



CITY OF WAUWATOSA  
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**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, September 12, 2006**

PRESENT: Alds. Birschel, Didier, Donegan, Herzog, Meaux, Sullivan, Treis -7

EXCUSED: Ald. Krill

ALSO N. Welch, Community Development Dir.; A. Kesner, Interim City Admin./City Attorney;  
PRESENT: Asst. Chiefs M. Anton, J. Hevey, Fire Dept.; Deputy Chiefs W. Rice, P. Nook, M. Carberry,  
S. Erke, Fire Dept.; Ald. Grimm

Ald. Treis as Chair called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.

**Land Division – 9529 W. Ruby Avenue**

The committee reviewed a request by Daniel Glaser for a Land Division in the AAA Single Family Residence District at 9529 West Ruby Avenue. Mr. Glaser was present. The Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval. Ms. Welch reported that the applicant wishes to purchase an L-shaped section of an adjacent parcel that wraps around the smaller parcel that he owns. He plans to create two lots extending straight back and meeting zoning requirements.

Moved by Ald. Birschel, seconded by Ald. Sullivan to recommend to  
Council approval of the Land Division. Ayes: 7

**Conditional Use – 255 N. 121st Street**

The committee reviewed a request by Allen M. Orville and Richard Eisenmann for a Conditional Use in the AA Business District at 255 N. 121st Street for the installation of audio visual/automotive accessories. Mr. Orville was present. Ms. Welch reported that Mr. Orville plans to relocate an existing business. The Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval contingent upon all installation work being done indoors but vehicles stored outdoors overnight per the request of the Fire Department.

Mr. Orville said that he has some questions about the requirement for outdoor storage. He is discontinuing the retail side of his business and moving toward dealership service and wholesale. He deals with a lot of high-end vehicles valued at \$120,000-\$125,000 that require more time and attention. He would be concerned about storing those vehicles outdoors, although it wouldn't be an every-day need.

Ms. Welch suggested holding this matter until the next meeting to allow for discussion with the Fire Marshal of measures to make the building safe for storage.

Moved by Ald. Donegan, seconded by Ald. Birschel to hold this  
matter for two weeks. Ayes: 7

**Zoning Code Amendment – Cellular Antennas on School District Property**

Ms. Welch outlined a request by the Wauwatosa School District for a zoning code amendment to allow cellular antennas and associated equipment on school district property as a Conditional Use. The process requires setting a public hearing date at this time. The committee would review the proposed uses at the time the matter returns for review following that hearing.

Ms. Welch explained that the school district has been approached by T-Mobile about installing antennas on some of their property, which would provide extra revenue to the district. Most of the school buildings are in residential areas, however, where antennas are not allowed. When the current ordinance was adopted, the School District was a part of city government and would have been included in language allowing antennas on municipal buildings. The proposed change would allow antennas as a Conditional Use on municipal and school district buildings. Retaining this as a Conditional Use allows the Common Council to review each placement.

Moved by Ald. Birschel, seconded by Ald. Donegan to recommend to Council introduction of a rezoning ordinance and adoption of a resolution setting a public hearing date of October 17, 2006. Ayes: 7

**Zoning Code Amendment – Front Yard Setbacks**

The committee reviewed a proposed zoning code amendment changing the required front yard setback and making other related changes in the AA Commercial District. The process requires setting a public hearing date at this point; the matter returns to this committee for discussion and final recommendation following that hearing.

Ms. Welch reported that the intention is to change the required front setback in AA Commercial from the current 60 feet to 25 feet. Most of AA Commercial parcels are on Mayfair Road directly across from AA Business zoning, which requires only a 10-foot setback. The setback apparently was originally established to allow for a frontage road, but the state DOT does not see that as being feasible along Mayfair Road and would instead prefer to see driveway entrances extended.

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Meaux to recommend to Council introduction of a rezoning ordinance and adoption of a resolution setting a public hearing date of October 17, 2006. Ayes: 7

Ald. Meaux requested additional information on the location of AA Commercial Districts prior to the public hearing. Ms. Welch said she plans to display a zoning map.

