

Minutes of the Prospect Park Association Land Use Committee Tuesday, June 13th, 2019, Revised July 9th, 2019

In Attendance on Sign-In sheet: Preston Mosser – Prospect Park Properties, Dan Pellinen – Tushie-Montgomery Architects, Karen Murdock, Florence Littman, Imani Cruzen, Caitlin Anderson, Brooke Magid Hart, Dan Pellinen, Dan Bryant, Dick Gilyard, Joyce Walker, Gayla Lindt, Joe Ring, Paul Kellogge, Lise Houlton, Martha Joy, Devon Blanchard, Lynn Von Korff, John Wicks Chair LU Committee.

Please see Agenda for listing of topics discussed. Note changes are shown in red font.

John Wicks welcomed all persons attending the meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. The meeting began with an update by Joe Ring of the status of the Conservation District being organized by neighbors residing near Tower Hill Park on portions of Clarence Ave and Seymour Street.

Joe described:

- a. According to the requirements of Conservation Districts, support is needed by 1/3 of the property owners within the proposed district, however in order to avoid potential conflicts the district will be pursuing agreement by 2/3 of the property owners instead.
- b. The process began about 3 months ago. The organizers have met with 12 of the property owners and of the 12, 9 have agreed to join.
- c. The designated conservation district will include all of Clarence Avenue and the 1st block of houses on Seymour that face the park are included. Conservation Districts must include both sides of the street unless one side is a Park (which in this case includes Tower Hill Park). In this case Tower Hill Park will be part of the District.
- d. They have been having difficulty finding people home and meeting with them.
- e. Dick Gilyard asked Joe to bring information to the Land Use Committee so people can understand what the District does.
- f. Another committee member asked if the Conservation District description could be placed on the PPA web site.

2. John Wicks described how no response has been received from William Wells, the architect for the 2424 Essex St residential project; Rick Filler, developer of the 4th Street Lofts project and the O'Shaughnessy Distillery Project even though these projects have request support from PPA in the past.

3. Concerns were brought up by committee members of the changes that have been communicated to the Committee by Ari Paritz of the Vermilion project (which received MOU approval last year). The project has been revised with the removal of the condominium units; increased numbers of apartment units and fewer parking spaces. These changes brought the following comments:

- a. Concern about the impact of less parking in the project and its effect on the neighborhood was expressed.

b. Differences of opinion regarding parking in new projects were expressed. It was noted that the LU Committee recently approved the project at 2424 Essex Street that has no parking. One comment noted how student housing may or may not have parking due to limited ownership of vehicles by student residents, particularly when LRT is available nearby. Employed tenants (or workers) may have cars. Florence Littman mentioned that she does not own a vehicle.

b. Gayla Lindt noted that when the Vermilion project was approved it contained 208 residential units but recent changes have increased the count to 256 units. Gayla would like to see the City's calculations for their approval process and their Traffic Management Study which was calculated for 189 units. Gayla noted that she thinks with the most recent changes the traffic study is out of date at this time. Where are the City's calculations that support these changes? Efforts should be made to obtain the details of the City's information.

c. It was noted that the condos were removed from the project because the project's financiers /Bankers would not finance them. As a result apartments were substituted for the condos. In response, Dick Gilyard noted that developers cannot build something that they can't finance and lawsuits between condo owners and developers have stopped the construction of condos over the past decade. In the instance of the Vermilion project, Dick noted that two bankers who were interested in the project did not like the mix between apartments and condos.

d. On another topic related to the Vermilion project, Joyce Walker expressed how she has heard Vermilion is working with adjacent property owners and has sent letters to them stating they are available to discuss their concerns, but the property owners are not interested in providing the approval for installation of "tie-backs" for construction of the foundation.

e. Gayla Lindt had briefly reviewed (prior to the LU Committee meeting) the drawings that Vermilion had sent to PPA offices and made the following comments:

