

Meeting Minutes

REPORT OF CITY PLAN COMMISSION

Monday, May 7, 2001 - 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Wescott; Lois Feldman; Elbert Rackow; Bud Flood; Fred Steffen; New Commissioner, Jackie Hoppen (Jeff Zabel, excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Comm. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Clerk Vickie Zdroik; Mayors Assis. Neil Marciniak; Ald. Sevenich, Molski, Sowieja, Phillips, Nealis, Filipiak; & Barr; Town of Hull Chairman John Holdridge; Tony Patton; Travis Haines; Ed Jurgella; Mike Yokers; Mary Ann Sharer; Jeff May

Chairman Wescott welcomed our new Plan Commission member, Jackie Hoppen. She served on the Plan Commission in the past, and was also on the Water & Sewage Commission.

1. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 2, 2001 PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

Elbert Rackow moved, seconded by Lois Feldman, to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2001 meeting. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried. (Jackie Hoppen abstained)

2. ACCEPTANCE OF RIGHT-OF-WAY - DOOLITTLE DR EAST OF WILSHIRE BLVD.

Chairman Wescott noted the attached memo from John Gardner on the road dedication is self-explanatory.

John Gardner noted when these roads were created, they were only 50' wide. When lots are created, we have the opportunity to ask for dedication and in this case, the engineer has recommended the streets be expanded to 60'.

Bud Flood moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to recommend acceptance of the right-of-way on Doolittle Drive east of Wilshire Blvd. as proposed. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

3. SIGN VARIANCE - THE POOL PEOPLE - 3280 CHURCH ST.

John Gardner stated the request is to replace the existing sign with a 144 sq. ft. sign. The ordinance allows a maximum of 100 sq. ft. They are requesting a variance to allow the proposed larger sign. A variance must meet the standards as indicated in the attached memo. Staff does not see the need for granting a variance that is unique to this particular property, and we recommend denial of the request.

Jackie Hoppen wondered why the definitions listed below on the proposed sign couldn't be accommodated on the existing sign. It seems as though that is all they are adding.

John Gardner responded the owner explained he wanted to use the proposed sign that is from another of their Pool People locations outside of town for this site.

Elbert Rackow moved, seconded by Jackie Hoppen, to recommend denial of the sign variance request of the Pool People at 3280 Church Street.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

4. CONDITIONAL USE - CONTRACTOR S STORAGE YARD - 2940 MINNESOTA AVE.

John Gardner distributed a new site plan which is slightly different than the one attached. A contractor's storage yard is a conditional use because of the nature of the business with outside storage, etc. He reviewed his attached memo and noted the site has no curb and is quite open. The owner does not anticipate large volumes of traffic because he will have another site for the bulk of his materials. There are some single family homes across the street which have dealt with dust and noise problems from industrial uses on this site in the past depending upon who the occupant of this particular building is. Tony's Landscaping is proposing to construct a 6' high concrete fence as shown on the site plan with landscaping between the fence and Minnesota Avenue, and also landscape the circled areas on the new site plan to the south to reduce some of the dust and noise impacts to the neighborhood. If the city gives them permission, they would also bring their landscaping out beyond the property line into the right-of-way. All vehicles would be stored inside with trailers being stored outside the warehouse along the property line adjoining the railroad tracks. The owner proposes to expand the office area with a 12' x 22' addition. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions as noted in the staff report.

Bud Flood noted it appears from the site plan that there is storage within 10' of the Minnesota Avenue property line.

John Gardner noted the recommendation had changed to no storage closer than 10' to the front property line.

Bud Flood questioned if there would be landscaping only on the south end and the concrete wall as a retainer for the materials and landscaping on the north? Will there be a fence across where the gates are?

John Gardner responded yes to both questions.

He noted he had received a call from Mae Kobishop who lives across the street, but is in the hospital now. She has concerns about noise.

Elbert Rackow noted it sounds as though there would be fewer vehicles visiting this site than when LB Trucking was there.

