

Transportation and Land Use Committee Meeting October 1, 2025

Committee Members: Meg Duhr, Sara Fleetham, Seth Smiglewski, JB Shank, Joe Landsberger, John Yust
FRF Staff: Julia McColley
City of St. Paul Staff: Bill Dermody

Congregate Living Zoning Study – Bill Dermody

Federal funding streams have change. This prompted several Sober Houses to request variances to allow more residents.

Planning Commission questions for the public:

How many adult residents should be permitted in a sober house?

- “Sober houses” are a form of sober living group homes that are not staffed, have no onsite services, are financially self-supporting, and are not regulated by the state.
- They provide a non-institutional residential environment with rules and regulations intended to encourage and sustain the residents’ recovery from chemical dependency.
- There is currently no upper limit to the number of sober house residents in most zoning districts in St. Paul. We desire to set a reasonable limit that allows the facility to function like a family.
- The current minimum separation distance is 330 feet.

How far should sober houses be separated from each other?

- The current minimum separation distance is 330 feet.

How far should supportive housing facilities, emergency housing, shelters for battered persons, and certain other congregate living facilities be separated from each other?

- The current minimum separation distance is 1,320 feet in most of the city (outside of downtown).
- Planning Commission is considering distances between 300 feet (a short block) to 1,000 feet.
- Also considering having a shorter distance if there is an arterial street in between the facilities.

Will these definitions make it easier for facility operators to know which category of congregate living they fall under in St. Paul? There has been confusion over whether certain facilities fall under “sober houses” or “supportive housing” in our code. Planning Commission wants to make it clearer going forward.

Committee proposes District 9 Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting 10/17/25.

Update from Previous Meetings – Meg Duhr

Walk the Corridor Event

- 9/10/25
- Well-attended
- Finished at Joe & Stans

Meeting with FCC and Mayor Carter

- 9/29/25
- Wouldn't agree to most of FRF Requests
- Will ask trucks to not cut through Schmidt
- Exploring areas to put food scraps collection

Upcoming Events – Meg Duhr

Mayoral Forum, 10/6/25, Gloria Dei Church

Multiple sponsors

Riverfront Q & A with Mayor Carter, 10/15/25, Highland Park Community Center

Friends of the Mississippi, FRF, Highland District Council, WSCO

Town Hall style meeting regarding W 7th Street, TBD

Other Notes

Chestnut Plaza work has begun

Neighborhood Cleanup Day – small group helped out.