



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE
WAUWATOSA, WI 53213
Telephone: (414) 479-8917
Fax: (414) 479-8989

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, June 29, 2004

PRESENT: Alds. Becker, Kopischke, Krol, Sullivan, Treis -5

EXCUSED: Alds. Heins, Subotich

ALSO N. Welch, Community Dev. Dir.; T. Wontorek, City Admin., A. Kesner, City Attorney;
PRESENT: J. Wojcehowicz, Water Supt.; J. Cameron, Asst. to City Admin.

Ald. Kopischke as Chair called the meeting to order at 8:35 p.m.

Request by Wisconsin Athletic Club to Construct Additional Parking

Ms. Welch reviewed a request by William Heinlein and Keith Nygren for reconsideration of parking for the Wisconsin Athletic Club in the Medical Center and Institutions District at 8700 Watertown Plank Road. In September 2003 the Common Council approved a Conditional Use for an addition to the existing health club and clinic complex. Full installation of required parking spaces was debated, and this committee wanted to avoid increasing impervious surfaces if it was not necessary. The Athletic Club was directed to negotiate with the Medical College for shared use of their large existing parking to the north of this parcel, with the need for additional parking reviewed again after construction was completed. The applicants now believe that additional parking is needed since the Medical College has indicated that they need all of the existing spaces for their students. Ms. Welch displayed a site map showing where additional parking had originally been proposed and pointing out that a revised plan provides for additional storm water retention and places additional parking spaces at the north end of the existing lot.

Bill Heinlein, 10909 W. Blue Mound Road, described the 50,000 sq. ft. addition scheduled for occupancy around August 15th. The majority of the new space is being leased to Froedtert and Wisconsin Athletic Club. Froedtert is doubling the size of their sports medicine facility to some 20,000 sq. ft. and is adding two more community rooms/classrooms for 98 people. The athletic club is doubling in size with membership expected to increase from 3,800 to over 5,000. The Medical College's plastic surgery department, including an outpatient facility, will also relocate to this building as well as Froedtert's entire telephone facility, which will occupy approximately 3,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Heinlein said that they are allowed to use the Medical College's large parking lot in the summer months, but the Medical College estimates that this lot is at 95-100% capacity during the school year. He estimated that 200 parking spaces are needed to serve Wisconsin Athletic Club Phase 2 development. There are 439 existing spaces, and city code requires 506 spaces, leaving them 67 spaces short. They are requesting 137 spaces to meet their needs, which is in excess of code requirements. All of that parking would be built on landfill and rubble and would be completely away from the forested area to the north and west. Many Wauwatosa residents use these facilities, and they have generated few police and no fire calls, he noted. He added that they have been a good neighbor and a good contributor to the city.

Mary Sorgel, 2438 N. 89th Street, a member of the Wisconsin Athletic Club, presented petitions bearing approximately 325 signatures of club members who support the request for additional parking. She spoke of difficulty finding parking spaces during peak times and noted that safety may be jeopardized when drivers park where they shouldn't.

Keith Nygren, 1939 S. 108th Street, said that it is difficult to gain parking from the Medical College because they are also expanding. He emphasized that the request is for the parking that was on their original plan, which has been re-engineered to address storm water concerns. Their facility's community based health function is unlike any others in the country and is a tremendous asset to the residents in this community.

Ald. Krol said this is a well-run, well-staffed facility that pays tax dollars and is a real asset to the community. He supported their request based on the current circumstances with the Medical College and the committee's earlier recognition of the need for review. He noted that they had originally held off on 155 new spaces and wouldn't be displacing green space since the land has little vegetation on it.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Becker to recommend to Council approval of 137 additional parking spaces –

Ms. Welch indicated that the proposed resolution would include storm water provisions. Mr. Heinlein added that the storm water plans were done in accordance with the specifications of the city engineer.

At Ald. Sullivan's request, Mr. Heinlein provided the names of those with whom he negotiated at the Medical College (Donna Gissom and Doug Campbell). Ald. Sullivan spoke of the need to consider the overall needs of the community and said he fails to see how the success of these businesses creates a requirement to permanently give up open space. He recalled this as at least the third time in his tenure that this committee has dealt with additional parking around this building, the first time resulting in the loss of a number of fully grown trees. We shouldn't give up a universally held resource so that a building can have closer parking, he stated. He felt that the applicants should work this out with the Medical College and indicated that he would talk with people there himself to try to gain further insight.

Upon further discussion of existing, required, and requested spaces, the Chair noted applicants often think they need less parking than our code requires, but this request for 137 additional spaces represents 70 more than would be required. Mr. Heinlein responded that 137 is almost the minimum number needed since staff alone will take up 100 spaces. He noted that the Medical College lot will be gated, so it would be unavailable for overflow. In his last conversation with them, the Medical College was not willing to give up any spaces. Ms. Welch added that our parking ratio of 1:150 sq. ft. for the athletic club is fairly high, although certain types of classes may have higher demand. She said that our parking standards seem to hold up for other places throughout the city and are fairly standard with what other communities use.

The Chair commented that this kind of a request is held to higher standards because we are talking about precious land. He indicated that he would like to see greater demonstration of the need.

Ald. Treis commented that it is hard to see why this business would request additional parking if it is not needed. Drivers cannot park on the roadway here, so where do they go? We have to look at what we want as green space and what is necessary to make various entities viable assets to the community. With the new GE facility, all of these needs will be further expanded. He agreed that no more spaces than needed should be installed and suggested that the number of additional spaces should be kept to a minimum.

