

# Minutes of the Prospect Park Association Land Use Committee Meeting Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019 PPUMC

**In Attendance persons names as listed on Sign-In sheet – attached.**

See attached Agenda.

List of persons in attendance:

Eric Amel, David Frank, Dick Gilyard, Lydia McAnerney, Preston Mosser (Prospect Park Properties), Laura Preus, Jere Purple, Joe Ring, Donna Schneider, Lynn Von Korff, John Wicks Chairperson of Land Use Committee. Cc. Jan Nelson PP Staff.

1. John Wicks welcomed all attending the meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.
2. John Wicks presented the draft Agenda and asked for a motion to approve it. Motion carried.
3. First item on the agenda was a discussion by Joe Ring of topics from the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting which took place today at the Planning Commission. Joe noted:
  - a. University Avenue is a State Highway under the jurisdiction of Hennepin County and Residence Inn is asking for a curb cut from University Avenue into their property. Approval must come from Hennepin County and not City of Minneapolis.
  - b. Newest topic that has arisen this week is the need for the City to undertake an EWA – Environmental Assessment Worksheet or EAW as recently described by Sarah Beimers of SHPO to John Wicks and Joe Ring. This response was brought about by John Wicks’ inquiry to SHPO as to what are the possible ramifications for a developer to undertake development within the PP Historic District particularly if the project intends to demolish buildings some of which are contributing structures. MS. Beimers noted that the EAW process is overseen by the Environmental Quality Board, not her office. They are just one of many reviewers of EAW’s.
  - c. Joe noted that the mandatory EAW is required because it is under the jurisdiction of SHPO and not the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission because PPHD was disapproved by the Minneapolis City Council but approved by SHPO for National Designation.
  - d. Joe also noted that the City Planner for our area Hillary Dvorak has previously stated that ‘they don’t need to do it’ but that was before Sarah Beimers voiced her opinion on the issue. It is likely that the City will consult with the City Attorney on this topic.
  - e. If the EAW were to be reviewed by the Environmental Assessment Board then we could get an opinion from a State employee – which may not be favorable to us.
  - f. Usually EAW evaluations are undertaken by consultants.
4. Comments from further discussion of the proposed Residence Inn project and Historic District.
  - a. Joe state that Planner Hillary is against doing anything so we don’t know what to expect.
  - b. Laura: could the building be demoed or could it go in another direction?
  - c. Eric suggested with good design the existing building could be incorporated in a new design of the Hotel.
  - d. Joe: the significance of Schneider Drug was the History of the Business and not the architectural character of the building it occupied.
  - e. Lastly: a mandatory EAW will be required for action to any property (undergoing modifications) in the Historic District, Joe stated – this is new to the City – “Stay Tuned”!!!
5. Eric Amel summarized three principle issues he recognized at the COW meeting and these are: the Developer recognized that by working with the neighborhood we have helped improve the project; the

curb cuts on University Avenue are problematic and the vertical fins on the University elevation are troubling.

6. Lynn VK suggested that she is not convinced a hotel is the best use of the land and would prefer affordable housing to be located there. The developer has also avoided engaging in the MOU process with us. In response Dick G. stated that the Residence Inn is the only project before us for review. No other developer has come forward with a project for affordable housing at this site. If the neighborhood/LU Committee would prefer affordable house at other locations in the neighborhood then we need to be out ahead of the developers in promoting such land use. That would mean meeting with a housing developer to discuss development before property is placed up for sale. However, our attitudes toward housing are part of the City's 2040 plan.

7. Eric emphasized that we need to convince the developer that they need to hire an architect specialized in Historic Preservation to work on buildings located within the PP Historic District.

8. Laura P. emphasized that a project such as the Residence Inn chips away at the PP Historic District and she wonders what we gain by giving away the zoning change which improves the development potential to the developer since there are those who feel the project is not an improvement to the neighborhood.

9. Dick G. indicated that we must be clear to the City about what our actions with respect to the developer were. That is, six meetings with the developer doesn't mean we support the project, even though our meetings have produced positive results for design of the project.

10. A motion was made and approved for the Chair to prepare a letter to the City Planner which discusses the implications and problems of the current project design within the PPHD and how we cannot support it at this time. However, we could support it if the project were to be sensitively designed to take into consideration its location within the Historic District and how we expect the project to be the best it can be. The Chair said the letter would be sent around to persons present for review and comment prior to it being sent out to the City and Cam Gordon.

11. The next Land Use Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at **6:30 PM**, at **Luxton Park** Community Meeting Room.

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**END**

Minutes prepared by John Wicks – send your comments or corrections to him at [jonewix@aol.com](mailto:jonewix@aol.com)