1. No site plan was included in the set.
2. They changed the count from condos and apartments to all apartments.
3. It is her understanding that the City does care whether the residential units are condominiums or apartments; however the total number of units does matter because it affects other calculations such as vehicle and bicycle parking and can impact the public testimony on the project.
4. The Art & Architecture building is not being conserved in the way it was originally intended or described in the MOU. In her opinion the building is truncated (that is the rear of the building). Gayla stated that in a PUD process a developer's project is given points for meeting specific requirements such as embodied energy in retaining existing buildings and she would like to see the City's calculation for this revised topic.
5. The Plaza's bump outs have changed. The Plazas have gotten smaller. Are points warranted for the change?
6. There is a loss of commercial area. During the public review process, Vermilion made arguments to change the previous zoning to a new zoning designation i.e., from C1 to C3A..
7. Where is the pet exercise area and the recycling storage area?
8. Project has been narrowed by 13' and this calls into question the need for the variance given regarding set back that may no longer be needed. Perhaps it should be given back to the City.
9. Dan Pellinen mentioned that with an increase of 25% of the residential unit count that it is a topic that cannot be approved by staff and should probably go back to the Planning Dept.
10. It was mentioned that Vermilion still has not taken possession of the property as yet.

f. Other comments regarding the Vermilion project:

1. Joyce Walker questioned if we gain force as we go forward with the MOU or the Planning Commission
2. In response Joe Ring noted that we need to get answers from the City regarding the project. If it had been in the MOU before what happens now that the topic has changed?
3. It was mentioned that the LU Committee obtain a consolidated list of comments from the Planning Department's Steve Poore or Robbin Garwood of Councilman Cam Gordon's office.
- g. On another topic, Lise Houlton (property owner who lives adjacent to the Vermilion project) expressed concerns with the structural tie-backs that the Vermilion project wishes to utilize on her property.
- h. Lastly, Gayla noted that Vermilion earned "points" for specific aspects of the project that have been changed. There are other conditions for the project that appear to still not be met (such as earth retention during construction and conferring with a history consultant to identify and mitigate impacts on nearby historic properties. Florence Littman expressed her opinion that the project should go back to the Planning Commission for further review.

4. The next topic to discuss was a new hotel project to be located at 2800 University Avenue by Prospect Park Properties. Preston Mosser of PPP and their architect Dan Pellinen of Tushie Montgomery architects were present to lead the discussion.

- a. The project will be located west of the existing Hampton Inn and connected to it.
- b. This will be an extended stay hotel. Demand for such housing is very strong today.
- c. It will be connected to the Hampton Inn at the ground level only.
- d. Plans are for a 6 story building, mostly with King Suites.
- e. 102 parking spaces will be provided – more than what the ordinance allows.
- f. The existing Hampton Inn currently has a shortage of parking at this time.
- g. In their application to the Planning Department, they wish approval for several variances:
 - i. Rezoning from OR2 to C3A to allow for new 6 story hotel from 4 stories to 5 stories and 75' in height; also loading dock change from 2 large docks to 1 small dock.
 - ii. Rezoning to change parking frontage from 60' to 100' along St. Mary's Street. (In a Pedestrian Overlay District parking frontage is zoned at 60'). Florence Littman voiced her concerns regarding a view of parking by adjacent neighbors in Glendale.
- h. The project will have dual brandings – both are Hilton products and include Free Breakfast!
- i. Project will have approximately 45 full time employees.
- j. Rough Schedule for the project is for an MOU in July 2019 and to go to the Planning Department this September.
- k. There is an existing 2 story building on the site which will be demolished.
- l. Preston Moser expressed their interest in forming a Task Force and hope to have 4 – 5 meetings with the Task Force before going to the City. A meeting was held with Andrew Liska of the City of Minneapolis and they were told that the City has no issues with rezoning or the parking extension however there may be a problem with the variance.
- m. The project will be called, "Home2".

COMMENTS:

1. Dick Gilyard expressed the need for operating windows in the project's rooms.
2. Florence Littman stated that the Task Force should reach out to Glendale in an effort to obtain their feedback for the project and to involve them in the planning process.
3. The Home2 Task Force will consist of the following people:

i. Preston Moser	iv. Dick Gilyard
ii. Dan Bryant	v. Devon Blanchard

iii. Joyce Walker

4. John Wicks will send out an email to LU Committee members and ask for volunteers.

5. Towerside Update by Dick Gilyard:

a. Towerside has evolved from the neighborhood. St. Anthony Park, St. Paul is part of the Innovation District. The “ideas” within the context of the Innovation District include the District Systems such as the water utilities and the idea of Development Guidelines – these are ideas that go beyond measurables – trying to design to a list of expectations. What are we expecting of the developer or at the particular space. We should have a single page sheet of expectations to give to developers.

6. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

Minutes prepared by John Wicks, please send requests for revisions to: jonewix@aol.com

Revisions are the result of comments received from Gayla Lindt