



**NORTH  
LOOP**  
NEIGHBORHOOD

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**North Loop Neighborhood Association  
Planning & Zoning Meeting Notes  
January 18, 2017  
6:00 P.M.**

**Heritage Landing Community Room, 415 1<sup>st</sup> Street North**

- I. January Planning & Zoning Meeting called to order at 6:05 P.M.
- II. Nine committee members were in attendance: **DJ Heinle, Karen Rosar, Kelly Nelson, Mark Hill, Neil Reardon, Francesco Parisi, Alice Eichholz, Jo Vos, and Darwin Lookingbill.**
- III. **A motion is made, seconded, and approved by the Committee to approve the Committee Meeting Agenda.**
- IV. **A motion is made, seconded, and approved by the Committee to approve the November 2016 Meeting Minutes.**
- V. 419 Washington Avenue North – DJR Architecture, Aron Johnson
  - a. There are three changes to the design that has been shown in previous presentations.
    - i. The height of the building is now 140 feet – exactly what zoning requires.
    - ii. The towers have been moved inward.
    - iii. DJR has been unsuccessful getting street trees in at all desired locations; it will need NLNA support.
  - b. The same public parking distribution remains; the skyway connection is still intact as earlier; there have been minor changes so as remove the need for variances and instead work within the zoning code.
  - c. The Committee asks if there are additional ways to provide greenery to the exterior. Unfortunately, HPC is fiercely opposed to any non-historic greenery and has jurisdiction over the exterior; any greenery would be under its review. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue will have trees, but there will not be any on 5<sup>th</sup>, as there were historically no trees there.
  - d. The 140-foot height of the building is to the parapet. According to code, another 14 feet is allowed for mechanical, as long as for every one foot of height, the system is moved one foot away from the exterior façade. The system will not

be visible from the street; it will be out of sightlines. Francesco notes that there are differences between the historic guidelines and the zoning code.

- e. Exterior is clad in standard, or small sized, brick on all faces; it also features cast stone on highlights, and clear glass. Red brick will be hand laid with panels.
- f. The parking structure will be flat plate, so that it could be converted to other uses; however, that is highly unlikely. It would then have 13 stories of office space. Convertibility for parking is an idea from the City – if someday, cars significantly reduce in number and use, the City wants to adjust space needs accordingly. Francesco notes that he is concerned about the precedent, that it might be opening the floodgates for developers to promise parking, be approved, and then convert the space.
  - i. There are questions about the provisions of public parking. It is clarified that all parking stipulations will be included in the development agreement. Any conversion to office space would require City approval.
  - ii. On the main level, more or less all of the parking is covered by active uses. There is retail on corner; if doesn't lease, it wouldn't convert to parking, as retail makes the building more attractive as well.
- g. Zoning code mandates that 3<sup>rd</sup> is the front of building; there is a 10-foot difference in grade.
- h. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Jo, and approved by the Committee to approve the changes, with the condition that DJR lobbies strongly for trees on 5<sup>th</sup>.**

VI. 729 Washington Avenue North – United Properties, Gordy Stofer

- a. Since the last presentation in November, the project continues to make progress. At the HPC hearing on December 13, the project was approved (4:1).
- b. There have been a few changes:
  - i. There are still micro units, though the number of units has changed. There were 48; now there are 59. No space has been added, it is just the way the square footage was divided and configured.
  - ii. The skyway had to be raised to thirty feet high. The archway was removed.
  - iii. Parking numbers are still fluctuating between 400 and 450; the final number is likely to be 420.
  - iv. Tweaks will continue throughout the construction drawings phase.
- c. Some things remain the same:
  - i. Nothing surprising was revealed in the additional solar studies, but the information will be helpful to inform the landscaping plan.
  - ii. Bike parking will be a significant part of landscape. There will also bike lockers, showers, and tool stations. Loose Wiles has a fitness center; that space may be accessible to tenants of this building. There will be more than ample street bike parking for visitors as well.
  - iii. The height of the building was approved at 140 feet at the parapet. The mechanicals are above that, but are set back. United is working with the neighborhood livability group and exploring options for the uses at the top of the building. From the low point of site, it is actually 138 to the top of the building because of the lower grade.
  - iv. The dedicated public space, which will be programmed and activated, provides a unique situation, as there aren't many of these spaces throughout the City. Plans hope to be formalized in the next month or so.

