

Meeting Minutes

City Plan Commission

Monday, March 3, 2008

PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Halverson; Lois Feldman; Ann Shannon; Jerry Moore; Tony Patton; Fred Steffen (Karen Aldinger, Excused)  
ALSO PRESENT: Comm. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Ald. Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik and Brooks; Water & Sewer Dept. Dir. Halverson; Mary Ann Laszewski; Reid Rocheleau; Heidi Okray; Hans Hofmeister; Eric Hofmeister; Shane Swiderski; Thomas/Diane Haulfmann; Wendy Zurawski; Scott Sleeter; Cathy Dugan; Laurel Hoeth; Darla Kraus; Cindy Stewart; Erik Hirzy; Henry Korger; Jack/Melissa Rzentkowski; Kevin Perri; Kelley Krebsbach; Dave Wilz; Chuck/Julie McCarty; Lorraine Falkavage; Robert/Diane Kirschling; Carol Wollock; Kim Erzinger; Lea/Kris Yenter; Emmett Polum; Morrie Karch; Sharon Meronek ; Rick Whipp; Bill Wallner; Laverne/Donna Syens; Roland Hawk; Greg Diemer; Carl Rasmussen; Jeremy Beaudry; Brian Seramur; Gary Marquard; Rich Sommer; Robert Wierzba; Tari Wallner; Gene Kemmeter, Po. Co. Gazette; Patrick Thornton, St. Pt. Journal

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1. **AIG Project County Business Park K B Willett Dr. and Business Park Dr.: Create TIF VII; Acquire and Sell Land; Vacate KB Willett Dr. and Portion of Vern Holmes Dr.; Accept Cul-de-sac Vern Holmes Dr.**
2. **Conditional Use Multiple Family Development (14 16-unit buildings) - 2301 Country Club Drive**
3. **Vacation of Portage Court East of Phillips St., and a Portion of Stanley St. between Phillips and Portage Streets**
4. **Building Request - Water Department Sewage Treatment Plant Bliss Ave.**

1. AIG Project - County Business Park - K B Willett Dr. and Business Park Dr.

- Create TIF VII
- Acquire and Sell Land
- Vacate K B Willett Dr. and a Portion of Vern Holmes Dr.
- Accept Cul-de-sac - Vern Holmes Dr.

John Gardner provided background on the project and the different sites that had been considered. TOLD Development was selected as the developer with AIG as the tenant. The 21 acre site at K B Willett/Vern Holmes Dr. was chosen. He reviewed the proposed principles to acquire the site (as shown in case report) and noted AIG will construct a 125,000 sq.ft. building with construction to begin no later than June of 2009. The construction costs include removing street and the utilities to make it a buildable site. St. Michael's proposes to build a 30,000 sq. ft. building with construction to begin no later than June of 2009. To make this project happen, a TID is necessary to fund the public costs. He reviewed the financials of land acquisition, removing the utilities currently in place, incentive, and a pedestrian underground crossing on the north side of the street between the business park and Crossroad Commons.

The reasons to create a TID: 1) create jobs in Portage County. AIG has the potential to be one of the largest, if not the largest, employers in the community, 2) brings new money into the community by selling their product outside of the community, 3) potential to be the second largest taxpayer in the city, 4) spin-off will be substantial in the business park, and 5) there was competition to move them outside the county, as well as outside of the state, and this project would not have happened here without the assistance of a TID. We are looking for a recommendation to proceed and the call for a public hearing and are looking at a March 31 public hearing date.

Jerry Moore moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to proceed to create a tax increment district and call for a public hearing for March 31, 2008.

Ald. Heart thanked those that worked so hard to keep Travel Guard in the community, and the Travel Guard employees who have worked so hard to make the company grow into what it is today. Corporations should be proud to support the community in which their employees reside. She has read about cities forced to provide very generous incentive packages to convince businesses to keep jobs within their city limits, under the threat of relocation. This specific TIF changes how the city cooperates with our businesses. In the past, we have used TIFs for redevelopment or blighted areas in general neighborhoods, not for a specific business. During the AIG development process, Mayor Halverson had accused Plover of using TIF districts irresponsibly in courting AIG/Travel Guard. A few weeks later, he brought forward a TIF proposal as part of the city's incentive package. We need to discuss priorities and potential development goals with surrounding municipalities, and look at a non-compete agreement between municipalities. AIG is only willing to sign a 10-year lease for the building, yet they are asking the city for a 20-year TIF. As an example, if TOLD/AIG pay off the TIF in 15 years, they would pay no taxes the remaining five years. What do we say to other businesses that are home grown and wish to move or expand in the future and how will this impact the financial health of our city, county, and school budgets. When public dollars are used for a private development, the city council needs to ensure the investment is made wisely with a clear plan and a sense of responsibility and feasibility.