**Agreement for Storage of Town of Brookfield Equipment at Fire Training Center**

Deputy Chief Erke reported that the proposed agreement would allow the city to house a Town of Brookfield burn simulator trailer outdoors at the Fire Department's training grounds, which is a fenced area. It would be maintained by the Town of Brookfield. Acquired through a grant, the trailer is a self-contained unit of approximately 9 by 24 feet.

Moved by Ald. Donegan, seconded by Ald. Birschel to recommend to Council approval of the execution of the proposed agreement. Ayes: 7

**Zoning Code Amendment to Modify Language Regarding Check Cashing Establishments Proposed Citywide Moratorium on Check Cashing and Similar Establishments**

Ms. Welch reported that the Plan Commission has recommended a one-year citywide moratorium to allow staff to research additional ordinance language that may be needed. In addition, a date should be set for a public hearing on zoning code amendments. Ms. Welch distributed copies of articles containing information related to these proposals.

Ald. Donegan requested background on ordinance language and process. Ms. Welch said that the language drafted by the City Attorney was adapted from a Racine zoning ordinance. It is possible that some of it may change after hearing from the public at the public hearing or when the matter returns to this committee following the hearing. The City Attorney has consulted with peers across the state. Although the Plan Commission has already conducted a hearing, the city code requires a Class 2 notice and a public hearing before the Common Council.

Referring to her memo of September 6, 2006, Ms. Welch spoke of concerns across the country about “check cashing” establishments and their impact on neighborhoods and residents. She referred to an additional article she can make available that describes businesses that target military families. In many cases, local zoning ordinances have not proven to be the best way to regulate these businesses. Many states have statewide regulations affecting the number of times a person can borrow and the interest rate charged. This is a very complex topic, and a moratorium is warranted to adequately determine impacts and if there are places in the city where these businesses could operate. Staff would like more time to come back with recommendations on how to regulate the time, place, and manner in which these businesses can be conducted.

Ray Py, 2450 N. 63rd Street, said that the military has a policy that a person with debt at 30% or more of gross income cannot move to new assignments. Most of the debt is due to these types of stores operating around military installations. This is a very serious problem for the government, and federal legislation is being considered to address it.

Joe Poplick, 2184 N. 66th Street, was concerned about crime and property values. He said that one of the purposes of zoning is to make sure there is some economic or social benefit to the city and he sees none.

Atty. Harvey Goldstein, 3900 W. Brown Deer Road, Milwaukee, representing EZ Corp., expressed concern about the proposal and the moratorium, which he said directly threatens their store and others like theirs. They feel it is unconstitutional and designed solely to prevent this type of store from operating anywhere in the city. The city has commercial districts, and they are a commercial establishment. They are regulated by the Department of Financial Institutions and licensed by the state. They are a bank for all intents and purposes, the difference with other bank perhaps being size and the interest rate charged.

Mr. Goldstein said that the moratorium will result in litigation that will be extremely expensive to the city and the applicant. They are asking the city to take a step back and negotiate something that would be in everyone’s best interest before taking steps that will result in something that is extremely expensive and protracted. In his opinion, the moratorium would not only preclude check cashing stores but also banks, savings and loans, and credit unions and may very well also preclude ATMs and any other business that includes cashing checks. Although people may not like their interest rates, they feel this is a legitimate business serving a purpose that

others do not. They give short-term, unsecured loans to individuals who need less than \$1,000 or \$2,000. A person cannot get \$750 at a bank on signature alone, no collateral, and a promise to pay it back in a couple of weeks. If prevented from operating, those services will no longer be available to people who need them. It would be similar to preventing larger interest rates on car loans, which would lead to people who don't qualify for lower rates to go without cars. Rather than a moratorium, Mr. Goldstein asked the committee to table the matter so that they can sit down with the City Attorney and others and try to come to a resolution that is acceptable to the city and EZ Corp. and any other institutions that would be affected.

