



Plan Commission Minutes  
April 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Eau Claire County Boardroom

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Members Present: Messrs. Brenholt, Gragert, Granlund, Larsen, Obaid, Pederson, Radabaugh  
Seymour, Weld

Staff Present: Ms. Ness and Messrs. Allen, Ivory, Noel and Pippenger

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Radabaugh.

1. **REZONING (Z-1641-19) – RM to P (Public)**

Mr. Radabaugh moved item number four on the agenda to the second item. There were no objections to the change.

Mr. Ivory presented a City request to recommend approval of rezoning from RM to P (Public) at 111 Niagara Street. The parcel is in the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan for possible park development. The Neighborhood Association is looking to enhance the parcel to make it more welcoming for residents and visitors. The Parks and Waterways Commission recommended approval with the possibility of adding benches and identification signs for greater use of the space. The property was purchased in 1997 using FEMA funds; this restricts structures from being built on it. There is parking on the southwest side of the parcel. This parking appears to be used by university students. Adjacent landlords do not have any formal agreement to use the City's property. In the future, signage would prohibit this non-park use.

Mr. Pippenger stated City utilities are nearby and there are no problems with this possible park.

Helene Smiar, 320 Broadway Street, spoke in support. The Neighborhood Association was given a grant from INVEST Health to help develop the space. They have two master gardeners to do the beautification design.

Mr. Weld moved to recommended approval of the rezoning with the staff conditions. Seconded by Mr. Granlund and the motion carried.

2. **FIVE YEAR PARKS PLAN AMENDMENT**

Mr. Ivory presented a City request to recommend approval of an amendment to the 5-year parks plan. To accommodate the last item, the parks plan would officially recognize the 111 Niagara Street property and classify it as a "special park and open space area". This designation fits because of FEMA's restrictions on structural improvements. Future naming of a park takes 60 days for comment and the Parks and Waterways Commission decides if a suggested name is appropriate. The City Council then makes the final decision.

Mr. Weld moved to recommend approval of the five-year parks plan amendment. Seconded by Mr. Seymour and the motion carried.

3. **REZONING (Z-1642-19) – R-1 to P (Public)**

**PUBLIC ZONING (PZ-1903) – Visitor and Admissions Center**

Mr. Ivory presented a request to recommend approval of rezoning from R-1 to P (Public) at the west end of Roosevelt Avenue, adjacent to Park Avenue and a site plan for a UWEC Visitor Center. The University's Visitor Center and Admissions center would cover five parcels on UWEC-owned parcels. The three western R-1 lots will be rezoned as the other two are already

P-Public. The first floor is approximately 8,000 square feet; with an overall height from 30 to 35 feet. The building would be setback 50 feet from the Little Niagara Creek's Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM). A bio-filter will be placed onsite before storm water runs off toward the creek. A small portion of the parking lot encroaches into the wetland setback and thus needs a DNR waiver. However, the new 22-stall parking lot would reduce the encroachment than what currently exists at the visitor parking lot. The University believes this is ample parking. Office uses will be relocated from Schofield Hall and there are no new staff expansions planned for the vacated spaces.

There are multiple pedestrian connections to the north and west that cross vacated Roosevelt Avenue. The sidewalk on the south side of Roosevelt Avenue should be extended to the east property line and provide a pedestrian ramp extending north to match the sidewalk on the east side of Park Avenue and show a pedestrian ramp on the site plan on the south side of the crosswalk located to the west of the driveway. Site and building lighting should not cast glare onto adjacent residents. The Parks and Waterways Commission recommended approval. The proposal is consistent with the Third Ward Neighborhood Plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Applicants, Mike Rindo with the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, Angi Goodwin and Travis Schroeder with Ayres Associates, stated they are in agreement with staff's conditions. They are not proposing to fill in the wetland and looking for a "no practical alternative" finding by the DNR. The bio-filter will help remove total suspended solids. They did not recommend permeable parking stalls because sand can plug the porous pavement. They asked to eliminate the bicycle parking requirement since there are 66 stalls for bicycling parking to the north. Pedestrian crossing safety at the corner should be enhanced with the traffic calming crosswalk they have planned.

The building will incorporate a number of green features including low-flow fixtures, three electrical conduits for future electric vehicle parking, and utilizing district steam heating. Additional features may be funded by the Student Office of Sustainability.

Kevin Rosenberg, 219 McKinley Avenue and chair of the Third Ward Neighborhood Association, spoke in favor of the new proposal rather than the previous dorm envisioned. He was concerned about the future Roosevelt Avenue roundabout creating more traffic congestion. Site lighting should not trespass into adjacent housing. The Neighborhood Association will vote on the proposal on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Gragert moved to recommend approval of the rezoning and site plan with the staff conditions (keeping the bicycling parking stalls shown on the site plan). Seconded by Mr. Pederson and the motion carried.

