



## **CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** 4/25/2018

**To:** Mayor and Plan Commission Members

**From:** City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

**Division Manager:** Matt Sadowski – (262) 636-9152 [matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org](mailto:matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org)

**Case Manager:** Jeff Hintz

**Location:** 1509 Rapids Drive, located on between Rapids Drive to the north, N. Memorial Drive to the west, High Street to the south and rail lines to the east.

**Applicant:** Racine Baseball Cooperative

**Property Owner:** GJ AND AM PROPERTIES LLC

**Request:** Consideration of a conditional use permit to operate a Recreation Building serving as an instructional baseball academy, on a portion of the third floor in an existing building at 1509 Rapids Drive for property located in an I-2 General Industrial Zone District as required in section [114-588](#)\* of the Municipal Code.

\*Note 114-588 refers back to 114-568 where Recreation buildings is listed.

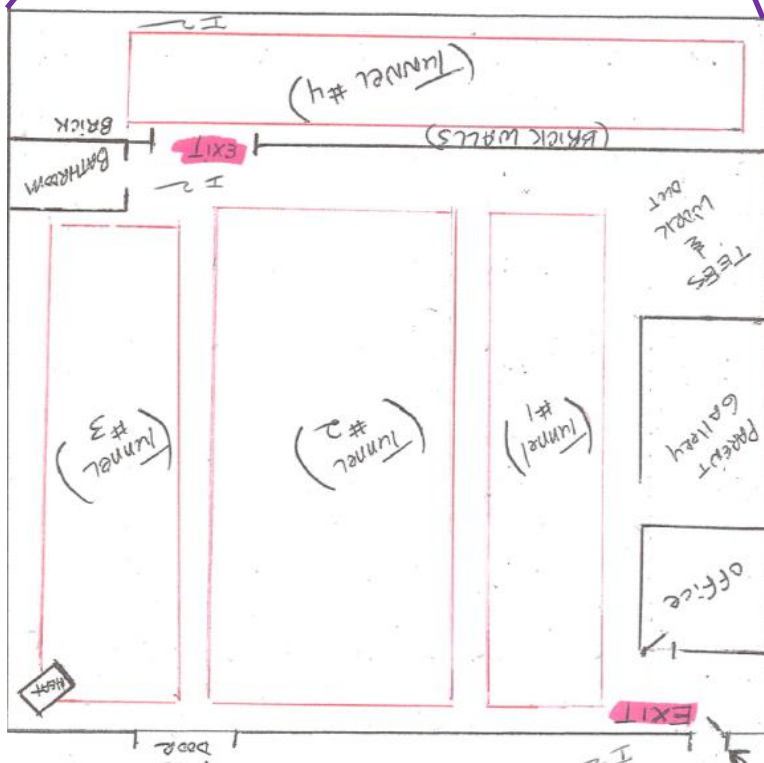
**BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:** The applicant seeks to utilize a portion of the third floor of the existing building near the southeast corner of the property. The space would be utilized as a baseball instructional academy for teams to practice hitting, pitching, some fielding and catching indoors, typically outside of baseball or softball season. This space is proposed to operate Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM and on weekends from 8AM-7PM.

The Zoning Ordinance classifies a Recreation building as permissible in the I-2 General Industrial Zone District upon the issuance of a conditional use permit (114-588).