Ald. Donegan raised the question of going into closed session. Mr. Kesner discussed closed session parameters but felt that move would not be needed at this time. Aids. Sullivan and Herzog concurred that a closed session is not appropriate right now, noting that a lengthy memo has been provided and closed session discussion of strategy may be needed in the future.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Donegan to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance and adoption of a resolution setting a public hearing date of October 17, 2006. Ayes: 7

Mr. Kesner announced that the public hearing would be held at the beginning of the 7:30 p.m. Common Council meeting on October 17.

Ald. Sullivan said it seemed that the clear purpose of our city's Trade District zoning in this area was to nurture and encourage the growth of businesses along North Avenue and update the code to reflect the needs of the area. He was greatly concerned when he saw the business's sign before an occupancy permit was approved, particularly because this type of business had very specifically been dealt with in discussions of the Trade District by public officials and businesses. Saying this is not a check cashing place is an argument based on semantics; very clearly it is a check cashing place as the city had perceived it. A moratorium would allow for updating the ordinance for the very strongest trade district.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Birschel to recommend approval of a one-year citywide moratorium on check cashing and similar establishments –

Considering the threat of litigation, Ald. Donegan said that he does not feel comfortable that he has evaluated everything associated with this action. The Chair noted that any action will not take effect until the Council votes on it, which leaves time for discussions and review. Ald. Donegan advocated meeting in closed session prior to a Council vote.

Mr. Kesner said that the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld similar moratoriums in similar cases in zoning situations. He does not feel it is a constitutional violation to enact a moratorium for a specific time period as long as it is not unending and not a complete prohibition but allows the city to get information together on the subject. He has spoken to Mr. Goldstein about this issue a number of times and feels comfortable we are in a place where we can move forward. The Council can modify it to apply to specific parts of the city or more specific businesses, or end it if it is determined that the goals have been reached. When the code amendment returns to committee, there will be a proposal for a regulatory ordinance that will apply citywide.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 7

**Proposal by the Wauwatosa Historical Society for a Little Red Store Visitor Center**

Ms. Welch said that she reported to this committee almost two years ago on various proposals for the Little Red Store. At that time, she was instructed to check into those proposals and come back with more detailed information. She found that there were many people who were interested in using the building for a business, but their interest was contingent upon the city investing all the money needed to rehabilitate the building and the leasing it to the business. A better proposal has now come forward from the Wauwatosa Historical Society for a partnership with the city to rehabilitate the building and then operate a visitor information center there. There are some details that need to be finalized before requesting final Common Council approval, but they would like to get the blessing to move forward and undertake fundraising efforts. They would like to come back with sufficient funds to almost completely match existing CDBG funding earmarked for this purpose so that the building can be returned to useful service.

Janel Ruzicka, 2127 N. 74th Street, executive director of the Wauwatosa Historical Society, said they are willing to raise approximately \$125,000 in either cash or in-kind donations to supplement city funding. The building is now in a condition that invites vandalism and is not a welcoming sight. The Historical Society has discussed this for the past five years and decided now to simply move ahead to help get the building restored.

Sharon Eiff, 1417 Lombard Court, a member of the Landmarks Commission/Historical Preservation Commission since 1991, said that this landmark has stood despite flood, fire, and neglect. It is in a centralized location for historical displays, education, and seminars. School children are very connected to the building, which they visit as part of their second-grade curriculum. Ms. Eiff distributed booklets about the Little Red Store prepared in connection with the dedication of an historical marker plaque at the site in 1978.

Kathy Causier, 8213 Aberdeen Court, president of the Wauwatosa Historical Society, said the Historical Society's board has directed them to work in collaboration with the city. They feel that the Historical Society has the expertise and resources to do this and that it is an appropriate organization to come forward and rehabilitate the building for a valuable use.

Ald. Herzog commended the group for coming forward with this proposal. Although questions still need to be answered, there seems to be consensus that something needs to be done. He questioned flood plain status and earmarked funds.

