



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/3/2022

To: Mayor and Plan Commission Members

From: City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

Division Manager: Jeff Hintz – (262) 636-9151 jeff.hintz@cityofracine.org

Case Manager: Jeff Hintz

Location: 1346 Main Street

Applicant: Raymond and Lodze Noël

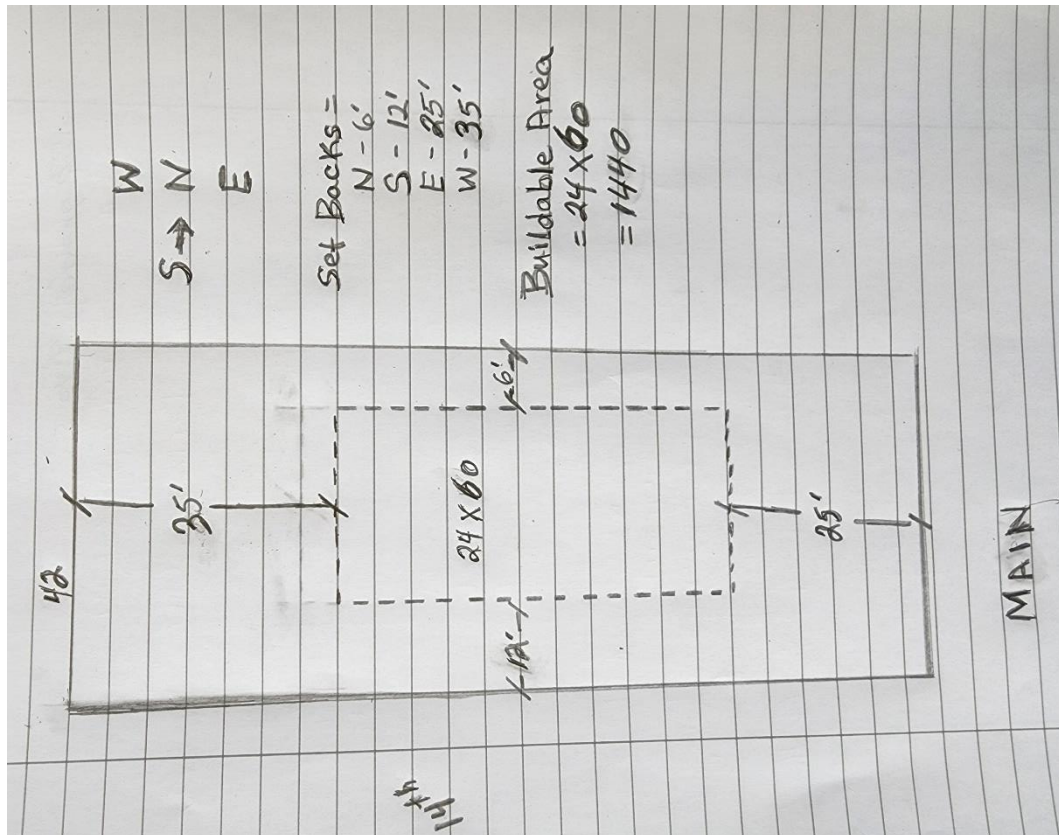
Property Owner: NRE401k Trust

Request: Consideration of a change of zone from R-2 Single Family Residence district to R-5 General Residence District.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The site is currently vacant and has been for decades. The applicants would like to construct a 3.5 story building on the site that would include three 3 bedroom apartments and a sub grade first floor that would be for parking. Based on the size of the site to achieve this density the R-5 zoning is required. Though the surrounding parcels are mostly zoned R-2 Single Family Residence there are a number of building of similar or greater density within a few blocks of the property.



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



Estimated Building Foot Print



New Rendering of Potential Architecture for Comment

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: 00826000

Property Size: 5179.28 square feet

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: High Density Residential

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.
- New development should be designed so it is compatible with established development.

Corridor or Special Design District?: N/A

Historic?: No.

