

**Excerpt from the
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)
Planning Division**

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 5, 2008

TO: Steve Poor, Planning Supervisor – Zoning Administrator, Community Planning & Economic Development - Planning Division

FROM: Jason Wittenberg, Supervisor, Community Planning & Economic Development - Planning Division, Development Services

CC: Barbara Sporlein, Director, Community Planning & Economic Development Planning Division

SUBJECT: Planning Commission decisions of August 4, 2008

The following actions were taken by the Planning Commission on August 4, 2008. 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 Motzenbecker, Gorecki, Huynh, LaShomb, Luepke-Pier, Nordyke, Norkus-Crampton, Schiff, Tucker and Williams – 10

Committee Clerk: Lisa Baldwin (612) 673-3710

4. Steve's Tire and Auto (BZZ-4115, Ward: 11), 4601 and 4615 Nicollet Ave (Hilary Dvorak).

A. Rezoning: Application by Jim Connelly with Appro Development, Inc., on behalf of Steve Johnston with Robeli Enterprises, LLC, to rezone the property located at 4615 Nicollet Ave from the C1 zoning district to the C2 zoning district.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the rezoning of the property located at 4615 Nicollet Ave from the C1 zoning district to the C2 zoning district.

B. Conditional Use Permit: Application by Jim Connelly with Appro Development, Inc., on behalf of Steve Johnston with Robeli Enterprises, LLC, for a conditional use permit to allow for the construction of a minor-automobile repair facility for the properties located at 4601 and 4615 Nicollet Ave.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the conditional use permit application to allow for the construction of a minor-automobile repair facility located at 4601 and 4615 Nicollet Ave 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 one year of approval.
2. All vehicles waiting for repair or pick-up shall be stored on the site in an enclosed building or in parking spaces in compliance with Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading.
3. Except in the I3 District, all repairs shall be performed within a completely enclosed building.
4. All vehicles parked or stored on-site shall display a current license plate with a current license tab. Outdoor storage of automotive parts or storage of junk vehicles is prohibited.
5. The sale of vehicles shall be prohibited.
6. In the C1, C2 and C3S Districts, all service vehicles associated with the establishment shall be parked or stored in an enclosed structure after business hours.
7. The use shall employ best management practices regarding the venting of odors, gas and fumes. Such vents shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet above grade and shall be directed away from residential uses. All storage tanks shall be equipped with vapor tight fittings to preclude the escape of gas vapors from the fill pipes.
8. The premises, all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within one hundred (100) feet shall be inspected regularly for purposes of removing any litter found thereon.
9. Unattended, automated dispensing of gasoline or other engine fuel shall be prohibited.

C. Site Plan Review: Application by Jim Connelly with Appro Development, Inc., on behalf of Steve Johnston with Robeli Enterprises, LLC, for a site plan review for the properties located at 4601 and 4615 Nicollet Ave.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the site plan review for a minor-automobile repair facility located at 4601 and 4615 Nicollet Ave subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval of the final site, elevation, landscaping and lighting plans by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division.

2. All site improvements shall be completed by August 4, 2009, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
3. Wood mulch shall be used in all landscaped beds.
4. The slats in the chain fence shall be removed once the landscaping has been planted on the site.

President Motzenbecker opened the public hearing.

No one was present to speak to the item.

President Motzenbecker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Tucker moved approval of the staff recommendation (Norkus-Crampton seconded).

The motion carried 9-0.

5. Spirit on Lake (BZZ-4104, RLS-54, Vac-1510, Vac-1547 and Vac-1548, Ward: 9), 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S (Janelle Widmeier).

A. Conditional Use Permit: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a conditional use permit to allow 41 dwelling units for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a conditional use permit to allow 41 dwelling units for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S, 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 one year of approval.
2. At least 20 bicycle spaces shall be provided for the residential use. At least 90 percent of those spaces shall be provided in the underground parking area.
3. Approval of the vacations by City Council.

