

**JOINT MAHTOMEDI CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION
WORKSHOP AGENDA
MAHTOMEDI CITY HALL
JUNE 19, 2018
5:45 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD DISCUSSION

- A developer will be presenting information and concepts for a potential pocket neighborhood in the City of Mahtomedi at the meeting

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mary Solie

From: Scott Neilson
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2018 7:42 AM
To: Mary Solie
Subject: FW: Mahtomedi PN

From: paul [mailto:paul@sperorebuilt.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 4:27 PM
To: 'Erin Perdu'; Scott Neilson
Subject: Mahtomedi PN

Hi Erin, cc Scott,

From: Ross Chapin [mailto:ross@rosschapin.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 1:26 PM
To: paul
Cc: 'Harold Teasdale'; 'Roger Tomten'; 'David Washburn'
Subject: Re: Mahtomedi PN?

Please send out this letter to the council members and planners Friday. Also ask them to google Pocket Neighborhoods to give context to the Chapin letter. Thanks much, Paul Steinhauser

Mayor Marshall, City council Members and Planning Commission Members, Erin Perdu and Scott Nielson. The following is a letter sent to Harold Teasdale. Roger Tomten and myself from Ross Chapin, the founder of the Pocket Neighborhood Movement. Ross lives in Seattle and recently had lunch with the 3 of us in White Bear Lake.

Paul,

Yes, we've been seeing and hearing wide and enthused interest in pocket neighborhoods from every region of the country — from potential buyers wanting to know where they are, to developers wanting to work with us, to city planners wanting info on zoning, to legacy land owners wanting a more thoughtful plan for their family land. I also have a Google Alert that sends me info on whenever “pocket neighborhood” appears on the web, from which I hear about pocket neighborhood plans in the works.

Why the interest? I believe it is an expression of pent-up demand not being met by conventional market offerings. Every community has elders needing a simple, dignified home with others nearby looking out for their well-being, or single parents & children who would benefit from shirt-tail aunties and grandparents, or empty nesters wanting increased connection that comes from a closely-knit neighborhood. And they want houses that fit their down-sized lives or budgets.

Yet most subdivisions have family-sized homes fronted with garage doors, often with an impressive entry and seldom-used living room facing the street. The life of the home is focused inside and in private backyards, with no eyes toward the street. Multiplied by 10s and 100s, the fabric of real community becomes frayed. Some

people, needing more connection rather than less, retreat into isolation and loneliness. Yet this kind of subdivision development is the easiest to achieve, given conventional zoning codes and markets that value houses primarily by size. Unfortunately, alternative options face uphill battles. A forward-thinking city planning ordinance and a progressive developer to test the market could create an inspiring example to begin to shift the direction of homebuilding.

I know that pocket neighborhoods are not for everyone by any stretch of imagination. But having them as an option would add choice, increase housing affordability and strengthen community life.

This is a worthy conversation. I wish you all the best!

Ross

Ross Chapin, FAIA

RossChapinArchitects

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Author: **Pocket Neighborhoods: Creating Small Scale Community in a Large Scale World**