



## HOUSING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 24, 2010  
Edgumbe Recreation Center

**Committee Members:** Mary Davis, John Haggenmiller, Steve Matysik, Gregg Curtis, Jane Amberg, Carrie Au-Yeung, Joel Clemmer, Leo Viktora, John Errigo

**Also in Attendance:** Afton Martens (staff), Susie Odegard, Joan Foreman, Gertrude Foreman, Anne Barthel, Russ Adams, Pau Wentzel, Ralph Congdon, Todd Curtis, Pamela Roemer, Mark Roemer, Bryan Bearss, Alec Dunkel, Wendy Ruble, Sarah Carlsson

Meeting called to order. Attendance roster distributed. Committee introductions.

### **University of St. Thomas Student Center & Athletic Complex Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit**

Doug Hennes from the University of St. Thomas gave a presentation on the University of St. Thomas Student Center and Athletic Complex Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit. Doug explained that the student center is taking place of the existing parking lot and the athletic center directly behind. The old gym was demolished. The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) has been involved during the process of the project. The project will also go before the Heritage Preservation Commission in March and the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission in April. Much of the construction falls on the north side of Summit in Union Park, with pedestrian and vehicle traffic and new parking lot at Grand and Cretin.

Questions from committee members included parking, budget, traffic flow, and whether neighbors attended the WSNAC meetings. Doug stated that most (about 3/4<sup>th</sup>) of students have parking permits and that the parking ramp is typically about 3/4<sup>th</sup> full and full at peak times and during events.

No committee action taken.

### **Application for a Conditional Use Permit, Cell Tower at Groveland Park**

Larry Coleman, of Clearwire LLC, and Susie Odegard, of St. Paul Parks & Recreation, presented information on an application for a Conditional Use Permit for a cell tower at Groveland Park. Larry explained that the focus of this cell tower was not for cell phone users but that the cell tower would supply wireless internet access and data as part of their network. Clearwire would like to replace the light standard with a cell tower and a small equipment cabinet (about 25' x 25' x 50"). The cell tower would be twice height of the existing pole. There is a similar application at Eastview Park. The footprint will be about twice the size of the current size and the foundation will be larger. Susie stated that the City's Parks & Recreation Department receives funds for the cell tower and enters into contracts with the providers for 5 years at a time.

Residents in attendance expressed concern regarding: creating an eye sore in the community, the cell tower as an inappropriate use for a park, the cell tower interfering with use of the park due to location and size, setting a precedent for more cell towers in the park, potential health hazards to residents, as well as concerns regarding the ownership and lease of the site. Residents that provided feedback to the council prior to the meeting voiced similar concerns and opposition to the application.

The committee chair pointed out that the committee recommended approval to a similar request just last month, so it is important to distinguish the differences: the other proposal did not have strong resident opposition, geographic difference (due to the shape of the two parks, surrounding buildings, trees), and the latest proposal is 25' higher as well as much wider. Motion: *The Macalester-Groveland Community Council recommends the Planning Commission reject the conditional use permit by Clearwire placement of a cell tower at Groveland Recreation Center.* Moved/Seconded/Passed. Two abstentions.

### **Wine Thief Expansion and Request to Waive 45-Day Notification Period**

Paul Wentzel of the Wine Thief came to the meeting to request a 45-Day Notification Period waiver in order to speed along the process of expanding into the space next door.

Community feedback submitted to the council prior to the public meeting included support for the expansion, as well as concerns regarding delivery trucks blocking the alley behind the business, and cardboard boxes not properly placed in a recycling bin littering the alley (and the potential for these issues to increase as a result of the expansion). A resident in attendance at the meeting expressed concern regarding the need for a privacy fence between the proposed expansion and 1781 St. Clair Avenue. The committee asked that Paul work with neighbors to address those issues. Motion: *The Macalester-Groveland Community Council supports the 45 day waiver contingent upon successful resolution of neighbor concerns, particularly regarding a privacy fence issue.* Moved/Seconded/Passed.

### **Staff Updates and Announcements**

Afton made some announcements and gave some updates.

Meeting adjourned.