B. Variance: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a variance to reduce the minimum parking requirement of the place of assembly from 34 to 30 spaces for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance to reduce the minimum parking requirement of a place of assembly from 34 spaces to 30 spaces for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

C. Site Plan Review: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a site plan review for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for site plan review to allow a mixed use building for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S, subject to the following conditions:

1. Community Planning and Economic Development Department – Planning Division staff review and approval of the final building elevations, site and landscape plans.
2. Site improvements required by Chapter 530 or by the City Planning Commission shall be completed by September 26, 2009, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
3. First floor windows for the place of assembly shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of 0.6 or higher as required by section 530.120 of the zoning code.
4. Five canopy trees shall be provided on-site including two in the landscaped yard on the west side of the parking area as required by sections 530.160 and 530.170 of the zoning code.
5. In the required front yard adjacent to 13th Ave, shrubs with a height of 3 feet at maturity shall be provided as required by section 530.170 of the zoning code.
6. Columnar landscaping shall be provided adjacent to the trash and mechanical screens to prevent graffiti as required by section 530.260 of the zoning code.
7. The applicant shall work with the Public Works Department or Hennepin County to reuse the decorative fence installed as part of the Lake Street reconstruction project before building permits are issued.

D. Preliminary Registered Land Survey: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a preliminary registered land survey for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission **approved** the preliminary registered land survey application for properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S, subject to the following condition:

1. A document that states that if the site is redeveloped, then the site will be replatted, if necessary, to create new tracts or lots that are in compliance with the requirements of the zoning code and subdivision ordinance shall be recorded with Hennepin County before the signed RLS will be released for recording with Hennepin County.

E. Vacation: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a vacation of a portion of an alley easement for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the alley vacation for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

F. Vacation: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a vacation of a city utility easement for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the city easement vacation for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

G. Vacation: Application by Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, on behalf of Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, for a vacation of a city landscape easement for the property located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the landscape easement vacation for the properties located at 1238 E Lake St and 2930 13th Ave S.

President Motzenbecker opened the public hearing.

No one was present to speak to the item.

President Motzenbecker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Tucker moved approval of the staff recommendation (Norkus-Crampton seconded).

The motion carried 9-0.

6. Peter Nasseff Maronite Home (BZZ-4113 and PL-230, Ward: 3), 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE (PL-230 includes: 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE) (Becca Farrar).

A. Rezoning: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church to rezone the subject parcel from the R2B (Two-family) district to the R5 (Multiple-family) district located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the rezoning petition to change the zoning classification of the properties located at 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE from the R2B district to the R5 district.

B. Conditional Use Permit: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church for a conditional use permit to allow 21 residential dwelling units for property located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a conditional use permit to allow 21 dwelling units on the properties located at 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE subject to the following condition:

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 one year of approval.

C. Variance: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church for a variance of the minimum lot area per dwelling unit from approximately 765 square feet to 693 square feet, or a variance of approximately 10% for property located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance of the minimum lot area per dwelling unit from approximately 765 square feet to 693 square feet or a variance of approximately 10% for the properties located at 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

D. Variance: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church for a variance of the front yard setback requirement adjacent to the west property line along 2nd Street NE from approximately 26 feet to 20 feet for property located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance of the front yard setback requirement adjacent to the west property line along 2nd St NE from approximately 26 feet to 20 feet for the properties located at 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

E. Site Plan Review: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church for a site plan review for a 3-story structure with 21 senior housing rental residential units for property located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission **approved** the site plan review application for a 21-unit, residential development on the properties located at 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE subject to the following conditions:

1. All site improvements shall be completed by September 26, 2009, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
2. Planning Staff review and approval of the final site, elevation, landscaping and lighting plans before building permits may be issued.
3. Incorporation of a convenient and prominent, principal entry on the west elevation of the building facing and accessible from 2nd St NE subject to Planning Staff review and approval.
4. Incorporation of 10% windows on the ground floor elevation of the building along 2nd St NE.
5. Compliance with the minimum landscape quantity requirement for canopy trees on the premises.
6. The brick coverage on the south elevation shall be increased by 50 percent.
7. The brick coverage on the north elevation shall be increase by 200 percent.

F. Preliminary and Final Plat: Application by St. Maron Maronite Catholic Church for a preliminary and final plat for property located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the preliminary and final plat application for the properties located at 601, 611, 613, 617, 621 and 623 2nd St NE.

Commissioner Huynh: I'd like to recuse myself from this item.

Staff Farrar presented the staff report.

Commissioner Tucker: Can you give some more hints as to what would constitute a prominent principal entry. Would the door be facing Second? What sorts of things would you look for when you're working with the architect on this?

