

REPORT OF CITY PLAN COMMISSION

March 04, 2019 – 6:00 PM

Police Department – 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Mayor Wiza, Alderperson Kneebone, Commissioner Arntsen, Commissioner Cooper, Commissioner Haines, Commissioner Hoppe, and Commissioner Rice.

ALSO PRESENT: Director Ostrowski, Associate Planner Kearns, City Attorney Beveridge, Alderperson Jennings, Alderperson Nebel, Alderperson Johnson, Alderperson Dugan, Alderperson McComb, Alderperson Phillips, Alderperson Morrow, Joe Bachman, Brandi Makuski, Evan Pfefferkorn, Tim McKnight, Chase Rettler, Will Stites, Sierra Niewiadomski, Armin Nebel, and Steve Chizzo.

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  3. Request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for a reduced setback to construct an addition to the Church at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801)
  4. Request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for an Alternative Parking Plan at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801)
  5. Request from the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Stevens Point to purchase and sell/transfer, or dispose of five properties: 1909 Prairie Street (Parcel ID 281240832401303), 1525 Ellis Street (Parcel ID 281240832101407), 1700 Strongs Avenue (Parcel ID 281240832400901), 1708 Elk Street (Parcel ID 281240832300120), and 1100 Fourth Avenue (Parcel ID 281240829304706)
  6. Request from the City of Stevens Point to accept the conveyance of property from Joan M. Zurawski at the east end of East Maria Drive, east of Green Avenue (Parcel ID's 281240827240321 and 020240827-08.20)
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1. Roll call.

**Present: Wiza, Kneebone, Arntsen, Cooper, Haines, Hoppe, Rice**

Discussion and possible action on the following:

2. Report of the February 4, 2018 meeting

Commissioner Arntsen acknowledged Mr. Guzman's testimonial letter that had been included into the record, but not read aloud at the previous meeting.

**Motion by Commissioner Cooper to approve the report of the February 4, 2018 Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Arntsen.**

**Motion carried 7-0.**

3. Request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for a reduced setback to construct an addition to the Church at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801)

Director Ostrowski explained that Holy Spirit Parish was requesting to construct an addition onto the north side of the church, as well as a parking lot reconstruction. Due to the constrained nature of the site, the applicants were pursuing reduced setbacks for the proposed addition, as well as the use of an alternative parking plan. In regards to the addition, staff reviewed the proposed site plan and renderings, noting that the design and placement of the addition would be appropriate for the area and would not negatively affect site access or circulation. Approval of the request was recommended with conditions outlined in the staff report.

Mayor Wiza asked for comments from the audience.

Aldersperson Dugan (District Eight) noted no concern with the reduced setback request, but suggested that the height of the addition be increased, and for more windows to be added to match the existing structure. She provided a brief history of the church's historical significance.

**Motion by Commissioner Arntsen to approve the request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for a reduced setback to construct an addition to the Church at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801) with the following conditions:**

1. **The building addition shall maintain a minimum setback of 10 feet.**
2. **Applicable zoning requirements shall be met for the building addition and parking lot construction projects, unless otherwise determined by the Zoning Administrator.**
3. **Staff shall have the authority to approve minor modifications to the plan.**

**seconded by Commissioner Hoppe.**

**Motion carried 7-0.**

4. Request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for an Alternative Parking Plan at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801)

Mayor Wiza noted a correction of minimum parking stalls being required, from 121 down to 114.

Commissioner Haines asked for clarification why the reconstruction of the parking lot did not trigger zoning requirements such as landscaping, to which Director Ostrowski explained that under a constrained site exemption, staff could internally waive those requirements, adding that the requirement of landscaping would further reduce their parking to under the minimum required stalls.

Commissioner Haines asked what the requirements would be under the new zoning code, to which Director Ostrowski explained that the minimums would still be very reduced, however the overall requirement of even having parking minimums warranted further discussion.