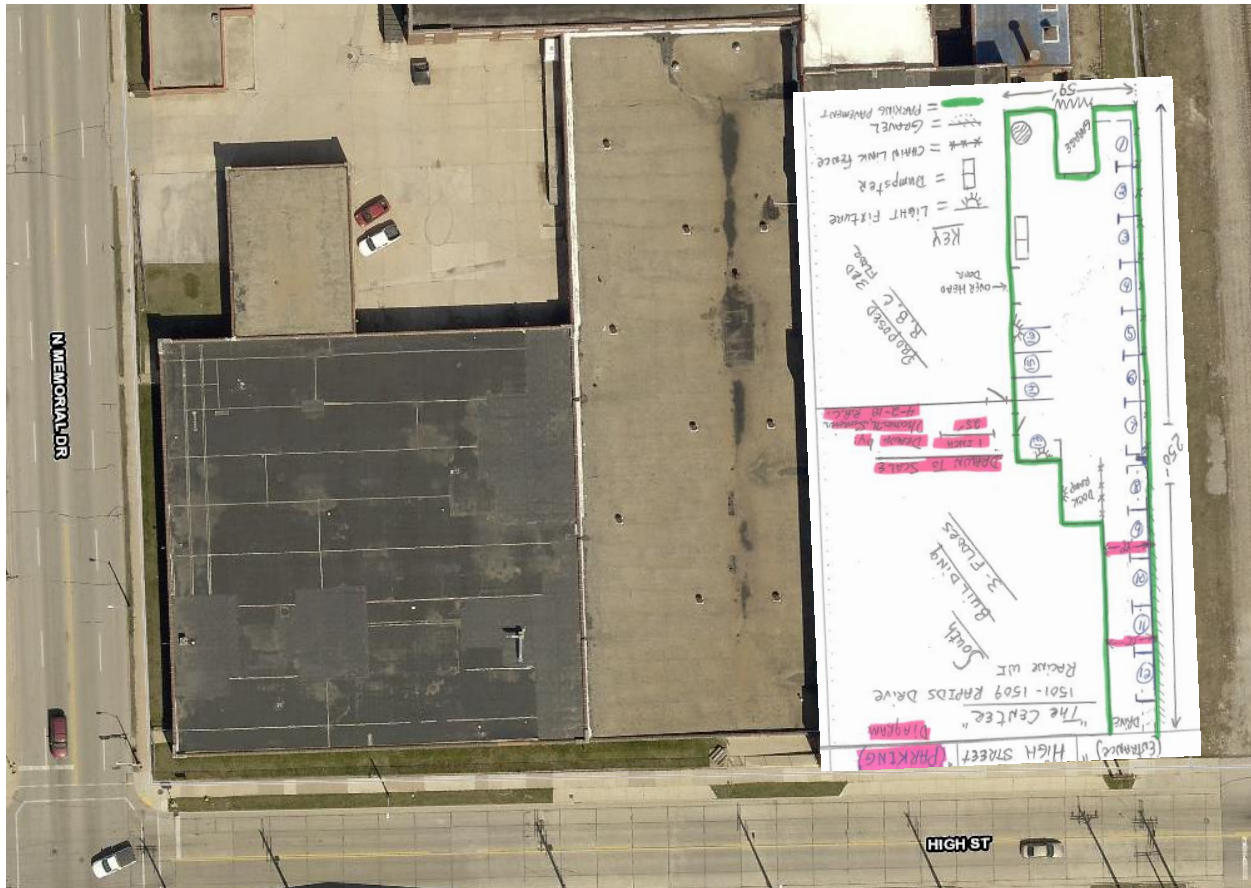


Approximate location of baseball academy on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, indicated by green box.

Birdseye view of the property, indicated in red (image from City Pictometry).



Floor plan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor space in the building, purple lines indicate respective corners on the northern wall



Proposed site plan for the property, submitted by applicant.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [21114000](#)

Property Size: 6.4 acres

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Industrial

Consistency with Adopted Plans:

The [Racine Comprehensive Plan](#) states that:

- The plan should encourage the redevelopment of older areas and commercial areas.
- Maintain and develop a land use pattern that strengthens the character and livability of the City's downtown core, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods.
- Encourage development patterns that promote efficient and sustainable use of land, that can be readily linked by transportation systems and that utilize existing public utilities and services.

- Promote redevelopment and infill in areas with existing infrastructure and services, enhancing existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
- Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.

**Corridor or Special Design District?:** N/A

**Historic?:** N/A

**Current Zoning District:** I-2 General Industrial

**Purpose of Zone District:** The I-2 general industrial district is intended to accommodate those industrial activities which may produce moderate nuisances or hazards in areas that are relatively remote from residential and commercial development.

**Proposed Zoning:** No change proposed

**Existing Land Use:** Originally built as a factory, now houses offices, warehousing/storage of goods and business center space.

**Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:**

<b>North</b>	I-1 Restricted Industrial	Self-service automobile washing facility
<b>East</b>	I-2 General Industrial	Railroad right-of-way
<b>South</b>	I-2 General Industrial	Contractor shop and yard space
<b>West</b>	I-1 Restricted Industrial	Surface parking facilities

**Operations:** The proposed hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM and a weekend schedule of 8AM-7PM. There are no employees and all instructors and coaches are volunteers.

