

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at 4:00 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, George Bornemann

Others Present: William Hebert, Brad Lenz, Sam Wessel, Brian Stahl, Jessica Bretl, Patty Howard, Angela Gonzalez, Traci Montev, Judy Beier, Todd Van Ryn, Ralph Fairchild, Leslie Forester, Coreen Immel, Deb Baumgardt, Tom Kilian, Matt Poindexter, Deeann Westerhaus, Jim Borysenko

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 4:00 p.m. noting that a quorum was present.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on approving a conditional use at 915 North 5th Street to allow for a long-term supportive home in a NMU, Neighborhood Mixed-Use Zoning District.

Jessica Bretl said that the Board of Directors of The Hagar House is present for the conditional use at 915 North 5th Street. This would offer long-term housing for women and children. An introductory video was presented to the commission. Bretl said that she was a stay-at-home mom and was put in the position that some of these women were in and said that it was overwhelming. Bretl said that she was able to overcome it with the community support and the lord and said that without this organization, she would not be in the same spot she is in. A second video was shown to the commission on how support is given to the women and families. A conditional use is needed to use the building in the way that it is being proposed.

Wessel said that this would be located in an existing building. Some building modifications will need to be made for six mothers and their children. A small parking lot is located slightly to the north. Screening would need to be installed. An annual license will need to be obtained to verify that the use hasn't changed. Items will need to be stored in the back yard. Wessel said that this would not negatively affect the neighborhood.

Patty Howard said that she is the current owner of the property and is delighted with this proposed use. Howard said that she strongly believes in the mission of the Hagar House. This need is extremely important. These are determined women who need additional support and are in this position by no fault of their own. This will be a very valuable asset of the city.

Angela Gonzalez, 502 Fulton Street, said that this is a good mission but is concerned about the increased traffic. Gonzalez said that she wants to make sure that all needs are met.

Traci Montev, 1300 North 9th Avenue #6C, said that she is starting a non-profit and works with people are addicted to drugs. Those people that are ages 2-18 need to be helped so the cycles do not continue. This is a very good thing and will help to stop the cycle.

Judy Beier, 502 McIndoe Street, said that she abuts this property by the alley. Beier said that she has concerns because this would be a change in the zoning. The existing boarding house across the street is not conducive to the neighborhood. Beier asked what will happen to the zoning if the Hagar House does not work. This is a fragile neighborhood and are losing a sense of a family neighborhood. Beier asked how the third floor egress will work. Beier asked what the maximum number of occupants will be. The mission is wonderful, but the neighborhood will be impacted.

Todd Van Ryn, 409 South 12th Avenue and Operations Manager for Bridge Street Mission, said that every

week they get 1-2 calls from women looking for help. Van Ryn said that Bridge Street Mission is only for men. There is a real need for this.

Ralph Fairchild, 522 McIndoe Street, said that he put himself through college and medical college after his wife moved in with her cocaine dealer. Fairchild said that he moved to Wausau with his children. This is not helping women and it is not a Christian thing to do. It is abusive. Fairchild said that it can be done and is offended to have people move in.

Leslie Forester, 502 McIndoe Street, asked if the zoning would be able to revert back to the current zoning if it doesn't work.

Coreen Immel, 526 McIndoe Street, said that she was a single mother going to school and working. The Women's Community helped. It is a great thing to offer, but the right place needs to be selected. Immel said that this is a busy street and asked if this area would be good for children. Immel asked how the historical home will be affected.

Patty Howard said that this is not a designated historic property; it is just located in the Andrew Warrens historic district. This is the perfect facility. Some temporary walls will need to be removed. The building was originally a residence. Sprinklers and egress will be installed. It is a ready-made home. Immel asked the commission if they would like this on Easthill.

Deb Baumgardt, 502 McIndoe Street, asked what will happen if this doesn't make it. Baumgardt said that she does not want that to happen.

Tom Kilian, 133 East Thomas Street and District #3 Alderperson, said that he received a lot of feedback about this item. Kilian said that the public feedback process should be reviewed. The standard notice was sent, but wish more residents would have been notified. More notifications could prevent problems in the future. Kilian requested that the commission deny the conditional use at this property.

