

Meeting Minutes

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

Tuesday, September 2, 2002 - 4:00 P.M. PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Wescott; Karen Aldinger; Lois Feldman; Jeff Zabel; Elbert Rackow; Bud Flood; and Fred Steffen

ALSO PRESENT: Comm. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Po. Co. Senior Planner Jeff Schuler; City Clerk Victoria Zdroik; Alderpersons Sevenich, Seiser, Sowieja, Barr, Molski, Phillips, and Moore; Mayors Assis. Louis J. Molepske Jr.; Police Dept. Capt. Linda Daubert; Po. Co. Maintenance Supt., Dennis Kolodziej; Dan Bowers, Po. Co.; Shawn Wesner, Po. Co.; Dan Retzki; Troy Hojnacki; Tim Semmann; Jim Schertz; Bruce Woboril; Ann Kulinski; Bob Woehr; Bob & Carrie Butt; Terry Dalsky; Jim Oliva; Barb Martin, Stevens Point Journal; Gene Kemmeter, Portage County Gazette
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1. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 1, 2002 PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

Elbert Rackow moved, seconded by Karen Aldinger, to recommend approval of the minutes of the July 1, 2002 Plan Commission meeting. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

2. PORTAGE COUNTY REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT A PARKING LOT ACROSS FROM COURTHOUSE

Chairman Mayor Wescott staff recommends approval with the understanding that this is isolated and not the first step of expansion which the city has opposed in the past.

John Gardner noted the immediate neighbors have reviewed the plans and discussed them with Dennis Kolodziej, Po. Co. Maintenance Supt., and support the proposed parking lot.

Dennis Kolodziej stated there is currently a joint-use driveway with the neighbor that comes within 3 feet of the property. They propose to move the county driveway 10 ft. from the north property line and have 10' of green space with a curb around it. We plan grass and shrubs, similar to what is around the courthouse, within the 10' green space. They may provide a picnic table for employees or anyone in the neighborhood. Lois Feldman expressed concern with the new shrubbery being small and recommends any shrubbery be as tall as possible.

Ald. Seiser felt the proposed green space and landscaping would not screen the parking lot from the street and the lot would not be compatible with the neighborhood.

Bud Flood moved, seconded by Jeff Zabel, to recommend approval of the request of Portage County to construct a parking lot across the street from the courthouse. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

3. CONDITIONAL USE REQUEST - LOCATE A TAVERN AT 912 MAIN STREET

John Gardner stated the owners propose to remodel the interior and exterior of the building which would be an improvement and benefit to the building and the area. He reviewed three of the conditional use standards that are the most germane to this request. He reviewed the concerns expressed by the police department and adjacent property owners, and felt an additional bar could have a negative affect toward other potential property upgrades and contribute to crowd control problems. Information was sent to neighboring property owners and staff encouraged their input. Staff recommends denial of the request based on noncompliance with these three standards

Capt. Linda Daubert of the Police Department stated they are not opposed to another Class B establishment, but we are concerned with that establishment going into the 800 or 900 block of Main Street. We have our hands full with the number of calls for service just in that two-block area, and listed the types of violations that they deal with on a regular basis. Communication has been good between the Police Dept. and the Downtown Business Association. Another issue they have is the cost for patrolling the downtown. We have a certain amount of officers for each shift. We have had to hold over and call in additional officers to deal with rowdiness, disorderly conduct, and crowd control for the large amount of people that are concentrated during certain hours in that area. Another concern is with the other areas of the city at that time of the morning when officer concentration is in the downtown. We are opposed to the issuance of another Class B license in the downtown area.

Dan Retzki, project owner and developer, referred to his handout (see attached) and reviewed previous news articles regarding downtown development and Smart Growth Plan recommendations. He described the proposed \$125,000 interior and exterior renovation plans and felt their project would increase surrounding property values. The proposal includes a full service kitchen serving lunches and dinners, games, and televisions for sports minded people. They want families to come for lunch and dinner and encourage a family, as well as a traditional sports pub, atmosphere. He feels having more eyes and increased lighting in the area by occupying the empty building will increase safety. He feels an establishment takes on the personality of whoever runs it.

Elbert Rackow indicated he is skeptical about this project providing effective watchers because they could quite likely contribute toward additional dangers downtown after the regular businesses are closed.

