



Payne-Phalen

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes for the Community Meeting

Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Online via Zoom Conferencing

Welcome: Introductions and Review of the Agenda

6:30 pm

In attendance:

Employees of PPCC - Jack Byers & Robin Horkey

Board Members – Kelsey Canaday, Janey Atchison, Seanne Thomas, Patricia Enstad, Lynette Harris, Julia Wilcox, Rebecca Nelson, Damian Schaab, Marci Exsted, Dayna Wolter, Athena Hollins

Community Members – John Anderson, Joann Ellis

Context:

Many organizations are confronting how to manage the need to host virtual board meetings and elections when current bylaws do not allow for this activity. Following the lead of the St. Paul City Council, in April 2020, the PPCC Board adopted the following language (and a series of other measures to manage the organization through this challenging time):

"In-person meetings, or meetings conducted under Minn. Stat. § 13D.02 of the City Council, are not practical or prudent because of the COVID-19 health pandemic emergency declared under Minn. Stat. Chapter 12 by the Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter. In light of the COVID-19 health pandemic, members of the City Council will participate in City Council meetings by telephone or other electronic means."

Developing the Payne-Phalen District Plan:

6:35 pm

1. Rezoning Application: 597 East 7th Street, Presentation/Q&A: Keyf Abdi, Nimco Ltd. and John D. Anderson, JDA Design Architects
 - Rebecca – so you're planning to create a daycare in this space?
 - John Anderson - Existing Building that appears to have been built in a number of phases, currently in an industrial zone. Doing this created several separate tenant spaces. Most Western space – the intent is to create a daycare.
 - Justine – what ages? → [John A. – infants through school age]
 - Justine - How many classrooms?
 - John A. – not set yet, MN has a formula (children x sq ft)
 - Jack – many of the folks here aren't experts at architecture...details?
 - John A. – described floor plan for board members
 - KC – there's a building there, was that the MN plumbing?

- John A. – yes, there was & there is an existing loading dock where subcontractors would pick up/drop off materials. My partner bought this space a year ago, this space is currently vacant.
- KC – is this plan involved w/this space? What is the intent with that?
- John A. – described that this space was built in the 3 phases, we are only discussing the one (Western) space. Daycare isn't allowed in an [industrial] zone, hence the request for rezoning.
- Rebecca – so this was bought [with that intent for a daycare]?
- John A. – yes, as well as other uses for the two other spaces as well [listed in the letter], such as a small office space, etc.
- Janey – have tenants been found for those?
- John A. – still looking. Some interest in a small catering kitchen or café.
- Justine – what does the timeline for the daycare look like?
- John A. – according to zoning admin, this could take 3 months to clear. Would love to think they can open July 1 (2022)
- Rebecca – will there be a playground?
- John A. – this site would utilize an off-site playground or park, they would shuttle the children. Their team is looking at several locations.
- Rebecca – brought up concern since this is a busy area (traffic)
- John A. – [spot] is fairly ideal. Curb cut into the site is 2 lanes, so there's considerable space for drop off. You can see the area North is also open for more turn-around space to add. Is busy but they have a parking plan that [they feel] is fairly efficient.
- Damian – adjacent location is a hole that is being filled. If we're talking about site plans, could you walk us through...where additional points of egress, ingress would be made? Current design has no windows.
- John A. – current plan is just layout. Plan is to open a number of windows along Payne & East 7th.
- Damian – any concern re: open windows w/highway outside
- John A. – only doors leading in & out face directly to the parking lot. Nothing fronts Payne & East 7th. Building is masonry, so new windows will need to be cut in. No new doors needing to be cut in.
- Lynette – is this right across the street from the body shop?
- John A. – yes
- Lynette – so that's next door to where apts are being built [will be directly north] are you involved with that too?
- John A. – no, in contact with those folks. They need an easement for infrastructure access they are coordinating w/[John's team]. They just rezoned that property to a T-2 and that's what we're seeking as well.
- Lynette – sees the point of view of having a daycare here w/apartments going up.

