



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
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 Dennis Wiser, Tony Veranth*

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

4:15 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

Alderman Wisneski did not call the meeting to order as there was no quorum present. He advised no official action can be taken on items at this meeting, however the Public Hearings can and will be held as they were properly noticed. The Public Hearings began at approximately 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: 3 - Vincent Esqueda, Aron Wisneski and Dennis Wiser

EXCUSED: 4 - Elaine Sutton Ekes, Jud Wyant, Tony Veranth and John Dickert

Others present:

*Matthew Sadowski, Principal Planner
Jill Johanneck, Associate Planner
Ken Plaski, Zoning Administrator/Chief Building Inspector
Brian O'Connell, Director of City Development*

Approval of Minutes for the May 30, 2012 Meeting

No action was taken on the minutes due to a lack of a quorum.

Principal Planner Sadowski announced that the Open House for the "Root Works" Root River Revitalization plan was being held in Room 209 from 4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., and Public Comment on the Plan will begin at 5:30 p.m., or soon thereafter, in the Council Chambers.

[12-7809](#)

Subject: A Resolution to adopt the document titled "Root Works - Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor Plan: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan". (PC-12)

Attachments: [RCEDC Root River Plan Support](#)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

OPEN HOUSE ON PLAN

Room 209

4:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. or soon thereafter

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON PLAN
Room 205
5:30 p.m., or soon thereafter**

5:30 p.m. Public Comments following the open house for the "Root Works - Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor Redevelopment Plan"

Alderman Wisneski re-convened for public comment on the "Root Works" corridor plan. Principal Planner Sadowski provided background on the plan, including previous plans that included the Root River but did not have the main emphasis on it. He indicated this plan is focused on the Root River and future development opportunities. A timeframe of the plan review process to date was provided.

State Representative Cory Mason spoke about the plan, noting the river has always been a focal point of the City and of the lakefront re-development efforts. The plan opens up more opportunity and guidance for environmental improvements and economic development. He noted the study area was defined in the 1980's which set forth four major goals for the plan. He emphasized the amount of public outreach and work done to develop the plan, that the public as well as private groups were involved, and public outreach was vital in the plan development.

Jolena Presti of Vandewalle & Associates, the consulting firm that worked on the "Root Works" plan, further described the intent of the plan, noting the focus on the historical roots of the area the plan encompasses and the variety of uses within the 'key areas' identified in the plan. These 'key areas' include locations titled 'Machinery Row', 'Belle Harbor', the 'Walker Site', 'CNH Downtown Riverfront District', and 'Transit Oriented Development District'. Ms. Presti also identified other potential areas of infill development discussed in the plan. It was noted the five districts of the plan encompass 325 acres.

Representative Mason added further comment, noting that people often advise they do not know how to get down to the river or how to utilize it. The plan has a 'Connections Map' component which identifies areas for public access and interaction within the plan area. He also noted on the creation of a view shed and other amenities addressed in the plan, and that there is focus on improvement of water quality, reduction of run-off, and the intent to incorporate new technologies to reduce pollution entering the Root River. He closed by stating the importance of the Root river and it is a true asset to the City of Racine.

Public Comments:

- 1. Wayne Klingman. Spoke in support of the plan.*
- 2. Cleveland Brown. Signed up to speak but was not present.*
- 3. Erika Jones. Signed up to speak but was not present.*
- 4. Jan Freu. Signed up to speak but was not present.*
- 5. Brian O'Connell. Passed on making comment.*
- 6. Marybeth Zuklle. Spoke in support.*
- 7. Monte Osterman. Spoke in support.*

8. *Mark Yehlen. Signed up to speak in support but was not present.*
9. *Melissa Warner. Signed up to speak in support but was not present.*
10. *Rick Olson. Spoke in support of the plan.*
11. *Lynn Monroe. Spoke in support of the plan.*
12. *David Williams. Signed up to speak in support, but was not present.*
13. *Geeta Jensen. Spoke in support.*
14. *Alderman Keith Fair. Spoke in support.*

ZOrd.001-12**Zoning Ordinance 1-12**

Ordinance adopting the document "RootWorks-Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan" for the City of Racine, Wisconsin

The Common Council of the City of Racine do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1: Pursuant to Section 62.23 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the City of Racine is authorized to prepare and adopt the document "RootWorks-Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan" (the Plan), as an amendment to the City's comprehensive plan as defined in Sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

SECTION 2: The Root River Council, with the assistance of the firm of Vandewalle & Associates, Inc., and in consultation with the River Alliance of Wisconsin and the City of Racine, in September of 2011 began preparation of the Plan that serves to assist in promoting and guiding development within the study area by: understanding the context within the city and the region, stimulating economic growth, allowing for public access and interaction with the river, improving water quality, and recommending implementation strategies; and

SECTION 3: The Root River Council (RRC) conducted stakeholders' interviews and public informational meetings to solicit opinion and educate the public on the Plan, and upon approval on April 20, 2012 the RRC forwarded a recommendation for adoption to the Plan Commission; and

SECTION 4: The Plan Commission of the City of Racine, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, recommended to the City Common Council approval of a resolution adopting the document titled "RootWorks-Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan"; and

SECTION 5: The Common Council has duly noticed and conducted a public hearing on the Plan, in compliance with the requirements of Section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 6: The Common Council of the City of Racine, Wisconsin, does, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document titled "RootWorks-Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan" pursuant to Section 62.23 and

Section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 7: This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the City Common Council and publication or posting as required by law.