## ANALYSIS:

Development Standards:

**Density** ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)): There are no changes planned to the exterior of the building as a result of this proposal.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Provided</b>
Lot Area	No minimum	6.4 acres
Lot Frontage	30 feet	1,625 feet for all frontages
Floor Area Ratio	4.0 maximum	1.24

**Setbacks** ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#)):

<b>Yard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Provided</b>
Front (Rapids)	0 feet	2 feet
Side (Memorial)	0 feet	8 feet
Side (High)	0 feet	2 feet
Rear (to the east)	0 feet	2 feet

**Building design standards** (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): The buildings on this parcel comply with the requirements of 114.735.5.b.1, however this building is not a new primary building or addition thereto. Exterior changes are not being sought with this application.

**Off-street parking and loading requirements** (114- [Article XI](#)) :

<b>Use Type</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Provided</b>
Recreational Building	31	* see note below
Total	31	190 + existing on site

\*Note: In addition to the parking for the existing business users on the subject parcel, the property owner owns a lot with approximately 190 parking spaces on the west side of N. Memorial drive. There is also a City owned lot to the south of this lot with approximately 170 spaces. The configuration proposed by the applicant in this application would limit emergency personnel access and limit two way traffic, so parallel parking along the access drive off High Street would not be allowed.

It is possible to locate some parking spaces below the baseball academy location on the subject parcel and not limit emergency vehicle access to this portion of the building. Given there is more than ample parking within distances allowed by the Zoning Ordinance, striping for this specific use would not be required as part of this request. However, if striping is done in this area, it must comply with access requirements provided to City Development by the Racine Fire Department.

**Landscaping, screening and yard requirements** ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): Screening and yards are not required for this use or zone districts, given the surrounding zone districts. The lot is developed almost to the property line and paved except for some strips of grass adjacent to public sidewalks.

The applicant has not proposed any landscaping with this request. Given the concealed location on the property for this proposed use, coupled with the fact the ability to install landscaping in this area is on property owned by the railroad, staff is not recommending landscaping with this request.

**Sign Regulations** (114-[Article X](#)): Signage is not a part of this request, but is planned in the future. Any signage would need to follow the sizing requirements outlined below.

<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Allowable Sq. Ft.</b>	<b>Provided Sq. Ft.</b>
Projecting/Wall	812.5 square feet	3 signs
Window signs	50% of window area <sup>^</sup>	N/A
Alleyway Signage	N/A	N/A
Total	812.5 square feet*	Approx. 80 sq. ft.

\*Total size determination would be made based on sizes and types of other signage on the lot. Once 3 or more signs are installed, the total is reduced by 20% with each subsequent sign.

<sup>^</sup>Each building is allowed two (2) window signs under four (4) square feet in total size, which do not count against the total allowable signage.

**Outdoor lighting, signs** (114-[Sec. 742](#)): The lighting on the property complies with the requirement that lighting be arranged, shielded and oriented in a manner which does not direct radiation or glare onto adjacent properties.

**Rubbish and trash storage** (114-[Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): The site currently has an enclosure for trash which complies with the requirements of the ordinance. The baseball operation will take all waste to the existing location on the property for disposal as needed.

**Engineering, Utilities and Access:**

**Access** (114-[1151](#)): Vehicular access to the site is provided from a driveway off of High Street. Given drop-offs and pickups will be prevalent for this type of operation, some sort of mirror will be needed to help avoid pedestrian automobile conflicts for patrons leaving the facility. The building is built up to the sidewalk and drivers will have no way to notice pedestrians on their right when leaving the facility.

Additionally, access requirements for emergency vehicles require a 20 foot road width at a minimum. The access road will need to be signed so that vehicles do not park along it at any time.

**Surface drainage** (114-[739](#) & Consult Engineering Dept.): Reuse of the site and building is not expected to impact the surface drainage of this lot.

**Sewage disposal and water supply** (114-[821](#) & Consult Engineering and S/W Utility): All utilities are available for this site and the applicant proposal to utilize this site is not expected to impact the ability to serve this area.

**Exceptions to ordinance:** No exceptions are required with this request.

**Additional Planning and Zoning Comments:**

## **REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:**

CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-154. – Standards.)

No Conditional Use shall be recommended by the Plan Commission unless it is found that that:

- 1) The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger, the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare.**

Staff Comments: The operation of this facility is not expected to generate noise outside of the building. It is very likely that this operation will not be noticeable to passersby and those inside the building except for future signage indicating where the facility would be located. The interior operation as shown on the applicant's site plan eliminates the possibility of any stray baseballs or softballs from damaging or even encroaching upon adjacent properties.

