

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Tuesday, December 15, 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, Mic'Kayla Ross

Others Present: Brad Lenz, William Hebert, Bill Scholfield, Richard Holster, Bob Tess, Christine Martens, Gary Gisselman

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 November 17, 2020 and December 1, 2020 meetings.

Bohlken motioned to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2020 and December 1, 2020 meetings. Peckham seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0 by roll call vote.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on rezoning 200 South 17th Avenue and 200 South 18th Avenue from SMU, Suburban Mixed-Use Zoning District to PUD, Planned Unit Development Zoning District and approve the General Development Plan to allow for indoor storage and future retail and office space.

Bill Scholfield said that he has had several meetings with city staff. He said that the property has been owned by the Lindell family for over 40 years. They are the owners of the building and were already marketing the building when the Shopko bankruptcy issues happened. They would like to utilize the existing building. It was built for a large retail user, but it is not desirable for some retailers, like Costco or Target. This is a very high exposure building. The building is too big or deep for most retailers. It has been determined that indoor storage is in high demand. Most of the plan can be done with the existing SMU zoning, except for the storage. It will be highly secured.

Ross joined the meeting at approximately 5:08 p.m.

Schofield said there are potential leads and retailers have said what they want and what they do not want. He said that he hopes to keep the project advancing with this zoning change.

Mayor Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Lenz said that PUD zoning is requested and the site plan and other information is included in the packet. This is specifically for the Shopko building and its parking lot. Lenz said that staff has looked at the different uses and overall density for this area. The staff report goes over the criteria for the PUD zoning. The requested storage is not specifically addressed in the underlying district and would therefore need a zoning change.

Peckham motioned to rezone 200 South 17th Avenue and 200 South 18th Avenue from SMU, Suburban Mixed-Use Zoning District to PUD, Planned Unit Development Zoning District and approve the general development plan to allow for indoor storage and future retail and office space. Bohlken seconded.

Peckham said that he likes that there will be something other than the asphalt and appreciates that the storage facility will not dominate the property. Peckham asked Scholfield about how the users will access it and if it would be through the north side or the front. Scholfield said that the storage will not be for boats or that type of equipment. It will be highly secured and will be for professionals. The area is growing and there is a large increase in apartments. The primary access will be the front doors. There is another plan for larger trucks along the north wall. Peckham asked if the building is two stories.

Scholfield confirmed this and said that there are two stories, but the illustration does not show it very well.

The motion carried unanimously 7-0 by roll call vote.

Discussion and possible action on approving a conditional use at 620 McClellan Street to allow for an institutional residential use, in a TF-10, Two Flat Residential-10 Zoning District.

Lenz said that this is the second and final step of the approval of the conditional use. A public hearing was held at the last meeting. Staff recommends approval with some suggested conditions. The conditions are that it is not transferrable to other institutional residential uses, the maximum number of residents shall be eight or two per bedroom and that a buffer yard may be ordered by the commission, if necessary. The conditions should be agreeable as they were discussed previously.

Neal motioned to approve the conditional use at 620 McClellan Street to allow for an institutional residential use, in a TF-10, Two Flat Residential-10 Zoning District with the conditions from the staff report. Peckham seconded.

Peckham said that he has questions on the third condition for the buffer yard and asked if this is to reserve the right to revisit if privacy is an issue. Peckham asked if the Plan Commission or zoning administrator would enforce this. Lenz answered that it is up the commission and the zoning administrator can use the standards in the ordinance.

Bohlken asked if there is a need for the buffer condition and said that it should be left up to the manager of the property. Bohlken said that the condition should be removed.

Brueggeman said that normally a conditional use would transfer with the property and asked if it could carry on. Lenz said that the conditional use is not bound to the specific owner, but if the use changes, it would have to be re-looked at.

Peckham said that he can appreciate a buffer yard and that there would be eight people using the space and that could safeguard if there are a lot of people. Peckham said that he is comfortable either way.

Bohlken said that in the block there is a large parking area. Richard Holster said that he put in the concrete area and owns the buildings. Holster said that he will be first to be contacted and has a good relationship with the police department. Holster said that he will address any issues so it can be workable. There is a boarding house nearby that he doesn't own.

Neal said that this would be solving something before there is a problem and is comfortable with the condition. Bohlken said that he understands that there is a concern for the residents, but there are plenty of residents in the area. Neal said that he's comfortable with the idea of no barrier.

Peckham motioned to amend the motion to include the conditions of the conditional use not being transferrable to other institutional residential uses and the maximum number of residents shall be eight, or two per bedroom. Neal seconded the amendment. The motion to amend the motion carried unanimously 7-0 by roll call vote.

The motion to approve the conditional use as amended carried unanimously 7-0 by roll call vote.

Discussion and possible action on landmarking of 500 North 4th Avenue.

Lenz said that this is for landmarking Grant School. The process of landmarking starts with the Historic

Preservation Commission. A public hearing was held by that commission. The Plan Commission and Common Council also need to approve the landmarking. The Plan Commission looks at a different set of criteria than the Historic Preservation Commission does. Lenz went over the criteria that need to be met. Staff recommends approval. He noted that the public interest includes preservation of historic buildings.

Bob Tess, Wausau School District, said that he did participate in the public hearing and is interested in learning about the process and is not standing in the way. Tess said that the school district has learned a lot about the community with the referendum. Tess said at this time he is not seeing an appetite for razing the school from the school board members.

Christine Martens, 1228 Arthur Street, said that she is absolutely positive that this marks all of the boxes for landmarking.

Neal motioned to approve the landmarking of 500 North 4th Avenue. Ross seconded.

Bohlken said that he feels that landmarking is premature since there are no plans and this could cause restrictions to the school district. Bohlken said that he suggests waiting until something is in place.

Brueggeman stated that he agreed with Bohlken.

Neal asked what the process would be if it passes. Lenz said that a recommendation would be given to the Common Council. Neal asked if it could be tabled. Mayor Rosenberg said that it could be tabled if more information is needed.

Gary Gisselman, 319 Park Avenue, said that the school is historically significant and the historic consultant's report does list Grant School as such. When the Wausau School District took the referendum, the school came to the front of the public. Gisselman said he is not sure what tabling it will change, but the landmarking will safeguard the building. The school is 110 years and needs to be landmarked. Lenz said that the ordinance identifies a timeline and it does not address tabling or delaying the vote at this point – he recommended sending it to Council one way or another.

Ross said that she is in favor of moving forward. There have been lots of meetings already. There are potential tax breaks for the school if landmarked. Tess said that the tax benefits do not matter. Tess said that he feels that the school board members have enough data points to not raze the school.

The motion carried 5-2 by roll call vote. Bohlken and Brueggeman voted against the motion. This item will go to Common Council on January 12, 2021.

Discussion and possible action on dedication of right-of-way for Fulton Street extended.

Lindman said that with Fulton Street being extended to the river for RiverLife this item would be for the dedication of the right-of-way.

Bohlken motioned to approve the dedication of right-of-way for Fulton Street extended. Peckham seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0 by roll call vote.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2021.

Planning news and education.

Lenz said that the article looks at the impact of projects on various people, and reminds us that not everyone drives vehicles – some are too old, too young, can't drive for various reasons, or just choose not to. Bohlken said that this was a very interesting article.

Adjournment.

Bohlken motioned to adjourn, seconded by Peckham. The motion carried unanimously 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

The Plan Commission is next scheduled to meet at 5:00 p.m. on January 19, 2021.