Matt Poindexter, 106 Novak Street, said that this location is a good area. The women will be in crisis and in dire straits. This property is near the YMCA and bus line.

Deeann Westerhaus, 233909 North 75th Avenue, said that she worked as a social worker previously and wish she would have had an organization like this. Westerhaus said she empathizes with people that were able to do this on their own. The facility will be staffed 24/7.

Mayor Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Peckham asked if there are plans to have a fence around the back yard for children to play and asked if there is a plan to keep the children on the property. Bretl said that there is a plan to fence in the yard and hope that neighbors will engage. Bretl said that they want to be good neighbors.

Lenz said that the conditional use would be for the boarding house. The underlying zoning district will remain. There are a variety of permitted uses that would be allowed. If a new boarding house would be at this property, it would be covered. A new use that would require a conditional use would need to come back to the commission. Brueggeman asked if the use goes with the property. Lenz confirmed this. The commission could put conditions on the conditional use to protect the public health and safety. It is a fuzzy area to only allow the conditional use to this organization. It could be viewed as playing favorites.

Hebert said that the public hearing is held during this meeting and this item will come back to the next meeting. A decision will not be made today. Neal said that the commission may be interested in this

particular use and asked if an agreement could be made to revert to the current zoning, if the property is sold. Hebert answered that the attorney's office would need to be consulted about that option. Neal said he has one picture of a boarding house and a different picture of this charitable offering. Neal said that it is not favoritism, but just different realities. Neal said that he supports the idea, but said there are concerns. The building used to house 16-17 people in its heyday. It is a fine property for this and it is a good service.

Peckham motioned to bring this item back to the next Plan Commission meeting and direct staff to obtain an opinion from the City Attorney. Bohlken seconded.

Mayor Rosenberg offered support for the project and said that women need a place. Mayor Rosenberg recommended that an informational meeting be held.

Bornemann asked if there were any comments from the Fire Department for the changes in the use. Hebert said that there have been discussions with the future property owner about the building code requirements. This property was originally used as a residence. Bornemann said that 24 people seems like it would be more occupants than normal.

Brueggeman said that a lot of common themes were said during the public hearing and asked if there is more that can be done with the procedural requirements. There were also a lot of comments that the mission is good, but do not want it in their back yard. Brueggeman said that he lives next to the Women's Community and said that you wouldn't even know they were there. The unknown factor is always a fear. Mayor Rosenberg said that with city projects, there are more involvement with informational meetings. Lenz said that the public hearing is a place for comments and is a good time to request more information from the staff or petitioner. A recommendation will be given during the second meeting. Peckham said that he likes this two-step process for conditional uses and asked if discussion to review the notification process could be added to a future meeting.

Stahl said that he has been to the property for regular inspections. There will be some conditional items that will need to be done, but it may be jumping the gun. Stahl said that the Fire Department will be involved in the review process.

The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on approving a conditional use at 913 North 3rd Street to allow for an off-site parking lot in a DPMU, Downtown Periphery Mixed-Use Zoning District.

Jim Borysenko, REI, said that he is representing the YMCA. The office building was razed and paved. Borysenko said that he worked with city staff to enhance the property. The proposal is to spruce up the property with landscaping

Wessel said that there will be 17 parking spaces. A conditional use is required for a stand-alone parking lot. Hebert said that they are doing everything that was asked.

Mayor Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Brueggeman motioned to bring this item back to the next Plan Commission meeting. Bohlken seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Discussion and possible action on approving a conditional use at 8454 Highland Drive to allow for mobile diagnostic imaging as an accessory use, in a MI, Medium Industrial Zoning District.

Neal motioned to approve a conditional use at 8454 Highland Drive to allow for mobile diagnostic imaging as an accessory use, in a MI, Medium Industrial Zoning District. Brueggeman seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2021.

Adjournment.

Bornemann motioned to adjourn, seconded by Bohlken. The motion carried unanimously 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

The Plan Commission is next scheduled to meet at 5:00 p.m. on September 21, 2021.