- 2) The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.**

Staff Comments: The interior operation of the facility is anticipated to muffle almost all of the sound from the outside of the building. It is unlikely that the residences to the east of this property, across the railroad right-of-way, would notice any noise while the facility is operating. The operation of this facility within the confines of this warehousing building is not expected to diminish or impair property values in the surrounding area.

- 3) The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.**

Staff Comments: Given the overall scale and mass of the buildings on this property, the baseball/softball operations are occupying a small fraction of the overall space within this property. This usage of the space is not expected to alter or impede the development of the surrounding area. The recreational facility is in a concealed location within the property overall and aside from signage, is unlikely to be readily noticeable within the building's 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

- 4) Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or are being provided.**

Staff Comments: The site plan submitted by the applicant does not propose any changes to the access, utilities or drainage for the site. The reuse of this site and existing building is not expected to impact the provision of utilities for the property or general area.

**5) Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designated as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.**

Staff Comments: The applicant plan does include parallel parking along the access road to the property, however due to emergency vehicle access, this will need to remain open. The egress from the site can be challenging for vehicular traffic because the building is built almost to the sidewalk. Some type of mirror will need to be installed to drivers of vehicles can see pedestrians on the sidewalk to their right, as a vehicle exits the site. There is a long access drive and loading/unloading area at the end of the drive which is adequate for loading and unloading activities necessary for this operation. The operation of this facility is not expected to create congestion in the area.

**6) The proposed conditional use is not contrary to the objectives of the current land use plan for the city.**

Staff Comments: The operation of this recreation building requires a somewhat vast space; at approximately 7,000 square feet this is type of use is consistent with the scale and size of buildings prevalent on industrial properties. While the actual usage of the facility is much less intense than what would occur on industrial properties, the land use in the Comprehensive Plan designates this property as “Industrial.” Due to the space required for this operation, it is not contrary to the objectives of the current land use plan.

**7) The conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may, in each instance, be modified pursuant to the recommendations of the plan commission.**

Staff Comments: This operation will conform with all applicable regulations for the I-2 zone district, no exceptions are necessary for this operation. The conditions below ensure the development is compatible with the surrounding area and fits the district in which it is located.

## **POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Approve the request with conditions deemed necessary to mitigate any adverse impacts that could arise from the project; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.



## **STAFF SUPPORTS THE APPLICATION FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

- This proposal will keep an existing building in service at an intensity which is much less than what would be permitted by the current zoning, but still consistent with the zoning.
- Sustainable reuse of land which utilizes existing utilities and services.
- This business will provide a service to the community.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM RACINE BASEBALL COOPERATIVE, SEEKING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A RECREATION BUILDING AT 1509 RAPIDS DRIVE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- a) That the plans presented to the Plan Commission on April 25, 2018 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all license requirements from the State of Wisconsin and City of Racine be obtained, complied with, and kept current at all times.
- c) The fee of \$695.00 for a Conditional Use Permit be paid prior to occupancy of the building.
- d) Installation of “no parking signage” along the access drive indicated on the applicant site plan as spaces 5-12.
- e) Installation of a mirror adjacent to the access drive in a manner in which would permit a driver to observe pedestrians on the sidewalk to the west when leaving the facility. This shall be installed prior to applying for occupancy.
- f) That if, prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit, required site improvements listed in “d” above have not been or cannot be completed, a financial surety shall be provided to the City. The surety shall be in a format as approved by the City Attorney’s office, and subject to all stipulations as identified for financial sureties in the City of Racine. The dollar amount shall be determined at the time of application based upon estimates provided by the applicants for any incomplete work, and shall be valid for no less than one (1) year from the date of issuance. The surety format and content is subject to review and approval by the City Attorney.
- g) All drop-offs, pickups, loading and parking shall occur on the subject property and not in any right-of-ways.
- h) That hours of operation are 3-9PM, Monday to Friday and 8AM-7PM Saturday and Sunday.
- i) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits acquired.
- j) 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.

