University District Zoning and Planning Regulatory Review Task Force February 24, 2009 Meeting 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM 12 Morrill Hall – 100 Church St SE

Public Comments on Draft Summary Report

Comments are broken out into sections found in the draft document.

Parking and Transportation

- Increased restriction of on-street parking can drive people to "overpark" in private driveways, leaving a burden on homeowners who are neighbors to rental properties.
- High cost of University parking forces student drivers into neighborhood street parking. How about free parking for U students and employees?
- Need to develop strategies to address high utilization of on-street parking spaces by people catching buses to downtown and the U of M
- Enlarge the routes of the U of MN buses to include Quarry and East Hennepin west side of Marcy-Holmes (Route 6 already goes down 4th Street SE to East Hennepin area)
- Keep Marcy-Holmes as residential as possible Granary Road should not connect to Second Street SE, sending truck traffic down residential streets
- Build more density on specific streets (?)
- Suggest changing existing two-way 7th St SE (parking on one side of street only) to (proposed one way) with diagonal parking and added greenscape (trees)
- Problems with commercial uses blocking access to homes on 19th for Deliveries Specifically to Joes market this is also an issue of loading zone enforcement.
- Lack of enforcement especially during winter....when snow narrows streets.
- Express interest in adding speed bumps.
- No parking on curves around the traffic calming diverters...
- Attempts to increase bike lanes could have impacts.
- Question: How many cars are parked that are not used on a daily basis? A resident asked whether a partnership could be struck with the University to create an offsite contract parking lot for storage of vehicles beyond the neighborhood boundary, where regular immediate access to the vehicle in the neighborhood wasn't necessary.
- I do not believe that there is any need for increased parking requirements for residential use. I refer specifically to any type of permit requirement for on-street parking. I reside on 18th Ave SE just south of Como Ave. In 15 years of living here neither I nor my guests have ever had a problem parking nearby my home. The only time there is ever a shortage of on-street parking is on Fridays when the local mosque is in use, and that is only for a short duration and inconsequential in my opinion.

Anybody complaining about not being able to park near their home in my neighborhood is being disingenuous. What they really mean is they are not always able to park in front of their home, and that's just plain selfish. In this era of tight city budgets, I believe any city funds used to increase permit requirements/enforcement for on-street parking in the SE/Como neighborhood is money wasted. As far as the new stadium is concerned, I am also willing to make an exception for any parking shortage that *may* occur there as well.

Seven Saturdays a year isn't going to hurt anyone, and any stadium goers in the neighborhood add to its vitality!

I do feel that the U needs to look in to park and ride lots. When I was a student in the 80's, the U had their own buses running thru the neighborhood. There was a park and ride lot located at 29th and Como that was used heavily every day. The U abandoned their bus line, and the lot as well. The lot has been unused for years, but MTC buses still stop there, although the demand for that stop is obviously negligible. Shutting down that lot and leaving it unused was a mistake.

- A suggestion for an incentive to allow increased parking per unit at new 3-4 unit buildings: the use of pervious paving stones (not gravel) in the parking area, with a site plan and a maintenance plan to be reviewed by the neighborhood
- Increased parking enforcement in the initial 2 -3 weeks of each semester (at the U), as an educational tool for new commuters about illegal parking
- Consistent signage regarding parking throughout the District (No Parking 30 feet from STOP signs or from bad visibility corners, No Parking at street diverter curves, etc.). Such signs are present in some locations, missing in others that seem to be identical.

Enforcement

- Get U of MN INVOLVED in student housing enforcement
- Increase regulatory enforcement actions Add a tax to new developments / or to rental licenses
- Require disclosure of additional information for landlords yes, identify all principals / owners of "untraceable" LLCs – put it on rental license and on Hennepin County property website
- Register and/or track landlords yes, use past record of landlords when reviewing any new proposals
- Make relative homestead illegal
- "Relative Homestead" properties are a problem They have no rental license, but students always rent to friends and family
- More stringent enforcement of violators escalated penalties for 2nd, 3rd, 4th violation by same landlord and/ or property
- Keep track of repeat offenders Increase fines by person not by property The same people break the law over and over
- Establish a better relationship with landlords who wish to follow the law, but renters are breaking the law. Landlords can share information with neighborhood group
- Require landlords to maintain city litter container on boulevards near their property
- Regulations regarding residents putting couches in front yard are being dealt with by CM Hofstede
- I think the jury is still out on the fairness of the existing occupancy laws. I believe they are somewhat archaic, specifically the "no more than three unrelated people" living in the same house. As a matter of fact, I was on a task force with Councilman Gordon in April of 2007 to address the fairness of the occupancy laws with respect to the neighborhood. While he wasn't able to get revisions in 2007, that doesn't mean the issue is dead. Despite what the (revolving door of) board members at SECIA says, they do not speak for the entire populace of homeowners here.