Staff Farrar: I think, initially, our intent was that the actual entrance would be on the west elevation and not on the side elevation. The way that it's set up is that the door does face 2nd St, however it's recessed. The building itself is at approximately 20 feet. I think the calculations that I had in the staff report is that it's recessed about 30 feet from the property line. Additionally, there is a door sort of on opposite ends that it faces the opposite direction. There is one that faces 2nd St NE, it's just the fact that the entrance itself...kind of driving up and looking at that front perspective you see a large garage door, but you don't see a principal entrance on this building and so it's just reinforcing the urban design principal that we have an actual prominent street-facing entry. I think there is room for negotiation on that point, understanding that there are still issues here and they're ADA accessibility related issues. We weren't necessarily saying that the entry they're proposing has to go away; there could be an entry along that interior side yard but we wanted to see something on that west face of the building elevation that made it look like that was the front of the building.

Commissioner Tucker: That helps. I'm thinking of helping the architects as they adjust to this condition that we may pass so they can deal with it creatively. The rezoning applies just to the plot where the building is constructed, correct?

Staff Farrar: Yes.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: One of the letters that came to us late mentioned something about the lighting that the neighborhood is asking for; historic styling, keeping with the features of the neighborhood, and they mentioned that there was another recent development and the Catholic Eldercare Housing project on 2nd St and Broadway where they had a similar condition...are you aware, is there sort of a consistent type of historic lighting in this area that we typically ask people to apply to accommodate or is this something that we would be dealing with as far as one of the conditions that we could be dealing with one of the conditions of this project or did you guys look at that at all? I was just curious.

Staff Farrar: It was new to me on this particular project. I was aware that were discussions on the Catholic Eldercare project about having to incorporate some sort of historic lighting and that was applicable mostly because they were also doing a large drop off area which they received a variance for in the front yard due to the fact that it was senior living. In that situation I was aware that they were working with that specific developer. As it pertains to projects in a larger sense, it has not been my experience necessarily as it relates to this neighborhood that that hasn't been a standard condition of approval. This is sort of a new

thing that popped up and I also read that myself today. I haven't been a part of those conversations. The letter seems to imply that the developer may be willing to look at that.

President Motzenbecker: Are there a lot of historic fixtures already existing? I know the city has two historic light fixtures you can choose from.

Staff Farrar: I'm not aware of any in this immediate block. I know that there are some throughout the area that they're trying to incorporate into the larger neighborhood.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: I wasn't sure if there was some overall neighborhood plan or something that they were trying to incorporate this project by project or something like that as we go along.

Staff Farrar: There isn't an actual small area plan that's applicable for this site. The basis for the rezoning findings and for approving the site plan was based on the Comprehensive Plan that's adopted. There is no small area plan that dictates that we want to see these different types of fixtures in place, but certainly if that's something the neighborhood is looking to incorporate and the neighborhood is ok with it, or the developer is ok with it, then we're ok with it.

Commissioner Schiff: I'm having a hard time seeing how Chapter 530 of the zoning code is being met in the site plan, specifically findings that for new construction the building walls shall provide architectural detail in order to create visual interest. In large buildings architectural elements including recesses and projections shall be emphasized to provide the building...to divide the building into smaller identical sections, particularly on the north side and the east side as well as the requirement that exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of the building shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building. How did you determine that the north and the east side meet those requirements?

Staff Farrar: I suppose in that situation, that part of the section of the zoning code does allow for windows also to be considered an architectural feature. In that situation, we didn't have issues with blank walls in this particular project. Clearly they were trying to maximize development on the site. Clearly the elevation that faces 2nd St and the front elevation has some articulation on the actual façade where it does have recesses and projections. In the larger sense of how the project complies with the 530 standards I don't think we were necessarily concerned with the fact that every single building wall didn't have articulation. We were looking at architectural features and the fact that there are windows. I guess you could also say that there's only a portion of the building that actually has the brick. I don't think that we require, typically, buildings that come into the city to have all four sides of brick; it's compatibility with materials. The material show on the north and east elevations is also being shown on the west elevation so I think it's fair to say that the building materials are compatible because in some way, shape or form, other than the brick, it's all shown on each individual elevation.

Commissioner Schiff: Ok, we'll let the applicant explain their design. Thanks.

President Motzenbecker opened the public hearing.

Mary Sherman (513 Main St): I have some concerns and questions about this because my first notification of this whole project was this meeting. I'm not real familiar with a lot of the things that have been going on previous to this. One of my first issues I guess is that my understanding is that this is a tax-free organization. Because of that, the houses that continually are being acquired by this particular church and by Eldercare, are taken off the tax roll.