Ms. Welch said that some floodproofing was done with grading for the parking lot to keep the building itself technically out of the flood plain and provide compensatory storage in another part of the lot. Ms. Welch said that CDBG funds were specifically earmarked for the Little Red Store quite a long time ago. Mr. Kesner added that those 1999 funds can be carried forward once earmarked.

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Didier to recommend preliminary approval of an agreement with the Wauwatosa Historical Society to proceed with fundraising while reserving final approval of the agreement until all details are worked out to the satisfaction of the City Attorney –

Joan Riggan, 7010 Wellauer Drive, representing the Suburban Woman's Club and the Wauwatosa Woman's Club, said this building is on the National Registry and is also a city landmark. She has gathered many signatures supporting the restoration as presented.

Responding to further questions about the CDBG funds, Mr. Kesner said that the project doesn't have to go into the 2007 budget because the funds are already there and budgeted with a promise to the federal government of being held for this building. There is no contingency for matching funds. A couple of years ago, the city solicited bids to proceed without any matching funds but found that the bids came in higher than the amount available.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 7

### **Business Planned Development at 6745 W. Wells Street**

A pending request by William Ibach for Preliminary Plan Approval of a Business Planned Development for a mixed use development at 6745 W. Wells Street returned to the committee from the hold file. Ms. Welch reported that this item was last considered by the committee in November 2005, at which time there was considerable discussion about scale, massing, and compatibility. She was directed to meet with the architect to try to convey some of the input from neighbors and the committee. The architect subsequently reviewed the proposal and has made some significant changes in the façade and some less significant changes in interior layout and parking spaces. The aesthetics and relationship to the neighborhood have been key issues. In reviewing the new elevations, Ms. Welch said that she is not convinced that they fully represent what the neighborhood wanted in terms of design that is compatible with surrounding businesses. As a substantially different elevation, the committee may choose to send it to the Design Review Board for another written report.

Bill Ibach, 2347 N. 100th Street, said the architect has been very diligent in coming up with an alternate exterior design, taking the input that has been offered into consideration. The size is essentially the same. There are 12 residential condo units and commercial space has been reduced to about 2,700 sq. ft. Two more underground parking spaces were added for a total of 38 spaces divided between 26 for residential use and the remainder for visitor and business parking. The architect tried to re-mass the exterior. Mr. Ibach said that he is not willing to reduce the size of the project for economic viability reasons, including the cost of construction and current condo market conditions. He seriously disagrees with those who think the project is too big for the site or the neighborhood. It is no more of an over-build than the Locker's site at North Avenue and Swan Boulevard or the Arvada condos at 109th and Blue Mound. The buildings right across the street are fairly big and are right against the sidewalk with no landscaping. Referring to color renderings and photos, Mr. Ibach said he feels they have done a very good job of proportioning the exterior and breaking up the façade to the point that it is better design than those previously submitted. The existing one-story building on the site with 16 parking spaces has not blended with the neighborhood since it was built in 1957, but this is still a viable site for a medical building. They would prefer not to do that, but they are at the end of the line right now.

Jack Shepherd, 500 N. 99th Street, said that plans and perspectives are often misleading, particularly in situations like this. He spoke of changes to neighborhoods, buildings, and people, which all eventually get replaced. The role of a planner and architect is not to preserve what once was but to do what has to be done as beautifully and as usefully as possible. If Serafino Square or Normandy Village hadn't been built, Wauwatosa wouldn't have received their \$25 million in taxes over the years. This project will generate \$72,000 more per year than the site presently generates. The 12 condos will likely be occupied by empty nesters or those just starting out. In Wauwatosa, condos purchased by empty nesters regenerate family homes with school-age children. There is now parking for 38 cars, which is more than on all of the commercial property in this area. In reality, there is actually no parking anywhere else. Condos are appropriate here, and the site is not being overbuilt. The commercial space is for businesses like a flower shop, jewelry store, or brokerage office. Perhaps condo residents would operate a business here. They have gone from 14 to 12 units, but it

cannot be less than that. The only way to provide more parking would be underground, which raises issues of cost. This project provides adequate parking, convenience, reasonable location, a nearby park, quality materials, and quality design. On the second floor, they have reduced from 4 loft units to 3 and have put in space for an optional elevator. The architecture could be tweaked, but that is the limit.