Current Zoning District: R-2 Single Family Residence

Purpose of Zone District: The R-2 Single Family Residence district is primarily designed to accommodate existing single family neighborhoods which are characterized by smaller lots than are required in the R-1 district.

Proposed Zoning: R-5 General Residence

Intent of proposed Zone District: The R-5 General Residence District is primarily intended to provide medium to high density residential areas adjacent to major shopping areas and convenient to places of employment. This district requires utilities of high capacity and community facilities sufficient to service the population, and street system capable of accommodating relatively heavy traffic.

Existing Land Use: Vacant

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	R-2 Single Family Residence	Single Family Homes
East	R-2 Single Family Residence	Park
South	R-2 Single Family Residence	Single Family/Multi Family Residential
West	O/I Office/Institutional	Hospital

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards (under the flex):

Density ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)):

Standard	Required	Provided
Lot Area	3,000 square feet minimum	5179.28
Lot Frontage	50 feet minimum	120 feet
Floor Area Ratio	4.8 maximum	.63

*existing non-conforming lot

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

Yard	Required	Provided
Front	25 feet	N/A
Corner Side	12 feet	N/A
Side	6 feet	N/A
Rear	35 feet	N/A

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): This will be reviewed as a part of the required design review for multifamily buildings.

Off-street parking and loading requirements (114- [Article XI](#)): This will be reviewed as a part of the required design review for multifamily buildings.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): This will be reviewed as a part of the required design review for multifamily buildings.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage has not been included with this request.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): This will be reviewed as a part of the required design review for multifamily buildings.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): This will be reviewed as a part of the required design review for multifamily buildings.

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

ZONE CHANGE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-82. - Findings of fact and recommendations of plan commission.)

The plan commission shall make findings based upon the evidence presented to it in each specific case with respect to, but not limited to, the following matters:

1) The Existing uses of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: The uses in this area (excluding the institutional uses of the former school and the hospital) are generally single unit dwellings. It would be remiss to not note, that there are multiple unit dwelling buildings located in this general area (2-3 blocks in any direction but East). These buildings were established well before the current zoning code was adopted and well before the City's first modern zoning ordinance was adopted in 1936; these uses are allowed to continue and are established as non-conforming uses under the current ordinance from 1973.

On the particular block this property is situated on, the only property usage is single unit dwellings and open space overlooking Lake Michigan. Historically, this particular lot had a single unit dwelling on it as early as 1933 per Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. In 1977, the block of property to the west used as accessory surface parking was granted approval to do so. About this time is when the dwelling which previously occupied the subject property was removed; it is believed to have been vacant ever since.

2) The zoning classification of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: Main Street zoning patterns (residentially speaking) is zoned R-2 Single Family Residence District from 12th Street going south to DeKoven Avenue. There are intermixed within this R-2 zoning several non-conforming uses, being multiple unit dwelling buildings; a couple of them are within a block of this proposed site. The R-2 zone district does not allow for multiple unit dwellings or duplexes as a permitted or a conditional use.

Moving immediately west of this site is a hospital complex, a school and related accessory off-street parking facilities, all zoned Office/Institutional zone district. To the south and west of these institutional campuses, the zoning for dwellings increases in density due to being zoned R-3 Limited General Residence District. Generally speaking however, the predominate residential dwelling type within 2-3 blocks in each direction of the subject site is a single unit dwelling.

3) The suitability of the property in question to the uses permitted under the existing zoning classification.

Staff Comments: The subject property is about 5,200 square feet in size. From a casual glance through the zoning ordinance, not even a single unit dwelling would be allowed there since the minimum

required lot size is 6,000 square feet; Code Section 114-772(b)(1) authorizes a lot which was in existence before the effective date of the ordinance (1973) to establish a single unit dwelling. Given this lot existed with a dwelling, in 1933 the 6,000 square feet is moot. The lot is suitable for the construction of a single unit dwelling based on the development standards established in the zoning ordinance.