Ald. Krol commented that this area is very minimal when compared to what will be given up to future development such as the new Children's Hospital or the economic development zone on the county grounds, for example. This request is for less than what could have been required six months ago, he noted.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Heinlein indicated that he would provide information on the square footage of additional impervious surface involved here.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 3; Noes: 2 (Sullivan, Kopischke)

Proposed Ordinances relating to Special Use Approval Process

Referring to his June 29, 2004 memo and attached flow chart, Mr. Wontorek summarized the efforts to develop a plan to streamline the review and approval process for Special Use permits and involve elected officials in the final approval.

The initial proposal, which was discussed earlier by this committee and the Plan Commission, removed the Board of Zoning Appeals from the process and called for a hearing and final action by the Plan Commission. Two alternatives that would bring the Common Council into the process were offered for consideration, as follows:

1. Eliminate the Special Use category and make all applications Conditional Uses (with the exception of Permitted Uses). Conditional Use applications would be reviewed by staff and by the Design Review Board, be forwarded to the Plan Commission for a hearing and recommendation, and then go to the Community Development Committee for recommendation prior to final approval by the Common Council.
2. Retain the Special Use category but, following Design Review Board review, have the Plan Commission hold a public hearing and make a recommendation directly to the Common Council. This would require a change in the Common Council's rules of procedure.

Ald. Krol supported the second alternative as a means of involving the elected representatives.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Treis to recommend to Council adoption of ordinances to implement alternative #2 above –

The Chair suggested a third option that accomplishes the goal of Council involvement without overburdening the Council with items like garage heights, outdoor seating, etc. He proposed moving forward with the initial proposal that removes the Board of Zoning Appeals from the Special Use process and gives final approval authority to the Plan Commission, but he suggested first reviewing and perhaps redefining some Special Uses as Conditional Uses. Then only those uses on which the Council would like to exercise final approval would be referred by the Plan Commission to this committee and then go to the Common Council for final approval. This also would help streamline the process for the types of items that remain as Special Uses, such as garage heights.

Ald. Becker supported the third option but said he would want to see something concrete within a definite time period before voting on it. Aids. Sullivan and Krol also supported the concept.

With consent of the second, Ald. Krol withdrew his motion.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Treis to place the matter in file pending return to committee in July when verbiage has been developed on which Special Uses should remain in place and which should be designated as Conditional Uses for consideration by the Common Council, all as a modification of the original proposal on streamlining the Special Use approval process –

Ms. Welch indicated that she could develop a list of current Special Uses in the various zoning districts by the July 27th committee meeting.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Conditional Use – 9250 Watertown Plank Road

The committee reviewed a request by John Hyland, WisVest Corp., for a Conditional Use in the Medical Center and Institutions District at 9250 Watertown Plank Road for a two-story 1,340 sq. ft. addition to the existing power building to house electrical equipment. Ms. Welch displayed an aerial photo and renderings of the facility. She indicated that the addition will be to the rear of the plant and not visible from Watertown Plank Road. Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval.

John Hyland, 9250 Watertown Plank Road, said that WisVest Corp. is a subsidiary of WE Energies. This facility is the sole provider of chilled water for air conditioning the entire medical complex. At present there are not enough sources within the plant to meet anticipated demand as those medical entities expand, so a line will be brought in underground from the north. A transformer will be located to the east of the cooling tower, and the electrical circuit breakers and switchgear would be inside the addition.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Treis to recommend approval of the Conditional Use –

In response to a question on water and sanitary sewer issues, Ms. Welch reported that the city engineer has established that this is not the type of facility that will create an impact on the sewer or storm water system. Mr. Hyland indicated that the majority of the addition will go on existing parking lot space; the other third will be on a small grassy area.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Conditional Use – 12012 W. North Avenue

The committee reviewed a request by John Link, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, for a Conditional Use in the AAA Single Family Residence District at 12012 W. North Avenue for an addition to the existing church facility. Ms. Welch displayed a floor plan showing changes to be made to the rear of the church to improve accessibility and provide a covered entryway. Office space and parking will be added at the front, which is along North Avenue, and a small equipment shed will be erected to the rear. There is sufficient existing parking to accommodate the additional space, and it is not anticipated that the changes will create any additional traffic. The Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval.

Chad Ochs of Groth Design Group, N58 W6181 Columbia Road, Cedarburg, displayed renderings and summarized the project. He indicated that the new parking lot at the front of the building is actually a relocation of a small existing lot, which will be converted to green space.

Moved by Ald. Becker, seconded by Ald. Treis to recommend approval of the Conditional Use. Ayes: 5

Proposed Ordinance – Correction of Improper Lawn Conditions

A proposed ordinance amending Section 15.32.030 of the Code to provide four days notice to correct improper lawn conditions was returned to committee for a recommendation on adoption. Ald. Krol, who had requested the change, said there is some flexibility in the current ordinance but he feels that this change will help gain compliance in situations such as a recent one in his district involving a non-resident owner. In that case, the owner was given seven days to correct conditions, but it actually was 14 days before the city took action to have the lawn mowed because of intervening weekends and holidays. He would still encourage staff to work with property owners as appropriate in each situation.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Becker to recommend to Council adoption of the proposed ordinance –

Upon further discussion of current ordinance provisions, City Attorney Kesner clarified that, statutorily, anything under 11 days means business days.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Update and Revisions to Water Rates and Rules

Mr. Wojcehowicz, Water Superintendent, outlined proposed revisions to portions of Chapter 13.04 of the Code relating to water rates and rules that will primarily update obsolete and outdated language. One substantive change allows the utility to turn off water services if they determine there is a hazardous condition. Another more substantive change relates to hydrant permits, which was revised to address concerns about water loss. Changes relating to fee structure are being reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Becker to recommend to Council introduction of the proposed ordinance –

Mr. Kesner indicated that he would provide a copy of the proposed ordinance showing additions and deletions prior to final committee action.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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