President Motzenbecker: That's something that we're not covering here. We have to keep our focus to the items on the agenda.

Mary Sherman: It's a concern of ours because we're picking up the taxes on these organizations.

President Motzenbecker: But it's not something we're approving, Ms. Sherman. I understand it's a concern, but we can't make any decision related to that so I don't want to take up a lot of time focusing on that, that's all.

Mary Sherman: That's one issue that I have. The other issue is that we already have Eldercare that has basically been an octopus and done things such as, not only their Eldercare facility at St. Anthony, they have acquired across on Main St, across on 2nd St, now on Broadway and also at St. Hedwig's Church. Those facilities are approximately 90 percent unavailable...or available at this point. Why are we building more facilities when those facilities are not used? Another issue that I'm having is, I was on the redevelopment group and the people have already fought hard and requested single family dwellings in this area. St. Anthony West, we try to keep is a show place basically, and it was, it became a model. Some of the things we had done were fixed Main St up, put new boulevards in, new trees, we put single family dwellings in and also made sure that all the business type places were gone. We want to maintain St. Anthony West as a single family residential neighborhood. Eldercare has taken over a large part of this neighborhood and a lot of the facilities are still vacant. I guess since the people have already voted and requested single family housing and that's what we had been doing and maintaining, I am suggesting that we do this likewise on this particular project.

President Motzenbecker: Ok, thank you for your comments.

James Thompson [not on sign-in sheet]: I represent St. Maron's Church, I am the business administrator there. Before I talk about a couple of things, I wanted to address her concerns. We are a tax-free organization, but this building will pay taxes because we are renting the property therefore we must pay property taxes. Secondly, if Eldercare is also doing the same thing and renting out or taking income from those facilities, even though they are a tax-free organization they still have to pay property taxes also. As far as availability, I can't say anything about their availability, but I will tell you that we have 14 parishioners out of the 21 units already expressing an interest in being considered. What I wanted to address is the look of the building and the entrance. We still have some work to do on that. Originally the property was going to be facing all along 2nd, but we decided by turning it we'd have a lower profile on 2nd so it wouldn't look like a huge building, it would be more of the church. That's why the look looks like this on 2nd St not a long building along 2nd St. I think that's why the building changed and so did the entrance. The original entrance we wanted to have closer to the church because a lot of the people that are going to be here are parishioners and wanted to

attend church coming right out the front door and going right into church. After talking with staff, she expressed an interest in moving it to the other side and we began to see some advantages. One, people dropping off residents and picking up residents, it'd be better if they were closer to 2nd St than the church. Keeping along the side was an advantage to them because if you pick up somebody and drop them off, it's easier to do it from the parking lot than it is from 2nd St. On 2nd St., St. Boniface shows about 30 steps from street side to get up into their building, same way with our rectory; it's a long hike. We wanted to reduce the amount of work that some would have to do to get an entrance into that building from 2nd St. It is a busy street; it has a lot of buses and traffic and it's hard to park there and it's hard to drop people off, that's why we prefer to have it up on 2nd St. The setback, we created an archway which is like a front door on 2nd St. The next door is not as far as she thought, it was only about 14 or 16 feet back. We can accommodate some changes in that but we still want the entrance on the side because we've created a front yard, so to speak, on the side of the building so it's got trees and some plants to create more of an entrance for them. We think that having the entrance on the side, even if we move it closer to the street, is an advantage to the tenants. Thank you very much for your time.

Commissioner LaShomb: I've been to St. Maron's so I know where it is. It's a great place to go to; it's beautiful. I guess my question is, how comparable is the façade on this building to the church building?

James Thompson: Very similar. We've asked that they have it be similar. We have some stone, but I would like to have the architect answer that.

Commissioner LaShomb: I would assume that since the parish is basically a Lebanese origin, what I would call a Lebanese origin parish, and I'm saying this as a Methodist so if I'm wrong I apologize, so I would assume that the design of the church was basically to be kind of consistent with what you might see in Lebanon. Is that right?

James Thompson: There are some similarities only in the fact that there is an archway in the front entrance similar to the archway in the church. There will be a cedar tree on there somewhere.

Commissioner LaShomb: So I guess what I'm hearing you say basically is the design of the building was an attempt to be consistent with the design of the church building itself so that's the compatibility. I see.

