

South St. Paul City Council Work Session

Session Notes for June 9, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Francis called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:00 PM on June 9, 2025

No formal Council Action is taken at a work session meeting, this is a summary of discussion that took place.

Council Members Present: Jimmy Francis, Lori Hansen, Joe Kaliszewski, Matt Thompson, Pam Bakken, Tom Seaberg, and Todd Podgorski.

Staff Present: Ryan Garcia, City Administrator

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Armour Gatehouses

Mr. Garcia provided a presentation summarizing the multi-year deliberation about the Gatehouse Structures that remain from the previously demolished Armour Plant. Mr. Garcia's presentation provided details about economic and physical considerations related to the potential restoration or relocation of the structures. Following Mr. Garcia's presentation, several community members encouraged Council to proceed with restoration of the structures and retention in the current location. A small number of community members expressed to Council that the City should not expend significant public resources on restoration or relocation of the structures. Many expressed the opinion that relocation of the structures would generally strip away the historic significance of the structures and felt it was not desirable to expend public resources on a relocation effort that most of those in attendance did not support.

Council Member Hansen encouraged Council to work with staff to facilitate a community-driven effort focused on preservation and potentially fundraising such an effort. Council Member Hansen felt the effort could be given a strict "deadline" to bring forward a viable plan for the restoration of the structures and their ongoing stewardship. Council Member Kaliszewski and Mayor Francis generally supported Council Member Hansen's suggested approach.

Council Members Podgorski, Seaberg, Thompson and Bakken expressed a preference for relocation of the structures to the Hardman Triangle, suggesting that the structures could provide a key thematic concept to the design of the public space within the future mixed-use neighborhood by bridging the City's past with its present and future.

Following considerable deliberation, the consensus of the Council was to pursue the relocation of the structures to the public open space currently planned within the Hardman Triangle. Staff advised that a next step would need to be commissioning a concept site plan for the proposed public space, potentially with approval of a design

contract in July.

B. City Property Disposition Strategy

Mr. Garcia summarized the memo and conveyed that staff was seeking feedback on how to approach disposition of City-owned properties at 316 Malden Street and 400 Richmond Street East. Council advised that the properties would not fit the City's future facility program or location needs and standards and suggested that Staff work to position the properties for sale and future development.

C. City Administrator's Update

Mr. Garcia provided brief informational updates on the following:

- The Legislative Session was wrapping up during the evening's meeting. Mr. Garcia communicated that generally speaking there were few legislative actions this session that would have direct impacts on the City of South St. Paul.
- Mr. Garcia advised that an ordinance amendment related to commercial billboards was being developed by staff and would be presented for consideration sometime in late summer/early fall.
- Mr. Garcia conveyed that the City Engineer's resignation would be effective at the end of June. Recruitment will begin the week of June 16.
- Mr. Garcia advised that the owner of 722 Concord continued to work with Frandsen Bank on financing the development of a small mixed-use development at the property with restaurant and residential uses, but had an identified gap that would be seeking support from the EDA's revolving loan fund. A completed application is expected in the next 30 – 60 days.
- Mr. Garcia noted that Dakota County was interested in partnering with either the CDA or City to provide centralized household organics pickup within South St. Paul.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council at the regular work session meeting, Mayor Francis declared the meeting adjourned at 10:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/: Ryan Garcia
City Administrator