Fred Steffen moved, seconded by Bud Flood, to recommend approval of the conditional use request for a contractor's storage yard at 2940 Minnesota Avenue with the following conditions/restrictions: a fence and landscaping be constructed across the front of the site as shown on the site plan and that no storage be allowed closer than 10 feet to the front property line.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

5. CONDITIONAL USE - SITE PLAN REVIEW - TWO BUILDINGS ON ONE LOT - PROPOSED MOTEL - 5327 HWY. 10 E. (BEHIND SHONEY S RESTAURANT)

John Gardner reviewed the conditional use standards in his memo and distributed additional commentary with aerial photos provided by County Planning. D.O.T. has issued a permit to move the original driveway location 30 feet to the east. He noted that D.O.T. is considering relocating Hwy. 10 away from this stretch which would decrease traffic by approximately 30%, however staff is concerned with the volume of traffic because

local traffic will continue to increase. No decision on the highway relocation is expected for at least one year. The proposed site plan meets the minimum parking standards and is an improvement over the previous site plan. City parking requirements for restaurants in general tend to be on the light side, and we have observed that Shoney's parking lot is full during holiday and non-holiday times. No vehicle access would be permitted to Nick's Road. The proposed motel would be a 3-story building within 20' of the south property line adjacent to a residential lot. The proposed setback meets the ordinance, but because the motel is a conditional use, conditions can be placed on the request. Previous approvals in similar situations have required owners to build a fence or barrier and/or screening between a commercial and residential use.

City staff is concerned about added traffic to the Hwy. 10 driveways. Traffic volume has increased as much as 48% since 1996 between Maple Bluff Rd and I-39. Traffic is projected to dramatically increase over the next 20 years in response to new development.

Engineering expressed concern with on-site maneuverability of delivery trucks. It appears that trucks could not negotiate the Wendy's parking area south of the drive-up aisle and the island may have to be eliminated. Trucks that have a 50' wheel base appear to be able to negotiate the site. Newer semis are getting longer and would not be able to negotiate the site.

The proposed signage appears to exceed the size limit and staff feels signage should meet the Sign Ordinance requirements. Ground signs could be an alternative.

We are withholding a recommendation pending input from neighbors, but if the conditional use is approved, staff would recommend the restrictions as indicated in his memo.

Jackie Hoppen noted in reading the staff report and highlighted the items that are not positive in addition to the recommendations that would have to be taken care of before they could move on, she doesn't feel it would be feasible.

John Holdridge, Town of Hull Chairman, noted he doesn't see a substantial difference from the original site plan. At that time, they talked about units and now they are discussing 60 units. Our concern is clearly the impact on single family homes and the size of this motel relative to the size of the lot. The Town Board continues to feel this is not the place for that motel.

Mike Yokers, Pine Oaks Ct., expressed opposition because of additional traffic and, being a realtor, feels there would be a tremendous negative effect to property values on Nick's Court. He provided letters of opposition from property owners unable to attend the meeting today.

Peter Zimmerman, 1486 Nick's Road, stated his house is directly south of the proposed motel. You can do everything you want to buffer noise when you have a 63-unit motel with air conditioners running, that will be a tremendous amount of noise. His property value will drop. That building is too large for that small of space. The way the proposed motel sits on the site, the privacy of his family will be gone because you can look from the motel windows right into each of his bedrooms and bathroom. He is totally against this request.

Scott McCormick, owner of the Wendy/Shoney properties, stated these properties have more land than what they need to operate the restaurants and we want to utilize the property at the back end of our lots to realize the income potential for our families. Just as the residents are concerned that it might reduce the value of their properties, not developing this back part of the property also reduces the value of our real estate, and that has to be considered. The utilities are there, the zoning is there, and our proposal meets all of the requirements. D.O.T. has granted the driveway location. People's opinions of how the building fits on the lot are irrelevant, the point is the building and parking works quite well and will certainly more than handle the business of Wendy's, Shoney's, and the motel. If the building is too big, we'll build a 44-unit. There is no question that P. Zimmerman is going to have some exposure, but Fairfield Inn already sits on one side of him. Unfortunately, occasionally people butt up against boundaries. He is trying to protect the value of his property and we are trying to maximize ours. You can't stop a project that has everything he mentioned due to one property owner who has some sort of exposure to the property. In terms of the sign variance, we are only looking at a sign for Sleep Inn & Suites somewhere in the 75-80 sq. ft. range.

Pat Olsen, 1498 Nick's Road, expressed concern with increased traffic, and garbage blowing around from the existing motel and restaurants.

Ed Jurgella, 1508 Nick's Road, questioned where the dumpsters and lighting will be.

John Gardner indicated on the site plan where the dumpsters are proposed on the site plan. With regard to the lighting, cut-off fixtures are proposed which would not have much horizontal glare.

Scott McCormick responded there would probably be minimal lighting on the rear for security.