David Graham [not on sign-in sheet]: There are a number of questions about site planning and architecture. Starting with the architecture, we tried to do a building...we looked at sloped roofs and we looked at flat roofs and we came up with an architecture that's derivative of the culture, the Lebanese. We talked to Father Maron about the base middle top, a kind of classical hierarchy. We tried to do a building that would fit into the neighborhood and also recall some architectural elements of Beirut, but not to try to have one dominate over the other. If you look at this façade, you've got St. Boniface, the refectory and then our building, we oriented the narrow façade towards 2nd. In the master plan, the long-range vision as Father Maron said, is that they want to be here forever and the idea is to keep the land open on the corner for further development, probably more infill housing and continue the façade line along 2nd and then turning it along 6th. This is part of a longer range vision. The building hierarchy is a base that would be clad in stone, a middle...and I'll get to Commissioner

Schiff's question because we have articulated and we're working on the architecture, stone at the center body and integrating some hopefully tastefully detailed arches that recall some of the traditional architecture of Beirut and then an attic which is stucco. That gives you a sense of how we're trying to fit in to the context. If you look at 2nd, the main elevations of the buildings are actually up about eight feet up off of the sidewalk level and it creates kind of a podium effect. Mr. Thompson has articulated the intent for the users who are frail, elderly folks to be able to get off directly into the building at a half level off of the parking but we totally respect staff and the need to create an entrance off of 2nd. This idea pushing the entrance further towards 2nd and creating an idea which is part from Lebanon is to create a garden arbor or entry where there is an archway with a plaque and literally do artistic wrought iron with the cedar of Lebanon. I think this does need some additional work. We have talked about perhaps pulling the façade of the building out so it's flush with that archway and then creating an arcade that would take you back. We think we can do both and I have seen examples though where the entrance to some great Minneapolis buildings are kind of through a garden and through an arbor way as opposed to just the façade of the building, but we've been working with staff on this issue and we're committed to working with them to hopefully bring that to closure. As far as the other facades, since the drawings that you have received, we've begun to add more brick and layer. There is a base and we're going to put the base of 10% per staff requirement of windows into what's essentially a podium, which is kind of a classical urban idea. We have brick on either end. The archway we think can form a façade on the parking but we can also address that issue of the street. The body of the building is stucco and sometimes the beauty is in the restraint. We don't want to do a hearty paneled or vinyl sided building; we clearly want to do a classic high quality building, put the detail and the punctuation where it does the most work. It's brick, stucco, we will continue to do finesse the details...so stone base, brick on the ends and then stucco is where we're kind of heading. In walking through the city I find examples of where you actually create a base for the parking. This is in Lowry Hill. There are some nice examples where you're dealing with grade where you incorporate a parking garage that doesn't look like a parking garage, but rather a classic base. In this case, the entrance to this home is actually off to the side and up. I don't think there are many good examples of how this is done and we hope to do this a lot better on 2nd because we know that the streetscape is very important and it's very important to us.

President Motzenbecker: Are you going to chose something unique then for that garage door to kind of bring it up?

David Graham: Yes, not one of those aluminum jobs. The other thing that we're spending a lot of time, and I'm not going to go over it, is we are significantly enhancing the amount of landscaping to at least for the near term continue to add greenery to the streetscape as a buffer between the existing surface parking and the street. That's the end of my presentation.

Commissioner Tucker: Could you put back that drawing, the 2nd St façade? I find that very illustrative. It shows me right away what's important there is an entrance facing 2nd St. This huge set of stairs on the church, the rectory and then lacking on your building reinforces the idea that you do need to have an entry from 2nd St to your building to fit in with the context of the neighborhood. I'm wondering how you came to the conclusion you did with this drawing that you probably made yourselves.

David Graham: For all sorts of technical reasons, functional reasons and urban design reasons we concluded that entrance for parking off of 2nd was the best, really the only solution. In fact, there is a pattern in this neighborhood for garage entries off of 2nd so it is consistent.

Commissioner Tucker: I'm talking more about the pedestrian entry.

David Graham: I agree that we need to continue to develop a stronger sense of pedestrian entrance on 2nd, I don't argue with that. The attempt that we've made I think is in the right direction but we have more work to do.

Commissioner Tucker: It seems like you moved from the east end to the west end, you just have a few more feet to go and you'll be there.

David Graham: It's about 16 feet.

Steve Jensen (8450 Riverview Ln, Brooklyn Park) [not on sign-in sheet]: I have maybe a question and observation from the staff report. The question would be, are these units intended to be open to the public, market rate units or is it intended to be a facility more associated with the church and its activities?