The code also accounts for yard reductions on parcels which do not meet the minimum lot size established. Sec. 114-254 allows for reduced front, side and rear yards if the lot is less than 50 feet wide and 120 feet deep; this section exists so that lots which were in existence before 1973 would remain developable under the current set of development standards and still develop in a manner which is generally consistent with the general area.

4) The trend of development, if any, in the general area of the property in question, including changes, if any, which have taken place in its present zoning classification.

Staff Comments: The property has been vacant for several decades, the previous use was that of a single unit dwelling. That being said, this block and to a degree, the general area hasn't seen much change in development trends in decades. The area is within the Southside Historic district, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and as such, many of the properties are historic and have not seen substantial changes to their exteriors since originally constructed. There were homes removed to accommodate the hospital to the west, but that was completed by the summer of 1977. The zoning scheme implemented in 1973 has had little change to it and generally worked to keep the general area as single unit dwellings, with the exception of the multiple unit buildings, many of which predate zoning in the City, and are considered non-conforming.

5) The objectives of the current land use plan for the city.

Staff Comments: The Comprehensive Plan calls for this area to be high density residential on the land use element within the document. This land use plan is implemented as a portion of the Southeast Wisconsin Region and includes all of Racine County. The current comprehensive plan was developed by the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission (SEWRPC) and density was considered on more of a regional basis, since the plan was more regionally (county) focused. As such, when considering the totality of density in the county, Racine developed much earlier than any other municipality, and historically, land was divided differently and communities with the oldest development, often had the smallest lots. This in turn leads to many residential lots being high or medium density on the land use plan; which is accurate for the regional approach to the current plan, but not necessarily City of Racine specific.

An area or a parcel being designated as high density residential on the land use map doesn't automatically mean it needs to have multiple dwelling units on it. The concept of density in the current adopted plan means less than 6,200 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. For this particular block (west side of Main Street), there are eight (8) tax parcels with single unit dwellings and 58,800 square feet; this averages to 7,350 square feet per dwelling if all the land were divided evenly on the block.

The plan could support a greater density for this block, such as this proposal and would be compliant with this criterion for the rezoning. This however, is one of the five (5) criteria which must be considered.

Additional Planning Comments: It has been the City’s practice to not treat single parcels differently than that of the surrounding area when considering redevelopment of infill lots within historical areas of residential character. To do so here, would be a departure from recent practice. It is also possible a rezoning could encourage others to demolish, rezone, and then rebuild at a higher density. Given the area is within a NRHP historic district, this is not something which the City would encourage as it is contrary to the goals of the Heritage Preservation Plan to preserve these areas.

The lot while vacant, could be built as a single unit dwelling under the current zoning designation of R-2. The general area from 12th south, seven blocks to DeKoven Avenue along Main Street is zoned R-2; the NRHP Southside historic district also encompasses much of this area and the predominant development pattern is that of single unit dwellings.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING, HERITAGE, AND DESIGN COMMISSION

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Recommend the adoption of an amendment changing the zoning classification of the property in question to any higher classification than that requested by the applicant; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.