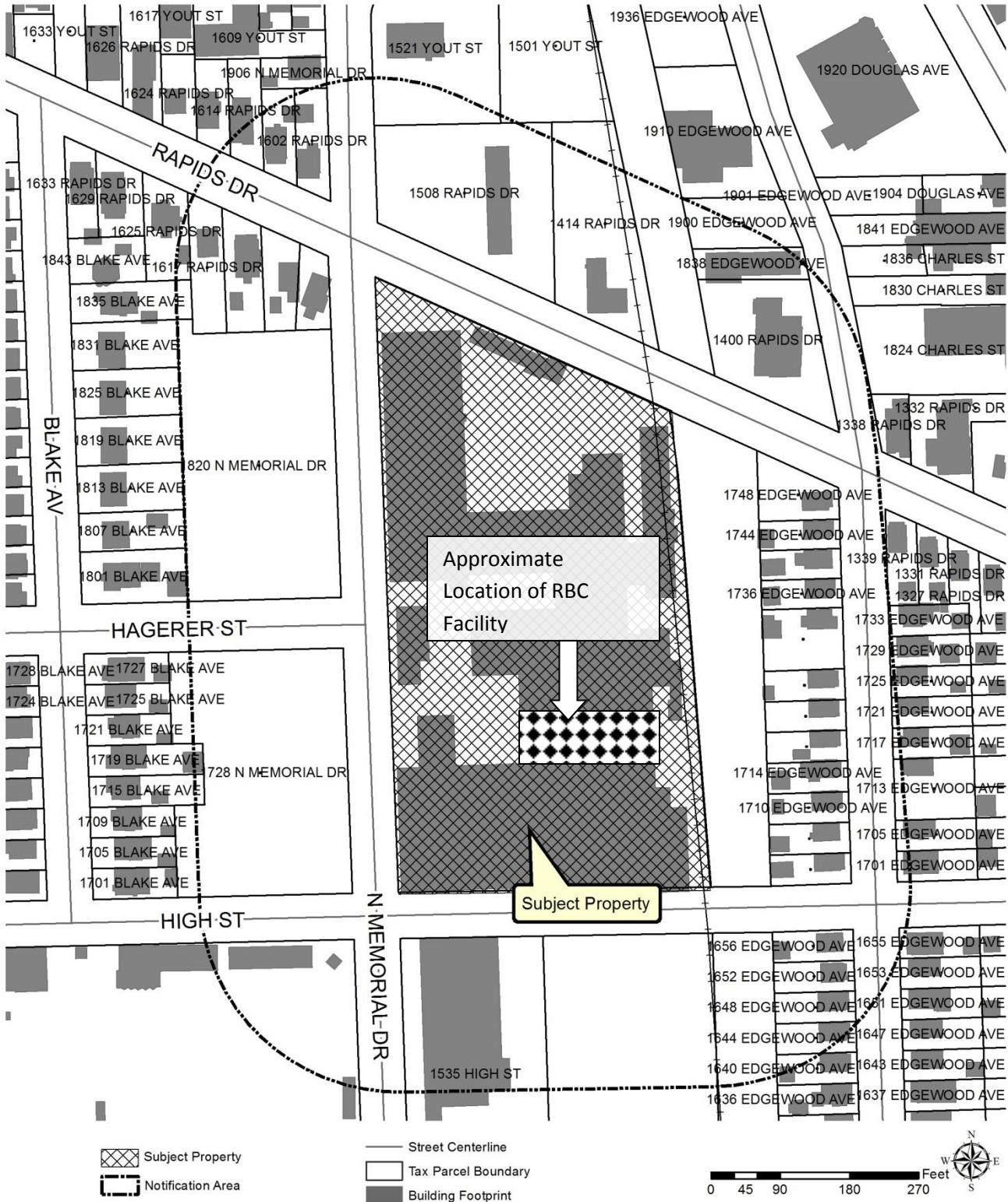
- k) That this conditional use permit is subject to Plan Commission review for compliance with the listed conditions.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) Property owner notification map indicating the subject property;
- 2) Aerial Photo indicating the subject property;
- 3) Zoning Map indicating the subject property;
- 4) Land Use Map from Comprehensive Plan, indicating the subject property;
- 5) Site photos of the property and general area; and
- 6) Submittal documents ([click to view](#)).