James Thompson: We have not done any pricing yet. That would depend on what our final pricing of it is. We intend to be competitive; we don't want to be higher than the rest of the people. The first options are to parishioners. We have 14 of 21 units already expressed by parishioners. In addition to that, we have two people who are parishioners are St. Boniface that have also expressed an interest and they have been added to the list.

Steve Jensen: The observation is regarding the staff report and I have made it all the way through this yet, but I noticed a couple of paragraphs where the staff conclusion is that strict adherence to the regulations of the zoning ordinance would cause undue hardship and it sounds as if the staff recommendation leans in support of redevelopment and rezoning along this stretch of the street and I wonder if someone could speak to that.

President Motzenbecker: Do you have a particular issue against the staff recommendation?

Steve Jensen: I do not. I have an interest in whether the city is advocating redevelopment in general in this neighborhood of the city, i.e., knocking down single family homes and putting up high density apartment buildings.

Staff Farrar: Clearly you can see once you get through the staff report, you can see what our recommendations are. You can see that we're recommending approval so we're in support of this particular project, but it's always a case by case basis. Every development that comes through in the city, whether it's in this neighborhood or somewhere else, it is evaluated on a case by case basis and there are findings in there that actually document the policies in the Comprehensive Plan that support this particular project.

Douglas Thayer (604 2nd St): It looks like a real well thought out plan, but I have the same concerns that she does down there; you're kind of changing the neighborhood a little bit. There is Eldercare, public housing, apartment buildings and I don't see a real need for this. It

almost looks like a done deal. My biggest concerns switch to safety. Second Street is busy with bus traffic, it's busy with bicycle traffic; a lot of people coming from East Hennepin. You have the Hennepin Ave Bridge, the Plymouth Bridge and the Broadway Bridge so people get funneled down there. That particular street by the church, whenever they have a function of some type or church, it's funneled all together and it becomes hazardous. About a month ago a girl and her boyfriend almost lost their life on the corner. Cars park everywhere.

President Motzenbecker: On the corner of 6th and 2nd?

Douglas Thayer: Exactly. In fact, I've got pictures from yesterday and today. That would be facing 6th and along here, this is where the proposed building would sit. That's kind of my biggest concern because basically there's no parking along there. You're adding another 21 units to it and even though they have underground parking...you're going to go visit grandma...

President Motzenbecker: There is a large parking lot in front.

Douglas Thayer: The parking fills up on a Sunday and on a Saturday and on a function. Where do they park? I just showed you where they park, they park in the street. Also, even if the people don't have a lot of cars there you're going to have Metro Mobility. It's thought out because they go into their parking lot, but do they have to have the density so high? You are right across the street from a park also with a wading pool.

President Motzenbecker: I think I get what you're after.

Douglas Thayer: It funnels all down in there. Let's fast forward to February or March when we get a little snow on the ground so now the cars are a little closer. Adding density to this area, what's it going to do to the safety? Do they have to have this many units?

President Motzenbecker: Do you have any other points you'd like to make to us beyond the safety point? Other concerns you have?

Douglas Thayer: No, that's it. There's only three of us that face it so there's not going to be a whole lot of people jumping up here and saying they don't like it, but when you see it every day with the cars, bikes and busses, you have to think of the density issue and if it's good for the city, good for the people driving down the street there.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: You mentioned your concerns due to the increase in density, I'm just curious, what do you feel in your opinion would be an acceptable density that wouldn't make the area more unsafe?

Douglas Thayer: They had five units there, what can they live with? They already mentioned it's a money making project. We already have a traffic problem with the five units, is it going to double? I don't have an answer directly to that problem, but they're asking for a relief of the setback rules so they can build more units. They're asking for the density rules to be increased so they can build more units, why can't they live with the existing requirements?

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: You feel that this many units of elderly individuals would create more of a parking situation than five homes that are currently there?

Douglas Thayer: It's a given. Even though they have their own parking, there's people that are going to visit. They do have a big parking lot, but on certain days it's packed. On top of it, you have a lot of the city functions that happen down at Riverplace...

President Motzenbecker: Sir, we've heard that. She asked you what you thought would be an appropriate level of density and now we're going back into the same thing you've already told us.