Wouldn't absolute enforcement of the existing antiquated occupancy codes contribute to the 'ever shrinking household size' you refer to on page 21? Wouldn't an ever shrinking household size further exacerbate the need for more and more housing?

I was quite angered when I read "Investigate strategies to limit the number of unrelated individuals living together in certain areas"-page 31. This is a blatantly discriminatory attack against students or other young adults in this neighborhood. If you don't agree, then replace 'unrelated individuals' with any other minority group and say it out loud. How does that sound? Fair? Why are unrelated individuals such a terrible demographic? Unrelated individuals sharing living quarters is part of modern society, just like married couples routinely having four or more children is part of the past. I wouldn't doubt that this idea was put forth by a member of SECIA, a majority of whom live in this neighborhood in spite of the students, whereas I live here because of them. Their concerted efforts, both past and present, to turn SE/Como from a student neighborhood to a 'family' neighborhood are well documented. Currently they have formed a group that makes home sellers pledge to only sell to owner occupants. This is notable for the following reason- home prices are higher in this neighborhood because of the demand, in large part due to investors and students, but I'm sure any sellers in this 'group' wouldn't be willing to take much less than market value for their home just so they can sell to a homesteader. They like to think they can have their cake and eat it too. It's almost like they're trying to make SE/Como their own little gated community.

SECIA's attempts to change this neighborhood from a student to a family neighborhood rely heavily on tactics that I consider discriminatory, and I believe they are using the ZPRR task force as a thinly veiled mechanism by which to continue their anti student agenda, an agenda which is antithetical to the purpose of this neighborhood.

- Consistent reporting back to neighbors by Inspections staff regarding complaints, so that neighbors don't give up on the Inspections process
- Extra Inspections costs could be covered by a surcharge on the rental licenses of property owners with certain levels of violations
- Enforce current ordinances related to...
 - Occupancy
 - o Housing violations including maintenance and garbage
 - o Parking violations including parking on front lawns and side yards
 - o Noise
 - o Party houses
- Implement...
 - o Inspection of all rental properties
 - Reduce the number of critical area parking permit issued for student only developments
- Revise...
 - o Permit applications and rental licenses
 - o State building code
 - o Liquor license laws to regulate number of establishments serving liquor in the neighborhoods surrounding the University

Design and Development Standards

- Encourage green design, perhaps a point system
- Discourage 3 + bedroom apartments
- Seek grants and other financial incentives for use of historically appropriate (external) building materials
- Emphasize rehab over demolition / new construction it's the greenest way
- It is detail / articulation / eccentric shapes / varying materials that create "CHARM" we need more of that.
- Set a higher bar for new projects regarding design we are now stuck with a lot of substandard residential buildings and we were powerless to stop it
- Set better zoning for "mini-dorms"
- In reference to the city's philosophy for transit oriented development.... the suggestion is that most development in SEComo isnt right on the corridor, which is a mismatch between the theory of TOD and its application in this Nhood.
- References made to the Lodges development, the idea of getting to better standards.
- Suggestion that any strategies which are cost effective and have little or low cost obligations given the budget climate would be the most palatable to the legislature.
- Design standards are about quality of construction something that will last greater than 20 years Concept of Ageing Well.
- Admin Review process bypassing extra eyes one of the concepts floated is strengthening the public involvement process in the Admin Review Process.
- A resident gave an example of a building being built over a lot line...due to the admin review process it was determined there was nothing to do to halt the construction to ensure setbacks were respected.
- The attendees suggested the Alliance consider adding points for neighborhood approval, or generally expanding the 1-4 points system to improve the Design Standards for such buildings.
- A concern about the political structure of neighborhood boards was expressed in regard to people who become involved in the neighborhood organization in order to serve personal/political or monetary interests, which allows them to lobby approval of their own projects, and then they excuse themselves from NHood boards.
- Eliminate relative homestead
- Revise Administrative Review