Commissioner Haines inquired on whether shared parking was an option, noting several of the surrounding parking areas such as the hospital and university.

Director Ostrowski explained that there were existing agreements for shared parking, but there were also additional parking needs for parishioners.

Aldersperson Nebel (District Three) was glad to hear that the church was connecting with the university for their parking needs. Additionally, she inquired on whether there would be landscaping required for the addition as the area needed more greenery. Lastly, she asked whether they could consider a permeable surface for the parking area.

Director Ostrowski confirmed that there would not be much greenery around the parking lot, however the addition would have increased landscaping. In regards to the permeable surface, that would be under the purview of the developer as the zoning code only required it if it was 150% of the lot coverage.

Aldersperson Dugan (District Eight) asked for clarification on whether the rectory would be demolished for the parking lot reconstruction, to which staff confirmed that the rectory would be demolished.

Director Ostrowski stated that staff would be agreeable to lowering the minimum required parking stalls for condition 1, in case the applicant didn't need as many.

Steve Chizzo (23201 Stanley St), project designer, made himself available for questioning. He explained that they were trying to maximize parking as there was need for the applicant. While the landscaping would be reduced on the lot, he clarified that there was some minor landscaping around the existing lots as well. In regards to the rectory, the applicant was willing to let the building go at no cost if someone wanted to spend the funds to have it moved.

Commissioner Haines inquired on why they had to set a minimum parking requirement when they could set a maximum amount of stalls.

Director Ostrowski explained that the current zoning code required over 200 stalls, but due to the constrained site, staff had the flexibility to reduce that minimum requirement, with Associate Planner Kearns adding that the number was the minimum benchmark needed for that site.

**Motion by Commissioner Hoppe to approve the request from Rettler Corporation, representing Holy Spirit Parish, for an Alternative Parking Plan at 838 Fremont Street (281240828300801) with the following conditions:**

- 1. A minimum of 99 stalls shall be provided on site.**
- 2. The zoning administrator shall have the authority to approve minor changes to the parking plan, which do not significantly change parking counts.**
- 3. Significant changes to uses onsite may require review and approval of another alternative parking plan.**

**seconded by Commissioner Arntsen**

**Motion carried 6-1, with Commissioner Haines voting in the negative.**

5. Request from the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Stevens Point to purchase and sell/transfer, or dispose of five properties: 1909 Prairie Street (Parcel ID 281240832401303), 1525 Ellis Street (Parcel ID 281240832101407), 1700 Strongs Avenue (Parcel ID 281240832400901), 1708 Elk Street (Parcel ID 281240832300120), and 1100 Fourth Avenue (Parcel ID 281240829304706)

Director Ostrowski briefly explained that the Redevelopment Authority may have interest in potentially purchasing the five properties for the purpose of transferring them to CAP services for redevelopment. The five properties were blighted and in a state of disrepair, and they were going through the County tax deed process. Due to the tax deed process, CAP services was unable to bid on the properties, thus the need for an intermediary. Two properties that posed the highest interest was 1525 Ellis Street and 1708 Elk Street, adding that CAP Services needed to own the properties in order to perform repairs or renovations.

Mayor Wiza noted that any purchase, sale, or acquisition of property required a recommendation from the Plan Commission.

Mayor Wiza asked for comments from the audience.

Alderman McComb (District Nine) noted her support, specifically for redeveloping 1708 Elk Street.

Alderman Morrow (District Eleven) inquired on whether the City would be allowed to bid below market value for the properties.

Mayor Wiza explained that the City would most likely not do any bidding within the first round, as the County could only take market value bids. If they did not obtain any market value bids, they could move onto round two of bidding where the County would be able to take whatever bid was in their best interest, meaning it did not have to be the highest bid.

Alderman Dugan (District Eight) noted her appreciation for attempting to deal with the dilapidated homes.