Mr. Jacob (616 7th St NE)[not on sign-in sheet]: I like the house and I like what they're doing right now to the parish. The only thing is, he was talking about parking; today there was a teacher's meeting and they probably didn't know that we use St. Boniface parking next door too and that's why there were cars all over 2nd St. To make the exit from 2nd St, it's kind of hard because the park right next to the street on 2nd St and with kids playing and running across back and forth so I'd rather see you keep it the way they had on the plan, please. Thank you.

Bob Margel (610 4th St): I'm on the Board of Directors at St. Anthony West and I don't speak for that group at all while I'm here. I have a concern about the insidious nature of what's happening to our neighborhood. When I first moved into the neighborhood there were already issues but it seems as if there's an encroachment, something that's basically attacking what I thought was the foundation of our neighborhood which was single family homes. The long and short of it is we've got eight religious affiliated buildings with their corresponding parking lots and whatnot and it seems as if little by little a house is going here and a house is going there and we have no idea where we're going to be five years from now. Keep in mind that it is a neighborhood, we want to keep it as a neighborhood and we like to see as many single family homes developed as we can kept in that neighborhood. Thank you.

President Motzenbecker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Tucker: To get the topic on the discussion, I will move the rezoning item A (LaShomb seconded).

Commissioner Williams: Has there been a study of the traffic flow? There is a lot of traffic that goes through there.

Staff Farrar: There was not an actual Travel Demand Management Plan that was required with this particular development. There have been other developments that have in the vicinity that have been larger; those have had site specific Travel Demand Management Plans for that particular development. Those plans basically evaluate how a proposed development impacts the level of services on those roadways. For this particular project, the density of 21 units, that was not deemed necessary by the Public Works Department.

President Motzenbecker: For everyone's benefit, they are meeting all their parking requirements, correct?

Staff Farrar: Correct.

Commissioner Williams: I know that location is near Webster School and I know that a fair amount of activity takes place there that attracts an audience and the school parking spaces are limited when they have larger events and they spread out into the neighborhood with their parking. That's additional pressure on their on-street parking.

President Motzenbecker: I have a little bit of a person experience in this matter. For the past four years I did reside and work at an assisted living facility at the corner of 26th and 1st Ave S. That was a 50 unit building, seven stories, about seven or eight units on each floor. We had a parking lot that had 10 spots and it was assisted living so there maybe a little bit more mobility with this particular item, but even with visitors that parking lot was rarely full; maybe once on the weekend if there was an event or it was the holidays, but it was rarely full at all and when it was there was some street parking available. That's just a personal example that I've witnessed for a similar thing and that had many more units than we're talking about here. It's different everywhere, but may be something to think about.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: When we say "senior housing", how compromised...are these basically healthy older people, are these compromised people in any way with mobility issues, are you using your own universal design to deal with as people deteriorate? What sort of things... I think that kind of drives some of the plans you guys are doing or some of the places where you have entrances and stuff but I'm trying to understand a little better of who exactly is going to be living in this facility.

James Thompson: The plans for this home are not assisted living, not nursing homes; these are seniors living independent.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: And you're assuming that they'll be driving?

James Thompson: I assume they'll be driving although I know of three tenants that do not drive at the present time.

Commissioner Schiff: I support the motion to rezone. I think we've seen similar examples throughout the city where institutions expand and I think this is an example. Where usually the institutions we see expanding are museums, sometimes they are hospitals, sometimes schools and in this instance it's a church. I disagree with comments that this is inconsistent with the neighborhood because the church has a choice. They're expanding within the block that's primarily religious use. By expanding within that block, I think they're minimizing impact on the surrounding neighborhood. I know from my experience being a board member of my neighborhood organization, we said the neighborhood was for people who live, work and worship within the boundaries and we included religious institutions in our definition of neighborhood. I think when we are looking at this church we are looking at the zoning across the street which is already zoned R4 and even those appear to be single family homes and duplexes, the zoning across the street is not the R1 zoning that you might expect for a single family home and the zoning map tells a different story here about what's happening in the character of this neighborhood and I do think this is consistent.

Commissioner Tucker: I did move item A because I do think the zoning is appropriate; Commissioner Schiff gave some of the reasons. I would also like to comment that as we rezone it and bring more residents to that part of 2nd St, we want the building, the residents, to

be part of the street. We'll get to that in the site plan review but I think it's important that it not just be an enclave attached to the church. It was already mentioned with the transportation for instance that not everybody will have a car, many people want to have a bus and that's the glory of 2nd St, it's a bus route.

