



## Prospect Park Association Land Use Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2022, 7:00 pm Regular monthly meeting (Zoom)

### Community Members Present:

1. *John Wicks (Chair)*
2. *Jeff Barnhart*
3. *Dan Bryant*
4. *David Frank*
5. *Dick Gilyard*
6. *Brooke Magid-Hart*
7. *John Kari*
8. *Ron McCoy*
9. *Jere Purple*

10. *Joe Ring*
11. *Donna Schneider*
12. *Joyce Walker*
13. *Julie Wallace*
14. *Lynn Von Korff*

### Guests Present:

1. *Larry Crawford (SECIA)*

1. **Call to Order.** Land Use Committee Chair *John Wicks* called the meeting to order.
2. **District Energy Stormwater System Project Update.** *Dick Gilyard* gave an update on the proposed non-carbon-based district energy system which will provide energy to multiple buildings. The McKnight Foundation provided \$600,000 for Evergreen Energy to conduct a research and feasibility analysis on the system. To fund the 1st phase, the City of Minneapolis approved \$11 million in bonds and \$2 million in loans. McKnight Foundation pledged an additional \$1 million.

The plan was to adapt two existing deep wells on Wall Company property. The wells would serve as a water thermal storage system. The system would have initially served the two Wall apartment buildings at Malcolm and 4th street, currently under construction. More buildings would need to be added, but the project could move ahead financially with two buildings. The work was to begin this October. Subsequently, Wall dropped out of the project, but the University of Minnesota is exploring the possibility of using the proposed system to provide energy to their five research buildings on the North side of University Ave. The University is working with Evergreen to conduct a research and feasibility analysis. We are waiting to hear the outcome. If constructed, stormwater would run through underground pipes to provide heating and cooling. The system would be community, user, and investor owned.

3. **Motion for PPA to support the proposed Murphy Warehouse Affordable Housing Project in Como neighborhood.** On behalf of Southeast Como Improvement Association (SECIA), *Joe Ring* presented a motion for PPA's Land Use Committee and Board of Directors to send a letter to the City Council and CPED supporting the Murphy Ridge developer concept for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the north portion of the Murphy Warehouse buildings, as affordable housing. *Lynn Von Korff* seconded the motion. *Larry Crawford* of SECIA's Land Use Committee answered questions.

SECIA has requested that CPED approve necessary amendments to the comprehensive plan and zoning to enable the proposed preservation and redevelopment of the northern portion of

the Murphy Warehouse site at 2222 Elm St. SE. The project requires a change to the 2040 plan. The City Council suggested SECIA obtain support from adjacent neighborhoods. Marcy-Holmes has already provided a letter of support for the project.

The project serves three goals: affordability, density, and preservation. According to SECIA, the “Murphy Warehouse buildings (originally Wabash Screen Door Company, circa 1910) makes a strong contribution to the neighborhood's visual and built-environment fabric, and relates strongly to the origin and development of the Como area as a working class and immigrant community with adjacent manufacturing, grain, and rail industries.”

Land Use Members requested that *Joe Ring's* draft support letter be revised to define AMI and replace the “old” with “former.” *Larry Crawford* will also provide photos of the project site, which Lynn will forward to PPA staff for the July board packet, along with *Joe Ring's* revised draft support letter. The motion passed unanimously and will be placed on the July 25th PPA board meeting agenda.

- 4. Pedestrian path from University Ave. to Williams Ave.** On behalf of PPA's Transportation Committee, *David Frank* asked the Land Use Committee to collect information on the closure of the pedestrian path connecting University Ave. to Williams Ave. The path provides a short cut to light rail for some Glendale and Arthur Ave. residents. The path potentially shortens the route by up to three blocks for some residents.

*Jeff Barnhart*, Prospect Park Properties, attended the meeting to provide background information. Prospect Park Properties installed the fence on private property owned by Prospect Park Properties (2828 University Ave.) and North Star Partnership (2835 Williams Ave). The property owners agreed the fence was needed, at least for the time being.

*Jeff Barnhart* explained that adding the fence was a last resort; not their first step. They installed the fence because during the past year they have experienced a sustained high level of crime (vandalism, car theft, people peering in and knocking on the windows as they pass, littering, etc.). They tried working with the police, calling 911 to request help, and asked the community for help. The police have not been responding to calls about property theft or vandalism. The lack of response has been ongoing and deeply discouraging. Since improvements did not materialize, the property owners installed the fence. The fence has essentially stopped the vandalism.

The reason the fence is effective is because the path provided a way for those committing offenses to leave the area without being identified. This is because there are no security cameras or lighting on the path. It was a convenient “escape” route. Existing security cameras have shown that vandals head in the direction of the path. There are security lights and cameras in other directions, but none along this path. It would be expensive to add lighting and cameras because there's no electrical wiring or poles along the path. It would be preferable to add lighting and cameras, but the property owners are not prepared to assume this large expense themselves.

The property owners included a gate in the fence, which could be unlocked in the future if crime levels drop, and the police respond to calls. It might also be possible to reopen the path if the city made the path safer and less attractive to vandals (e.g., install a sidewalk, street lighting, etc.)

There was no motion on this issue in Land Use. The sense of members was to provide this information to the Transportation Committee so they could consider further action, if any, such as recommending that the City of Minneapolis make the path safe for pedestrians and unattractive to vandals.

5. **New Land Use Committee Chair.** *John Wicks* announced he is resigning as Land Use Committee Chair. PPA will need a need Land Use Chair. *John* suggested co-chairs might also work well. Those interested in service as the Land Use Committee Chair or Co-chairs should contact *Eric Amel*, PPA Board President, and/or *Liza Davitch* at [staff@prospectparkmpls.org](mailto:staff@prospectparkmpls.org) who will forward the information to Eric. Committee Chairs are nominated by the Board President and elected by the Board. Until there is a new chair or co-chairs, agenda items for Land Use meeting should be emailed to [staff@prospectparkmpls.org](mailto:staff@prospectparkmpls.org) or [landuse@prospectparkmpls.org](mailto:landuse@prospectparkmpls.org) and forwarded to PPA's Management Council for action by a PPA board task force or another committee.
6. **Thank You to John Wicks - outgoing Land Use Chair.** Committee members thanked *John Wicks* for his many years of dedicated service as Land Use Chair. They noted *John's* fairness. His organizational and facilitation skills served as a model for committee work. *John* displayed calm, patience, fairness, and professional poise during one of the liveliest periods of development in Prospect Park. Members noted we owed John a purple heart and hazard pay for his work! Land Use is one of the hardest committees to chair because of the extraordinary scope – the projects touch on everything in the neighborhood. *John's* leadership was reliable and consistent. He kept excellent records of documents and agreements. *Julie Wallace* noted that we need to ensure *John's* documents make it to the PPA archives at the library. *Lynn Von Korff* will contact *Susan Larson - Fleming*, who is a historian and familiar with this process, and then reach out to *John* after he returns from his upcoming vacation. Committee members extend their deepest appreciation to *John!* *John* assured us we will see him at future Land Use meetings. Much thanks to *John!*
7. **Home2 Rooftop café open.** *Jeff Barnhart* announced that the new Home 2 rooftop café at 2808 University Ave SE is opened, and all are welcome.
8. **Plans to address the Parking Shortage on the north side of University Ave.** *Dick Gilyard* reminded the committee that Towerside funded a parking space assessment in 2016. At that time, they found that if the land was developed as proposed, there would be a shortage of 3,000-4,000 parking spaces. In fact, there is an extreme packing crunch. There will be a task force to study and take action on this issue in the Fall, including conversations with Metro Transit. The group will consider such issues as where to locate a new parking facility north of University Ave. and who will fund the project. *Dick Gilyard* suggested a representative from PPA serve on this task force. No action record at this time.

Respectfully submitted:

*Lynn Von Korff*  
Prospect Park Association member

APPROVED by the Land Use Committee, August 11, 2022.