

PAYNE PHALEN DISTRICT FIVE PLANNING COUNCIL

STRONG SAFE WELCOMING CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Community Planning and Economic Development Committee (CPED)

DRAFT MINUTES Tuesday, January 4, 2011

722 Payne Avenue, Saint Paul

Chair: David Syers cped@paynephalen.org

Present: Chair Syers, Roy Evans, Andy Noble, District Five Chair Al Oertwig, Cheryl Peterson, Regina Rippel, Virginia Rybin, Buzz Wilson

Absent: Ed Davis, Mike Venem (excused), Ryan Kapaun (excused)

Staff: Excused

Community Members Present: Linda (from Ramsey County Commissioner Rettman's Office), Jimmy Gerding, Sam Hanson of East Side Neighborhood Development Company (ESNDC).

Chair David Syers called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests.

1. The minutes of the December 7 CPED meeting were reviewed and approved.
2. VACANT BUILDINGS. Sam Hanson of the East Side Neighborhood Development Company (ESNDC) presented information on the organization's Vacant Building Action Team. Over the past three years, he said, residents have volunteered to evaluate vacant buildings to determine whether they were worth saving, which structures should be demolished and which structures should be purchased because of possibilities for future redevelopment. The recommendations are forwarded to city officials. The latest evaluation was done between August and October of 2010 in an area covering roughly 25 blocks around the J. A. Johnson Elementary School. Of the 33 buildings evaluated during that period, 13 were recommended for demolition. Hanson said the residents identify the buildings that are the best possibilities for future redevelopment, and ESNDC urges the city to buy them. He said about 95 were evaluated earlier; he did not have information with him at the meeting on how many of those were recommended for demolition. District Five Chair Al Oertwig moved that CPED support the report's findings and recommendations. The motion was seconded by Buzz Wilson and approved on a voice vote.
3. DULUTH CASE RECREATION CENTER. On Jan. 10, the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department will hold a public meeting on the proposed Park System Plan which includes recommendations for closing this East Side recreation center. Committee Chair Syers, noting earlier closings of other public facilities in District 5 and elsewhere on the East Side, said residents should not have to lose more. The Payne Phalen District Five Planning

Council is on record in opposition to the closing. CPED Committee Member Regina Rippel said a vicious cycle is created as the city fails to fix deteriorating areas in community facilities. Fewer people use them because the neglect results in unsafe conditions, she said, and the city cites declining use as an excuse for closing centers like Duluth Case. Buzz Wilson suggested dedicating a percentage of activity fees to go to ongoing building maintenance. CPED suggests a strategy of reinvestment at this location and does not support closure of the center. District Five Chair Oertwig and leaders of two other community organizations sent a letter opposing the proposed closing to the city's Parks and Recreation Department in November. Oertwig made a motion that District Five reaffirm the letter as its position at the Jan. 10 hearing. The motion was seconded by Cheryl Peterson and approved on a voice vote.

4. **DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS.** Committee members briefly discussed data on the number of auto crashes at major intersections in the city of St. Paul. Several of the intersections with the most accidents included Maryland Avenue paired with various cross streets. Chair Syers recommended that the discussion be continued to a future meeting when traffic experts could attend to answer questions and otherwise explain the data. The continuance was approved.

5. **ALLEGED BAKERY VIOLATION.** The committee received brief reports on informational items. These included a notice to the proprietor of Don Panchos Bakery, 1248 Arcade St. The St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections is recommending action against the bakery's license based on alleged storage of bulk food in open bags. Unused food in open bags should be transferred to approved, tightly-closed bulk containers, the notice says. Andy Noble made a motion to send a letter documenting that D5 is aware of the violations and while we are thankful to have the business in the neighborhood we expect the business to adhere to ordinances and to rectify the violations immediately. The motion was seconded by Al Oertwig and approved on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned.

(Minutes taken by Virginia Rybin and David Syers).