Passed by the Common Council:

Approved:

Mayor
Attest:

City Clerk

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [RCEDC Root River Plan Support](#)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

[12-7810](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Discussion of possible revocation of a Conditional Use Permit approved for an automobile repair facility at 2835 Lathrop Avenue. (PC-12)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

[12-7684](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Sheila Sheets representing "2 Sheets to the Wind" seeking a conditional use permit to operate a pub and grill at 3316 Douglas Avenue. (PC-12)

Attachments: [PH Notice - 3316 Douglas Avenue](#)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

[12-7811](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Review of a request by Donna Daams of Chartroom Charlie's seeking a minor amendment to a conditional use permit to construct a stage for outdoor music performances at 209 Dodge Street. (PC-12)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

[12-7812](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Mark Madsen, representing Vivian and Anthony Merlo, for approval of a two-lot Certified Survey Map for the property located at 2504, 2514, 2518, and 2522 Douglas Avenue. (PC-12)

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

PUBLIC HEARINGS HEARINGS

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12-7814

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Terynce Guthrie representing The Hawks Motorcycle Club - Wisconsin Chapter, for a Conditional Use permit to operate a meeting hall/clubhouse at 2051 Mead Street. (PC-12)

Attachments: [PH Notice - 2051 Mead Street](#)

Alderman Wisneski advised the public hearing only will be held on this item. Public input will be recorded but no action taken due to lack of a quorum.

Associate Planner Johanneck provided information on the request, including the area, property and surrounding zoning. It was advised the building occupies the entire lot, and all parking would be on-street, and that per the applicant there would be approximately 10 members, or up to 20 people, on site at a given time. The building has a full kitchen, and it was advised the applicant indicated he had spoken to the City Clerk's office concerning consumption of alcohol on the premises, and the rules that govern such activity. Views to and from the proposed location were reviewed.

The proposed hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Ms. Johanneck also reviewed the site plan and floor plan. She advised Staff is recommending approval subject to conditions.

Public Hearing opened at 4:30 p.m.

- 1. William McNeal, 2540 Rolling Fields Dr. – Operates the church at 2054 Mead Street, spoke in opposition of the proposal with concerns about parking, concerns that the use will create traffic congestion.*
- 2. David Williams, 1542 Salton – Expressed concerns about safety, and alcohol and motorcycle safety, and the number of people who will actually occupy the building vs. what was stated by the applicant.*
- 3. Wayne Clingman, 236 Jones St. - Spoke in opposition, citing concerns about possible illegal activity, and the site becoming a 'hangout' for youth.*
- 4. Alderwoman Krystyna Sarrazin, 1753 College Ave. – Spoke in opposition, due to the proximity to residential neighborhoods. Verified the applicant or a representative were not present to discuss their proposal.*

Public Hearing closed at 4:45 p.m.

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

12-7813

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Vivian and Anthony Merlo to re-zone the property located at 2514 & 2518 Douglas Avenue from R-3 Limited General Residence to B-2 Community Shopping District, as well as amend the 2035 Land Use Plan for the City of Racine to reflect a change in land use from High Density Residential to Commercial Use for the aforementioned properties. (PC-12)

Attachments: [PH Notice - 2514 & 2518 Douglas Avenue](#)

Associate Planner Johanneck advised the visual presentation had been shortened due to the lack of a quorum, however provided a detailed history behind the request for rezoning.

Ms. Johanneck summarized that a conditional use request made several years ago for a business to locate at 2504 Douglas Avenue exposed numerous land use violations within that property and on adjacent properties owned by the Merlo's. One violation included the creation by the property owners of a parking lot on the aforementioned lots north of 2504 Douglas Avenue. A house had previously occupied the lot at 2514 Douglas Avenue. The lot at 2518 Douglas contains no structures. Both are currently zoned R-3 Limited General Residence.

A review of the surrounding zoning and property zoning was provided. The rezoning of the two lots would allow for these lots to function legally as additional parking for the main commercial building at 2504 Douglas Avenue, which currently contains a small day-care and a children's re-sale shop. This rezoning is appropriate, along with the other requests for the sites which are pending, to create a usable parking area for a non-conforming parking situation.

