

SUMMIT-UNIVERSITY PLANNING COUNCIL

Board of Directors

Meeting, 2008 July 22

Minutes

The Board of Directors of the Summit-University Planning Council met on Tuesday, 2008 July 22, at the St. Albans Community Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Beeman, Keillin Curtis, Angela Earl, Frances Goodlow, Annie Heideman, Dick Kleinbaum, Amy Michael, Carl Nelson, Brock Obee, Marquitta Ransom, Edward Swanson, Darren Tolbolt, Emmerson Ward, Steve Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Duddingston, Pauline Eichten, Jeff Gardner, Babette Jamison, Tim Jorrisen, Rena Moran, Charlie Neimeyer, LaVina Wells, David Youmans

STAFF PRESENT: Irna Landrum, Elen Bahr

GUESTS: Erin Dady, Mayor's Office; Nanette Echols, Brian Hopkins, and Betsy Raasch-Gilman, RNC Welcoming Committee; Jim Michaud, Freedom House; Mark Voerding, Ramsey County

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the President, Steve Wilson, at 7:02 PM.
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: It was requested that item 6.c.1. be moved up to follow item 3. Upon motion by Michelle Beeman, seconded, it was

VOTED, That the agenda be approved as amended.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Angela Ward noted that her name had been omitted from the list of Members Present. Upon motion by Darren Tolbolt, seconded, it was

VOTED, That the minutes of the 2008 June 24 meeting be approved as amended.

6.c.i. COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST. Elen Bahr, who had been hired recently as the Communications Specialist for the Summit-University Planning Council, was introduced. She talked about plans for communications that she would be undertaking, for example, a slide show for Rondo Days, an updated Web site with promotional material on the home page and an updated calendar, and columns for the *Villager*. She is working on her first issue of *The Front Porch*.

4. UPDATES ON RNC: Erin Dady from the Mayor's Office spoke about plans for the Republican National Committee. She distributed maps of the traffic management and parking management plans. Approximately 45,000 visitors, including 15,000 from the media, are anticipated. They will be using approximately 17,000 hotel rooms. The concern of the Police Department is for both public safety and access. During the Convention, the police will continue to patrol neighborhoods as is done now. Buses will be rerouted; information on this will be available in early August. Certain parking ramps in downtown Saint Paul will be closed, and people who normally park in those ramps will be shuttled into the downtown area. She emphasized that the downtown will be open for business. Information about protest routes are available online.

5. RNC WELCOMING COMMITTEE: Nanette Echols, Brian Hopkins, and Betsy Raasch-Gilman from the RNC Welcoming Committee (RNCWC) were introduced. They described themselves as an "antiauthoritarian anarchists committee". They are planning actions on Labor Day, not during the working week. They are hoping to blockade delegates out of the Xcel Energy Center, the idea being that what people will be seeing on television is an empty center. They think that perhaps 5,000 persons will be involved in their activities. On August 31 there will be a

peaceful march to the cwenner, and on September 2 there will be a poor peoples' march. "Peace Island" will be a two-day conference at Concordia College. On September 4 there will be a high school walkout and march toward the State Capital. The RNCWC itself is not planning any violent actions, but they said they don't have any control over others. An open forum will be held on August 6. They also will be opening a center where people can go and find out what is going on. They distributed leaflets about some of the events.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AND SAFETY COMMITTEE: Jim Michaud spoke about a new program he is operating through Freedom House and the Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation called Aurora/St. Anthony Senior Chore Service. The plan is for residents of Freedom House to provide free community service to the elderly, low income, and disabled residents of Aurora/St. Anthony and District 8. Each resident is required to spend two hours per week on the project. They do things such as lawn service, painting, minor repairs, and the like. They are looking for donations of supplies, as well as the cooperative support of the SUPC office and help with advertising. During the discussion, there was some concern mainly about the logistics of the endeavor, although everyone on the Board seemed to be in favor of SUPC working with the group.

Annie Heideman said that she had been meeting with neighborhood activists about the proposed Youth Council and that she has been trying to get adult support.

b. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: Emmerson Ward, member of the Committee, reported. Two projects had been discussed at the Committee's meeting. One was a proposal for the construction of retail and office space at the site of the former Asian supermarket at Western and Central. All of the paperwork for the city has been done. There were some questions about cleanup of the property. The Committee indicated that no formal support from SUPC had been requested.