# Conditional Use Request - 1509 Rapids Drive

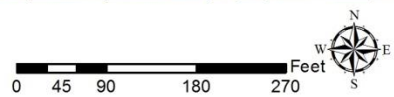




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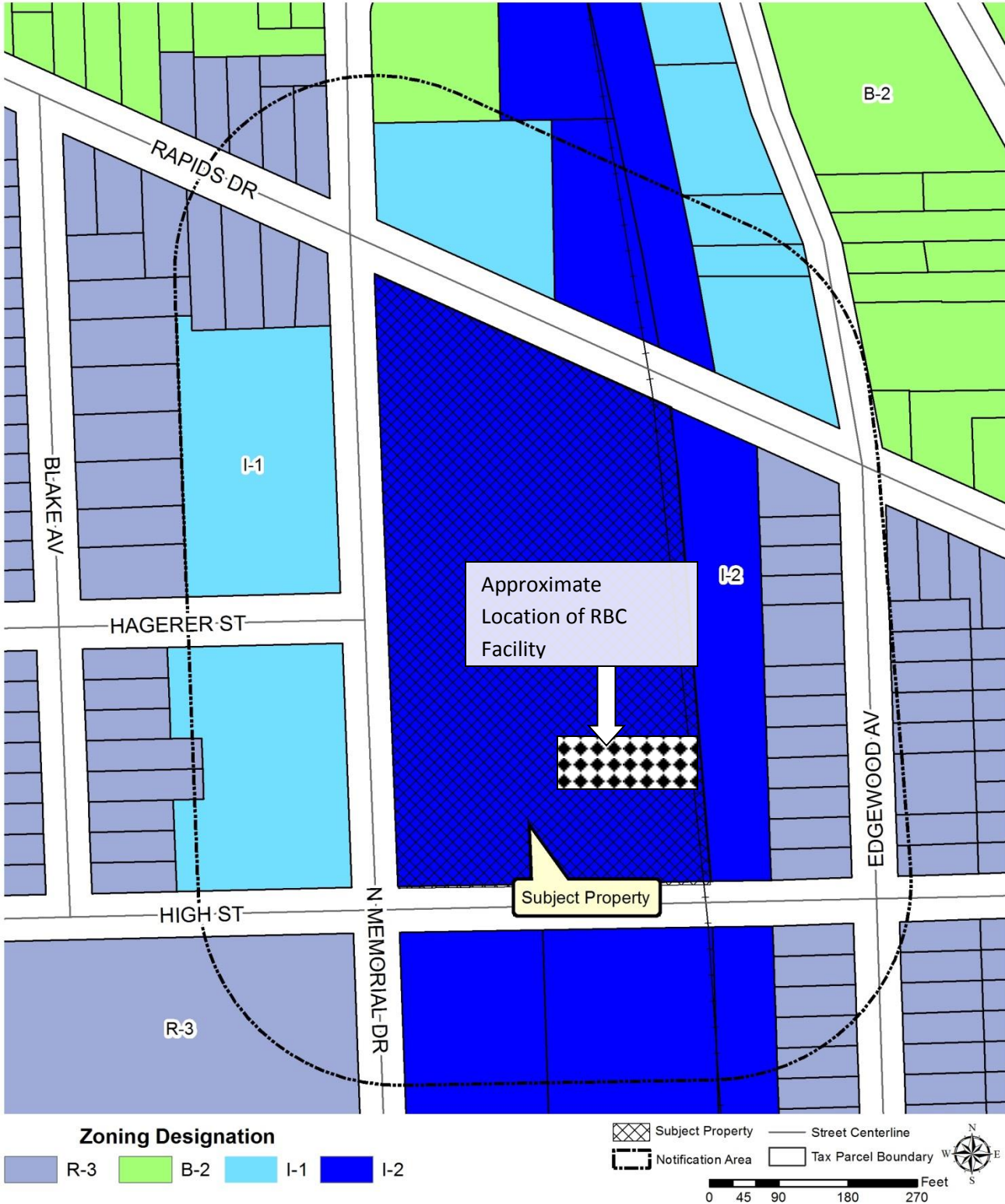


- Subject Property
- Notification Area
- Street Centerline
- Tax Parcel Boundary





# Conditional Use Request - 1509 Rapids Drive





# Conditional Use Request - 1509 Rapids Drive



### Site Photos



Looking east along High Street, red line approximates access entrance



Looking north at loading area and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor area where academy will be located



Looking south towards High Street from access drive



Looking west on High Street from access drive



Looking east on High Street from access drive



Looking south across High Street from access drive