Commissioner Arntsen asked for clarification if only the County could assume properties based on tax deed, and whether the City had the same ability, to which Mayor Wiza explained that statutorily, only the County had that ability. If the County moved forward, they would need to reimburse the City and any other entities for any delinquent items.

Director Ostrowski added that the County did not need to start the tax deed process, and they could let the properties sit if they so choose. However, they may be more inclined to start the process if interest in purchasing and repairing the properties was shown.

**Motion by Alderman Kneebone to approve the request from the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Stevens Point to purchase and sell/transfer, or dispose of five properties: 1909 Prairie Street (Parcel ID 281240832401303), 1525 Ellis Street (Parcel ID 281240832101407), 1700 Strongs Avenue (Parcel ID 281240832400901), 1708 Elk Street (Parcel ID 281240832300120), and 1100 Fourth Avenue (Parcel ID 281240829304706); seconded by Commissioner Rice.**

**Motion carried 7-0.**

6. Request from the City of Stevens Point to accept the conveyance of property from Joan M. Zurawski at the east end of East Maria Drive, east of Green Avenue (Parcel ID's 281240827240321 and 020240827-08.20)

Director Ostrowski briefly explained that the property owner was looking to transfer two pieces of property to the City of Stevens Point, of which one parcel was in the Town of Hull and the other in the City of Stevens Point. Both parcels would most likely become right-of-way upon transfer. The process would help clear up ownership within the surrounding area.

Mayor Wiza asked for comments from the audience.

Alderman Nebel (District Three) asked why it was advantageous for the City to go through the process, as they would have even more property to maintain, to which Mayor Wiza briefly added that they already used the area for snow storage.

Director Ostrowski also explained that the area would most likely not be developed, but the parcels would serve as right-of-way for the parcels that were originally transferred. The current owner did not own any property surrounding it, only the slivers or remnants. Sometimes remnants or sections were created as a result of land transfers, and they were only trying to clean up the area ownership.

**Motion by Commissioner Cooper to approve the request from the City of Stevens Point to accept the conveyance of property from Joan M. Zurawski at the east end of East Maria Drive, east of Green Avenue (Parcel ID's 281240827240321 and 020240827-08.20); seconded by Commissioner Haines.**

**Motion carried 7-0.**

7. Request from the City of Stevens Point to accept the donation of land from Valley Communities Credit Union along Henrietta Street (Parcel ID's 281230805101317 and 281230805101316)

Director Ostrowski explained that Valley Communities Credit Union was proposing to donate two parcels totaling approximately 30,000 square feet. The two parcels stated, he explained, posed challenges in regards to further development, explaining that no utilities existed on Henrietta Street, thus most development would require the extension of utilities. Under City ownership, the properties would need to be maintained. Some options, he lastly added, could be to establish a mini-park or recreational area, get a cooperative agreement with a developer, or transfer the land to adjacent property owners.

Mayor Wiza noted another option could be to establish a community garden, or pollinator garden. While they didn't know what use would go there yet, he reiterated that the credit union had no use for the land.

Mayor Wiza asked for comments from the audience.

Aldersperson Morrow (District Eleven) asked if there were any City utilities nearby, to which it was explained that the nearest utilities were towards the west, or on Whiting, adding that extending utilities was currently costing \$100 per lineal foot per utility.

Aldersperson Dugan (District Eight) provided a history of the area and the stated parcels, explaining that it used to be a community garden. She also noted that the area was lacking in green space, and it would be nice to have a pocket-park for the surrounding children.

Aldersperson Johnson (District Five) explained that she had been a longtime advocate for more parks within the city. Similar to the Friends of Emerson Park group, she suggested there could perhaps be a Friends of Henrietta Park group to assist in funding a park for the area.

Aldersperson McComb (District Nine) stated her support for the request and welcomed a park in the area. She suggested a pollinator garden with a trail leading through it.

Commissioner Arntsen inquired on the historic use of the property, and whether there could be any liabilities regarding environmental contamination, to which Mayor Wiza stated that there were no known issues on the property according to City records.