James Loduha, 641 N. 77th Street, said he is within walking distance of this project and finds it to be attractive and in keeping with the neighborhood. He has been a real estate professional for 30 years and finds this to be an appropriate use and no more dense or closer than neighboring properties. Also, it has parking that others don't have. It is not likely to be occupied by families with children that would place more pressure on services. It will provide more tax dollars and is a much better use than what is there now or some of the medical uses the building could be put to.

Louis Corrao, 6742 W. Wisconsin Avenue, felt that the project is too big and would not enhance the neighborhood. The applicant was supposed to come up with something that met residents' views, but they have never attempted to talk to neighbors for their input. Residing right behind this site, he is the one who will have to live with it as well as others in the neighborhood.

Steve Raasch, 6830 W. Wells Street, said there appear to be substantial changes to the architecture, but it is still apparent that the building doesn't step down in scale as it approaches its neighbors. The property across the street steps down in scale as it moves from the corner to the residential area. Neighbors are also concerned with aesthetics, size, and impact on traffic. How does it compare to similar planned developments in density, setbacks, parking, etc.? The extreme measures taken to accommodate parking seem to indicate that it is overbuilt.

Ald. Grimm noted that staff does not recommend approval of this submittal. He would like to see the project better match the neighborhood.

Russ Drover, 9116 Jackson Park Boulevard, said he took an interest in this site because of the zoning change, which allows it to encroach more on the neighborhood. This is the only parcel in the immediate area that has Business Planned Development zoning. The Lockers parcel at Swan and North has much more land, and there weren't any other options because of the residential lots to the rear. Mr. Drover said he feels that the building here is too big for the site; size and scale should be carefully considered.

Ms. Welch explained that part of what should be looked at when comparing the Locker's site is coverage of the lot and the fact that the site is zoned AA Business. It will have underground parking, first floor businesses, and the residential units will be above. They also have surface parking. One of the design changes there was to move the building farther away from residential to allow for about 40-50 feet between residential property and the building. In the subject proposal, there are setbacks of about 10 feet, and the building covers the bulk of the site. The footprint has not decreased, and Mr. Shepherd confirms that green space remains at 24%.

Ald. Birschel said that density would be putting a building one foot behind the lot line all the way around. He felt that 24% green space is plenty.

Ald. Sullivan commented on the need to act on how this impacts the overall good of this committee, which is why the decisions are made by representatives of all aldermanic districts. He listens to residents who live nearby but tries to put it in the greater context of the overall development of this city. This is a prime location, and if this project doesn't go in, something else easily could that is a permitted use under current zoning. Reopening a clinic there could present more problems than residential. The project does seem to fill a need for

this type of housing, and it also creates some new business opportunities. Are we supporting development and new businesses, or not? If putting the brakes on development because it will be locally unpopular, we will never build anything. Ald. Sullivan said he is concerned by the staff recommendation and somewhat surprised by it since it seems the applicant has gone to great lengths. This is a dynamic addition to the community and is vastly better than reopening the medical clinic. It will create some change in the neighborhood, but it is an asset and will help build business.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Herzog to recommend approval of the project subject to continuing staff input on what changes are necessary to secure some level of staff approval –

Ald. Herzog agreed that this project should move forward but noted that staff is looking to this committee for answers. He noted that the previous plan was not rejected by the Design Review Board but received a tie vote.