4. **REZONING (Z-1643-19) – C-3H to C-3P**  
**SITE PLAN (SP-1909) – Addition**

Mr. Allen presented a request to recommend approval of rezoning from C-3H to C-3P and to approve the site plan for an addition at 1106 Mondovi Road. The required Clairemont Avenue setback is 70 feet. The applicant is asking for a 20-foot setback instead for an outdoor dining platform canopy along with a future pole sign. The dining structure would be 12'4" out from the building façade and 50 foot long. The existing building is at a 75-foot setback. The proposal does not impact traffic circulation since it would be located in landscaping. Staff is recommending the

commission review the request related to the structure only, and research the larger setback reduction request on a more comprehensive basis.

Applicant, Greg Johnson with Artisan Forge Studios LLC, stated the proposal is within the landscaping area but elevated to match the floor inside. It would not be attached to the building but on piers. Access will be from within the building but there will be an emergency exit. He voiced concerns for the area setback reduction study to be completed in a timely fashion because his tenants are desiring a sign to advertise.

Mr. Granlund was reluctant to make the change until the comprehensive study is completed.

Mr. Larsen moved to recommend approval of the rezoning and General Development Plan, but allowing only the outdoor dining structure with the 12'4". Mr. Pederson seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Larsen moved to approve the site plan with staff conditions. Mr. Pederson seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Granlund voted nay for both motions.

5. **MASTER SIGN PLAN (MSP-1901) – Multi-tenant sign**

Mr. Allen presented a request to approve a master sign plan for a multi-tenant ground sign at 2510 and 2536 Alpine Road at the northwest corner with a 15-foot setback from the corner. This sign is for two buildings within Gateway West Business Park. The sign code standards for this business park were recently amended to add a provision applicable to multiple tenant buildings for a business identification ground sign with a maximum size of 150 square feet, maximum height of 15 feet, and at a minimum setback of 15 feet. The proposal meets the standards, but the base should be landscaped and this should be the only tenant listing sign for the two West Park buildings.

Applicant, Dan Draxler with Stratford Sign Company, stated they adjusted the sign to meet the new covenant standards.

Mr. Brenholt moved to approve the master sign plan with staff conditions. Seconded by Mr. Seymour and the motion carried.

6. **EASEMENT – Prairie Circle North**

Ms. Ness presented a City request to recommend approval of an easement at Prairie Circle North. The easement is needed to reduce water pressure in the southeast portion of the City. The Oakwood Hills reservoir serves the area. There is a high drop from this area causing possible safety concerns with water utilities. A utility system study identified pressure reduction was needed. The easement will be no cost to the City.

Mr. Pederson moved to recommend approval of the easement. Seconded by Mr. Brenholt and the motion carried.

7. **DISCUSSION/DIRECTION**

A. **Third Ward Plan Update**

Mr. Noel presented a draft update to the Third Ward Neighborhood Plan. He explained the City process for creating neighborhood plans after a neighborhood association makes a request. A plan update steering committee is formed to represent the neighborhood with association leadership and other resident stakeholders. Staff has been working with this Third Ward committee since September of 2017. The last plan had successes of down-zoning the lower

residential area and some major street reconstruction projects. The draft has been put together with the committee and input received via a neighborhood survey. A down-zoning in the northern section is not recommended due to creating many non-conformities to existing structures and it not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. If and when new development occurs in this area, the plan outlines several design and form-based policies to judge a project so it is "right-sized". The committee recommended that Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should be taken out of the draft since they may create enforcement problems.

The commission debated the merits of ADUs. They decided to wait and understand what the neighborhood association wants. They also thought the issue needs city-wide study. The status of the historic landmark opted-out properties was discussed. Mr. Noel stated these properties would need to be studied in a revised Third Ward Historic Landmarks Plan.

Kevin Rosenberg, 219 McKinley Avenue and chair of the Third Ward Neighborhood Association, asked that the plan background be included from the original plan and that they would like more time to review the plan. Regarding possible parking permits, he noted one concept would be to study ways to monetize parking on the street. He also was interested in La Crosse's pilot program for a parking permit program.

Mr. Noel stated staff will work with Mr. Rosenberg and the association so there is adequate time to review the draft.

Commissioners directed staff to set up public hearings once the association takes a vote.

B. Net Zero Energy Guide

Mr. Noel provided background on the City's Net Zero Energy Building Guide. The project is being funded by the Public Service Commission of WI via a grant. The voluntary guide will seek to increase awareness and construction of high performance residential and commercial buildings. A local task force will be formed to help provide input to staff and the consultant.

The commissioners were supportive of moving the process forward with creating the guide.

C. Code Compliance Items

None.

D. Future Agenda Items

None.

E. Additions or Corrections to Minutes

None.

8. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of March 18, 2019 were approved.



Terry Pederson, Secretary