Jeff Zabel noted the proposal meets some of the goals of the Downtown Task Force. Anytime we can bring life to a vacant building downtown it is good. If we don't approve this, chances are the building will stay vacant and deteriorate further. This is a conditional use and he feels we should give it a try for one year.

Elbert Rackow agreed and proposed that the conditional use expire 12/31/03 or 6/30/03, although he has a hard time justifying to himself encouraging a business owner to spend \$125,000 on a use that could be terminated in one year.

Ald. Sowieja felt this proposal would be a great addition to the downtown. We can only hope that by having this renovated new business down there, a less desirable licensed establishment might close as a result of this one.

Ald. Seiser felt the proposal is attractive and commended the developers for giving their attention to the downtown.

Carrie Butt, owner of Divepoint Scuba Center, indicated she is excited whenever she hears about a new business coming downtown and felt this proposal would help her business. She is fairly comfortable that they are going to do what they say, but wishes there were some guarantees that

there would not be fights, broken windows, etc.

Jim Oliva, owner of Mom's Computers, stated he has been downtown since 1990 and has not had problems. He is excited about filling an empty building with a sports bar and feels if they are spending this much money on breakable commodities such as the video equipment, that they will not let negative activity go on inside the bar.

Ald. Barr noted based on what he has seen so far, he tends to support this project.

Ald. Sevenich stated she has had a few calls from constituents downtown against the proposed bar. She feels caught because here is someone who wants to do something in the downtown and people don't want it. She questioned who would be running the bar if both owners live out of town.

Dan Retzki responded he works in Wisconsin Dells but is here every week. Troy lives in Stevens Point and would be managing the bar.

Ald. Molski noted she is glad to see that an owner lives in town and is willing to put money into improving an old building in the downtown.

Bob Woehr, 727 Second St., expressed concern with another tavern downtown. Their proposed business plan sounds positive, however there is leeway where the city could set conditions that ensure that the proposed atmosphere would be maintained.

Ann Kulinski, Carousel Candy, felt the plan is fantastic. She requests that one of these gentlemen attend the regular meetings of the Downtown Business Association held with the police department. These meetings deal with downtown issues and we can't work together if your not there.

Bob Worboril, owner of Elbow Room Tavern, stated he is impressed with the plan and supports their project. He noted the positive change at Clark Place.

Jeff Zabel moved, seconded by Bud Flood, to recommend approval of the conditional use request to locate a tavern at 912 Main Street.

Elbert Rackow moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to amend the motion to include a sunset for the conditional use of December 31, 2003.
Ayes, all; Nays none; Motion carried.

Vote on motion as amended: to recommend approval of the conditional use request to locate a tavern at 912 Main Street, with such approval to expire on December 31, 2003.

Ayes, Zabel, Flood, Rackow, Steffen, Aldinger, and Ch. Wescott.

Nays, Feldman. Motion carried.

4. AMEND "R-2" SINGLE FAMILY CORNER LOT AND SIDEYARD BUILDING SETBACK

John Gardner reviewed his attached memo and noted the first issue is sideyard setback requirements for new construction on narrow lots in Single Family zoning. Current setback requirements are 25 ft. from the street right of way with sideyards totaling 20 ft., one side not less than 8 ft. In order to make use of existing older 50 ft. lots, staff recommends reducing the setbacks to 8' minimum sideyards on each side for buildings less than 2 ½ stories on lots 55 ft. wide or less in Single Family zoning districts. In addition, corner lots of 55 ft. or less require a 25 ft. setback from one street and a 20 ft. setback from the other street which would leave 22 ft. for actual buildable area. Staff recommends making sideyard setbacks for corner lots of 55 ft. or less a conditional use to be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Fred Steffen moved, seconded by Bud Flood, to recommend approval of amending the corner lot and sideyard building setbacks in the "R-2" Single Family Zoning District as proposed. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

5. ACCEPT ROW MAP - PORTAGE COUNTY BUSINESS PARK

John Gardner stated this cul-de-sac was accepted several months ago, but when it was surveyed, they found it really should have been larger.

Bud Flood moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to accept the expanded right of way map for the Portage County Business Park as presented.
Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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