Part of the process to achieve compliance was this request to rezone the two lots from residential to commercial, as commercial parking lots are not allowed within residential districts. Upon Staff review it is the conclusion that the use for commercial versus residential is a sensible change, considering the location along Douglas Avenue, a main commercial corridor within the City, and the un-likelihood of the parcels being utilized for residential use in the future. The re-zoning and 2035 Land Use plan amendment will allow the owner's to proceed with amending their conditional use to incorporate this area into additional parking for the building at 2504 Douglas Avenue, which is severely under-parked. The two lots are currently represented as high density residential on the 2035 Land Use Plan and the modification would change this to commercial land use. Staff also supports the map modification for reasons as stated.

It was noted this request is accompanied by a Certified Survey Map to re-structure the property lines and join the two lots with the lot addressed as 2504 Douglas. Additionally, this CSM would add a buffer of land to the residential lot addressed as 2522 Douglas Avenue (located on the corner of Douglas Avenue and Augusta St.). This lot will remain residential and only have access off of Augusta St.). Due to lack of a quorum, the Certified Survey Map was not presented at this meeting. Ms. Johanneck noted the rezoning and land use plan amendment are two of four items required to bring the property into compliance. The Certified Survey Map, as well as a pending Conditional Use amendment, will complete the process. Staff recommendation is for approval of the rezoning and amendment to the 2035 Land Use Plan for the City of Racine, subject to conditions.

Public Hearing opened at 4:50 p.m.

1. Sue DeKeuster, 1537 Augusta St. – Spoke in opposition. Presented a petition signed by individuals objecting the rezoning request and change to the 2035 Land Use Plan. Also noted was lack of confidence in the owners and the City, lack of respect of the way the City is doing business, discussion of drainage problems from a building located at 2504 Douglas Avenue, grading issues, objection to turning residential lots into gravel parking, the change to the 2035 Land Use Plan, that nobody knows what is going to be built on certain lots, access through their property to other lots, violations occurring from the conditional use approval of the pole barn,

and the cellular tower with a propane tank.

2. Florence Boyer, 1549 Augusta St., - Spoke in opposition, citing concerns about what they are planning for the property to the west of the field, doesn't know what the land will be used for, does not trust the applicants, traffic issues, and noted agreement with the first speaker.

3. Joanne Cruz, 1533 Augusta St., - Spoke in opposition, discussing landscaping, that they have put rocks on her property, that there is weeds and junk accumulating between her fence and their property, and she does not want landscaping along her fence.

4. Vivian Merlo, 3025 Spring St. – Is the applicant and spoke in favor. She advised they purchased the house and property to the north of them but had to remove it due to its poor condition, advised they have worked with the City concerning parking requirements, they have plans to improve and pave the parking lot and provide a landscape buffer, noted they added gravel, advised they cannot control people crossing the rear of the lot and Romaine Ave., did not know the neighbor had a problem occurring with the stone, that they have a contractor working on the weeds, they remove the trash weekly, have removed tires that were dumped on their property, and are doing what they were asked to do by the City.

5. Norm DeKeuster, 1517 Deane Blvd. – Spoke in opposition, stating fault lies not only with the Merlo's but with the City due to prior projects, noted grading has occurred on the property, the City was going to see what could happen with the drainage, asked why the surveyor that was out there didn't survey their properties too, cannot find answers in the building records, noted that the public hearing was not held at the time advertised, wanted to know why the neighborhood didn't know about the general plan, asked why part of the power point was removed, talked about the area along Douglas Avenue becoming commercial from Augusta St. to Romaine Ave.

6. Vivian Merlo, 3025 Spring St., spoke again. She clarified the two lots up for rezoning are currently not buildable as currently zoned due to their width. Advised the property used to be a swamp. She indicated there were possibly some issues with the sewer line, and that the drainage problems for the other houses may have stemmed from problems generated in the 1940's.

7. Sue DeKeuster, 1537 Augusta St, spoke again. Wanted to clarify the water issue, stating while it may have been a swamp in the past, did not exist in her yard until the pole barn and radio tower were erected. She referenced a letter from Brian O'Connell. Ms. Johanneck clarified for Mrs. DeKeuster that currently there are four lots, and the lot on the corner of Augusta and Douglas will remain residential, and this rezoning and CSM will benefit this corner lot by giving it a landscape buffer, and the re-zoning will allow for the paving and use of the two lots for parking. Also, that this is an appropriate request as there cannot be a commercial use in a residential zone district, and that the only thing changing is the zone, we are putting standards on a parking lot only, we are not changing any land uses. Mrs. DeKeuster continued to discuss the zoning in the area as she understood it, stating she does not want any of the issues rectified. Alderman Wisneski attempted to clarify her point by summarizing she does not want the properties rezoned, and that nobody be allowed to park on the property, and would like to see it remain residential.

Public Hearing closed at 5:20 p.m.

No action was taken on the item due to a lack of a quorum.

Administrative Business

Adjournment

Alderman Wisneski closed all Public Hearings at 6:15 p.m. without objection.