

**Macalester Groveland Housing and Land Use Committee**  
**Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 6:30 pm via Zoom**

**Meeting Minutes**

Attendees: Mike Moore (Chair), Catherine Plessner, Colin Fesser, Dave Pasiuk, Gene Johnson, Jack Fei, Meg Arnosti, Meg Grove, Regina Purins, Tom Dietsche.

Staff: Alexa Golemo.

Guest: Deb Burns.

1. Welcome & HLU Introduction, Mike Moore, Chair
2. Agenda additions/deletions - none
3. Approval of March 22, 2023 HLU Committee meeting minutes.

*Action: Motion by Dave Pasiuk, Seconded by Regina Purins. Committee voted to approve meeting minutes 9-0.*

4. Approval of March 29, 2023 HLU Committee special meeting minutes.

*Action: Motion by Catherine Plessner, Seconded by Regina Purins. Committee voted to approve meeting minutes 9-0.*

5. Discussion of St. Paul Police Department's (SPPD) Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). *The SPPD published a draft UAS policy on 3/29/2023, and scheduled two public comment meetings (4/16 and 4/20/2023). The public comment periods ends 4/30/2023. This Item was deemed appropriate for HLU Committee discussion because of the potential for residents' properties to be involved with drone activity. HLU Committee members received an email copy of a letter from the Hamline-Midway Coalition to the SPPD Chief opposing the UAS program.*

HLU Committee members' issues and concerns:

- It would be helpful for HLU members to hear directly from the SPPD about plans. What is the urgency of enacting the plan? Current comment period ends 4/30/2023.
- Based on [UAS | Saint Paul Minnesota \(stpaul.gov\)](https://stpaul.gov) (also attached to 4/26 meeting agenda), the SPPD says it will use drones according to [Sec. 626.19 MN Statutes](#) (Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles).
- The statute specifies when a drone can/cannot be used, but the list of exceptions is long.
- There is some history of the SPPD misrepresenting information on traffic stops to the Macalester Groveland Transportation Committee. For example, the SPPD claimed the demographic make-up of people involved in traffic stops with in line with the City's demographics. That turned out to not be true – people of color were more likely than white people to be pulled over.
- There is some concern about the level of surveillance possible with drones.

- Where are the funds to support the UAS coming from? Couldn't those dollars be better spent on community engagement?
- The SPPD request for public comment is not on the UAS program, but rather on the draft policy. [Note: the SPPD UAS website has a Feedback Link – see St Paul website link above]

*Action: Motion made by Regina Purins, seconded by Kensey Lipstreuer.*

*The HLU Committee approved this resolution 10-0 to be sent to St. Paul's Police Chief:*

*The Housing and Land Use Committee of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council is concerned with the lack of public outreach on an important matter of public safety and finances, and does not believe that we can take an informed position on the SPPD implementation of a drone program without more robust outreach program from both SPPD and the City of Saint Paul. MGCC requests additional information regarding concerns raised about the public outreach process, the funding source and budget for this program, and the potential need for the creation of a Citizens Advisory Board. Unless these concerns are addressed, MGCC cannot offer a recommendation for approval of this policy as written.*

- The HLU Committee agendas are packed which seems to crowd out regular use of the Rubric. For example, discussion of the Summit Avenue Trail Plan would have been richer had Avenue users who weren't represented – notably youth and people with disabilities – had been at the table. The Rubric can help the Committee and staff make sure everyone who has a stake in issues has a voice in the discussion/decisions.
- Getting non-traditional committee members to attend meetings will be successful when they feel comfortable enough to participate. In addition to better recruitment, we have to be better at onboarding.
- What is each MGCC grid member's responsibility in recruiting people to be part of discussions?
- People who are most unhappy with changes find ways to get their voices heard. Beyond that, and especially if the issue doesn't appear to directly impact people, they do not show up for discussions.
- Flyers, whether mailed or delivered door-to-door, seem to be effective at getting information to people who live within 500 feet or maybe 3-5 blocks of some kind of land use issue. It is not without cost, though. Golemo estimated that a recent mailing on the century plaques to 1,000 households cost an estimated \$500-600.
- The City of St. Paul could provide information on who lives within 500 feet of emerging development/construction.
- On the other hand, isn't it the property owners/developers to be in touch with neighbors, including students and renters? Perhaps one role of the HLU Committee is to hold property owners/developers accountable for getting information out.

*Actions:*

- o *Deb Burns is now a voting member of the HLU Committee by attending three meetings in a row.*

- *The HLU Committee will begin each meeting by introducing and recognizing new attendees as part of its effort to integrate them into HLU processes.*



## 6. Announcements

- MGCC 2023 Board Elections are underway. Voting ends on 4/27/23 at 11:59 pm. Results will be posted on the MGCC website: <https://macgrove.org/> on 5/5/23. The first meeting with new Board members will be on 5/11/23.

## 7. Adjourn