



Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board
Freeman Building
625 Robert St N
Saint Paul, MN 55155
651-757-1500
<https://mn.gov/caapb/>

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board Meeting

September 24, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

DRAFT Minutes

Board Members

Present: Board Chair Lt. Gov. Flanagan, Board Vice Chair Dana Badgerow, Dr. Kate Beane, Alicia Belton, James McClean, Melanie McMahon, Sen. Nelson, Sen. Pappas

Joined Later: James Garrett Jr., Hannah Hills, Rep. Schultz

Joined Later and Left Early: Sen. Nelson

Not Present: Rep. Klevorn

Quorum present? Yes.

Proceedings

Meeting Kick-Off

- Lt. Gov. calls the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.
- Overview of Agenda
- Board member roll call

Item 1 - Capitol Mall Design Framework

Staff Overview

Lt. Gov. Flanagan welcomes Josh Brooks, Principal Landscape Architect and Planner from Sasaki, and Executive Secretary Erik Cedarleaf Dahl. Lt. Gov. Flanagan hands the discussion over to Erik Cedarleaf Dahl to give an overview of the Framework and seek an action item from

the Board to approve final changes to the 90% Capitol Mall Design Framework and begin the 90-day review and formal amendment to Comprehensive Plan to include the final formal attachment to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area, last adopted in 2021.

Erik commends Sasaki for their work in reaching almost 14,000 Minnesotans in developing the Capitol Mall Design Framework as well as holding several community meetings and meeting with many stakeholders. Mr. Brooks will be sharing changes since the last Board meeting in May. Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl hands the discussion over to Mr. Brooks from Sasaki.

Capitol Mall Design Framework Presentation – Josh Brooks of Sasaki

Mr. Brooks presents the final Capitol Mall Design Framework document. He highlights:

The final Capitol Mall Design Framework (CMDf) document has been presented for approval as the official policy for managing the district around the Minnesota State Capitol. This comprehensive framework was developed through extensive public engagement, reaching over 14,000 people, and emphasizes inclusivity, diversity, and vitality in the Capitol Mall area. It is designed to respect the historic legacy of the Capitol, while also adapting it to modern needs, including accessibility, functionality, and the celebration of Minnesota's cultural and ecological diversity. The CMDf sets forth a vision for the future of the Capitol Mall that prioritizes public engagement, creating a welcoming environment for all Minnesotans, and ensuring that decision-making aligns with both historical context and modern requirements.

The CMDf is closely tied to the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), which documents the historical significance of the Capitol Mall and influences the design framework. The CLR recommends treating the site as a place for rehabilitation rather than restoration, ensuring that updates respect the site's history while meeting contemporary standards. The CMDf focuses on several key themes, including the right-sizing of roads, the addition of new trees and walkways, and the creation of spaces that celebrate Minnesota's diversity. The framework is a strategic roadmap for decision-making that balances historic preservation with the need for modern amenities, ensuring that the Capitol Mall remains a functional, inclusive, and celebrated public space for generations to come.

The CMDf provides a long-term vision for the Capitol Mall, with detailed guidelines on landscape design, public space development, and infrastructure improvements. It serves as both a policy document and a blueprint for future development, outlining specific steps for implementation and strategic investments. This document is expected to guide the evolution of the campus, ensuring that each decision made aligns with the broader goals of accessibility, inclusivity, and respect for the Capitol's historic legacy. The CMDf is now poised to guide future decisions, setting a tone for ongoing development while honoring the past.

Questions

Mr. Brooks concludes presentation. Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks Mr. Brooks for the presentation and for the work of the whole Sasaki team, and then asks the Board members for any questions.

Board member Melanie McMahon thanks the Sasaki team and all of the State of Minnesota staff and community that participated in the work. Melanie also appreciated distinction between the

CLR and the CMDf – the CLR being more of a living document meant to guide and the CMDf being the planning document.