Commissioner Cooper asked if Park Director Schrader had been contacted in regards to the request, to which Director Ostrowski stated the Park Director's openness to accepting the area for a park.

**Motion by Aldersperson Kneebone to approve the request from the City of Stevens Point to accept the donation of land from Valley Communities Credit Union along Henrietta Street (Parcel ID's 281230805101317 and 281230805101316); seconded by Commissioner Haines.**

**Motion carried 7-0.**

8. Strategic Plan Request for Proposals

Director Ostrowski stated that the City was in its final stages of completing its comprehensive plan rewrite. Once completed, the City could look into more narrowly focusing on specific goals, objectives, and policies through a strategic plan. The Strategic Plan Request for Proposals had been provided within the agenda packet for review, and staff was open to any additional comments or suggestions relating to the release of

the RFP. He detailed the timeline of its release and noted a minor change of a May 17<sup>th</sup> deadline for submittals. The funds for the process had been budgeted during previous years.

Mayor Wiza asked for comments from the audience.

Aldersperson Johnson (District Five) stated her support for strategic planning. She recommended adding a bullet point on page 73 or 74 of the agenda packet to articulate the importance of aligning the Strategic Plan with not only the Comprehensive Plan, but the City's existing plans such as the Green Tier Legacy Plan, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Commissioner Haines asked if the Strategic Plan included the whole City and all departments, and not just focused on planning, zoning, and land use.

Mayor Wiza clarified and confirmed that it would be all encompassing, to which Commissioner Haines agreed with Aldersperson Johnson's recommendation.

Aldersperson Kneebone reiterated the importance of encouraging the use of the document, rather than having it sit on a shelf and not referenced.

There was a brief discussion amongst the Commission and staff regarding the hierarchy of the strategic plan in relation to other planning documents for the city, its purpose, and what types of items or objectives it would address. It was explained that the strategic plan would assist in carrying out short-term objectives and priorities.

Aldersperson Johnson (District Five) briefly explained that a strategic plan would produce action items and a work plan to address goals and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan.

Aldersperson McComb (District Nine) explained that a strategic plan was vital, over-arching, and identified the vision and goals for the City. She also asked if the public would be involved in the process.

Mayor Wiza confirmed that there was the intention to involve the public. He asked that any additional comments or feedback be forwarded to the Director or Community Development Department.

No action was taken.

#### 9. Community Development Department Monthly Report for January and February, 2019

Director Ostrowski briefly explained that while values were lower than previous year to date values, they were still looking at a good year, adding that there were many projects in queue for 2019. He expected a significant uptick over the next month as projects continued to move forward. In regards to the violation report, code enforcement had continued as normal. He noted that a new Property Maintenance Code was being produced, with it hopefully being completed and implemented prior to the coming summer months.

#### 11. Director's update.

Director Ostrowski provided updates on the following:

1. Comprehensive Plan: Completed draft had been received from SEH, and would be brought forward to the commission after staff review.
2. Land Development Code: Currently being formatted, and Chapter 7, Supplemental Use Regulations, currently being reviewed.
3. Targeted Area Master Plans: Initial public meeting had been successfully held. Additional public meetings would be held:

- i. April 2019 – Regarding Division Street

- ii. May 2019 – Regarding the Downtown
- 4. Neighborhood Program: City looking to get local residents more involved within their neighborhoods. Two potential designations could include:
  - i. Neighborhood Group / Neighborhood Associations: Allow anyone to form this type of group. Want to promote grassroots organization and involvement.
  - ii. Qualified/Certified Neighborhood Associations: Potential to have specific signage for the district, qualify for certain Redevelopment Authority programs or other grant programs.

Aldersperson Dugan (District Eight) stated that District Eight would be providing additional assistance in helping to create delineated areas for neighborhoods that were interested in doing so.

12. Adjourn.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.**