

# HLU Minutes

September 23, 2023

Attendees:

Mike Moore (Chair), Colin Fesser, Meg Grove, Dave Pasiuk, Zak Yudhishthu, Art Punyko (Acting Secretary), Elizabeth Wefel, Wendy Merrell, Heather Huffman, Alexa Golemo (Staff)

## 1. Minutes from the July 2023 Meeting

Motion to approve July 2023 HLU Committee Meeting Minutes (Meg A., Dave P.)

Vote: 6-0 with 3 abstentions

## 2. 1488 Grand Avenue Site Plan Review for proposed development.

Property owner Joe Schneider is not seeking any variances for this project but he provided information on the project and answered questions and took comments from the neighborhood and the HLU committee.

The developer (Joe) is not sure how the rents would compare with respect to the AMI. The rents should be approximately 20% less than other new apartments in the area (The Harper, The Juliet, etc).

There were comments regarding how little parking there is in the proposed project. The developer said that there are no parking minimums required by the city. The owner said that this proposed project favors nicer apartments and not necessarily require a parking space. They are going out on a limb by only offering limited parking.

A neighbor appreciates the effort to offer middle-range rents. Who will the building management company? Is he developing other sites in St. Paul? Can his construction project minimize the alley damage during the construction. Joe said he will manage it directly and provide a handyman to provide service. He will have another leasing agent to help.

There is another site under development (611 Cleveland Ave) and this project is also not providing parking either. Joe also said that he will ask the builder to keep the alley damage to minimize.

It was mentioned that the city design guidelines (66.343) specify the preferred and prohibited types of construction materials for use in residential units in TN zoning. Many nearby apartment buildings on Grand include brick, stone, and glass. The proposed building appears to only have fiber board siding which is not preferred per the TN design guidelines. The developer said that the exterior of the building is not fully determined. He will evaluate the possibility of including brick elements in the project.

A neighbor asked if this new building be comparable to the 1554 Grand apartment building. The developer said that the 1554 building is more of student housing. He is trying to build something different with higher-end finishes inside like the Vintage and the Harper.

The developer was asked about his willingness to donate and/or salvage materials from the single-family home. Joe is willing to consider donating materials if he is provided a contact.

There was a neighbor comment about the proposed building will likely extend far back into the lot. Will Joe be willing to save trees to preserve on the existing lot? Joe said that he would not be able to preserve trees that are in the build-zone. Some of the trees on the side of the house may be able to be preserved.

There may be 20+ additional vehicles parking on the street. Joe replied that people and families may share vehicles now and in the future. These units will attract people that work from home and have a home office—not everyone will be driving.

### 3. Know Your Rights presentation by the St. Paul Dept. of Human Rights and Equal Opportunity.

Presented by Ma-Riah Roberson-Moody and Beth Commers, City of St. Paul

HREEO team presented the anti-discrimination ordinance in Saint Paul. St. Paul has one of the strongest anti-discrimination ordinances in the country and protect 13 classes of people that live or work in the city.

The city has a team of investigators that in areas of Education, Employment, Real Property, Public Accommodations, Public Services, Credit, Business, and Reprisal.

The HREEO has five boards and commissions and all are welcome to apply and get involved. See [stpaul.gov/HREEO](http://stpaul.gov/HREEO).

### 4. Phase 2 of the 1-4 Unit Housing Study (Committee Discussion)

There were comments regarding the size of the zoning change and there will be cases where there are six-unit buildings allowed on the smallest of city lots (40 feet) wide. Some felt that this was too extreme and dense to apply across the board.

Other comments indicated that these changes allow a more gradual approach to increase housing in the city. These changes will allow for longer-term density increases. Some members felt this was a gentle approach to zoning. There was a comment that many zoning codes were implemented to discriminate. The new plan is attempting to simplify the zoning code and eliminate the discriminatory sections from the past.

The city has a public hearing planned in October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to recommend approval of the revised 1-4 Unit Housing Study: Phase 2 Zoning Amendments as approved by the Planning Commission on August 18, 2023 (Zak Y., Elizabeth W.)  
6-3 with 0 abstentions.