



# City of Racine

City Hall  
730 Washington Ave.  
Racine, WI 53403  
[www.cityofracine.org](http://www.cityofracine.org)

## Meeting Minutes - Draft City Plan Commission

*Mayor John T. Dickert, Alderman Aron Wisneski  
Atty. Jud Wyant, Atty. Elaine Sutton Ekes  
Vincent Esqueda, Alderman Eric Marcus, Tony Veranth*

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Wednesday, February 8, 2012

4:15 PM

City Hall, Room 205

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### Call To Order

*Alderman Wisneski called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.*

**PRESENT:** 5 - Elaine Sutton Ekes, Jud Wyant, Eric Marcus, Tony Veranth and Aron Wisneski

**ABSENT:** 1 - Vincent Esqueda

**EXCUSED:** 1 - John Dickert

### Approval of Minutes for the January 25, 2012 Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Sutton Ekes, seconded by Commissioner Veranth, to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2012 meeting. The motion **PASSED** by a Voice Vote. Alderman Marcus and Commissioner Wyant abstained from voting as they were not present at the last meeting.

#### 12-7294

**Subject:** (Direct Referral) Request from Eugene Beal, representing U.S. Auto Shop, LLC, for a conditional use permit for an automobile repair facility at 2309 Lathrop Avenue. (PC-12) (Res. 12-2985)

**Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-8-12:** That the item be approved subject to conditions.

**Fiscal Note:** N/A

**Attachments:** [PH Notice - 2309 Lathrop Ave. \(revised\)](#)  
[\(12-7294\) CU 2309 Lathrop Avenue](#)

*Principal Planner Sadowski noted this item had been deferred from the last meeting for Staff to work with the applicant for additional information and clarification on the request. A review of the area, zoning, and surrounding land uses was provided. Mr. Sadowski indicated the information requested of the applicant at the last meeting had been provided.*

*Commissioner Wyant noted he will be abstaining from this item.*

*Alderman Marcus asked about condition of approval h., noting he does not feel it is the purview of the Commission to micromanage businesses and this information should not be required. Mr. Sadowski indicated the information was added so in the event the questions ever arise as to the permissibility of a training facility being*

*operated in tandem with the auto repair shop, these conditions will address such a use.*

**A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commissioner Sutton Ekes, to recommend approval of the request, subject to Staff recommendations, with the modification of condition h., that h.2, 3 and 4 be removed. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote with Commissioner Wyant abstaining.**

**4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARINGS****4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARINGS**[12-7341](#)

**Subject:** (Direct Referral) Request from Rubin and Deliya Jackson seeking a conditional use permit for non commercial use of a portion of a street level tenant space at 2033 Lathrop Avenue. (PC-12) (Res. 12-2986)

**Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-8-12:** That the item be approved subject to conditions.

**Fiscal Note:** N/A

**Attachments:** [PH Notice - 2033 Lathrop Ave](#)  
[2033 Lathrop Book Store .001](#)  
[\(12-7341\) CU 2033 Lathrop Avenue](#)

*Principal Planner Sadowksi noted that the applicants for this item are the same applicants who proposed the church at a previous meeting, but have modified their request and are now requesting a bookstore in conjunction with the church at 2033 Lathrop Avenue. He provided background information on the site, zoning, surrounding uses, and parking concerns. The space of approximately 1,700 square feet would be for the bookstore a minimum number of hours per week, then on Sundays and Wednesday evenings the book shelves would be moved out of the way to create an area for worship.*

*Public Hearing opened at 4:45 p.m.*

*1. Connie Brandt, 3828 Spring Drive, noted parking concerns and has heard that another business may be coming to the shopping center, causing more parking problems. She noted problems with snow plowing and asked if there will be child care at the location.*

*2. Deliya Jackson, applicant, advised she counted over 100 parking spaces, that they will work out the signage issues, that the plowing is not within her control and would need to be discussed with the property owner, and would like to offer after school care and partner with other entities and keep the opportunity open to be able to provide this in the future.*

*3. Shirley Chester, property manager of 2033 Lathrop Ave., feels the parking should not be a problem and made a comment about the snow plowing.*

*Public Hearing closed at 4:52 p.m.*

*Alderman Marcus advised he would like to make a provision to allow for the ancillary services that were presented at the last Plan Commission meeting, including counseling, exercise facilities, after-school programs, support groups, etc... He feels*

