

CITY OF WAUWATOSA

MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER
7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE
Telephone: (414) 479-8917
Fax: (414) 479-8989

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting - Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Committee Room #1

PRESENT: Alds. Becker, Birschel, Kopischke, Krill, Krol, Subotich, Sullivan, Treis -8

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Estness; Ald. Grimm; N. Welch, Comm. Dev. Dir.; A. Kesner, City Attorney; W. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works; D. Wheaton, Chief Inspector; B. Jacobsen, Admin. Intern

Ald. Kopischke as Chair called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

Location of July 4th activities at Wauwatosa West high school grounds

Ms. Jacobsen reported that 700 flyers were delivered to residents surrounding West High School bounded by Burleigh, Meinecke, 113th and 124th Streets. Additionally, the neighborhood association e-mailed residents with the information. Six comments were received; three in favor and three opposed to having the 4th of July festivities at Wauwatosa West. Ms. Jacobsen thanked Mr. Kappel for his assistance in distributing the flyers.

Ald. Subotich said he received one phone call in opposition and asked if other sites were considered. Mr. Kappel stated that many sites were looked at, but the only practical site was at West.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Krill to recommend endorsing the relocating of the 4th of July activities including fireworks to the West High School site, pending approval of the School Board -8

Review of condemnation order on structure at 2254 N. 61st Street

Mr. Wheaton distributed a memorandum and photographs of the structure. He said as of Monday the exterior is complete except for some painting and caulking. The number of windows does not conform to the plans approved by the Design Review Board.

Dean Sokol, 2254 N. 61st Street, said the painting and caulking have not been completed due to weather conditions and work will be completed as soon as possible. He said the windows were changed from the original plans because of circumstances with an elderly parent moving in.

In response to a question from Ald. Becker, Mr. Wheaton said the addition is slated for razing and removal unless the Council resolution authorizing it is rescinded. If the raze order is rescinded, the plans for the windows will have to be redrawn and the applicant must appear before the Design Review Board for approval.

Moved by Ald. Becker, seconded by Ald. Krill to recommend rescinding the order to raze the structure at 2254 N. 61st Street --

Alds. Krol and Birschel expressed their support for the motion in that most of the work is completed. Ald. Kopischke pointed out that it is now three months after the deadline. He said the neighbors are supporting the canceling of the raze order and are satisfied with the progress.

Vote on the motion was Ayes: 8

Request to rezone 3040 N. 117th Street

The applicant, Brett West, 1836 N. 49th Street, said the request to rezone is to allow construction of a medical office on what was formerly a used car storage lot.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Sullivan to recommend to Council introduction of a rezoning ordinance and adoption of a resolution setting a public hearing date -8

Request for rezoning and Preliminary Plan Approval for a multi-family residential development at 1215 N. 62nd

Ms. Welch said the first action is the request to rezone the property from AA Light Manufacturing to Business Planned Development. The second action is site plan approval for the multi-family condominium development. She reminded the committee that the Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval. Approval of the preliminary plan will be contingent on identifying and addressing any concerns or conditions that must be met by the developer before final approval. At the last meeting, the committee had concerns about traffic impact, the reef and bluff. The committee requested the developer provide a direct exit to State Street. The applicant now shows an easement across the Sentry parking lot that would provide access to State Street from the development. Staff feels this easement would be a very bad idea because it would open up access from the commercial traffic to the surrounding residential neighborhood. The commercial traffic would have a significantly greater impact than the proposed condominiums.

Jeff Bogart of Eppstein Uhen Architects, 333 E. Chicago Avenue, Milwaukee, indicated on a map the proposed easement. He said residents expressed concern about the height of the buildings in relation to the height of the bluff. He showed a scale drawing of the development indicating the four story buildings are at least 150 feet away from the top of bluff. He pointed out the building nearest the bluff would be obscured by vegetation. Further east, the scale of the buildings decreases. From the street to the top of the bluff is over 70 ft., much higher than the proposed buildings. Mr. Bogart said he wanted to illustrate that the proposed development will respect the bluff.

Ald. Kopischke said at the last meeting he requested the applicant to provide photos showing the height of the proposed buildings in relation to the bluff. He asked if they were available. Mr. Bogart replied they were unable to obtain photos, so they brought the scale drawings showing elevations.