The second project was at the old police stations site at Dale and University. This is for retail space and fifty units of senior housing. Again, no formal support from SUPC had been requested.

A member of the SUPC has been requested for work on the formal planning process for the 2010-2020 watershed management plan. Angela Earl expressed an interest in serving in that position.

Upon motion by Emmerson Ward on behalf of the committee, it was

VOTED, That the Summit-University Planning Council write a letter in support of the West Village project.

c. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE: Brock Obee, Chair, reported. A postcard has been prepared for National Night Out. This will be handed out at Rondo Days and also distributed at local businesses in the district.

At the committee meeting they had discussed some of the challenges facing them. One of the main ones relates to advertising. There is approximately \$850 for advertising in *The Front Porch* that is past due. An effort needs to be made to collect this money. They will be developing a new protocol for advertising, making sure that the rates are competitive. They are asking everyone on the Board to help with finding advertisers as they are able. Each issue of the newsletter costs about \$2,300.

d. FINANCE COMMITTEE: The financial reports as of June 30 had been distributed with the Board packets. In the absence of the Treasurer, Edward Swanson, a member of the Finance Committee, reported on the continuing plans for the fall fundraising campaign.

e. LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: Amy Michael, Chair, reported. Elen Bahr has agreed to serve as facilitator for the Board retreat. The retreat will include discussion of quarterly and annual goals. The date of the retreat was discussed, and the consensus was that a date in September or October was preferable to one in August.

f. LRT AD HOC COMMITTEE/DISTRICT COUNCIL COLLABORATIVE: Steve Wilson reported on recent developments. The most recent update has been sent out. The supplemental draft EIS is due August 25. It is believed that there is legal action pending, and he encouraged people to watch the news on August 4.

Carl Nelson called attention to an editorial in the July 20 issue of the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* that stated that Rondo Days “should remind us to be careful before we ‘pave Paradise’ and put up an interstate highway. Or a light rail line” and that “St. Paul has always drawn strength from its neighborhoods, and major developments must play to that strength.”

Upon motion by Carl Nelson, seconded, it was

VOTED, That the Summit-University Planning Council write a letter to the Saint Paul Pioneer Press thanking them for this editorial and emphasizing that the strengths of Summit-University, which is the neighborhood of Rondo, are the residents of the neighborhood and the small businesses of the cultural heritage corridor along University Avenue; that if light rail and Central Corridor development happens, SUPC residents and businesses, and it is hoped all of our fellow St. Paulites, will work strenuously to preserve the homes of residents and the viability of the small businesses, as well as insisting that light rail serve those residents and business by having stops for passengers at Western Avenue and Victoria Street; and that copies of the letter also be sent to the members of the Metropolitan Council and the Ramsey County Commissioners.

7. STAFF REPORT: A written report was submitted by the Executive Director. She mentioned how happy she was to have had Der Vang as an intern through the end of August. She also mentioned that she had met with a media relations professional.

8. OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Upon motion by Dick Kleinbaum, seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The proposed Central Corridor light rail project and related land use development will likely bring about significant changes in the years ahead to the communities of Frogtown and Rondo; and,

WHEREAS, These changes, in the absence of comprehensive planning and engagement, have the potential for negatively affecting the most vulnerable members of these communities; and,

WHEREAS, A number of community organizations representing these neighborhoods, including District 7/Thomas Dale, the Greater Frogtown Community Development Corporation, District 8/Summit-University, Aurora/Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation, University United/U-PLAN, and the city of St. Paul have created a collaboration to proactively plan for managing these changes in a way that will provide maximum benefits to the community and minimal disruption; and,

WHEREAS, This collaboration, known as the Frogtown Rondo Partnership, has applied to the Environmental Simulation Center, consultant and grantee of the Ford Foundation, for funding for a special pilot project to undertake this planning, and has been awarded a major multi-year grant; Now, Therefore, Be it

RESOLVED, That Summit-University Planning Council formally accept this grant and authorize our participation in this pilot project to be managed by the Frogtown Rondo Steering Committee consisting of representatives from each of the partner organizations.

b. Upon motion by Amy Michael, seconded, it was

VOTED, That the Summit-University Planning Council support the proposed streetcar memorial for the Selby Avenue Streetcar Tunnel.

10. ADJOURN: Upon motion by Dick Kleinbaum, seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Edward Swanson
Secretary