*it adds to the use of the space and will draw more people into programs, support groups, etc. He feels it adds to the use of the space and will draw more people into the mall. Mr. Sadowski advised anything that adds activity to the shopping center would be welcomed.*

*Alderman Wisneski asked Mrs. Jackson about her prior comments from the previous Plan Commission meeting, where she stated she did not want to have a bookstore or a coffee house, etc. to meet the retail requirement to locate their worship facility. He asked what has changed since they were last before the Commission. Mrs. Jackson advised she had been approached by members of the public to assist them in developing their bookstore, and it helped the whole idea come to fruition, and in turn would meet the retail component, yet still allow for other 'non-commercial' activities.*

*Commissioner Wyant noted the last time this item was before the Commission the concern was more a matter of policy and use, not whether they can run a bookstore. The issue was commercial use vs. non-commercial use. He noted to the Plan Commission that the determination of how much church use versus bookstore use is to be made by the Council.*

*Alderman Marcus noted he feels the new request and ancillary uses meet the intent of what the Commission and the code intend to accomplish. Commissioner Sutton Ekes inquired about adding additional uses to the conditions. Mr. Sadowski suggested adding the uses to condition h. and allowing any changes to be reviewed and approved by the Director of City Development.*

*Commissioner Wyant asked if this can be sent to the Common Council without a recommendation to get their guidance on the issue. Director of City Development, Brian O'Connell stated that from the time the provision was first discussed the intent was to focus on the characteristics of the operation, and that offering more activity brings the use closer to the intent of the non-commercial use allowance in the ordinance. He stated it would be helpful to the Council if the Commission filed a recommendation on the item.*

**A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commission Sutton Ekes, to recommend approval of the request subject to Staff recommendations, with modifications to item d. to read: "That the bookstore shall be operated at least 36 hours per week, not less than Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.", and item h. shall now read: "That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Plan Commission, except that uses such as a clothing bank, music lessons, bible study, homework assistance, group sessions, men of valor, youth action and fitness classes may be submitted for review and approval to the Director of City Development. No major changes shall be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Common Council". The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.**

**12-7342**

**Subject:** (Direct Referral) Request from Rev. Kevin P. Stewart, representing St. Luke's Episcopal Church seeking a conditional use permit to amend an existing non-commercial use to allow a hospitality center at 614 Main Street. (PC-12) (Res. 12-2987)

**Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-8-12:** That the item be approved subject to conditions.

**Fiscal Note:** N/A

Attachments:     [PH Notice - 614 Main Street](#)  
                              [\(12-7342\) CU 614 Main Street](#)

*Principal Planner Sadowski provided background information on the area including zoning, surrounding uses and views, and information on the structure being requested for the hospitality center at 614 Main Street. The floor plan indicated areas where there would be computers, a welcome area, a kitchen area, bike storage, snack area, library, check-in, relaxation/meeting area, a smoking area, and the entrance leading into the church. The zoning of the property is B-4 Central Business District.*

*The hospitality area would use a portion of the building of approximately 4,300 square feet in area. There would be one staff member and up to 37 volunteers, be open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., on holidays, and extended hours as needed (emergency events, snowstorm, etc). The average number of guests has been around 100 per day, or 300 per week. It was stressed this is not a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, but a place to meet and utilize the facility during structured, set hours.*

*Guests will be offered light snacks, with authorization of the Health Department, and there is collaboration between this organization, Racine Vocational Ministry, HALO, Racine County food bank, UWM School of Nursing and Health Care network.*