Senator Nelson thanks Mr. Brooks for the presentation and comments that the documents are very thorough, very comprehensive, organized, easy to navigate through, and the partnerships, the vision, all of those things are to be applauded. Sen. Nelson also commented that she doesn't think 14,000 touchpoints is enough of a representation of the 5 million Minnesotans, especially since many live outside of the Metro Area and may not have been able to participate in the charettes. Sen. Nelson also expresses concern about using the CMDf as a comprehensive plan and expresses that it isn't appropriate for the long term, since the world, society, Legislature, and Minnesotans are constantly changing and that we did not have a very broad input into the design. Then Sen. Nelson says Sasaki produced a phenomenal document that can be very helpful but is aware of its shortcomings.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks Sen. Nelson for her comments and asks Mr. Brooks if he'd like to reply to the comments.

Mr. Brooks expresses that the comments are relevant and acknowledges that community engagement is always a challenge and that they try their absolute best to reach as many people as possible in a short time.

Board member James Garrett comments that he's very impressed by the amount of work Sasaki put in as he participated in a few of the events. Mr. Garrett then asks Mr. Brooks if there are things that Sasaki would do differently if it were just a Sasaki plan.

Mr. Brooks replies that he believes what is in the CMDf is the appropriate guidance for moving forward, while acknowledging that there were some recommendations they have given on very specific physical details that still hold merit. However, at the end of the day, it's the designer's responsibility to reach to input and evolve our thinking in concert with the community and stakeholders.

Board Member James McClean asks if something came up down the road that conflicted with the Framework or if there was a significant change and the Body wants to rethink the Framework, what would the process be like?

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl replies that he will need to get back to Mr. McClean but also notes that this is a live Body that that can make changes as necessary if there is new information, funding, or perspectives on what the Mall and the surrounding area should be focused on. He also highlights that the Comprehensive Plan is the basis, and the Resolution they will be discussing will open up another 90-day comment period on integrating the Framework into the Comprehensive Plan. So there will be more opportunity for public comment and the CAAP Board will continue to work to get more input.

(Someone) asks if the Comprehensive Plan is something that is redone every 10 years.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan confirms that it is every 10 years.

Senator Nelson amends her previous comments and states that Legislature is representative of all Minnesotans and provides funding and thinks there should be more legislative oversight and involvement going forward.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks Senator Nelson for her remarks and says that she thinks this is an opportunity for the members of the House and Senate who sit on the CAAP Board to bring the conversations that happened here back to their legislative colleagues. And she encourages members to do that over the next 90 days as there's an opportunity for the public to weigh in at least one more time. She also expresses gratitude for the Legislators who serve on the Board.

Senator Nelson expresses concern that Minnesotans, and the nation, will have a lot going on the next 90 days, and Legislators will have limited bandwidth for their constituents or other elected officials regarding something as important as the Capitol Mall. She suggests it might be appropriate to delay or pivot to a better time frame that would allow for more legislative involvement. And notes that this is a consideration, not a motion.

Board Vice Chair Dana Badgerow underscores that this has been an incredible and detailed effort, and she emphasizes that this becomes part of the Comprehensive Plan. And that this provides the framework, the overall outline, within which we will operate.

Board Vice Chair Badgerow moves to approve the Capitol Mall Design Framework resolution that is in the packet and the slideshow presentation, and to tie the bow on the project. Board member Melanie McMahon seconds the motion.

Senator Nelson states that she will not be supporting at this time due to the reasons she listed earlier – looking for more legislative and constituent involvement.

Executive Secretary Erik Cedarleaf Dahl does roll call. There are 9 ayes and 1 nay. The motion is approved.

Meeting stopped for a break at 9:52 a.m.

Meeting reconvenes at 10:01 a.m.