1. There will be three curling courts (12 x 60-70) to host the North Loop Curling Club, and will be available December – March. The courts will have some private control for corporate events, but will also be open to public, especially on nights and weekends. This is a relatively new process through the Park Board related to park dedication fees; will take some back and forth, but United is very excited about the public/private partnership.
  2. Alice suggests more active uses for adults, and not just children. Gordy encourages NLNA to collect ideas and send to Max Musicant, as the place is currently a “blank canvas, an amenity space for office tenants and residents.” The park subcommittee plans to actively engage and become more involved.
- d. There has been lots of interest in retail space; negotiations are now underway with potential tenant.
    - i. Speakeasy type establishment would be great near alley, maybe bike store as well.
  - e. HPC didn't say no to street trees on Washington; still have to go through final approval; concrete curb and other mechanisms are planned so that trees survive.
  - f. United has spent a lot of time with Herschel Lofts planning for the border area between the two properties; they have come to an agreement regarding screening and landscaping.
  - g. **A motion is made by Alice, seconded by Jo, and approved by the Committee to approve the design. DJ adds a note of thanks for all the comments that have been shared and recognizes that this project has taken a much different path than many other developments and has been a very positive process. Darwin Lookingbill does not vote in favor.**

VII. 500 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street – Arctic Cat and Jackie Cherryhomes

- a. Arctic Cat has relocated from Plymouth to the North Loop because of the neighborhood's manufacturing history and its ability to attract personnel and business. Since August, the company has already expanded from 26 to 90 employees; its new facility is built for 125, but has the capacity for 175. The relocation has been a huge morale booster for the company.
- b. Arctic Cat would like to make signage changes and add window coverings on seven first level windows; they are requesting a certificate of appropriateness.
  - i. Western Container signs currently on the building are non-historic signs from the 1960s. Rather than remove these signs, Arctic Cat would like to install removable metal signs into mortar joists atop the signs, so as to not damage the building and allow the signs to remain intact. The new covers will have the same footprint as existing signs. The signs are not iridescent, nor are they lit; they will feature Arctic Cat's proprietary green. City to recommend approval at HPC committee meeting. Currently, there is one sign, a blade sign on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is intentionally minimal in its design and presence.
  - ii. The removable films and screens on the windows will have 60% opacity, so that employees can see outward, but passersby cannot peer inside. Employees require the natural light, but there needs to be some level of confidentiality and privacy. The door on 5<sup>th</sup> and the three showroom windows will not have these coverings.

1. The Committee asks about the graphics on the film and suggest they have a more suburban feel. It requests a design that has a subtler commercialism, one that respects the neighborhood.
- c. The new building has space to host a meeting there; stop by anytime for tour.
- d. **A motion is made by Karen, seconded by Alice, and approved by the Committee to approve the proposed signage.**

VIII. 200 Washington Avenue North – Adsit Architecture, Mina Adsit

- a. The redevelopment will include the classic rehabilitation of a historic building at the northwestern corner at the intersection of Washington Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Unoccupied for at least 12 years, this 5,000 square foot building, owned by restaurateur John Rimarcik, will have active retail on the first floor and offices on the second and third. One of the oldest existing structures in the City, it features wooden walls and ceilings, exposed brick, and interior archways.
- b. The building was placed on the Historic Register in 2014; it was approved last month by the Historic Preservation Commission; the project is expecting National Park Service (NPS) Part II approval required for tax credit financing in the next few months.
- c. Per NPS direction, the architect is to maintain as much of interior as possible. Windows that have been bricked in will be added back; the woodwork will match the existing façade; the ghost sign will remain on the exterior; existing windows on the second floor in reparable condition will be cleaned and re-glazed; others on the third floor will be replaced with metal clad wood windows. The adjacent structure, which is not a contributing structure, will remain in place for the time being.
- d. The change in grade prevents the main entrance from being located on Washington Avenue because of accessibility issues; it will be on 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- e. HPC has already approved the proposed design, but Adsit Architecture is requesting a letter of support for the project. **A motion is made by Neil, seconded by Kelly, and approved by the Committee to support the project.**

IX. Committee Business

- a. Neighbor Comments
  - i. There are no neighbor comments.
  - ii. The annual meeting will be held next Wednesday at T3. Please refer to the website for exact times.
- b. Subcommittees Updates
  - i. Dave Decker will be withdrawing from the committee, as he is relocating to San Francisco for work. Darwin Lookingbill is also moving out of state in April and will not be participating through February and March. There will be the need to backfill Dave's and Darwin's positions. Once the new board is elected, there will be new co-chairs as well. There used to be 15 slots; that number has been reduced to 11.
  - ii. Three people (Jarrett, Raisa, and Zack) express interest in running for the Board.
  - iii. The Downtown Master Area Plan came out today; Jo will send the information to DJ to send around. Jo was appointed to the citizens

advisory group for the redevelopment of Nicollet Island. There has been an initial RFQ to facilitate the public engagement process and meeting with citizens; Jo will have more to report in the future.

- iv. The Fancy Pants Dance for all children will be held on February 25, from 4:00-6:00 P.M. at 504 5<sup>th</sup> Street North, behind Coffee Corner. Proceeds will benefit People Serving People.

X. Any additional concerns

- a. There are no additional concerns.

XI. New Business

- a. There is no new business.

XII. The next meeting will be held on February 15, 2017.

Adjourned at 7:27 P.M.