*Public Hearing opened at 5:40 p.m.*

- 1. Jessica MacPhail, 1401 College Ave. Spoke in favor of the request.*
- 2. Bob Bagley, 1435 Springdale Dr. Noted he is a Deacon, and has at least 25 members of his parish who are active in this service, and is in support of this request to meet the needs of the less fortunate in the community.*
- 3. Matt Lawler, 623 Wisconsin Ave. Spoke in opposition, does not want this downtown citing that he feels it is inconsistent with the City's desire to attract businesses.*
- 4. Kevin Stewart, 4722 N. 104th St., Wauwatosa., Reverend of St. Luke's Parish, Spoke in favor of the request, noting this is about caring for people in need who are looking for safety, relationships, and they have nowhere to go to stay warm of meet and work with others. He noted the poor are already downtown, and this is the perfect place for these services.*
- 5. Elaine Sutton Ekes, 2910 Green Street. Spoke in favor of the request. She did note a few concerns, including not allowing individuals to congregate around the back of the Sixth St. building an in the alley due to noise; those working in the building near the windows find it can get quite noisy which makes it difficult to get work done. She would also like trash to be handled and contained properly when set out on the curb for pick-up.*
- 6. Joe Muratore, 2800 Chatham. Spoke in support of the request, subject to adding the conditions noted by the previous speaker.*
- 7. Liz Simmons, 306 Blaine Ave. Spoke in favor of the request.*

*Public Hearing closed at 5:52 p.m.*

*Mr. Sadowski clarified this is in front of the Plan Commission because it is a*

*non-commercial use in a commercial district as required by a recent change to the Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, the various uses being provided were seen as something that surrounding property owners and the community should be aware of. He noted that this use was viewed by staff to be similar in character to that of the Love and Charity Mission on Douglas Avenue, which also has a conditional use permit.*

*Several changes to the conditions of approval were suggested and include: 1. Changing Condition #d.2 to require access via the Main Street entrance; 2. Changing Condition #d.4 to read "Hospitality center operations shall be confined to the interior of the building at 614 Main street and guests shall not use the Main St. porch or yard area, other than for access to and from the building."; changing condition #d.5 to read "The facility shall not serve guests under the age of 18 years unless accompanied by an adult"; changing condition #d. 12 by adding the words 'approved by' between the words be and kept in the first sentence; add a condition #d.13 to read 'Guests and staff shall not congregate on the west side of the building or northern alleyway.'; and changing condition f. by adding 'Trash and recyclables set out for curbside pick up shall be properly bundled or contained'.*

*Alderman Wisneski asked if St. Luke's church wanted to have similar activities with members of their congregation, with the same hours on the same days, would a Conditional Use permit be required. Mr. Sadowski advised no, as it would pertain to their members and normal operations vs. the general public. He noted if there were problems with the activity, such as smoking and littering, etc., would there be a way to address the issues? Director of City Development O'Connell noted since this church is located in a commercial area, and the increase of activity being requested, it was felt creating a conditional use gave the applicant more security in the use and clarified the operational boundaries for this situation. Alderman Marcus noted he felt uncomfortable with this conditional use as this is what many churches already do, and a conditional use permit wouldn't be required.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Wyant, seconded by Alderman Marcus to recommend approval of the request, subject to amended staff recommendations. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote with Commissioner Sutton Ekes abstaining.**

**12-7344**

**Subject:** (Direct Referral) Request from J.C. Frazier for Northwestern Funeral Chapel, Inc. seeking a conditional use permit to operate a funeral establishment in conjunction with facility for other private and community events at 740 Lake Avenue. (PC-12)

**Attachments:** [PH Notice - 740 Lake Avenue](#)  
[Parking and Funeral Procession Traffic Plan](#)

*Principal Planner Sadowski provided background on the property, surrounding zoning and land uses, and views of the area. An overview of the site plan and interior layout of the building were provided. He discussed the intent of this conditional use is to operate funeral services (without on-site embalming or cremation) and to allow use of the site for funeral services, visitations and viewings, yet also allow other community-type events such as conferences, meetings, or other similar activities, as have been conducted in the past. This building is referred to as the Women's Club and is currently for sale.*

*Public Hearing opened at 6:10 p.m.*

*1. John Murphy, 5801 Washington Ave. Spoke in favor of the request of conversion of this multi-purpose facility and allow for other community events as well as funeral*

services. He noted there are issues with the site, including parking, air conditioning for the building, etc., but the building is an asset to the area and would work well for the proposed use.

2. Kay Gregor, Executive Director of the Racine Literacy Council, 734 Lake Avenue, noted parking and traffic problems are a big concern.

3. Reverend Foster of First United Methodist Church 745 Main Street. Spoke in opposition, noted the parking and traffic problems, especially during funeral services.

4. Gordon Stangle (sp?), 1665 Water St., Milwaukee. Noted he is trying to sell the building, the downtown area has always had traffic issues, and unless buildings are removed to make room for more parking these issues will continue regardless of the use. He favors the use for this beautiful building, and noted the property would be added back to the tax rolls, whereas it currently is not.