Ms. Welch said that this elevation is substantially different than what was presented to the Design Review Board the last time. The committee can decide whether or not to send it there again. With a Business Planned Development, the Common Council has more control in specifying things like the number of units, positioning on the site, materials, and the design of the building. The Design Review Board can be used as a consultant because they are, in fact, the aesthetic review authority, but their approval is not required. A report can be requested from them for assistance in making a decision. If moving forward now, Ms. Welch reminded the committee that preliminary approval sets forth the conditions that would be reviewed for compliance when the final plan is submitted. The Design Review Board should report on the aesthetics of the property facade. As noted in past meetings, there are a few other items to be cleared up before final approval including sewer credits and a storm water plan. Staff recommendations can be provided along with the Design Review Board's report.

With consent of the second, Ald. Sullivan amended the motion: to recommend approval of the preliminary plan pending a report to this committee from the Design Review Board and recommendations from staff on conditions for final plan approval –

Ald. Didier said she will recuse herself from voting on this because of a possible conflict of interest.

Ald. Meaux commented on the need for a thoughtful, logical conclusion that will satisfy the best interests of the city. He would like to base a decision on the recommendations that come back to the committee.

Ald. Herzog noted that, in concept, the committee would be approving 12 units and 2,700 feet of commercial space as well as the general layout subject to input of the Design Review Board. Ms. Welch said that engineering considerations would also be a factor.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 6; Present: 1 (Didier)

### **Fire Department Facility Study**

The Chair noted that the committee intended to discuss possible locations at this meeting. Ms. Welch indicated that she and Fire Department staff could answer questions regarding size and criteria for specific sites.

Ald. Birschel described a site that he said was looked at by staff and rejected, an area of county parkland on the north side of Menomonee River Parkway just west of Ridge Court that is often used for soccer. Its size seems to be sufficient and there would be no demolition cost, but the Chief reportedly didn't like the grade, which is lower than surrounding property. Contractors might pay to bring fill there, however. Although on a parkway, it is less than 200 feet from a residential area. All functions would fit on this site.

Ald. Meaux advocated discussion of program needs for any particular site. Ald. Donegan concurred that the committee should first determine if some functions can be split off from others, determine how much space and what kind of space is being sought, and then identify sites.

Ald. Herzog said he would want to know a lot more about a site before adding it to the list. Is Ald. Birschel requesting that staff look into the parkway site, and is he still interested in the Greek church site? Ald. Birschel replied that he would prefer the parkway site over the Greek church property.

Ald. Didier suggested that the committee next make a finding on whether fire administration needs to be at the station or can be added to another site. If the department says they need administration and other functions at one location, she commented that she would not disagree with them.

Ald. Meaux said that the consultant did not answer some of the questions raised at the last meeting. He was asked to look at specific programs and sites but was unable to recommend functions that could operate separately. It seems possible that either maintenance or administration could be housed at another station, city hall, or the city yard.

The question of negotiating with the county arose, either on station #3 on Watertown Plank Road or the county land suggested by Ald. Birschel. Ms. Welch explained that reopening the agreement with the county involving station #3 would probably not be advantageous to the city. Negotiating the purchase of other land is an entirely different question. (Mr. Kesner offered further comments later in the meeting.)

Ald. Donegan asked about adding on to station #2 on Mayfair Road, which needs a new bay, to house administrative functions. Assistant Chief Anton said that the plan for a new apparatus bay at station #3 is still conceptual but he feels there would be no room for administrative space there. There have already been additions to the north and south. Asked by Ald. Didier if going up rather than out was considered, Chief Anton said that a multi-story building on that site wouldn't be impossible to do but would be an unusual looking presence in that neighborhood. Ald. Birschel commented that building over the bays would require first-floor columns, which is what they were trying to avoid. Ald. Didier felt, however, that making the building large enough would keep columns from being obtrusive.

Ald. Sullivan said that he finds the Fire Department's statement that they need to have all the functions together to be compelling. He favored devoting a specific meeting just to that question.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Donegan to discuss specifically at the next meeting whether or not administration and other functions must be incorporated into one site, the format of such meeting to be a presentation by department management directed to that issue with the expectation that their statements would be challenged –

Deputy Chief Rice said that staff is all here in anticipation of that question and is prepared to address that issue tonight.