Planning and Zoning Framework

- Properties in R2B district do not always function as duplexes or single family. Identify these properties and create an action plan to change the property. For example rooming houses in R2B are a problem perhaps change to triplex or four-plex, where occupancy can be better regulated
- Yes zoning needs to match the reality of a great number of rooming houses existing in R2B
- We need 1 person at CPED who is familiar with neighborhood issues. One person that developers see (talk with) to have plans reviewed. We need a director appointment
- Suggestion that the City's philosophy of providing less off street parking is unrealistic.

- The City invests vast resources into "Planning" comment that the plans are later ignored. Example Lodges were constructed regardless of the MHNA / Comprehensive plan. Comment that the City staff ignored the MHNA plan when reviewing this project Someone described further what she meant to be in reference to the disconnect between the long term vision of a comp plan versus a proposal that is permitted in a zoning district.
- Expand the residential overlay zoning in Industrial Zoning along the periphery of the District. An example might be the blocks north of E. Hennepin near 35W or near Industrial Blvd.
- Consider...
 - Historic districts
 - Conservation districts
 - o Zoning overlays
- Implement buffers and transitions between low density residential and commercial zoning
- Eliminate conflicts with the Comp Plan
- Revise Zoning classification of over zoned single-family homes and duplexes

Public Process

- Consistent item or sub agenda in all community sub groups
- Have a cross / person (?) responsible for meeting times and results
- Bulletin boards available for above in fraternity, public bill boards
- Improved communication as mentioned in draft report
- Support role of District as mentioned in draft report
- Possibilities to add language requiring public notification on Admin Review
- Encourage...
 - o Faculty and staff to live in neighborhoods surrounding the University
 - Life cycle housing that appeals to young singles, couples and families, non-University employees who work in the area and empty nester
 - Creation of University of MN boundaries to prevent further destabilization of surrounding neighborhoods
 - O University recognition that investing money to stabilize the neighborhood is part of the cost of expanding in the neighborhood
 - o University recognition that its policies of expecting the neighborhoods to house U students and their cars have created many problems that must be addressed
 - o University commitment to encourage parents/students to select supervised and safe housing.
- Remove impediments to citizen participation
 - o untimely notification/no notification
 - o different participation procedures followed by various city departments
 - o daytime meetings
 - o disrespectful and inattentive hearing bodies
 - o unequal treatment of zoning and land use applicants

University District Zoning and Planning Regulatory Review Task Force February 24, 2009 Meeting 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM 12 Morrill Hall – 100 Church St SE

Moratorium on construction of 1-4 unit structures

The following is a list of items that staff proposes to focus on as a possible response to the 1-4 unit and demolition moratoriums in the University District.

Possible Code Amendments

Regulating Floor Area Ratio for all projects with 1-4 Dwelling Units

Pros:

- Controls allowable building bulk to create more uniform development pattern
- May serve as a way to regulate number of bedrooms in a unit by reducing overall building bulk allowed
- Can affect the percentage of a lot that is covered by the main structure

Cons:

- May stifle development in areas where "infill" is appropriate
- May simply serve to reduce bedroom size thereby further focusing the market toward one demographic

Increasing residential parking requirement to 0.5 per bedroom

Pros:

- Triggers an increased parking requirement for units with over 2 bedrooms
- May result in lower occupancy of buildings if smaller units are then built
- May reduce the bulk of buildings by requiring that more lot space be devoted to parking

Cons:

- More lot space devoted to parking likely means less green space
- Potentially conflicts with comprehensive plan policies which encourage reduced emphasis on automobile reliance
- Not necessarily supported district wide i.e. transit oriented projects/areas

Process Related Issues

Altering standards and review process for projects with 1-4 Dwelling Units

- Change or add point options to encourage developers to engage the community
- Strengthen the neighborhood notice requirement

Building demolition notification

- Ensure enforcement of building code requirement of notification by regulatory services
- Add as part of sign-off for demolition application