Reid Rocheleau stated he is pleased that AIG is staying in Stevens Point, but is disappointed that they are abandoning our downtown. Why is the city administration offering a TIF and millions of dollars in incentives to one of the world's wealthiest companies. When Plover offered a TIF, some alderpersons were opposed to offering TIFs as incentives. These are closed door agreements. The city will buy the property for \$2.3 million from the county and then sell it to AIG for \$1.00. The proposed tunnel to Plover that they want us to pay for would, would allow their employees to spend their lunch money at the restaurants in Plover. Would this development happen on their own? The county told him they have \$4 million invested in that property that they sold for \$2.3 million. The county expected to reap the tax benefits and are very upset that the city is making a TIF. The county won't receive anything for 20 years. He feels the state guidelines are not being followed and are not in the proper order with regard to the public hearing, joint review board, etc. It is the responsibility of the Plan Commission to not act on this until the proper public process has begun. Another TIF is being planned for \$10-12 million for the mall and stimulate growth downtown which he would support.

John Gardner noted he wanted to clarify Ald. Heart's comment that the city has not done TIDs for anything but redevelopment. We have done TIDs for the original city industrial park and also Woodward Governor. He has previously proposed non-compete and anti-piracy policies, and they were rejected. Until the community decides policies for use of incentives, we will continue to see this kind of competition between municipalities using whatever tools they can.

In response to Mr. Rocheleau, the city paid the county's asking price for the land. The land was for sale and we are paying the asking price. We did not get a special deal. We have done the mailings for the joint review board and included the statute stating the findings they have to make. The wheels are in motion.

Chm. Halverson noted the first meeting in reference to AIG took place within closed session because of the negotiations that we, as municipalities, were in. From now on, everything will be vented in front of you as it is today and there is nothing else that is hidden. We were not just competing with our own county, we were competing on a much greater scale. He can't do any negotiating without approval from the Common Council. Everything was vented through that body appropriately. This is the beginning of that process. We have to make sure that "the perfect" doesn't get in the way of "the good". We have to balance very carefully. The tunnel concept was raised by AIG to allow for the presence of restaurants and things for employees to do on their lunch break. The cost of that pedestrian crossing will be a 3-pronged approach between the Village of Plover, City of Stevens Point, and Portage County. This project would be the second most important single development in the city since Sentry World Headquarters.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

## 2. Conditional Use - Multiple Family Development (14 16-unit buildings) - 2301 Country Club Drive

John Gardner reviewed his staff report and noted the request meets the standards and neighbors concerns. They are proposing a cul-de-sac with no open connection to Mary's Dr. unless for an emergency or construction. This is predicated on the creation of a TID to assist with extending utilities to the site which will be acted on at a later date. He has suggested screening between the residential and industrial uses. He recommends approval with the conditions that adequate utilities be available and storm drainage be retained on site. This project will not happen if a TID is not approved.

Shane Swiderski stated he is proposing ten duplex lots along Carol's Lane as a buffer and the apartment complex would be moved to the interior of the site. He will have 5-6 acres of green space. We are cul-de-sacing the road so all traffic from the apartment complex will go out through the industrial site. The traffic from the duplexes would go out to Carol's Lane. This project would relieve some of the burden from the individual tax payers.

Tony Patton moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to proceed.

Dave Wilz, 1909 Mary's Dr., representing the subdivision, thanked the Mayor, John Gardner, and other departments of city government for allowing the additional time necessary to work out plans while still allowing the development of the Spectra Print property in a sensible way. They ask that any future development of the Spectra Print property be planned so that future traffic issues would be self-contained and traffic would exit onto Country Club Dr. with the exception of the owner-occupied duplexes on Carol's Lane. If the TIF is successful, the 7+ acres along Carol's Lane would be rezoned for duplexes and no more than 8-10 buildings, representing 16-20 units, would be built along Carol's Lane. They would be owner occupied and enter/exit off Carol's Lane. The amount of individual driveways could be as many as 20 spread out over the 1,080 running feet. In principal, they are supportive of the basic components of this plan.

