

WEST ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION (SPECIAL MEETING)

The Special Planning Commission meeting of the West St. Paul Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Kavanaugh on Tuesday, August 02, 2018 at 4:35 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers, 1616 Humboldt Avenue, West St. Paul, Minnesota 55118.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Stevens, Chair Kavanaugh, Strohmeier, Leuer, and Green.

Absent:

Commissioner McPhillips and Commissioner Franzmeier.

Also Present:

Assistant Community Development Director Ben Boike,
Community Development Coordinator Melissa Sonnek

Adopt Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2018, and, Regular Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2108.

ON MOTION to APPROVE and ADOPT the Regular Minutes of both regular meetings by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Stevens. Motion approved 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

[PC Case # 18-13 – Conditional Use Permit \(CUP\) to allow Outdoor Seating at 973/975 Smith Ave – Robert and Ann Ulrich \(Continued from July 17, 2018\)](#)

Ben Boike presented the staff report. At the July 17 meeting, this Committee recommended approval a CUP for on-site sale of liquor, which was later approved by Council and this Committee has memorialized the Findings of Fact for the Variance for reduction of street parking at the COA meeting before this meeting. However, at the July 17th meeting because of the concerns of the patio and the construction of the parking lot, it was requested that this item should be continued for further discussion on how the applicant can better design the patio and ensure safe parking lot.

Two options were presented to the Committee for review (included in the Commissioners' packets):

- 1) Remove southern 3 parking stalls, juts the patio into the parking lot and provide the option to back out on Smith Ave to exit parking lot.
- 2) Reorient the parking (north – south) as vehicles pull in from Smith Ave, it can turn left by 90 degrees, parallel to the building. This would keep the patio up against the building. This allows the vehicles to pull in and back up in the parking lot and pull straight out on Smith Ave.

Both options present pros and cons. Option 1 presents better dining experience because the patio is larger, is more visible from the side walk which enhances the sidewalk. However, Staff

recommends option 2 since it is preferable from the point of public safety as the cars will be able to back up in the parking lot before exiting on to Smith Ave.

This parking lot is adequate in lot size to allow turning in and backing out. There is no further room to extend the parking area and put a side walk.

Condition 2 which was contingent upon the approval of the variance of reduced off-street parking stalls is now removed since the Variance was now approved.

The applicant, Ann Ulrich discussed that the 2nd option may not fully allow ADA accessible ramp that meets code. She presented a third option as suggested by their architect. This option is to build the ramp next to the wall of the building and decrease the parking lot by 1 stall. This ramp will meet the code on the “rise to ramp ratio” and provide ADA accessibility. If the ramp was built perpendicular to the building on the north end, it may meet the “rise to ramp ratio” but this would mean that the person in wheelchair will have to enter the restaurant through an entrance that is designated for private party space. This would not be a feasible option, business wise and not a cleanest approach. Also, the architect would have to weigh in on if that option of the ramp will definitively meet the ADA requirement.

Would flipping the whole design of the interior of the restaurant work better? The applicant said she would explore that option with their architect. However, the current layout meets the mechanical layout of in the basement in line with the kitchen in the back.

Mr. Boike concern about losing 1 more parking stall is that the approved Variance would not account for that. To meet parking requirements, could the applicant fit 4 stalls at the back of the proposed restaurant. The parking lot is a sloping and that would mean a ramp built perpendicular to the restaurant on the south end, would be steeper and would need a “higher rise to ramp ratio” which will not be convenient to a person in a wheelchair.

The south entrance, the building 10 to 12 inches higher than the parking lot and at the north entrance (the entrance to the private party room), the building is 6 inches higher than the parking lot.

Commissioner Leuer clarified the “rise to ramp ratio” of 1 inch per 10 to 12 feet is for indoors ramp. For outdoors, it can go up to 5% and if there are railings it can rise 8%. 10 inches is a little higher in 10 feet, but 6 inches is doable. If the redoes the parking lot, they would have the flexibility between 5 to 8 inches of slope.

Commissioner Stevens wanted to reconfirm the Zoning Code for ADA in this case. Mr. Boike clarified; for every 25 stalls, 1 ADA stall is required and any future change in use of property, the ADA accessibility will have to be re-examined.

Chair Kavanaugh suggested a curb between the proposed restaurant and the liquor store for pedestrian safety. The applicant does not have a problem in including this in their site plan. They may include planters, or a low wall.

Chair Kavanaugh's comments on Option 2:

- a) Landscaping between the east stall and the sidewalk: there is some room between the last parking stall and side walk (a couple of feet). Would the applicant be able to build some landscaping there to provide a buffer between the sidewall and the parking? Ben clarified that the building official commented that there should be an 8 ft wide access aisle between the two – however, in that case the eastern parking stall will be pushed very close to the sidewalk. If that is not a mandatory requirement and if there is an exception available, there is some room to work with some landscaping there.
- b) Lighting in the parking lot: Would it be a good idea to provide additional lighting given the residential area surrounding this proposed restaurant? Ben clarified the Lighting Ordinance requires that light is directed in the parking lot and not cross over the property line. Ben suggested the lighting on the exterior of the building will provide adequate lighting in the parking lot.

Commissioner Green suggested a bike rack on the property. The City Staff will work with the applicant on the location of the bike rack. Preferably on the south side wall of the building.

Staff recommends option 2 for the proposed restaurant. Chair Kavanaugh invited the Committee's preferences on the option. Commissioner Stevens was fine with either option as long as the ADA was met. Option 1 of having the dining patio closer to the street would be a good option but if it was a trade off for the ADA, then option 2 is preferred which addresses the ADA. Commissioner Green prefers Option 2 as it addresses pedestrian safety better than Option 1. Commissioner Leuer is ok with either Option 2 or 3 and understands why the Commissioners prefer option 2. Commissioner Strohmeier prefers Option 2 as it is the practical option to get the ADA requirement met.

Chair Kavanaugh suggested in Option 2 from the north side from the sidewalk directly to the entrance be striped safe crossing area.

ON MOTION to APPROVE the Conditional Use Permit (Option 2) to allow Outdoor Seating at 973/975 Smith Ave – Robert and Ann Ulrich by Commissioner Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Strohmeier with the following additional conditions to the original 8 conditions:

- 9. Put in a bike rack**
- 10. Appropriate lighting in the parking lot and patio**
- 11. Potential landscaping to buffer the sidewalk with the parking**
- 12. Curb or barrier between the south access to the event side and the liquor store Chin Chin's parking lot**
- 13. Pedestrian striping from the sidewalk to the entrance on the north end.**

Public Hearings: The public hearing was held for this CUP. None from the public was available at this meeting for additional comments/feedback.

New Business: None

ADJOURNMENT:

ON MOTION by Commissioner Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Green, Commissioners RESOLVED to ADJOURN the August 2, 2018 special meeting of the Planning Commission at 5:09pm. Motion approved 5-0

Prajacta (Alex) Eveland
Recording Specialist