5. J.C. Frazier, 3749 56th St., Milwaukee. Is the president of Northwestern Funeral Chapel. He noted the intent is to do more than funerals in the building, is aware of the parking issues and noted there are parking lots nearby where they could shuttle individuals to and from the site, and processions could be staged away from the building to avoid as many traffic concerns as possible. He feels the concerns can be worked out with the neighboring properties if they work together on solutions, noting this change doesn't have to be bad, but has to be managed. He requested the Commission approve their request.

6. Catherine Anderson, 920 Prairie Dr. She is the president of the women's club foundation, noted that parking has always been a problem in the area but has always been managed. She is in favor of the request.

7. Tom Meredith, 4848 Ellison Dr. Indicated his family runs a funeral home adjacent to this site, indicated they worked in creating a parking lot in the area, noted the parking and traffic problems, citing that competition is not the reason he is not in favor of this use, but traffic, parking, and staging concerns are already a problem and don't want to see it made worse.

8. Duke Meredith, 1675 Douglas Ave. Noted the parking concerns, does not feel the women's club building would be a good fit for this use as it is adjacent to another funeral home, and is opposed.

9. Stewart Lowe, 1407 W. Mequon Rd., Mequon. Noted he is a real estate broker, the zoning of the building is institutional, and that any use coming to the building will bring traffic with it. This building is a good fit for the type of uses requested, and he is in favor of approval.

10. Tom Meredith, spoke previously, advised he knows there will be traffic conflicts, the previous speaker is from Milwaukee, not Racine, and he has been here 40 years and knows the limitations. He noted again competition is not a reason for his reason to deny, but it's the traffic and bottlenecking that he feels will get worse.

11. Joe Meredith, 224 Augusta St. Commented that they would schedule around the women's club events in the past, but would not be able to do that anymore.

12. Laura Miller, 6008 Independence Rd, Mt. Pleasant. She is the property manager of the building, and noted the decision was made to sell in 2009, and it was listed in 2010. She noted it is hard to find uses to fit the building. She advised the women's club is no longer in the financial position where they can maintain the building. She is

*in favor of allowing this conditional use.*

*13. J.C. Frazier, spoke previously, advised they are accustomed to dealing with traffic problems, they have hired security to assist and will continue to do so if needed, they are willing to work with adjacent uses, accustomed to waiting if it is necessary, and will do anything they can to help the traffic.*

*Public Hearing closed at 6:45 p.m.*

*Alderman Wisneski outlined the proposed uses for the building, and that it is not solely for a funeral home. The conditional use is to add the option of funeral services, but the building will continue with the other uses such as offices, recitals and small concerts, meeting clubs, speakers, and fund raising events.*

*Commissioner Wyant asked if a conditional use would be required if there were no funeral activities being requested? Mr. Sadowski advised no. Commissioner Wyant expressed his concern with the parking and congestion that exists in the area, and would like to see a parking / transportation plan to indicate how these issues can be better handled.*

*A motion was made by Commissioner Wyant to defer the item to allow the development of a parking/staging/transportation plan be developed and continue to work with City Staff. Seconded by Alderman Marcus, motion carried. Ayes –all.*

*Alderman Wisneski noted it appears it is the staging of funeral vehicles and the processions that is the real issue here, because if it were not for the funeral use the building could be utilized daily for all the permitted uses, at capacity, and use as much parking as it needed and there would be nothing that could be done about it. The staging appears to be a big part of what is causing concern.*

*Commissioner Veranth agrees the funeral viewing and staging is a main concern. He noted other potential options, such as staging at Festival Hall and utilizing shuttle services or other transportation options, could help the situation.*

*Commissioner Sutton Ekes agreed that individuals do not like to have to walk or park away from their destination, and not just for funeral services but for all businesses. She noted there is quite a bit of parking downtown, but the applicants in this case need to focus on the staging issue, identify the volume of vehicles they may have to deal with, and anticipate where they envision people parking their vehicles, and get a plan in place for their own benefit.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Wyant, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to defer this item to allow the development of a parking/staging/transportation plan be developed and continue to work with City Staff. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.**

## **Administrative Business**

*None.*

## **Adjournment**

*Alderman Wisneski adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m. without objection.*