

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Wednesday, October 28, 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, Melissa Engen, Sean Fitzgerald, Jack Young, David Aicher

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 September 15, 2020 meeting.

Brueggeman motioned to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2020 meeting. Peckham seconded. Peckham said that on the second page, the name should be changed from Shellie to Sallie. It was confirmed that this would be corrected. The motion carried unanimously 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on amending the general development plan at 920 North 1st Street to allow for a 6,100 square foot dental clinic, in a PUD, Planned Unit Development.

Fitzgerald said that there was a request for proposal sent out in June and this project is half of the only proposal that was received.

Jack Young said that they would like to relocate some area dentists to this location to have a combined facility in the downtown area. This area would allow for more space and would be a general dentistry clinic.

Dr. David Aicher, 1707 Crestview Drive, said that he has been practicing for 31 years and enjoys the Wausau area. Aicher said that it is very important for him to slow his practice down and this would be a good way to have 2-3 dental groups to work together sharing state of the art equipment in the facility. This would also give the opportunity to recruit new dentists. Aicher said that in Baltimore, properties are given a walking score and this facility would add to the downtown area for that.

Mayor Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Lenz said that this item is to amend the general development plan. The plan needs to be approved by the Plan Commission and Common Council. Lenz showed the committee a rendering of what was originally approved and said that the use was not listed. The shape of the building is different, but is roughly in same area. Lenz said that he reviewed the Master Plan and it is laid out differently and there are areas of mixed use. Small scale restaurants and retail are located along the stream. Office use is part of the mix, but not in the same arrangement. Lenz said that development has already veered a bit from the Master Plan, but it should still be reviewed.

Brueggeman motioned to amend the general development plan at 920 North 1st Street to allow for a 6,100 square foot dental clinic, in a PUD, Planned Unit Development. Peckham seconded.

There was discussion about committee members abstaining from the vote due to having a dentist that would be involved in this project. It was determined that those members could still vote because there is no personal financial gain with the approval of the project.

Peckham said that he was glad to see the financial incentive approved and asked if this should be

considered. Lenz said that these are separate items that will both need to go to Common Council separately. Peckham said that this project is very welcoming and will be nice looking, but asked if the building could be spun around. Young said that with the building being north orientated, it is easiest to control for a dental office. The back side of the building will be exposed and will have glass.

Neal asked if future details will come back to this committee. Mayor Rosenberg confirmed that the specific implementation plan will need to be come back to be reviewed.

Lindman said that the idea of the trail was to create interaction and there will not be any interaction at the back of the dental office. Lindman said that parking also seems excessive. Young said that the plan shows 42 parking spots and some of the spots will be shared with the residential development. Young said that the parking spaces could be reduced, but they are very conscious on the minimum that they need. Young said that the southern parcel was considered, but the orientation is very different and smaller. It is not the same space area for the building and parking. Lenz said that there is a discrepancy in the parking calculation – one parking space is required per every 400 square feet over the 2000 square feet. A minimum of 11 parking spots would be need and the new zoning code allows for a maximum of 16 parking spots. There were 40 spaces proposed. Young said that would work for general retail, but would not work for a dental office. Young said that they wouldn't be able to operate. Lenz said that the Lot 3 on Fulton Street is part of the request for proposal and would solve some of the problems. The lot is bigger and uses would coincide with the Master Plan. Young said that the lot pictured is a different lot or layout that was in the request for proposal. This is a substantial development.

Brueggeman asked if the Master Plan was modified after WOW was constructed and if other requests for proposals had gone out. Brueggeman asked if this is the first time that a request has come forward for this lot and if we should wait another five years for another proposal. Lenz said that this was the only proposal for this RFP. The first request that had gone out was for the 16 acre parcel.

Brueggeman said that the parking density seems large but said he has empathy for the business owners. There needs to be a balance. Lenz said that there are options that the committee could do. The committee could approve the proposal as it is, conditionally approve it or deny the request. It could also be tabled to review moving the building. Fitzgerald said that the request was from early spring when there were two proposals received. One proposal was from Blenker and the other was from Cherry Tree. The Economic Development Committee determined to put the request out again. At this time, the joint proposal was received. The Economic Development Committee did want to see a multi-level facility. Brueggeman asked if the committee has any control over parking. Lenz said that the petitioners should receive some direction at this stage. Sippel said that the area is designed for multi-use public parking – the total parking spaces can be less because of different times that parking is needed for different uses.

Neal said that location provides walkability, but there seems to be a lot of emphasis on parking in the plan. The vision is to have a community use feel. Every vision does not have to look like the original thought. There will be some people that live in the area and some that will work there. There will be landscaping and there could possibly be a public access feel to it. Neal said that the plan is not 100% complete, but has his support.

Peckham asked how the density is determined and if there could be apartments over the dental office. Young said that a mix of retail was considered, but patients are used to a stand-alone facility. A ground level facility is needed. Lenz said that the targets for the area was a total of 80,000 square feet space for offices. The density is looked at in terms of square feet but also number of stories. Peckham said that if the parking is reduced and there is underground parking, it could anticipate a better density. Lenz said that this is not part of their current plan.

Brueggeman amended his motion to amend the general development plan at 920 North 1st Street to allow

for a 6,100 square foot dental clinic, in a PUD, Planned Unit Development with the condition that staff and the petitioner work together on onsite parking changes. Peckham agreed to the amendment to the motion.

The motion carried 5-1. Lindman voted against this item. This item will go to Common Council on November 10, 2020.

Discussion and possible action on approving signage at 107 West Bridge Street, in a UMU, Urban-Mixed Use Zoning District.

This item was pulled from the agenda.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2020.

Planning news and education.

Sippel said that this is a very interesting article and how the housing market has changed for more demand in smaller cities. It will be interesting to see how much will change with more people working remotely. Brueggeman asked if the city is doing anything for this. Sippel said that this is something that city has already been doing – there has been a focus on improving livability.

Adjournment.

Brueggeman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Peckham. 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 November 17, 2020.