The developer, David Israel, 540 Lake Cook Road, Deerfield, IL, said some comments at the last meeting indicated that the Metcalfe Company, owners of the Sentry Foods, were opposed to the project. He clarified that Metcalfe's were very excited about the project and in favor. Mr. Israel said that when he

looked at the possibility of building condos in Wauwatosa, studies indicated that this area and particularly Wauwatosa is severely under built. Empty nesters wind up leaving the area because there are no condos to buy when they sell their homes. He said he would like to be a good neighbor and would like to work with the neighbors to create a beautiful development.

The following spoke in opposition:

Patty Vaughn, 1287 Martha Washington Drive
Gary Kandziora, 6124 Martin Drive
Virginia Schumann, 1405 Martha Washington Drive
Mary Ann Grages, 1307 Martha Washington Drive
Sally Champine, 1354 Martha Washington Drive
Bonnie Stadler, 6309 W. McKinley Avenue
John Huwilor, 1279 Martha Washington Drive
Mike Zeimet, Eckert Door Company, 6510 W. State Street
Owen May, 1296 N. 63rd Court
Dan Sidner, 1350 N. 63rd Street

Questions and comments were as follows:

- Density - Not opposed to a condo development at this site, but concerned that the density is too great. Too much development in too small an area. Committee should consider downsizing the project.
- Traffic - Traffic will increase greatly and condo residents will travel through the residential neighborhood to get to Milwaukee Avenue. Traffic will be a problem both night and day. There is talk of the “walkability” of the development, but people won’t walk to Sentry, they will drive and create more traffic. Feels the Mayor and committee are not listening to residents. The traffic study did not take into account the additional commercial traffic from Applebee’s and Walgreens. State Street can’t handle the current traffic volume, and this development will only make it worse. The infrastructure is not there to handle the additional traffic.
- Access to State Street - Mr. Israel had access to State Street, but sold it to Sentry. If streets are put in, they should go through to the Walgreens site.
- Parking - Sentry parking lot is often full. An easement through the parking will create less parking. The proposed development has only 33 parking spaces for visitors.
- Bluff concerns - Elevation of the condos is too close to the top of the bluff. Four stories is too high. Residents living on the top of the bluff will have only roofs to look at. People often dump their junk down the bluff. People often climb the bluff and enter yards at the top. There needs to be security to prevent this. The bluff must be protected.
- Other - Questioned a possible TIF (Tax Incremental Finance District) and what would happen if the condos do not sell. Concerns were expressed if the condos are turned into apartments, and that the transient nature of apartments bring more crime in the area. Neighbors need to have a voice in this matter. It was stated this development has a 4 year completion schedule, and residents would have to put up with construction dirt and noise for 4 years.

Matt Mikolajewski, Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation Executive Director, submitted a letter on behalf of the WEDC Board of Directors outlining the benefits of the proposed development and addressing some resident concerns.

Ald. Grimm pointed out there is contamination on the site and asked who would be paying for the clean-up. He said 33 visitor parking spaces for the development are far too few. He referred to the State Street Study, completed in 1997, and said this development does not conform to the study.

Mayor Estness said she was on the Common Council when the State Street study was passed. The study calls for retail, residences, and multi-family dwellings. The State Street Study shows the property as a manufacturing because that is what it was in 1997. She said she believes this development is congruent with the State Street plan. She asked residents if they wanted the site to stay light manufacturing. She pointed out people complained about Western Metals when they were in operation. Mayor Estness said the only way to increase the city's population is to diversify the housing stock. There are not enough condos in the city. No matter what happens there is going to be the impact of traffic. Traffic is a highly sensitive issue right now because of the construction on State Street. The question that needs to be asked is what is in the best interest of the community at large. She didn't feel that keeping that one parcel industrial is in the best interest of the city. If this development does not occur, there is a possibility of a strip mall or a large single retail unit. The reason The Reserve has State Street access is that they face State Street and access was restricted from 62nd Street. At the request of Mayor Estness, Ms. Welch pointed out the city legally cannot require the developer to acquire another person's property to provide State Street access.

The Chair said the public input portion of the meeting was closed and questions raised would be addressed.