They thanked Shane Swiderski for re-visiting his original plan and they look forward to working with representatives of their subdivision to ensure that the layout of duplexes on Carol's Lane have the least impact on the green space and natural plantings on Carol's Lane. The cooperative effort between the developer and Kirschling representatives should be commended. We thank the Hofmeister family for putting forth a tremendous effort to resolve these issues. We thank all the representatives of the Town of Hull, especially Chairman Holdridge.

John Gardner responded no one can guarantee that the duplexes will be owner occupied anymore than you can guarantee that yours or your neighbor's property would be owner occupied. The units could be rented as well as owner occupied. We are committed to downzoning to two family.

Reid Rocheleau stated the original proposal was for 80 units which everyone opposed. Ann Shannon was opposed to the 80 units because it is zoned industrial and wanted to preserve this area for creating jobs. Now there are 224 units with 20 duplexes. There won't be any room for any other development. Mr. Hofmeister's original plan provided for all office condominiums. He needed a road through there and needed someone to help him with a TIF so that he could do it. Apartments would happen on their own. We are compromising the site with taxpayer's dollars. We need paying jobs in this community.

Chm. Halverson noted this plan did not exist in the beginning. He believes Mr. Steffen was opposed to an apartment complex of this nature abutting single family homes. This became a very good compromise that went to the neighbors, the Hofmeister's, Mr. Holdridge, and back to the city. It was decided that this would make the most sense for all parties involved. It preserves the ambiance of the single family neighborhood and allows for the redevelopment of a site that has been vacant for over 10 years. You would not be committing yourselves to a TIF district, you would be approving a conditional use that itself is conditioned on the creation of TIF district. It gives Spectra Print the ability to redevelop their site and make it financially feasible.

Eric Hofmeister thanked Mayor Halverson, Mr. Gardner, and Mr. Holdridge for the strong amount of intergovernmental cooperation. We are pleased with our new proposal and it couldn't happen without them all working together. He thanked Mr. Swiderski for helping make this compromise work. We have invested over \$5 million in new equipment which has allowed us to remain a competitive printer, continue to add people, and to be a proud member of this community. A big part of making this work for us has been to sell and develop the property and to be able to lease out the excess space in our building. We now need help to be able to rezone this and have the conditional use so that Mr. Swiderski can invest his \$15 million of tax base in the community. We also need help with the TIF. This will not happen without the TIF.

Rich Sommer, rental property owner, stated he would oppose a TIF district for additional apartments.

Tom Haulfmann, 5316 Carol's Lane, noted one goal of the Eco-municipality Task Force is to promote a sustainable socially healthy community. How will 224 dorm-style apartments fit into this concept. Some provisions should be made to provide green space and a common park or playground to give this block some sense of community.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin St., stated this is housing for 500 people. You will be depending on all the existing landlords to keep paying their taxes every year which will be used to pay for bonds to build the infrastructure for their competitor. We don't need to create a TIF to encourage apartments to develop, they will occur anyway. If Mr. Hofmeister needs help, give him a loan. If we TIF ourselves to death, we may not have enough when it comes to the downtown, AIG, county-city building, and our aging historic areas. There is a demand for industrial sites because our neighboring industrial park is almost full. This is not a safe place for families and children because of the noisy 4-lane interstate, the railroad tracks, and a heavy industrial factory site to the west. In addition, there are three ponds and the factory's road that will be running through the apartments. She contacted ten planners in other communities and found they do not allow any residential in industrial zoning. This is the wrong use of a TIF, the wrong zoning for family living, and only a win/win for the buyer, seller, and developer.

Henry Korger, 3200 Water St., stated he hopes this will not be a back door entrance into a TIF district. He doesn't want to help anybody build apartments. They should be able to do it on their own with a banker and themselves. We don't have much industrial land left in the city and to put apartments on it doesn't make sense.

Ald. Stroik questioned how our zoning code allows for multiple family units in industrial when other municipalities don't. Has there been any consideration of play equipment for the green space to the east.