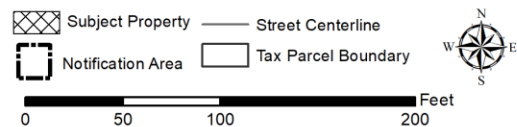
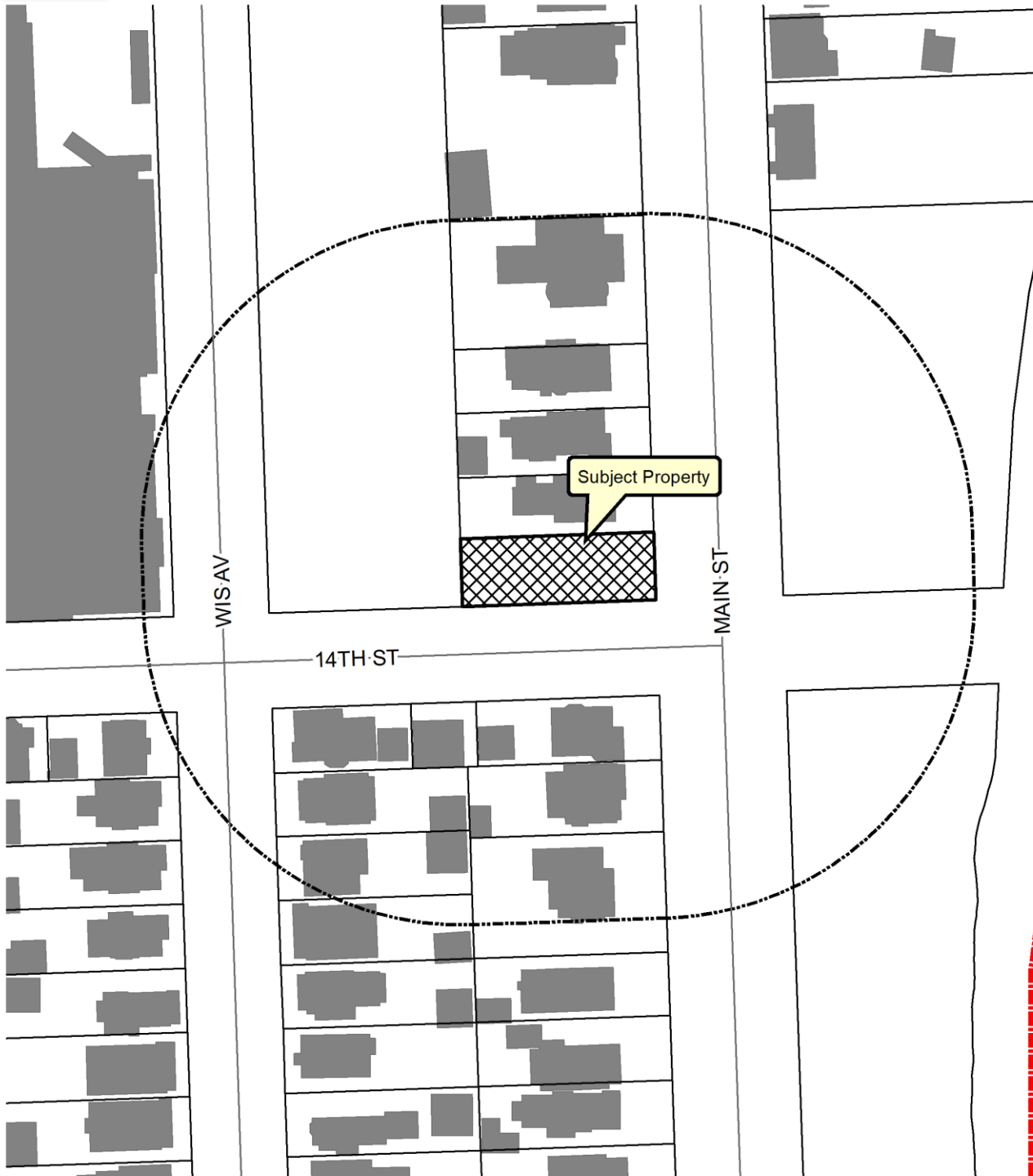
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: THAT PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE 0002-22 REZONING THE PROPERTY FROM R-2 TO R-5 BE DENIED.

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 (view in legistar).



Rezoning Request - 1346 Main St.