The Chair elected to take comments from the public at this point.

Richard Peeples, 11132 W. Ruby Avenue, felt that the existing building could be remodeled for administration and training and a new building built and connected to it for all other functions.

Becky Rudella, 1531 Underwood Avenue, spoke of the difficulty of coming to meetings and waiting for a decision. She would like to see this completed as quickly as possible.

Ray Barnowski, 7353 Harwood Avenue, said this question needs to be a #1 agenda item for the next meeting. He suggested looking at the Western Metals site as a possibility for a new station.

Jane Keelan, 1512 Mower Court, questioned the difficulty of renegotiating the contract for station #3 on the county grounds. Perhaps there are solutions that would benefit both the city and county. The site has much land, and nothing would have to be taken down. It is central to the other two stations.

Mr. Kesner said that the county contract is being investigated. It is a long, detailed, 60-year contract signed in 1980 that the county would like to get out of in any way possible. It brings \$1,200,000 to the city. We would have to determine what can be done within the contract without reopening it. Station #3 has become a strong enough option to require examining the contract in more detail, which Mr. Kesner said he has spent time on in the past few weeks.

Asst. Chief Anton expressed appreciation for the committee's efforts, outlined the determinations reached thus far, and said the pivotal question now seems to be whether the department needs all functions under one roof or if they can be split at separate locations. He noted that the sign on the side of station #1's building says "headquarters," denoting a station where all the functions—administration, prevention, training, maintenance, and fire line suppression—are under one roof and are coordinated and dispersed. Staff feels no differently on dividing those functions than would the police chief, public works staff, or others that work together in inter-related functions, and that is the direction of the answers that this committee would receive.

Ald. Sullivan indicated that he is comfortable right now with voting in support of keeping all functions in a headquarters building on one site, but perhaps it could best be addressed as the first item at the next meeting. Ald. Herzog also was prepared to move forward tonight and agreed that core services should be in one place.

Roll call vote on the motion, Ayes: 2; Noes: 5 (Birschel, Didier, Herzog, Meaux, Treis) – Motion fails.

Moved by Ald. Sullivan, seconded by Ald. Birschel that this committee finds that administrative, maintenance, training, and other functions currently found in the Fire Department headquarters should be housed together in a fire station site –

Ald. Sullivan clarified that the motion does not exclude the possibility of adding support functions to an existing fire station. Citing the need to assemble a large piece of land in the most valuable part of the city that could include acquisition of private property, Ald. Donegan said that there are far more complex organizations with many more people, some even in other parts of the world, who communicate every day without seeing each other. He noted that stations #2 and #3 operate effectively without being attached to headquarters. Ald. Sullivan drew an analogy to the effective interconnection of city departments at city hall.

Asst. Chief Anton explained that the department coordinates activities for all three stations at station #1 headquarters. They are not saying they need to be right next to the fire companies, but at the same time they do not feel that they should be totally detached from emergency response operations. The command staff is part of the department's emergency response team. One of the command staff is on 24-hour duty every day as incident commander while the rest are working in the office coordinating training, fire prevention, maintenance, or other activities. The department feels the need for a headquarters where they can coordinate training activities, do plan and permit reviews, and provide other services to the public, and they would like to provide those functions under one roof. In a city with multiple fire stations, it is fairly ordinary for one to serve as headquarters. When faced with an aging headquarters/fire station, West Allis built a new station on a fairly small footprint and now uses the converted building only for administration. Anecdotally, there has been a tremendous disconnect in that department as a result of moving the administrative office a mere 100 feet from the fire station. Here, it is the department's opinion that there is a strong basis for a coordinated, efficient, and effective operation in one facility. The maintenance function is not just about changing oil or servicing brakes. Mechanics coordinate maintenance on apparatus, facilities, and grounds, dealing with everything from painting and carpeting to HVAC and plumbing. Asst. Chief Hevey coordinates fire prevention, a large operation that brings a great number of people to the station. That function could work at station #2 if it would fit there, but it would not be as effective in the northwest corner of the city.