Kelly Binder, 1503 Nick's Road, stated the biggest investment we make in our lives is our houses and the quality of life on Nick's Road will be diminished if this motel is built here.

Mary Ann Sharer, 1516 Pine Oaks Ct., doesn't feel a buffer is tall enough to take care of a 3-story building. We will have a lot of people, noise, lights, decrease in our property values, and she is not in favor of it.

Ald. Barr stated he doesn't want to build a motel in anyone's back yard or in close proximity to a residence, but he feels he has an obligation to taxpayers that he represents to explore and support any legitimate tax revenue producing venture.

Ald. Sowija noted it seems there are a lot of issues to be resolved with regard to barriers and lighting, etc. He agrees with Ald. Barr and would like to see the developer work with the residents to resolve some of these issues.

John Gardner responded the Plan Commission can table if they feel they need more information with regard to barriers or lighting. Any action taken by the Plan Commission is strictly advisory and is subject to final review by the Common Council.

John Gardner reviewed the memo from Portage County Planning which discusses three major points of concern: 1) the access and internal vehicle circulation - problems could occur if and when larger trucks service the site; 2) the proximity of the proposed motel to the rear of the Shoney's building - the back end of Shoney's restaurant would be 60' from the proposed motel which would equal the depth of two parking stalls and the width of a drive aisle. Where will deliveries take place and will the dumpsters fit into the new configuration; and 3) the proximity of the proposed motel to the residential property to the south - a 42' tall building located 20' from the lot line of a residence will have quite an impact. If commissioners feel there should be more space between the motel and the residence, they should recommend denial based on the site's inability to support proper separation. The fact that increased setbacks may not be able to be accommodate does not negate the validity of their requirement.

Chairman Wescott felt the core issue is that a 42' tall building 20' from the lot line will have an impact. How does the commission want to deal with it.

Elbert Rackow noted he was on the commission and council when we approved a driveway that went around a commercial building to an

apartment building in the 300 block of Minnesota Ave. Our standards ought to be higher than to have to drive past two buildings to get to the motel.

Jackie Hoppen felt because it is a conditional use, she would think a developer would comply with our standards. Maybe a smaller motel. To **abuse everyone in the neighborhood doesn't make sense.**

Fred Steffen noted a 42' building with a 20' setback from a residential property puts them right on the residents back steps. The top floor of the motel can look right into the property. There has to be a better way to put the motel in there. Possibly move the building to the east where they currently have parking.

Bud Flood questioned whether their marketing plan indicated the 63 units is the minimum number of units to make it a paying situation. Maybe it could be scaled down a little - one story or two stories partly in the ground.

Lois Feldman expressed concern with a 3-story building.

Elbert Rackow moved, seconded by Bud Flood, to deny the conditional use request for two buildings on one lot at 5327 Hwy. 10 E. because of unresolved ingress/egress issues, traffic pattern issues, and that the proposed use would be injurious to the use and for the purpose already permitted, and substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

## 6. DOWNTOWN PLAN

John Gardner stated he has been working with Brian Doudna of the Portage County Business Council on an outline following the Main Street Approach Program. The Main Street approach looks at four aspects of the downtown: design, organization, economic restructuring, and promotion. Marshfield is a Main Street Program and Wausau has not been accepted into the program. We are not saying we should become a main street city, but we are looking at the design and economic restructuring aspects of their program. The resource team will be here soon to meet with focus groups, local people, task force members, and downtown property owners to do an assessment as to what issues they think should be addressed.

Elbert Rackow expressed concern with the vacant spaces downtown versus people building new buildings at the edge of town.

John Gardner responded that seems to be a classic problem all across the country. It is sometimes cheaper to build new than to deal with making necessary changes to older existing buildings. Parking is another issue.

Chairman Wescott noted the alderman put \$25,000 into the 2001 budget for a comprehensive plan for the downtown. The State of Wisconsin put \$7,500 in as part of the downtown study. We have had many improvements in our downtown and he noted success stories such as: the interior rebuilding of the downtown Sentry Insurance building which has resulted in the significant increase in employees; the state-of-the-art day care for the Noel Group; and the decision to keep the Lincoln Center as part of the downtown, and city and county government are both located in the downtown area. Those are things that are right in our downtown. The CenterPoint Mall Market Place is being acquired by Dial Corporation which owns a number of shopping centers in the county and we will become a part of that networking.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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