- John A. – one of the reasons, too, is that the neighborhood needs another daycare. Going north on Payne turns into residential, primarily. Also, w/university just up the hill, this is ideal for parents.
- Lynette – asked clarification based on maps image, John clarified. She also asked whether they thought about the security level for the area.
- John A. – looking at floorplan: two doors leading outside to parking lot. Looking at parking lot -> demonstrated depth of this (~60 feet deep).
- Justine – clarified that she feels Lynette may have meant on-site security of some kind
- John A. – code requires video cameras going during the day, doors locked during the day (need to buzz-in & out), staff always on site w/children.
- Patricia – wondered about fencing of parking lot for safety & nearby streets
- John A. – would be open to that [they've talked about it]. 2 scenarios would be loading onto/off of a shuttle bus or their parents directly dropping off outside the building (with escorts to/from the car)
- Justine – I think a fence would make sense (w/darting children). [Rebecca agreed]
- Lynette – talked about 3 stages, one being used for the daycare. Clarification regarding the rest of the space. [John clarified that just the western portion, on the left, will be daycare]
- Damian – what is the proposed total student occupancy? Mentioned that they know what the square feet is, asked what the statute states...
- John A. – about 60 children, based on the statute
- Damian – asked whether this many children w/their parents would make sense w/the parking space & safety issues
- John A. – mentioned additional parking to the north & buffer zones
- Damian – 60 cars are fitting in 60 feet, then?
- John A. – well, you have to remember that you have [a few surges, rather than everyone coming all at once]
- Damian – does not feel this corner can accommodate any amount of surge. This has recently been redesigned to open up traffic flow due to confusion of the space. Concerned about visibility.
- John A. – mentioned curb cut being 2-way here to assist w/avoiding this
- Lynette – will dock be utilized for daycare?
- John A. – will be used for other businesses but the daycare will have a kitchen & the dock will be useful for drop off of items (snacks, milk)
- Jack – asked John to show where a truck would drop-off, in relation to children being dropped off/picked up
- John A. – truck wouldn't encroach into existing parking stalls
- Damian – multiple times, fire engines will be passing and providing some noise pollution

- John A. – children will be safely tucked inside during this time
- Janey – noted basement, what will it be used for?
- John A. – additional classrooms, will install an elevator for accessibility
- Jack – why isn't that included in city application?
- John A. – I think the floorplans are clear that there are 2 levels...
- Rebecca – mentioned that we don't see a floorplan for the basement, perhaps we didn't get it.
- John A. – perhaps that's it
- Jack – what we're showing is the packet the city sent to us. Does the city know that this is planned for?
- Patricia – this wasn't clear this would be used for childcare space. Not clear that this will be used & what it will be used for. Can see numbers but doesn't come through what the square feet is. 60 kids seems like a lot in that space. Another question is, what is the plan for ventilation?
- John A. – mechanical ventilation, entire H-Vac will be replaced. Regarding the number of students allowed, this is mandated by the state regulations.
- Patricia – asked for the floorplan for the basement
- John A. – have done ~6 daycares around the metro, many of which use the lower level & this has been successful
- Rebecca – issue is that without that floorplan, this does a disservice to us & the city. That needs to be represented.
- John A. – will reach out to Bill Dermody (the city planner) make sure he gets the plan & it's clear about that.
- Justine – also mentioned potential idea of gym for students
- Patricia – agreed, that an area for physical recreation be included
- John A. – state requires this, plan is to have that offsite (park/playground)
- Rebecca – and during the winter?
- John A. – yes.
- Lynette asked clarification about what ages he mentioned. [infant to grade-school]
- Patricia – final comment as a former kindergarten teacher, would be looking at Eastside Y where they have large muscle space. That's why, this particular plan, without how this space will be used – without any outdoor space/muscle space & needing to have reliable transportation – all these are concerns for me.
- John A. – all of these guidelines you mentioned are heavily regulated by the state & will be followed, mentioned licensing & inspections.
- Lynette – never really came across many daycares w/other businesses inside the building
- John A. – it actually happens quite frequently (mentioned in malls, other multi-use buildings)

- Justine – asked about background checks for other businesses as well as daycare
- John A. – partner will likely see to this.
- KC – mentioned issue of traffic, history of violent incidences, firefighters, and her skipping even going to the university there due to safety concerns
- Lynette – major shooting there last year that took a life, having a daycare there...it wouldn't be regular windows I would want there.
- John A. – suspects zoning will consider this on Thursday night
- Rebecca – what are you looking for from us?
- John A. – hoping to support staff report, believes this will come out in favor of the rezoning. Hopes we would support this.
- Damian – any plans to meet with the neighborhood group that meets for that particular area?
- John A. – is that not you all?
- Rebecca – he's referring to the Railroad Island neighborhood group

Discussion

- Rebecca – we definitely need a daycare, not sure this is the space
- Patricia – I'm really confused about this building & the first project is a daycare, no place for the kids to be outside. Doesn't understand this as an initial goal, not sure if it's due to money. Bothered her that there's no plan for the basement provided. [other folks agreed]
- Jack – they first applied for variance to zoning (currently industrial). Currently allows for daycares if attached to industrial use. City determined that they should rezone this property. City says this should be mixed-use, listed as opportunity site. Sees redevelopment here. Rezoning is a good idea but applicant hasn't been forthcoming about the details. Asked city for more details regarding traffic -> they said because John didn't include this, it didn't trigger site-plan review. Seems they are withholding info to avoid this. [wouldn't necessarily be visited in-person if they don't change anything outside]
- Patricia – can we recommend site review? [Jack – we could, but this doesn't mean they do it] Patricia suggested we do this, doesn't feel we should approve this. **Patricia motioned to deny support & request the city go out in-person to review the site.**
- **Marci seconded.**
 - Lynette – since I've started going through [a lot the last month] related to looking at zoning, build-outs, etc. Maplewood will go out & look even before approval. One thing is, I know there needs to be childcare but this is not the place.
 - Janey – From MN's Department of Health: "Indoor space: the licensed capacity is limited by the amount of indoor space. A minimum of 35 square feet is required for each child."

