



**MACALESTER-GROVELAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HOUSING & LAND USE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 – 6:30 pm.
Groveland Rec Center, 2021 St. Clair Avenue**

Chair: Mike Moore
Secretary: Wendy Merrell
Staff: Alexa Golemo

Attendees:

Saura Jost, Cathy Plessner, Marc Manderscheid, Brian Baird, David Pasiuk, Kate Baxter-Kauf, Gene Johnson, Tom Dietsche, Mike Moore (Chair), Alexa Golemo (staff), Jack Fei, Mark Seuntjens, Jim Walker.

The meeting was called to order by chair Mike Moore at 6:30pm.

I. Introductions

Mike spoke to the goals, process and responsibilities of the committee. All committee and staff members in attendance introduced themselves.

II. Addition/Deletion of Agenda items

No agenda items were added or deleted.
The secretary being unable to attend, the chair designated Tom Dietsche as acting secretary.

III. Approval of September 2019 Minutes

The September 2019 minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote (moved by Cathy P., seconded by David P.).

IV. 426 Mount Curve Boulevard, variance requests for side yard setback, rear yard setback, and lot coverage in order to construct a building addition to the back of the house; Mark & Jennifer Lammers, Homeowners; Nancy Peters Sparrow, White Crane Construction

The builder and homeowner described the proposed project, how the variances were triggered, and why they believe they should be approved. There were no public comments from the audience. Two letters of support from neighbors were received by MGCC.

In committee discussion, multiple members commented that this project illustrates a problem in the city zoning code and that it shouldn't have needed any variances in the first place if the relevant section of the city's zoning code had been better written.

In this case a good and noncontroversial home remodeling project triggered retroactive changes to the required garage setbacks, solely because the steps to a replacement rear addition to the house would now be less than six feet from the existing garage (which is not part of the project), thus turning it into a virtual “attached garage”. The code’s garage setback rules fail to address scenarios like this, where a code section (apparently written only with new construction in mind) is being retroactively applied without any clear purpose or benefit to anyone. One member said that a zoning administrator should be able to waive a case like this.

Members also expressed a desire to bring this example up to Mike Richardson from the city planning staff when meeting with him at our next HLU meeting in November.

A motion was made by Marc Manderscheid, seconded by Brian Baird, and approved by unanimous voice vote, as follows:

“The Housing and Land Use Committee recommends approval of the side yard setback and rear yard setback variance requests for the property at 426 Mount Curve Boulevard, Reference No. 19-093421.”

V. 2020 - 2024 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated Plan; Emma Siegworth, City Planner, City of Saint Paul

City Planner Emma Siegworth, assisted by Beth Ullrich, Grants Manager, presented the city’s new 2020-2024 HUD Consolidated Plan, followed by a Q&A session. Topics covered included:

- What is the Consolidated Plan? The City of Saint Paul receives approximately \$8-9 million in federal funds each year from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for housing and community development projects and programs.
- In order to receive this HUD funding, the City must prepare a five-year Consolidated Plan.
- The Consolidated Plan addresses the City’s housing and community development needs, and identifies five-year priorities for how to use these funds, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG).
- Funding breakdown: CDBG about \$6.7M, HOME about \$1.76M, and ESG about \$0.578M.
- From a high of about \$18 Million in the 1970’s, recent HUD grant levels are under 50% of that in nominal dollars, and more like 10-20% when adjusting for inflation. This has greatly impaired the city’s ability to fully address the many serious problems that this funding targets.
- MGCC members and the public are encouraged to complete the online survey, to help inform PED on how to prioritize the projects that will be funded by these grants.
- Macalester-Groveland does not qualify for many HUD projects because less than 50% of its population is in designated low-income brackets.

More information available here:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economicdevelopment/consolidated-plan>.

Emma’s complete PowerPoint presentation will be posted to our web site with these minutes.

VI. Updates/Announcements

- Jack Fei encouraged committee members to read the Transportation Committee's recent motion to recommend that the city remove code section 63.207, which deals with parking requirements. The TC's motion will be on the agenda of the November board meeting.
- The next board meeting is on November 14th, 2019.
- The next HLU meeting is on November 20th, 2019. Note that this is one week earlier than usual, due to a conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday. Mike Richardson from the city planning department is scheduled to present drafts of proposed changes to the zoning code.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at about 7:30pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tom Dietsche, temporary acting secretary, on 11/02/2019.