

South St. Paul City Council Work Session

Session Notes for October 13, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Francis called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:00 PM on October 13, 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, Brian Wicke, Police Chief.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Cable Franchise Fee Memorandum of Agreement

Mr. Garcia and Council welcomed Beth Baumann, Executive Director for NDC4 and Town Square Television. Ms. Baumann provided a brief presentation outlining NDC4's ongoing efforts to continue to provide local programming in the face of declining cable subscriptions. Ms. Baumann presented a request for the City, along with other NDC4 Member Cities, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would modify the amount of franchise fee revenues distributed to Cities for Fiscal Years 2026 – 2030. Council is expected to act on a MOU at the Monday, October 20 City Council Meeting.

B. Armour Gatehouse Relocation Planning & Budgeting Update

Mr. Garcia summarized the estimated timeline and budgeting implications of advancing with a plan to relocate the Armour gatehouse structures from their current location to the proposed future public space within the Hardman Triangle redevelopment district. Council discussion primarily focused around the anticipated expense involved to undertake relocation of the structures intact, which Mr. Garcia advised was estimated to exceed \$600,000 based upon price estimates obtained from qualified structure moving, restoration, and excavation companies.

Councilmember Hansen sought a compromise solution, inquiring of the proposed buyer/developer of the EDA property at which the gatehouses now sit whether one of the structures could be retained. John Young, representing Riverside Holdings, responded that unfortunately the location and orientation of a retained gatehouse would render the building nonfunctional for the business' needs by cutting off the planned employee parking and access area, a problem which could only be solved by both decreasing the size and shifting the location of the building, conditions which in their own right would not meet the business' operational needs. Councilmember Hansen expressed disappointment that a solution could not be agreed-upon to retain at least one of the structures.

Councilmembers discussed the pursuit of a selective/hybrid deconstruction approach for the

structures. Council suggested that masonry and ironwork materials from the structures should be retained by the City for potential integration into a public display or art installation, potentially within the Hardman Triangle redevelopment, or that bricks could be offered to interested parties as keepsakes. Councilmember Hansen and Mayor Francis recalled that a similar approach was taken upon the closure of the Stockyards in 2008.

Ultimately, Council's consensus was that the level of financial commitment required to pursue the relocation of the gatehouses was difficult to justify when considered in the context of the many other capital investments the City is poised to undertake in the near future. Council consensus was that sensitively deconstructing the structures and retaining materials for reuse represented an opportunity to recognize the City's history in a meaningful way. Staff committed to requesting quotes for the sensitive deconstruction and material retention approach to be presented for consideration and potential award at a future EDA meeting.

C. EDA Properties Discussion

Mr. Garcia approached Council seeking clarification of intent with properties at 417 Concord Street North (owned by the EDA), 314-318 2nd Street North (under contract to purchase by the EDA), and 316 Malden Street (owned by the City). Council agreed that all structures at 417 Concord Street North should be demolished and the site held for future redevelopment. Council suggested that the three residential structures at 314 – 318 2nd Street North should be retained in the near-term, and further exploration of potential short-term and long-term repositioning should be undertaken. Council confirmed that the 316 Malden Street property should not be considered "available" in its current condition for lease or sale, and that the Council's intentions with that property are to align with the recently approved South Concord Corridor study for a redevelopment to a higher and better use.

3. COUNCIL COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

There were none.

4. 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 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/: Ryan Garcia
City Administrator