- Dayna – I live right across the street & I have similar concerns to [Damian & Lynette]. Agrees that congestion & location are not ideal.
- Julia – doesn't support
- Athena – agrees w/what folks are saying, advises having city come out to look at it because it could go through even without our support. Likes the idea of the space for this but could be done better, more thoughtfully.
- Patricia – even the thought of using the basement to reach the maximum number of kids rather than using that for a gym space...and then 60, with that kind of traffic?
- Justine – concerned that it would be easy to bus children. Across my company, we can't even find people to do hotel shuttles
- Seanne – concerned about classroom space in the basement. Saw 1 narrow stairwell & one wider. In a fire, that would be hard to get everyone out in time also with no operable windows. Affirmed having someone come out to see it.
- **Everyone voted in-favor.**
- Patricia – do we want to include our specific concerns in that letter?
- Rebecca – I think Jack has those written down

6:55 pm

2. Update and Progress Report: Developing our community engagement strategy for 2022: Discussion and organizing session led by the Engagement Subcommittee (Rachel Sheild, Julia Roberts, Justine Martin-LaCroix)
 - Julia – we can move this to our next meeting.

Business items:

7:45 pm

3. PPCC Monthly Financial Report and Status (Janey Atchison, Treasurer)
 - Janey reviewed: we gained \$22,000 and spent \$11,000 -> on track so far. Wants to do an audit this year, asked for recommended companies that do audits for nonprofits.
4. Approval of minutes: (Marci Exsted, Secretary)
 - Janey motioned to approve the minutes.
 - Athena seconded
 - Passed unanimously
5. For the record: 2021 Donor List – Jack
 - Goal was \$1,600 from donations by 2021 and we exceeded this by \$1,000 – largely from silent auction. We also have silent donor who gives \$20 per month. Letters went out to those named.

7:50 pm

Updates and new business:

6. Update: Creation of the new Land Use, Transportation, and Environment (“LUTE”) Subcommittee (Update from the Committee).
 - Kelsey – they decided to go with the 2nd Thursday of the month for 45 mins.

- Patricia – as we saw tonight, this is often a lot so the idea is to have a group that focuses on hearing some of these presentations & that we include an educational component to it. In March, Jack mentioned, we have the Arcade/7th street redesign folks coming to talk. We also talked about Bill Dermody (our planner) come talk. Feels we're all working to get up to speed on this. Suggested Damian for this.
- Jack – part of taking care of that in the subcommittee would be to relieve that for the full group's agenda.
- Damian – has yet to be able to attend his other committee meeting, maybe can switch [to this new committee]
- Patricia – keep in mind, not everything goes in a timeline: such as tonight the issue addressed was brought up after our [LUTE meeting].

7. Artist Engagement hiring process (Update from Executive Committee) - Jack

- Reviewed that 2 colleagues visited Exec committee & advised on hiring process. Suggested we put out a revised request for proposals that seeks groups of artists. They mentioned a few that may already be interested.
- Damian – would this prevent individual artists from applying, then?
- Jack – it might
- Seanne – they used the words of a “cohort”
- Jack - doesn't prevent individual artists teaming up
- Damian – would they have to exist in the state as an entity or ?
- Jack – no needed [formalized existence]. The other thing Springboard brought to us: in the 2 years since we started this project – many artists have become more adept at hybrid work & also a lot of artist teams have formed.

8. Hiring new staff: Environmental Justice Community Coordinator; full-time position. (Update from Jack Byers, Executive Director)

- Applications reviewed by grants application team – met this morning & created short list of candidates. Currently setting up interviews. Hope to find 2, 1 to work with Powerderhorn & 1 to work with Payne Phalen. Goal to have folks working by April 1st. Process will be another 6 weeks or so, also waiting for money flow.

9. *Please promote in your networks*: Paid gig workers needed! Equity4Energy Project. PPCC is partnering with two organizations, Slipstream and Streetwyze to recruit community ambassadors who will work through the year to help bring local households of color into this project.

- Position is \$20/hr

ADJOURN

8:00 pm

- **Lynette – working on Equity4Energy through her small business!**
- **Rebecca motioned to adjourn. -> Unanimous vote in favor!**

➤ **Next PPCC Community Meeting:** Tuesday, March 22, 2022, 6:30-8pm, on Zoom