

City of Racine

*City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

4:15 PM

Room 205, City Hall

City Plan Commission

*Mayor Gary Becker
Alderman Gregory Holding
Atty. Jud Wyant, Elaine Sutton Ekes
Vincent Esqueda, Frank Tingle
Brent Oglesby*

Mayor Becker called the meeting to order at 4:17 p.m.

PRESENT: 6 - Gary Becker, Elaine Sutton Ekes, Gregory Holding, Brent Oglesby, Frank Tingle and Jud Wyant

EXCUSED: 1 - Vincent Esqueda

*OTHERS PRESENT: Brian F. O'Connell, Director of City Development
Rick Heller, Chief Building Inspector
Donnie Snow, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Alderman Michael Shields
Alderman Jim Kaplan
Kristin Niemiec, RCEDC
Chris Schanz, RCEDC*

Approval of Minutes for the June 13, 2007 Meeting

A motion was made by Atty. Jud Wyant, seconded by Alderman Gregory Holding, that the minutes be approved, as distributed. The motion PASSED.

07-0424

Subject: Compliance review for Toys-R-US at 2433 S. Green Bay Road.

Recommendation of City Plan Commission on 4-11-07: That this item be deferred

Recommendation of City Plan Commission on 5-30-07: That this item be deferred

Recommendation of City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: That this item be deferred.

Director O'Connell briefly described the progress on this item, and explained that this item stems from an enforcement action taken against Toys-R-Us.

Kurt Pruitt, representing Regency Mall, stated that his staff is coordinating the effort to construct the access drive and that representatives of Toys-R-Us had expressed concerns regarding potential conflicts with their receiving dock. While reviewing the engineering plans he outlined advances in the project with respect to solicitation of construction bids and the anticipated relocation of utilities. Mr. Pruitt stated that all parties have voiced support for the concept, but none other than Regency Mall have committed to the project.

In response to Mr. Pruitt's and Mayor Becker, Director O'Connell stated that City Staff would develop a letter of explanation and a draft agreement; and these documents would then be distributed to all parties.

Dave Smithers, Acting Manager for Racine Toys-R-Us requested that he be kept informed of the project and that he be forwarded any associated information.

A motion was made by Alderman Gregory Holding, seconded by Frank Tingle, that this item be Deferred. The motion PASSED.

07-0607

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by the Director of City Development to rezone 1300 (odd) Block of Washington Avenue.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 5-30-07: That an ordinance be created and a public hearing scheduled.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: that this item be received and filed.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [Rezoning 1300\(odd\)Block Washington.pdf](#)

Director O'Connell explained that this item has progressed, an ordinance has been prepared and a public hearing has been set before the Common Council. He stated that the ordinance will be presented to the Commission members at their next meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Gregory Holding, seconded by Frank Tingle, that this item be Recommended to be Received and Filed. The motion PASSED.

[07-0613](#)

Subject: Communication from Jan Roland, President of Racine Habitat for Humanity, requesting the transfer of the north side of Jones Park to Habitat for Humanity to build homes.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 5-30-07: That this item be deferred.

Recommendation of the Board of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services 6-13-07: that the request be approved.

Fiscal note: None

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: That this item is not in conflict with City Plans and Programs.

Further that the transfer be approved.

Further that a reversion clause in the City's favor be included in the transfer documents.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [Jones Park.pdf](#)
[M.Alderman Q.A. Shakoor, II.pdf](#)
[M.Frank Tingle.pdf](#)

Director Brian O'Connell reminded Commission members of the location of Jones Park and that the Commission had deferred action on the item until the Board of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services could consider the request. He informed the Commission that the Board had voted to support the request. He also noted that he had received correspondence from Alderman Q.A. Shakoor, II in opposition to the request.

Alderman Michael Shields stated that he has received calls from people in the neighborhood who expressed opposition to this request. He acknowledged that there are other parks in the area but that children need to cross busy streets to access them. He cited other vacant lands available in the area which are suitable for residential development, that the County Supervisor for this area is opposed to the loss of parkland in this neighborhood, and he cautioned that parkland is a valuable tool in the work to revitalize neighborhoods and its loss can be detrimental to such efforts. He concluded by stating that he commends the work of Habitat for Humanity does but an overall plan for the subject neighborhood needs to be developed before the City relinquishes parklands.

Frank Tingle suggested that there are other properties in the neighborhood that may be better suited for residential redevelopment, and that he does not support the loss of parkland to accommodate this project.

Mayor Gary Becker disagreed with Alderman Michael Shields and Frank Tingle in that alternative properties they have cited for this project are either not available or not suitable for residential development. He stated that in his many visits to Jones Park he has never seen anyone using it.

Jan Roland of Habitat for Humanity stated that other sites in the area had been investigated and none were as suitable as the Tenth Street frontage at Jones Park.

Alderman Gregory Holding stated that on his visits to the park he too has never seen anyone using it.

In response to Alderman Gregory Holding, Jan Roland of Habitat for Humanity stated that they have taken back only 4 out of 50 homes from their clients. He explained that to reduce client failures, Habitat provides on-going and comprehensive counseling to their clients. He emphasized that Habitat for Humanity would not be utilizing the entire park.

Donnie Snow, Director of the Department of Parks Recreation and Cultural Services stated that while the action of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission was to approve the transfer of lands to Habitat, his staff's recommendation was not in support of the loss of parkland for this area.

Alderman Jim Kaplan stated that a City facility in the area, while identified by others as a potential alternative location for housing development, had recently seen major infrastructure investment and therefore would be poor choice for use as a location for housing. He expressed support of the proposed Jones Park location citing that it will bring new families into the area.