John Gardner responded he does not know the history on it but would research it.

One of the criticisms about standard zoning in the industry across the country is that it is too exclusionary. It creates exclusive zones for residential separate from commercial, industrial, and multiple family. By separating those uses from each other, it requires that people commute between the

different uses. There is a move to start to break down those barriers and blend those uses with each other.

Shane Swiderski responded they haven't planned anything for that green space.

Robert Kirschling stated his family was under the impression that these would be owner-occupied duplexes. We would go along with the duplexes if they were decent and owner occupied. The traffic is terrible on Country Club Dr. and it is not designed for it. We need to get together and create a road that will handle all this traffic.

John Gardner responded the city nor anyone else can control what the ownership status of a building will be. He noted Chet and Loretta Kirschling asked for multiple family zoning for this property years ago.

Robert Kirschling noted they planned high end multiple family development.

Ann Shannon questioned why is the conditional use tonight when it is all coming back next month.

John Gardner responded you can act on it tonight or you can wait until the duplexes and the TIF are together.

Fred Steffen noted this is "M 2" and yet the plan shows office complexes which is not industrial. We need some manufacturing land in this community. He doesn't feel that putting apartment buildings in there will drastically affect commercial. His concern was putting apartments in that will exit only Carol's Lane and that has been addressed.

Lois Feldman noted there seems to be a connection between Items #1 and #2. If the AIG project goes through, we may need more housing.

Ann Shannon noted there has been an enormous amount of cooperation and negotiation that has occurred. She would be in favor of the downzoning, but it would be very hard for her to go for a TIF District that is not job creation or blight elimination.

Chm. Halverson asked Tony Patton to modify his motion to include all of the acceptable conditions and that they are met.

Tony Patton moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to recommend approval of the conditional use request for multiple family development (14 16-unit buildings) at 2301 Country Club Dr. based on compliance with all conditional use standards and conditioned on adequate utilities being available and storm drainage to be retained on site.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

Chm. Halverson noted this development would not occur on this specific site as proposed without the TIF district. The issue of 35% of this particular use within a TIF district has to do with geography and not the content of the TIF. We want to make sure that Carol's Lane is included in the TIF so that we can borrow off of the TIF to resurface and redevelop Carol's Lane. We also want to make sure that the area for the underpass is included as well that is an allowable use adjacent to the TIF district. We want to be able to have the increment that will eventually be created off of this TIF to go back into the reinvestment of the infrastructure improvements on Country Club Dr. We have and continue to do traffic analysis. Currently, they are acceptable. The Fire Chief is in complete agreement with the site plan and is in accordance with what he wants to see with regard to the cul-de-sac.

### 3. Vacation of Portage Court - East of Phillips St., and a Portion of Stanley St. between Phillips and Portage Streets

John Gardner noted the parking lot approval is not included in this item tonight. We are dealing with vacating Portage Court and just a little remnant of Stanley St.

Rick Whipp, 2016 Main St., representing the Old Main Neighborhood Assoc., noted they have no objections. He appreciates notification of the meeting.

Jerry Moore moved, seconded by Ann Shannon, to recommend approval of the vacation of Portage Court east of Phillips St. and a Portion of Stanley St. between Phillips and Portage Streets. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

### 4. Building Request - Water Department Sewage Treatment Plant - Bliss Ave.

John Gardner noted the location of the proposed building. We recommend approval.

Dir. Halverson noted the building will be used for sewer maintenance equipment.

Fred Steffen moved, seconded by Ann Shannon, to recommend approval of the building request for the Water Department Sewage Treatment Plant.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:25 p.m. The meeting minutes reproduced on this website are derived from the computer files used to produce the official minutes for the City of Stevens Point, but are unofficial. The minutes on this web site cannot be certified under s. 889.08, Wis. Stats., and cannot be considered prima facie evidence under s. 889.04, Wis. Stats. Certain tables, maps, and other documents that are a part of the official minutes are not included in the files reproduced on this website. Please consult the printed minutes, available in the City Clerk's Office, for the official text. The decisions made by City of Stevens Point boards, committees, and commissions (other than the Police & Fire Commission) are advisory only and are not binding on the city until affirmed at a meeting of the Common Council. Some of the minutes on this web site might not be approved by the Common Council as of today.

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