



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final City Plan Commission

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

Wednesday, March 14, 2012

4:15 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

Mayor Dickert called the March 14, 2012 Plan Commission meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: 4 - Elaine Sutton Ekes, Vincent Esqueda, Eric Marcus and John Dickert

EXCUSED: 3 - Jud Wyant, Tony Veranth and Aron Wisneski

Others present:

*Matthew Sadowski, Principal Planner
Jill Johanneck, Associate Planner
Ken Plaski, Chief Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator*

Approval of Minutes for the February 29, 2012 Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Esqueda, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to approve the minutes of the February 29, 2012 meeting. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

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) (Res. 12-3041)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 3-14-12: That the item be approved subject to conditions.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [PH Notice - 740 Lake Avenue](#)
[Parking and Funeral Procession Traffic Plan](#)
[\(12-7344\) CU 740 Lake Revised-Final](#)

Principal Planner Sadowski briefly reviewed the site location and information on the request. The primary concern remains the parking/staging areas for funerals held by the existing Maresh-Merideth funeral home and, if approved, Northwestern Funeral Chapel. Various options for staging and processions were presented.

Mr. Frazier consulted with a Traffic Engineer, Mr. Wayne Higgins, 890 Elm Grove Road, Elm Grove WI 53122, on this issue and was present to speak if necessary.

Alderman Marcus noted he would like to focus on issues concerning the funeral use only, as this is the only reason for the conditional use. Talk of various options for processions were discussed. Mayor Dickert noted his feelings about remote parking, stating people will tend not to use the shuttles and feels that their availability is not a viable option to address the parking concerns.

Alderman Marcus questioned Mr. Higgins about circulation should there be more than one funeral at a time and if he had simulated or planned alternative routes. Mr. Higgins advised he had not, and to do so would be dependent on knowledge of where people are parking and how they enter the procession. He also suggested the two funeral homes discuss upcoming events and work out potential conflicts together between themselves before they occur. Alderman Marcus mentioned the commission is focusing on land use, and not the communication of the businesses. This means the focus is on the procession issue as traffic and parking is already a problem in this area, and any permitted use could cause traffic and parking problems, but not the processions, as they are unique to the funeral services.

Mayor Dickert asked if there were an event at Memorial Hall or Festival Hall where parking is not available during a funeral service, have they planned for a secondary parking option. Mr. Higgins advised they have not but it could be looked into.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes discussed possible alternatives for processions to be set up to eliminate some of the parking congestion. Mr. Sadowski added the funeral homes may place up to 10 of their own bags free of charge. More may be purchased from the Department of Public Works at \$6.25 a day per bag. Commissioner Sutton Ekes expressed concern that the City be able to limit the number of meter covers so as not to affect the other businesses in the area who utilize street parking.

Mayor Dickert requested clarification on several points. He inquired if the existing location on Barker Street would remain if they receive this approval. Mr. Frazier stated it is a possibility, however has not been determined yet. Mayor Dickert also asked about what other types of activities will take place at this facility. Mr. Frazier advised they are considering religious and cultural activities, weddings, banquets, and events that the City of Racine would feel appropriate for the site. They are not intending to have rock concerts or basketball games or the like. It was noted there is a kitchen on site, but any event with food would be catered. They are not seeking a liquor license.

Alderman Marcus recapped with Principal Planner Sadowski that the only item under consideration here is the funeral services and processions as they triggered the conditional use. Mr. Sadowski concurred. He further questioned Mr. Sadowski if, in crafting the language for the conditional use, can language be constructed addressing that should problems occur, that quick action can be taken to remedy the situation. Mr. Sadowski advised language to assist addressing potential problems can be added to the conditions, and the language can be shared with the City Attorney for his review.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes agreed the Attorney's office could add the language, discussed a review period in which this conditional use use could be reviewed, and wants Staff to add language regarding where staging areas could occur, including details on the shuttling plan. Mr. Sadowski stated the staging and route planning could help alleviate some parking and traffic concerns of surrounding properties.

Mayor Dickert again noted the need for Northwestern Funeral Chapel to come up with a secondary parking site. In the situations when there are events at Festival or

Memorial Hall, and they're utilizing their parking lots, the funeral homes would not be able to utilize that parking. Commissioner Ekes concurred with Mayor Dickert.

Mr. Frazier reiterated how they will work with existing parking, and how they plan to utilize staging areas and processions.

A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commissioner Esqueda, to recommend approval for the conditional use at 740 Lake Avenue, subject to Staff recommendations, with the addition to the conditions of a provision from the City Attorney's office to offer an expedited process if there are violations related to item g.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes suggested a friendly amendment to include: Aside from the 3 main vehicles described by Mr. Frazier (the lead vehicle, the hearse, and the family vehicle), no other meters shall be bagged for associated funeral operations shall be placed within the area bounded by Wisconsin Avenue, Lake Avenue, Fifth Street, and Ninth Street, and that all other vehicles participating in a procession originating from 740 Lake Avenue shall join said procession at the intersection of Library Drive and Sixth Street and proceed east to Pershing Drive. The amendment was accepted and the motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

[12-7466](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Amendments to the City of Racine floodplain ordinance for consistency with FEMA mapping. (PC-12)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 3-14-12: That an ordinance be prepared and public hearing scheduled.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [Flood Plain Ordinance Amendment](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Sutton Ekes, seconded by Alderman Marcus, that an ordinance be prepared and a public hearing scheduled before the Common Council. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes left the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING

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[12-7467](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request from Bryan Linstroth, representing Stein Gardens and Gifts, seeking a conditional use permit to operate a seasonal garden center at 3502 Douglas Avenue. (PC-12) (Res. 12-3067)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 3-28-12: That the item be approved subject to conditions.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [PH Notice - 3502 Douglas Avenue \(12-7467\) CU 3502 Douglas Avenue](#)

Public Hearing Opened 5:20 p.m.

1. *Mr. Jerry Schmitt, 250 E. Groveland Dr., Oak Creek, WI 53154 is the applicant and explained the seasonal concept, that they have a west side location and this will provide service to the east side, they will have a 21'x36' greenhouse, and provided a synopsis of the project operating plan.*

Mayor Dickert inquired if there will be sales other than plants. Mr. Schmitt they will sell soil, small items, but no large trees or shrubs and no other vendors will be allowed to sell from their area.

Public Hearing Closed at 5:25 p.m.

Due to a lack of quorum, the item will be scheduled for the March 28, 2012 Plan Commisison meeting for action.

Administrative Business

None.

Adjournment

Mayor Dickert adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m. without objection.