Deputy Chief Rice pointed out that station #1 responds to more fires than any other station. It houses a group of seven chiefs and two maintenance personnel in addition to the fire suppression forces, putting the most fire power right in the heart of the city. He also cited interaction as a reason why that is important. He is much more effective when he is able to discuss certain problems with a captain, a lieutenant, or a firefighter, and that was also true when he served as the training officer. That interconnection results in a strong product. The fact that station #2 is too far north has been pointed out in many reports and by consultants over the years. The building is 50 years old and the site is small, so we would be doing the same thing that occurred with station #1. He strongly urged the committee to keep all functions together for an efficiency and effectiveness.

Assistant Chief Hevey spoke of the fire prevention bureau's need to meet frequently with city hall staff and others whose offices are within a fairly close walking or driving distance from station #1. Consulting and plan review is done on a daily basis. He also helps manage the hazardous materials team and works continuously with the health department. The headquarters in the Village is an ideal location for the necessary interaction. Asked about the likelihood of health department co-location, Chief Hevey indicated that parking demands were found to be almost unmanageable in such a scenario considering their staffing and the demands of the clinics they conduct.

Ald. Meaux asked for further comment on why it is critical for maintenance to be part of headquarters or at least at one of the facilities. Chief Rice said that nothing *has* to be—they can get anything done that they have to but feel it is in the best interest of the city to keep them all together. He interacts with the master mechanic and equipment mechanic every day as well as other line personnel. That face-to-face interaction is critical. If they would move to another station, he would lose the ability to manage that operation as effectively as when they are in the same location. Major training will still take place at the training grounds at the city's public works site, which he travels to on a regular basis, sometimes multiple times in one day. Adding more travel time to meet with maintenance staff would be significant.

Ald. Meaux next inquired about possible duplication of maintenance equipment with that at the city yard. Chief Rice said that no one at public works is trained to work with hydraulic systems or self-containing breathing apparatus. They also routinely do plumbing work and have routinely bandaged together the boiler at station #1.

Chief Anton added that there are some duplications in equipment since fire mechanics change oil and do similar routine maintenance, but some of the routine preventative maintenance specialties differ from what is done at the city yard.

Responding to questions from Ald. Didier regarding vehicle staffing, Chief Anton said that the department adheres to a minimum staffing level that varies from vehicle to vehicle. Then asked how fire and emergency service would suffer if non-emergency functions were not located at a fire station, Chief Anton said that it would be in the area of communication between all stations and all firefighters. On an annual basis, they rotate people among different crews and stations. There is also an opportunity to rotate through station #1 headquarters, known as “the big house,” where they learn and interact with the different functions there. He commented that, even though the police have just one station, the police chief would not favor separating his administrative functions—his captains, clerical staff, and dispatchers—from his line street people any more than the fire department would favor separating the subject functions from one of the three stations. Although the department can’t locate all chiefs and functions at all three stations, they have established the coordination at one station that expands to the other stations.

Chief Rice commented on how firefighters help administrative staff accomplish objectives. For example, the master mechanic or a firefighter familiar with standards on rigs may be consulted when a problem is encountered with the specs for a \$500,000 engine. Within a half hour, that problem can be resolved. That type of situation takes place every day and is why he would be less effective in another location.

Ald. Meaux commented that explanations about training and filtering in of staff have hit home for him. The decision is not only on a vision for the next 75 years but the interaction and training that is critical as people retire over time. Ald. Sullivan commented that we are looking at the department for a critical mission, and we are almost holding their success in doing their job against them. A corporate example doesn’t apply to the very physical nature of the service. He cited his father’s experience with Coast Guard command, and said that at some point there is no substitute for what they are requesting, to be all in one box.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 6; Noes: 1 (Donegan)

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 p.m.

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Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk  
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin