

DRAFT Minutes of August 8, 2011
FNA Board Meeting

Board Members Present: Jeremy Abbs, Jeff Alden, Ellen Berner, John Finlayson, Lynn Steele, Steve Haslach, Erle Savage, Steve Young.

Minutes from the July 12, 2011 FNA meeting were approved.

Board Actions: The Board approved a motion to pay additional expenses for the B.L.E.N.D. Award, above the \$550 that has been spent to date on printing and mailing. Zoning Chair Ellen Berner estimated that additional expenditures will run a couple hundred dollars more. The B.L.E.N.D. Award has brought in \$1,300 in fees this year.

Other:

- FNA President Steve Young circulated a written copy of the Council Member's Betsy Hodges' report.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Erle Savage will be adding funds to the Tree CD from the Plant Sale proceeds.
- **Pershing Park** – Park Director Marc Holtey reported that there is a new phone system at Pershing Park. Marc also noted that Cliff Swenson was rehired as a Park Board planner and Marc met with him about recently about Pershing building updates. They discussed bathroom updates, accessibility for people who use wheelchairs, upgrading furnaces and heating and possibly cooling. These items will go out to bid this fall. These improvements are being pursued through the MPRB capital funds.
- Pershing Field improvements are not yet underway. Still projected to hit optimum seeding window around Labor Day. First phase is grading and soil modification. They will then install irrigation and seed and remove Field number 3. They will tear up entire turf area. There has been a lot of moisture this year which will help keep the dust down.
- **Fulton Farmers Market** - Jim Sowers, Facilities Manager from Lake Harriet Methodist UMC was present. Steve Young offered the Board's thanks for hosting the Farmers Market and the Fulton Festival. We appreciate the church's support of the community.
- There were no questions on this month's Committee Update reports.
- **Zoning Update from Ellen:** There were 26 submittals for the B.L.E.N.D. Award, which amounted to \$1,300 in fees collected. Ellen submitted the checks for deposit to our Friends of Fulton account. The jury selected 9 properties – 3 are commercial, 2 are new builds and the rest are residential remodels. The award ceremony will be at Vinaigrette. This year the B.L.E.N.D. award expanded to the full city. Press coverage has been good. The presenter will be Dean Johnson from Hometown, a show that is produced here in the Twin Cities. The awards will be Sept. 15 from 7-9 p.m. at Vinaigrette. All are welcome.
- **The Waters Senior Living on 50th** – Ellen introduced Jay Jensen, the developer from The Waters. They have revised the development's designs based on neighborhood input collected at the July Zoning Committee meeting. They are requesting two things from City of Minneapolis:
 - A conditional use permit because it's an assisted living development for seniors.
 - And because 20% of units will be affordable housing, they have applied for TIF and affordable senior housing funding.
- Jay said that demand on site is 263 units or 4 times what is being proposed. There will be Care Suites (7) – a higher level of care. 64 underground parking spaces. Peak staffing is 20 staff between breakfast at 8 or 8:30 to lunch time (12 noon.) A licensed nurse will be on duty 24 hours a day. Each unit has a "magic pack" with its own heating and cooling unit. Neighbors won't hear heaters or air conditioning units.
- Jay held up the design boards, which presented several views of the proposed development.
- The first board included a view from the Lake Harriet Methodist Church. The revised version has removed 3 units on the 4th floor on the Northeast and Northwest corners. This changed reflects a bump back look for the 4th floor at the NW and NE Corners. They have also moved the building closer to 50th St. They are trying to mirror the building across the street to give it more of a residential feel. Both the front and the back look like fronts. There is a two-story atrium all the way through and a low maintenance façade.

- Jay offered to email the designs to anyone.
- From curb to building is 25 feet all the way around. The design includes a patio area with a low wall to give some definition. The main entrance is in the back close to the church. The entrance to the parking ramp is in the back of the building, rather than from the street. It also includes a fountain and flood lights that aim at the sign. No exterior lights on the sides.
- On the back there will be four canned lights and some lighting around the walkway. Most of the lighting will be ambient. Unit lights will not stay on very late.
- There is a 14-unit memory support. It is a good size and stays quiet. They have their own dining areas and common areas and memory support gardens.
- The building will have a living room, wellness areas, library/bistro, fitness area will include recumbent bikes and weight and balance programs. There is a spa (beauty shop and more.)
- Receiving will be tucked away and will unload to the first floor. They will not have to back up to unload. Can pull through.
- Higher level of nursing care is on the east side of the building.
- The kitchen has been moved to keep it inside.
- The third floor is all apartments. There is a full kitchen in every apartment that includes washer/dryer. Like regular apartments.
- People can age in place. They bring the services to the seniors rather than making them move.
- Some units have decks.
- There are 3 units on the outside perimeter of the 4th floor Southwest side, across from Wuollets and one home on Chowen.
- Garage – 64 spaces underneath. Will likely have 40 spaces unused. It will also possible for neighbors to park a boat there in the winter in unused spaces. There will be a dedicated parking area for employees. They also subsidize public transportation for their employees.
- **What did you lose by bumping part of the 4th floor in?** Now extends closer toward 50th St. as suggested in zoning meeting. Still 90 units, but in a new arrangement.
- They have moved the kitchen in response to suggestions.
- They will have underground water storage system, a perforated system so they don't cause water run-off problems for neighbors.
- Regarding the financing – They will put in a super sinker to pay off debt early. Will be between 9-10 years to pay off TIF.
- **How does affordable housing work for 20 units?** Some people live longer than their assets. The average stay is 3-7 years. For folks who spend down their assets, they work with Hennepin County on the Elderly Waiver Program. TIF pays for half of affordable housing themselves and The Waters pay for the other half of it. They don't take a developer fee.
- The exit stairs and lighting have been moved inside.
- **What about ambulance service?** On average, once or twice a week an ambulance will come. Some with no sirens. Medical emergency will have lights and sirens as they come. They would turn off lights and sirens as they turn onto Chowen or Beard Avenue.
- They have submitted Affordable Housing Trust Fund in July. Have not submitted CUP yet. Will do that after this meeting. IF they get through City Council this fall, they would break ground this spring.
- **What is the overall height of the building?** Midway up the roof is 52 feet, measuring from the front door.
- **What in this neighborhood is 52 feet?** Jay wasn't sure. He would have to measure. Jim Sowers said the sanctuary is the tallest part of Lake Harriet Methodist Church. The Beard side of the church is probably 20 feet. The sanctuary is 40 feet.
- **How much green space?** 25 feet around the building.
- **Are the existing curb cuts going to be used?** They will rip the current ones out, but they will be close to the same location. The landscape plan will restore the boulevard with trees on Beard and Chowen. Will match typical family homes.

- There will need to be a separation from the church parking lot. There is now a hedge. It will belong to the Waters. The Waters will replace all the bushes and put new bushes in. There will be a hedge of some form.
- Height at the one corner is a little higher. When you walk the site, the SE corner on 50th and Beard is the highest and the other 3 corner are the same – will have a 3-ft retaining wall. Will try to lower it on the site.
- **On the Beard side, will you see a 4 story building or 3 story building?** They are trying to design it so it requires no variances. They didn't want a flat roof. They have looked at the Bancroft design.
- Request to look at the 4th story. The building will set down slightly lower on the property. Will look more like 3-1/2 stories.
- **Is there a way to extend the roofline to 50th Street?** Need 90 units to make the numbers work out. Woullets is on the Chowen side. Also needed to keep the building symmetrical. There are 3 or 4 homes along Beard that will have a view of a 4-story building. And 3 homes on Chowen that will have a view of a 4 story building behind the bumped out units.
- Resident comment: Once it goes up it will be up and it will be big. It will likely be up for a long time.
- **What is the company's thought after 20 years? Will it become an apartment building with a restaurant?** Between 2020 and 2040 demand for this kind of housing and care will almost triple. The demand is softer for the next 10 years. They are doing a Conditional Use Permit saying it has to be senior housing for 55 and older. You would not build an apartment building with so many common areas. Jay projects that it will be there for 40 years.
- They don't need a variance for height. Previous project was about the same height. They don't need a variance because of the underground parking. It will be tall. There are a lot of open areas. One Board member stated that he feels they could get 90 units on three floors. Jay responded that they want a certain distance between windows for privacy. Need enough spread to include a drive around.
- **Will the flow of traffic be one way off Chowen?** They have not figured that out yet. The traffic study is just getting underway. They are open to suggestions. Chowen has a tendency to back up past the church in the morning and in the afternoon when kids get out of school.
- The traffic study is pertinent. Need to look at an arm on the Chowen light because the lights are so far off. Need to fix the light at Chowen and perhaps add a light at Beard. There is a lot of on-street parking on Chowen.
- **What materials will be used?** The outside will be hardy board, stone on the front. They don't know the colors yet. Hardy board is a cement board. They will make a material sample board available.
- The main signage will be on retaining wall. It will say "The Waters on 50th." There will also be two monument signs that will be lit one way. They are turned so they are parallel to the street. The signs will be lit with two small spotlights. The 50th St. sign will have four spotlights.
- **Why do we need small signs at the driveways?** Jay said they will look really residential. They have talked to the church about how they will look.
- **Will you be using pilings?** The soil is challenging in some spots. They will screw in piers rather than pounding in pilings. They used this approach at another development.
- Resident comment: May need some resurfacing on Chowen after heavy equipment has come through.
- **Fulton Farmers Market will be open annually. How will they protect vegetables, open air, etc. How will construction dust not contaminate the market?** They don't usually work on Saturdays. Jay said he would make sure. He will make sure that we know how to get a hold of him during construction.
- **Height seems to be the biggest issue. There are 4 stories next to ranch-style homes. How do people feel about the 4th story right across the street?**
 - Sue Frankowski stated that she wishes the development would be three stories throughout. The developer is not requesting a zoning code change so they have the right to go as tall as the zoning code allows. She doesn't like it, but the zoning code is what it is. She likes that the developer is working with the neighborhood and homeowners. She stated we need to be careful. Logically we may need to compromise.

- **John Finlayson mentioned the issue of the TIF district. The land produces minimal revenue. There will be 8-10 years when it will be producing no revenue. Wish they would not use the TIF dollars. TIFs are designed to deal with blighted areas. This is not a blighted area. He stated that he is opposed to using TIF funds.** Jay responded that he ran the MCDA at one time so he understands TIF funding. The Waters of Minnehaha is eligible for TIF for affordable housing.
- **Does everyone understand TIF?** The property is taxed at a certain rate, the building will be taxed at a much higher rate. They take the difference between the two.
- Jay stated that they are applying for \$125,000 in TIF funding per year for The Waters on 50th. The total would be 2.5 million for affordable housing unit, paid for by the difference in property taxes. Will not be fully assessed until the TIF is paid off. They are paying half of the subsidy and it will shrink to half of 20 years.
- **How much land will you have for snow removal?** About 25 feet. Will likely have to haul for heavy snows.
- Resident comment: The city is generous with OR designations – to allow offices and residential to reside together. 51st and France is zoned OR. It's going to be by far the largest building in the area. It's on the edge of the commercial area. 2-3 houses on Beard are rental property. Resident is concerned that this might encourage someone to looking at another project between Abbott and Beard. Will increase their property value on Beard.
- The reason why Pinehurst did not need variances was because they would have had a strictly residential use. Because this is senior living it requires a conditional use permit. City can put conditions on the use within reason.
- Jeff Alden applauds the affordable housing component. He likes to see socially-oriented developments going up. It was going to be luxury condos before. We have parents and ourselves who will need this.
- Erle Savage stated that he thinks it was a very fair presentation. Better than an empty lot. Make it high quality.
- **How much will the units rent for?** Rent will start at \$3,200-3,500/month for one bedroom. This is the market rate, per Jay. Rent is usually \$3,300-4,000 for 2 bedroom/2 baths. Additional medical services will be more. Memory support will be \$5,500. Care suites are \$6,000-9000 per month. The average length of stay is 3-7 years. The company likes to include an affordable housing component in their developments.
- Nursing home today is \$6,000/month. This is much cheaper than a nursing home. They will not have a nursing home on site.
- This is the 11th development of this type that The Waters has built and the second one in the City of Minneapolis. Other locations include: Little Falls, Princeton, Plymouth, Eden Prairie.
- **What about the mechanicals and generators?** The generator is inside. The main gas is outside. Will likely be in middle. You hide it with bushes.
- Zoning Chair Ellen Berner commented that none of us like to see tall buildings go in because we are used to the village we live in. We'd like to keep it that way. She feels The Waters has made accommodations to address the concerns of the neighborhood and she appreciates that. They don't need any variances.
- FNA President Steve Young commented that he appreciates their willingness to adapt to meet neighbors' concerns. Height is still big issue facing residential streets. He suggested that they think about that as they are tweaking things.
- Jay said that they are meeting in two weeks with architects. Submittal will be in late September. He is willing to come back so neighbors can see the changes that have made. They would have the landscaping plan at that time.
- **Could we see the side view from Beard and Chownen and some perspective drawings?** It's difficult to gauge the true size by seeing it without what is around it. Jay agreed to provide perspective drawings.
- Jay agreed to provide a shadow plan.
- Suggestion that Jay may want to look at the lighting at 5100 Drew. Jay said he would drive by to look at it.
- **Have there been other proposals for use of that property? Have other developers come in since The Bancroft project?** No, not since the Bancroft. The CVS Pharmacy proposal was before that.
- Jay said that the property is under contract for purchase. They have the right to buy.

- ***There was once a proposal for the parking lot at 51st and France. Potential may be there. Are there other options we are looking at and other risks?*** Mr. Minn did not own the land at 51st and France. The Bancroft that was proposed didn't need any variances. This needs a conditional use permit. If this didn't work, someone else could throw up a 4 story housing project and they would not need any variances. It is private property.
- Someone could also put in a minimal office building. With the cost of land today, everyone wants to build as much as they can. There is a minimum size that makes it work economically.
- There may be a risk to not accepting this project. Where is the balance point?
- Jay will plan to attend the September 14 FNA meeting to present further information about the project and changes that have been made since this meeting. FNA will publicize this in the FNN, on our website, and in the enews.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Rhea Sullivan, Neighborhood Coordinator

Approved by FNA Board: _____

Signed: _____

Jim Tincher, Secretary