94 in lieu of the northern elevation. We propose that that be added as a secondary signage location in this application in lieu of the north sign.

President Tucker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Schiff: Do we have the ability to move the location of the proposed sign as suggested by the applicant or would that require a new application or new noticing?

Staff Dvorak: The way that the notice was written it wasn't side specific, however, it wasn't analyzed by staff either as to location or size or whatnot.

President Tucker moved staff recommendation for items A, B, C and D (Schiff seconded).

Aye: Brown, Cohen, Gagnon, Kronzer, Luepke-Pier, Schiff, Slack and Wielinski

Recused: Huynh