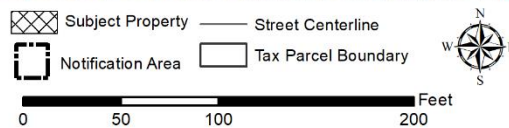




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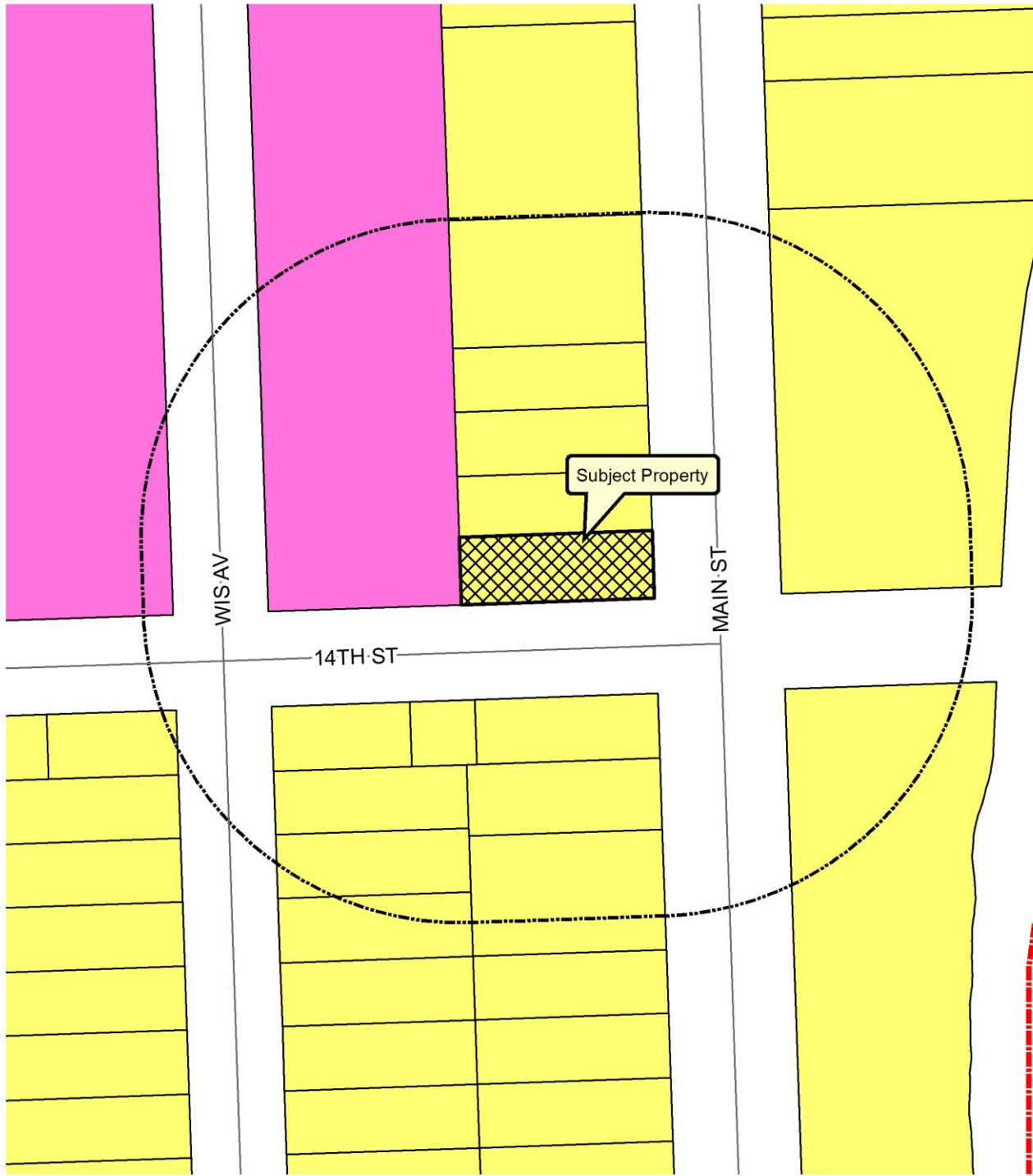


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Rezoning Request - 1346 Main St.



