

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Tuesday, August 18, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Katie Rosenberg, Eric Lindman, Patrick Peckham, Tom Neal, Bruce Bohlken, Andrew Brueggeman

Others Present: Brad Lenz, Brad Sippel, William Hebert, David DeSantis, Melissa Engen, Jennifer Blair, Mary Ann Gullihur, Steven Gullihur, Sally Kitzrow, Jerry Koble

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

Mayor Rosenberg called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. noting that a quorum was present.

Approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 meeting.

Bohlken motioned to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 meeting. Peckham seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on amending the general development plan and specific implementation plan at 1404, 1406 & 1412 Grand Avenue and 105, 107 & 111 Sturgeon Eddy Road to allow for three multi-plex residential buildings, in a PUD, Planned Unit Development.

Jennifer Blair, Scherrer Construction, said that there are currently three buildings with 15 units. The buildings are in disrepair and the property owner would like to raze the buildings and rebuild with multi-unit buildings. An unexpected twist occurred when the property owner at 1414 Grand Avenue offered to sell the property. The premise will be the same, but it will open it up more. There will still be ample units and space. The original plan was to develop this for 29 units; the plan has now increased to 32 units. With the additional units, it will meet the city requirements. There will be 56 total parking spaces. The footprint will be similar to the proposed, but will have height variations and will not appear to be so boxy.

Mary Ann Gullihur, 316 Ruder Street, said that she is representing the southeast side neighborhood group. The leadership team of the group is excited about the proposal. Gullihur said that she has been a resident of the area just over two years. The group has been looking for ways to make Grand Avenue grand again. There are some concerns about the proposal. This corner is very significant on the main thoroughfare in the city and marks the boundary of the neighborhood. Gullihur said that her first impression of the property was not good as there was trash on the property and overflowing trash bins. There is always overgrown grass and no maintenance done. Gullihur asked what the plan for the maintenance would be and if a manager would be on site. Gullihur said that there isn't anyone currently taking care of the property. Gullihur asked who will be cleaning up the property after a tenant moves out. Gullihur said that she is currently working for the census bureau and has walked the area and has been so disgusted with what is seen on the inside and outside. Gullihur asked why the city has not taken action to get the property cleaned up. All of the property owners want to keep the property values stable or to rise. The buildings are lovely, but compact. Gullihur asked where the snow will go.

Steve Gullihur, 316 Ruder Street, said that he has concerns for parking. There is a serious parking issue and additional parking will be needed. Sturgeon Eddy Road or Miller Avenue cannot be used for parking. Gullihur said that the tenants would use the parking lots at Advantage Insurance and Sturgeon Eddy Bluffs. Gullihur said that if the rents would be at market rate, there will be couples with two vehicles for the one bedroom. Gullihur asked where the tenants would park in the winter.

Sally Kitzrow, 128 Miller Avenue, said that she has lived in the neighborhood for sixty years and on Miller Avenue for forty years. The neighborhood used to be safe and quiet, but now there's garbage

thrown out of windows and the tenants do not take care of the yard. There is always a risk of getting rear-ended when traveling north on Grand Avenue while trying to turn onto Miller Avenue. This was always a desired neighborhood. It is quiet and safe for families; it is not for apartment buildings. The tenants do not respect the people that live in the neighborhood. The additional units will add to the congestion and the building height will detract from the neighborhood. The property owner has not taken care of the property. The additional units will not create a safe walking environment for those at Sturgeon Bluffs.

Mayor Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Neal motioned to amend the general development plan at 1404, 1406 & 1412 Grand Avenue and 105, 107 & 111 Sturgeon Eddy Road to allow for three multi-plex residential buildings, in a PUD, Planned Unit Development. Bohlken seconded.

Neal said that he lives on Hamilton Street near East High Apartments and would imagine that there were the same concerns when the high school was converted to apartments. The complex has proven to be a good neighbor. The current issue could be a management issue. The Inspections Department or Police Department can be contacted for any issues. The existing facility is run down and this could aesthetically be a good replacement. The balconies break up the wall, but it looks institutional from Grand Avenue. Balconies give a feeling of being lived in. The parking and storage areas could be addressed with the new purchase.

Peckham said that he is concerned about the parking issues and is pleased that 1414 Grand Avenue will be acquired, which will help with parking. Peckham said that the maintenance issue cannot factor in, but the commission could look at the parking and density. Peckham said that it seems like they are packing the tenants in. Peckham asked what it will bring to the neighborhood and the rental cost.

Jerry Koble said that the rents will be \$700-\$800 for a one bedroom and \$800-\$1000 for a two bedroom. It has been found that cheaper rents create more problems. The current buildings are 120 years old. Koble said that he is not able to address the vehicle issues.

Sippel said that this item will only be for the approval of the general development plan. They will need to come back to add the neighboring property into the district.

Blair added that they have been back and forth with staff and are looking to make modifications to the exterior. There will now be a mix of two and three story buildings. Neal asked where the venting will be placed. Blair answered that the venting will be to the interior so it is not visible to the street side. Blair added that they will be taking the comments into consideration when finalizing the plans. Neal asked what type of material the exterior of the building will be. Blair said that vinyl siding with a mix of textures will be used.

Lenz said that there is a dumpster enclosure shown on the plans and asked if commercial dumpsters will be provided. Blair confirmed this.

Peckham asked about the size of units shown on the staff report of 3,630 square feet. Sippel answered that it refers to the density. The zoning district of MRL-12 was initially used for recommendations since that was the district that fit best with the lot size. With the addition of the new lot, MRM-20 zoning will be used for recommendations.

Lindman asked how the tenants will be prevented from using the area that is for emergency vehicles. Blair said that grass pavers will be installed that will be appropriate for the vehicles, but will not be a visible parking area for tenants. There will also be a sign up to mark the fire lane.

Neal asked if the committee is allowed to vote on the item since the acquisition of 1414 Grand Avenue has changed the plans. Lenz confirmed, but said it will need to come back either way to add the other property.

The motion carried 5-1. Peckham voted against the item.

Discussion and possible action on the final plat for Siewert Park.

Hebert said that the preliminary plat was discussed in June. There has been no change to the final plat. The plat is in the Town of Stettin, but the city has review authority.

Bohlken motioned to approve the final plat for Siewert Park. Neal seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Discussion and possible action on the sale of 1321 Curling Way.

Peckham said that the drawings are not very clear. The commission discussed what the yellow lines would refer to. Lindman said that this item is for the sale of the excess right-of-way, which is depicted in red on the second map.

Peckham motioned to approve the sale of 1321 Curling Way. Bohlken seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2020.

Planning news and education.

Sippel said that he did not have any additional information, but that the article was very informative.

Adjournment.

Brueggeman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Neal. The motion carried unanimously 6-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

The Plan Commission is next scheduled to meet at 5:00 p.m. on September 15, 2020.