Item 2 – Capitol Mall Design Framework Implementation Update

Lt. Gov. Flanagan hands the discussion over to Executive Secretary Erik Cedarleaf Dahl for updates on Phase 1 of the Capitol Mall Design Framework.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl shares an image of the Phase 1A Plan the Board approved in the Upper Mall and Lower Mall focused on getting what was statutorily required per the Legislation for the Capitol Mall Design Framework. He mentions that CAAPB was hoping to get the funds extended to next June [2025] to work on the Martin Luther King Commons, trees in the Upper Mall and Lower Mall, the Tribal Flag Plaza, and the Ford site. CAAPB did not get the extension, so it has to spend all of the \$5 million allotted to this project by December 31 of this year. It is working with Admin and their consultant to get as much of Phase 1A done before the end of the year. Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl also explains that CAAPB will be pursuing an extension with future legislature.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl shares an image of Lot Q and explains we will be replacing trees in Lot Q and Cass Gilbert Park. The trees will replace ones that have died and will expand the tree canopy.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl shares mockups of the Lower Mall West and East that show the trees that are currently in the process of being planted. There are also trees in the shoulders of the Upper Mall that are also being planted.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl next shares mockups of the Tribal Flag Plaza. CAAPB has been working with the Governor's Office and the Tribes to work on plantings and flag size. The trees will be Tamaracks. He notes this work will be done by December 31, if everything works out. He then shows renderings of the Tribal Flag Plaza that show the plantings, flags, and benches.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl shares an update that CAAPB will not be able to move forward with the temporary project at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. There wasn't enough time to address the road surface and traffic and safety issues, but it will be pursued in the future.

Exec. Sec. Cedarleaf Dahl then shares a rendering of the Ford site. The Ford building has already been demolished, so the rendering shows the trees, green space, and new tunnel entrance at the site.

There were no questions.

Item 3 – Application for Commemorative Works Removal: USS Ward Gun

Lt. Gov. Flanagan moves onto the next agenda item, an application for removal of the Commemorative Work USS Ward Gun. Lt. Gov. Flanagan hands the discussion over to Principal Planner and Zoning Administrator, Peter Musty, and the applicant, Executive Director of the MN Military & Veterans Museum Randal Dietrich.

Peter Musty introduces Randal Dietrich and gives an overview of the Ward Gun proposal to relocate the gun to a prominent display in the new museum. Mr. Musty explains that the USS Ward Gun has spent its first years of retirement in a prominent spot on the Capitol campus, with Administration caring for it. He also notes that this application will be testing CAAPB's new Commemorative Works Rule Process established following a Comprehensive Task Force in 2021 and 2022. The process is designed to be accessible to anyone or group and can handle removal, modification, and addition of new works or a combination. Mr. Musty shares a slide that has the steps of the Commemorative Works Removal Process and states that there have been other applicants inquiring informally and some are now cultivating applications that may be reviewed in the future. Mr. Musty and the CAAPB staff extend a special thanks to Mr. Dietrich for being willing to be the first applicant to test the new rules.

Mr. Musty then explains that today is mostly informational and is the first step in the process that is described in the Board memo. It allows us to start the public process which will include one or more public hearings and the formation of a Commemorative Artwork Review Committee that will make recommendation back to the Board. Mr. Musty then states that after hearing from the applicant, the Board will consider a resolution to support the next steps of the process.

Mr. Musty hands the discussion to Mr. Dietrich.

USS Ward Gun Presentation – Randal Dietrich, Executive Director of the MN Military & Veterans Museum

Mr. Dietrich shares his presentation on the USS Ward Gun, highlighting its historical significance as the gun that hit and sank an enemy mini submarine that was attempting to sneak into Pearl Harbor an hour before the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941. The Ward Gun has been outside on the State Capitol grounds since 1958, where it has been exposed to the

elements. Mr. Dietrich points out that he believes moving the artifact indoors will be better for its long-term care. He then speaks to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum's capacity to care for historical artifacts. They brought back the sail of the USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul submarine from a naval yard in Washington and are currently restoring it to then be installed in the new, 40,000 square foot museum at Camp Ripley (currently under construction). The museum is set to open in 2026 and would include the Ward Gun for its grand opening. Having the Ward Gun in the new museum would allow for a much richer interpretation and storytelling of the whole history of the Ward Gun and its crew members.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks Mr. Dietrich for his presentation and willingness to go through this new process. Lt. Gov. Flanagan also expresses excitement over the educational possibilities of this new museum to teach students about Minnesota history. Then Lt. Gov. Flanagan asks if there are any questions.