Zoning Designation

Yellow R-2 Pink O/I

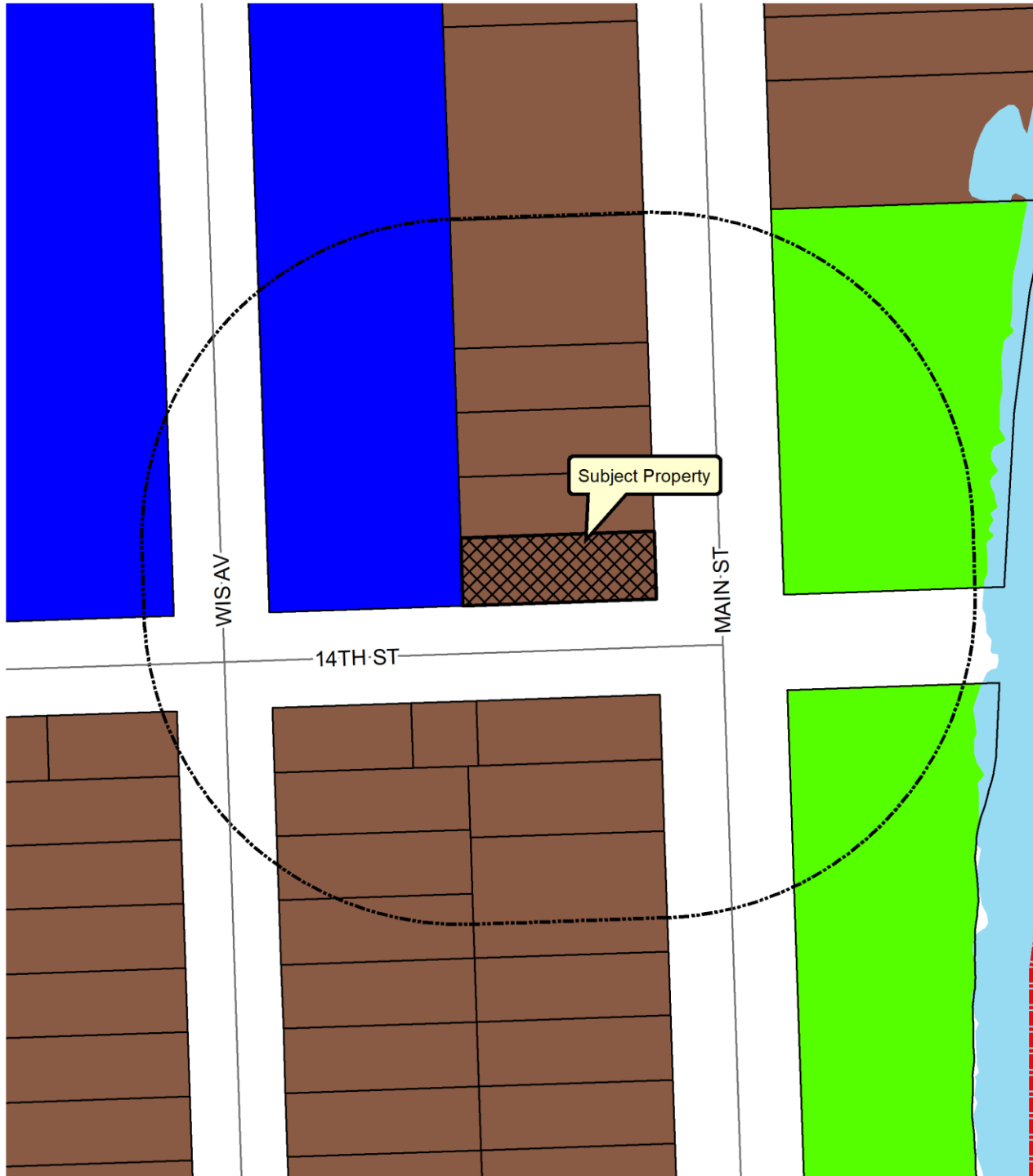
Legend:

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

0 50 100 200 Feet



Rezoning Request - 1346 Main St.



Land Use Designation

- High Density Residential
- Primary Environmental Corridor
- Governmental and Institutional

Subject Property Street Centerline
Notification Area Tax Parcel Boundary

0 50 100 200 Feet

Site Photos



Looking East onto Parcel



Looking North onto Parcel



Looking west onto Parcel



Looking South across 13th Street



Looking South along Main St.



Looking North along Main St .