A motion was made by Alderman Gregory Holding, seconded by Elaine Sutton Ekes, that this item be Recommended For Approval, as outlined in the recommendation. The motion PASSED.

07-0731

Subject: Communication from the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources requesting the reclassification of flood-fringe to flood-storage as it relates to the Pike Creek basin and the Sorenson Creek basin.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: That a letter of understanding be forwarded to the Village of Mt. Pleasant and the

Wisconsin DNR, and that an ordinance be prepared.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [Reclassify flood-fringe.pdf](#)

Director Brian O'Connell explained the intent behind this proposal and its relation to the overall improvements being made to the Pike River Watershed by the Village of Mt. Pleasant. He also received correspondence from Alderman Ron Hart in support of the reclassification.

A motion was made by Atty. Jud Wyant, seconded by Alderman Gregory Holding, that this item be Recommended For Approval, as outlined in the recommendation. The motion PASSED.

07-0829

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Bill Mitchell of S.C. Johnson seeking a minor amendment to a conditional use permit for a proposed addition to the S.C. Johnson Flight Center at 3450 Mt. Pleasant Street.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: That the request by Bill Mitchell of S.C. Johnson seeking a minor amendment to a conditional use permit for a proposed addition to the S.C. Johnson Flight Center at 3450 Mt. Pleasant Street be approved, subject to the following conditions:

- a. That the plans stamped "Received June 12, 2007" and presented to the Plan Commission on June 27, 2007 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b. That all applicable permits be obtained from the Federal Aviation Administration.
- c. That all applicable building and occupancy permits be applied for.
- d. That colors match or complement those of the existing building.
- e. That all applicable codes and ordinances be complied with.
- f. That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Plan Commission, and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Common Council.
- g. That this permit is subject to Plan Commission review for compliance with the listed conditions.

Director O'Connell explained the proposal and why staff had determined that the addition was considered a minor amendment.

Mr. Bill Mitchell of S.C. Johnson stated that he had nothing further to add.

A motion was made by Atty. Jud Wyant, seconded by Alderman Gregory Holding, that this item be Approved, subject to the listed conditions in the recommendation. The motion PASSED.

07-0820

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Director of City Development that an overlay district be established requiring a conditional use permit for all commercial uses in the West Racine commercial area.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27--07: That appropriate procedures be developed to further implement ordinance 114-638.

Further, that this item be received and filed.

Director O'Connell explained that since placing this matter on the agenda, additional research into existing ordinances had revealed that the ability already exists to require conditional use permits for all commercial uses in Access Corridor areas, such as the West Racine Commercial Area.

A motion was made by Alderman Gregory Holding, seconded by Frank Tingle, that this item be Received and Filed. The motion PASSED.

Public Hearing starting at 4:30 p.m.

07-0821

Subject: (Direct Referral) Proposed creation of a Business Improvement District for the Uptown Commercial Area.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 6-27-07: That Uptown business Improvement District Operating Plan as presented to the City Plan Commission on June 27, 2007 be approved.

Further that the Mayor be authorized to appoint members to the BID Board.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [BID for Uptown Commercial Area.pdf](#)

Mayor Becker opened the public hearing at 4:59 p.m., reviewed the public hearing process and introduced the item.

Director O'Connell reviewed the boundaries of the proposed district, explained the intent of the plan, and briefly mentioned other business improvement districts established by the City such as those for the Downtown and West Racine business districts.

Kristin Niemiec of RCEDC stated that she has worked with the Uptown Improvement Organization in the development of this BID plan and further explained the need for, and intent of the district.

John Kopulos of the Corner House, 1521 Washington Avenue, stated that he is in support of the creation of the BID as it will help the Uptown Business District move forward.

Dr. Richard Kemper, 1509 Washington Avenue, spoke in support of the creation of the

BID emphasizing Uptown's status as an entrance to Racine and the need for a good first impression.

Alderman Michael Shields expressed his support for the BID, as it will help to promote and support the area.

Jim Hyke, Director of Safe Haven, 1030 Washington Avenue, spoke in support of the BID stating that it will promote district cohesion.

Mr. Singer, 1514 Junction Avenue, expressed a concern that funds also be expended in his area and not just along Washington Avenue.

Mayor Becker suggested that Mr. Singer provide a letter expressing his desire to be appointed to the BID board, to help see that funds are distributed to his specific area.

A representative of Nelson Machine Co, 1201 Washington Avenue, expressed concern that while the BID may help to beautify the area, she can see no benefit to her business as it does not involve the visitation of customers to the property. Rather, she felt that the costs of proposed improvement should be supported by the entire City since Uptown is considered a gateway area.

There being no further comments, Mayor Becker closed the public hearing at 5:19 p.m.

Alderman Gregory Holding pointed out that residential properties are excluded from the BID assessment.

In response to Brent Ogelsby, Mayor Becker stated that while the total assessment amount may seem low, it is proportional to that of other BID districts given the size of the Uptown Area, and that the BID levy can be changed each year by the Uptown BID Board.

Director O'Connell stated that the BID assessment could increase or decrease each year depending on the desires of the BID Board, or district property values.

Mr. Kopolus stated that the proposed operating plan reflected the level of BID assessment recommended by the Uptown Improvement Organization.

A motion was made by Alderman Gregory Holding, seconded by Elaine Sutton Ekes, that this item be Recommended For Approval. The motion PASSED.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Commission and hearing no objections, Mayor Becker adjourned the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Brian F. O'Connell, Secretary
Director of City Development*