Questions

Board Vice Chair Dana Badgerow asks what action the Board is being asked to take today.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan and Peter Musty reply that it will be an approval of some steps in the process.

Peter Musty presents to the Board the Removal of Commemorative Works: Three Step Process:

1. Application review and report to the Board
2. Commemorative Artwork Review Committee
3. Final report, hearing, and Board decision

Mr. Musty clarifies that the resolution is not authorizing any actual approvals of the proposal, but simply stating awareness and support for Executive Secretary and staff to keep moving the process along, begin forming the committee, and hold hearings as necessary.

Board Vice Chair Badgerow moves to approve the resolution. Board member Hannah Hills seconds the motion. Lt. Gov. Flanagan asks if there is any discussion.

Discussion

Mr. McClean asks if there is a new Commemorative Artwork Review Committee (CARC) for each application.

Mr. Musty explains that yes, there is a new CARC because each Commemorative Work is different and requires their own set of experts.

Board member Dr. Beane comments how thankful she is for this process. She also notes how climate change has a real impact on public art, and this is a good example of that.

Executive Secretary Cedarleaf Dahl calls the roll for votes. There are a total of 9 votes by roll call: 9 ayes and 0 nays. The motion is approved.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks Mr. Musty and Mr. Dietrich and then introduces the next agenda item.

Item 4. Update: Rice Street and Jackson Street project updates: Informational

Lt. Gov. Flanagan introduces the presenters – Principal Planner Peter Musty, Anna Potter of the City of Saint Paul Public Works, and Cassie Pinta of TKDA.

Peter Musty provides an overview of the Rice Street and Jackson Street projects as they pertain to the Comprehensive Plan. The Comp Plan calls for support of walkability, comfort, safety, resilience, and mobility improvements throughout campus and the network of streets, and public spaces throughout the Capitol Area. These two important street reconstruction projects will transform two corridors in the Capitol Area. Mr. Musty then hands the discussion over to Anna Potter.

Rice Street Project Presentation – Anna Potter, City of Saint Paul Public Works

Ms. Potter thanks the Madam Chair and Board members and begins her presentation on Rice Street. Ms. Potter notes that they just kicked off the design process for this project and shares a map of the street that they will be working on. She acknowledges that it takes a long time to get streets built correctly with public process, then shares the timeline for the project:

- August-December 2024: Understand existing conditions
- January-December 2025: Evaluate design options
- January-December 2026: Recommended concept and final design
- January-April 2027: Construction

Ms. Potter then states the goals for the project while noting that they are in flux right now. They will be working with a technical team, CAAPB staff, community members, and property owners to flesh out the goals. Currently the goals are:

- Improve pedestrian safety and access
- Improve bicycle safety and access
- Improve transit and multimodal operations
- Develop mobility hub
- Improve vehicle safety and operations
- Design for an enhanced and sustainable public realm
- Design for existing and changing land uses
- Utilize partnerships and have a transparent process

Next, Ms. Potter comments that her team and CAAPB staff have significant coordination in the following ways:

- Participation in monthly Project Management Team
- Standing monthly check-in specific to CAAPB issues
- Partnership on community engagement and outreach planning
- Review goals, concepts, and design for consistency with related projects and processes (CMDf, etc.)
- Assist with scoping and planning for mobility hub
- Project can provide updates to and engagement with CAAPB leadership as requested

Ms. Potter concludes the presentation by reiterating that they just kicked off, so they will be coming back to CAAPB with updates. Finally, she shares the other project contacts – Nick Fischer, primary contact and Project Manager, and Haila Maze, Consultant Lead.

Jackson Street Reconstruction Project Presentation – Cassie Pinta of TKDA

Ms. Pinta begins their presentation noting that they are speaking on behalf of the City of Saint Paul, and then shares a map of where the project will be taking place. Ms. Pinta then shares the feedback they received from the community:

The community has spoken about Jackson Street during recent, nearby projects.

- What the street looks like is important to the neighborhood, and it needs improvement.
- Accessibility is an issue including cracks in the sidewalk and roadway.
- Safety improvements are needed including increased lighting and better sight lines.
- Signage needs to be improved.