(The meeting recessed at 9:23 p.m. and reconvened at 9:31 p.m. -8)

- Density - Mr. Israel said he would go back and see if the project can be made smaller than 256 units. When planning the project, he looked at The Reserve density of 25 units per acre and is proposing the same thing. He needs to keep the price in the range of \$200 per sq. ft. to make a profit. He would like to be able to sell the condos for about \$180-185,000 for a 1 bedroom unit and \$230-250,000 for a 2 bedroom. Reducing the number of units will increase the price per unit. If the number of units can be downsized, he will, but it will depend on costs. Ms. Welch said the city does not have a density limit for developments. However, the proposed development has the same density as The Reserve. The highest density development in the city is Hart Park Square.
- Access to State Street - Mr. Israel pointed out the proposed easement through the Sentry parking lot is impractical, but really the only option if the city insists on State Street access. He said such a traffic route is a disaster waiting to happen. He indicated on a map a 26 ft. wide easement between Eckert Door and Grede Foundry. This easement is only for the use of Eckert Door and Grede. The only other option is to buy Eckert Door and remove the building. However, Mr. Eckert is asking \$1.5 million for the property. This would make the cost per unit price too high. Mr. Israel said he never thought State Street access would become a major issue.
- Traffic - Mr. Israel clarified the traffic study projected an increase of one car every five minutes during peak hours. Ms. Welch pointed out that when Western Metals was in operation in 2002, there were 230 people employed.

- Parking - Mr. Israel said the number of parking spaces meets requirements. Currently, 33 visitor parking spaces are planned, but he is looking at increasing those.
- Bluff concerns - Mr. Israel said they don't plan to touch the bluff and it will not be damaged. The only plans are to clean up some of the debris and vegetation at the bottom. Mr. Israel said some sort of security would be provided at the bottom of the bluff; security cameras, fencing, or other security measures.
- TIF - Ms. Welch said there has been discussion by the Joint Review Board regarding a TIF. The Joint Review Board wanted to have a more definitive plan to make financial calculations before a decision on a TIF is made. She pointed out there is an area TIF in place since 1998 that covered the construction of The Reserve.
- Environmental remediation - Ms. Welch said there will be no cost to the taxpayers for environmental remediation.
- Other - Mr. Israel said the condos will always be condos, not apartments. He said he is willing to sign an agreement with the city ensuring this. Regarding the 4 year phase-in plan, the market study done projects sale of 50-60 units per year. If the units sell faster, more units will be built faster. Ms. Welch pointed out that through the business planned development approval process, any changes to the project would have to come back for Common Council approval. Mr. Kesner pointed out there are limitations on how the city can require ownership vs. rental units. The city can prohibit the developer from creating rental units, but cannot tell a condo owner they cannot rent their unit to someone else.

Ald. Sullivan said the committee cannot be expected to approve a plan without traffic arrangements settled. This is the site of a defunct manufacturing facility. If you say you can't support a residential development, then you might have to accept something less desirable. Unreasonable conditions are not fair to the property owner and the rest of the city. The city needs to balance the needs of the commercial and residential property owners. The city has a responsibility to nurture economic development. Nobody wants development in their neighborhood. City officials need to listen to the needs of the neighborhood but they have a responsibility to the entire community. The city is in need of condo availability for empty nesters. However, he didn't see the need for buildings 4 stories high. That is not consistent with the rest of the community. Ald. Sullivan did not feel the project plans are ready for a vote at this time.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Becker to hold for more information regarding a lower density design and with fewer stories; a traffic plan approved by the planning department, and photos indicating building height versus bluff height --

Ald. Grimm said he spoke with members of the committee that produced the State Street Plan and that this development is not consistent with the plan. Ms. Welch reiterated that this development is congruent to the State Street Plan that was approved by the Common Council in 1998. Copies of the plan are available for viewing in the Planning office.

Ald. Kopischke said he read the State Street Plan. There are some broad goals about bring residential development into the area. This specific site is shown as manufacturing, but that was the existing business

in 1998. This project is in the spirit of the State Street Plan. He said the committee has had limited opportunity to discuss these issues and he would like to see the committee give some direction to the developer and staff as to what further information is required before discussing the matter.

Ald. Krill said he was in favor of this project. This is an opportunity to add condominium housing that the city can't pass up. He pointed out the only way to increase population is through projects of this nature.

Ald. Becker said he was concerned about TIF funds and the environmental clean-up. Clean-up costs can rise dramatically from original estimates. Ms. Welch pointed out the TIF is a separate issue and requires a separate approval process.

Ms. Welch said there seems to be a misunderstanding why staff doesn't like the traffic plan. Staff is concerned that it would open up the surrounding neighborhood to increased commercial traffic.

Vote on the motion was Ayes: 8

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

bw