Commissioner Gorecki: I support this. I want to echo the comments of my fellow commissioners in regards to expansion. I live in the neighborhood. I wasn't crazy about the initial teardown of the houses to expand the parking lot, but obviously St. Maron is a contributing factor to the neighborhood; they've been a strong ally to the neighborhood since I've lived there, which has been over 10 years. I'm not crazy about the parking entrance, parking garage entrance, on 2nd St but I understand the conflicts of the site itself. Just a couple of additional comments, the owner at 600 and 604, you're a great asset to the neighborhood as well, but I'll also point out that you have absolutely no parking in the neighborhood so probably most of the cars you see there are your tenants. That is part of the character of the neighborhood. Parking is going to be an issue in our neighborhood because we're an urban environment and that's part of the character and fabric with which we live in.

President Motzenbecker: All those in favor of R2B to R5 rezoning? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.

Commissioner Tucker: I'll move item B (Motzenbecker seconded). Just a brief comment, 21 units is kind of a tight fit that's why the variances and request for alternative compliance and I think we'll get to those issues when we discuss entrance, landscaping in the site plan review.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: I support the conditional use permit. This does appear a little dense for the size of the structure, but what I appreciate is that the envelope of the structure, there was an effort to make the envelope of the structure fit within the character of the neighborhood; they didn't go taller, they didn't go larger. I think there was a sensitivity to that which I appreciate very much. I also think that, while I do understand the character concerns and changing communities...one of the interesting aspects is that we do have an aging population and there are a lot of aging people who would like to stay in their original neighborhoods. Looking five or ten years down the road, we need to start thinking about how to incorporate...part of our Comprehensive Plan is to have continued lifecycle housing for people at all cycles of life. We don't want people living in the city when they're young and moving out as they get older. We want people to keep these neighborhoods stable and vibrant and live where they've always lived. I think projects like this, if they're built with sensitivity to the scale and the character of the surrounding areas, can give us some clues as of how we might move forward with some of that stuff. Nothing's perfect, I'm not saying this one is, but I think there has been an effort to accomplish these goals and I support the project.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: I concur with the commissioner who just spoke. It's a neighborhood and we want to keep it as a neighborhood. The people who practice their religion at this church, this is their neighborhood as well as parishioners and I'm sure they would like to remain there as they age. I think it's clear that the decisions that have been made through this design process kind of echo the fact that this is for an aging population, the fact that they would enter from the parking lot instead of having to climb up numerous stairs

given their age. I can appreciate that and I think that would support that motion to keep them in this neighborhood so they can keep practicing and remaining in the city.

President Motzenbecker: All those in favor? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.

Commissioner Tucker: I will move variances C and D (LaShomb seconded).

President Motzenbecker: Any discussion? All those in favor? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.

Commissioner Tucker: I will move the item E, site plan review, with the five conditions recommended by staff. I would like to change condition three and make it just a little bit stronger and read “incorporation of a convenient and prominent principal entry on the west elevation of the building facing, and accessible from, 2nd St NE, subject to Planning staff review and approval.” (Norkus-Crampton seconded).

Commissioner Schiff: I heard the explanation from ESG team and I’m still troubled by the lack of consistency between the front of the building and the sides of the buildings, particularly as we saw from some of the pictures shown by the neighbors. This will be viewed by over a block away. Because of the surface parking lots on the block, you’re going to have site lines from quite some distance. What appears to be interior lot lines that are not visible to the surrounding properties are actually quite visible from a block away. Consistent with our requirements in site plan review, to get more consistency and compatibility with the size of the building and specifically on the south elevation, increase the percentage of brick by 50% and on the north elevation increase the percentage of brick by 200% (Nurdyke seconded).

David Graham: Ok.

President Motzenbecker: All those in favor of amendments as stated? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.

President Motzenbecker: Any further discussion on the site plan review?

Commissioner Tucker: I just want to know if staff and the architects got sufficient instruction on this entry so they can work out a good scheme that will fit with the neighborhood and reach our urban design goals.

James Thompson: What we have on the north side is brick on the side and you want two more of those.

President Motzenbecker: Correct.

James Thompson: On the south side, you want half of that more.

Commissioner Schiff: Exactly.

Commissioner Tucker: On the west side you want it to look like you can enter the building from the street.

President Motzenbecker: All those in favor? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.

Commissioner Tucker: I will move item F (Motzenbecker seconded).

President Motzenbecker: Any discussion on the plats? All in favor? Opposed?

The motion carried 9-0.