Ms. Pinta then explains the project scope and design in response to community feedback:

The project will reconstruct Jackson Street between University Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue. The following improvements will be included:

- A new bikeway along the west side of the roadway
- Removal of all on-street parking
- New pavement
- New lighting and traffic control
- New trees and additional greenspace in boulevards
- Utility improvements including new water and sewer lines
- Retaining wall improvements

Ms. Pinta then states that in regard to the funding, a portion of this street reconstruction project will be paid for by a 1% local option sales tax, called Common Cent. This sales tax was approved by Saint Paul voters in November 2023. A portion of the project will also be funded through assessments to property owners adjacent to the project.

Ms. Pinta next provides a general timeline of the project:

- Preliminary Design: July – October 2024
- Final Design: October 2024 – May 2025
- Public Hearing: April 2025
- Construction Begins: July 2025
- Community Engagement: Now – April 2025

Ms. Pinta states that she anticipates some construction work to fall into 2026, but that the roadway aspect will be done before the snow falls. She then shares future engagements that they are working toward coordinating.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan asks if there are any questions.

Questions

Mr. McClean notes that the streets in question are important Regions Hospital emergency route.

Ms. Pinta acknowledges Mr. McClean's comment and states that their main concern is their [the hospital's] opinion of losing some free parking that's along the roadway on the south end of Jackson Street. Ms. Pinta points out that the hospital has two brand new parking ramps that can

be used, but they will be coordinating a meeting to see how they can accommodate those who are unable to afford parking in the ramps. They are also working to ensure residents have parking spaces as well.

Mr. McClean thanks Ms. Pinta for her comments and adds that he was thinking more about the routes that emergency vehicles need to take and if that would be affected by this project.

Ms. Pinta assures Mr. McClean that they are taking that into consideration during their design process.

Mr. McClean thanks Ms. Pinta for her comments. He also notes that at Community Engagement sessions, there are often comments that are outside the scope of the project. He wonders if there is a way to capture that feedback from the city, county, and community engagement sessions for the CAAPB to review.

Ms. Pinta explains that Mr. Musty attends their monthly meetings, and they also have summaries of their different events that include who they interacted with and general comments made during the sessions. Their team recently received comments about the parking, and they are now trying to implement those comments and add a parking bay for residents.

[Unclear who is speaking] They are speaking about Rice Street project, and asks what the scope of the project is – Is it only focusing on brick and mortar, the physical infrastructure? And if so, are there other teams from Saint Paul dealing with the social aspects who will be coordinating with the City?

Ms. Potter answers yes to both questions. She then explains that the \$25 million the State appropriation gave to them has three components:

1. Rebuild the street including the physical infrastructure needed to do that
2. Ensure that there is coordination with CAAPB and a public, transparent process
3. Establish a Mobility Hub

Ms. Potter acknowledges that there will be economic development issues that arise, like parking capacity issues outside the right of way. So in their monthly technical group, they have people from Planning and Economic Development and from DSI, who have the same counterparts of the County, where they discuss if an issue is regarding the physical infrastructure of the street or if it's a policing and enforcement issue. And hopefully one of the attendees at that meeting will know how to handle the concern or at least know who to contact to address the issue.

Lt. Gov. Flanagan thanks the presenters.

Item 5. Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2024

Board member James Garrett moves to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2024 meeting. Board member McClean seconds. Lt. Governor Flanagan calls for a voice vote, no nays. The minutes are approved.

Item 6. Informational memo: Other project updates

Lt. Gov. Flanagan points out that the Board packet contains other status updates on CAAPB projects, and that the CAAPB staff is available for questions.

Executive Secretary Cedarleaf Dahl expresses gratitude for the support of the agencies and communities with which the CAAPB works. He also introduces CAAPB's new employee, Jessie Hughes.

Board Vice Chair Dana Badgerow motions to adjourn. Mr. Garrett seconds the motion. Lt. Gov. Flanagan adjourns the meeting.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

DRAFT