



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

Meeting Date: 10/27/2021

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: Steven Madsen

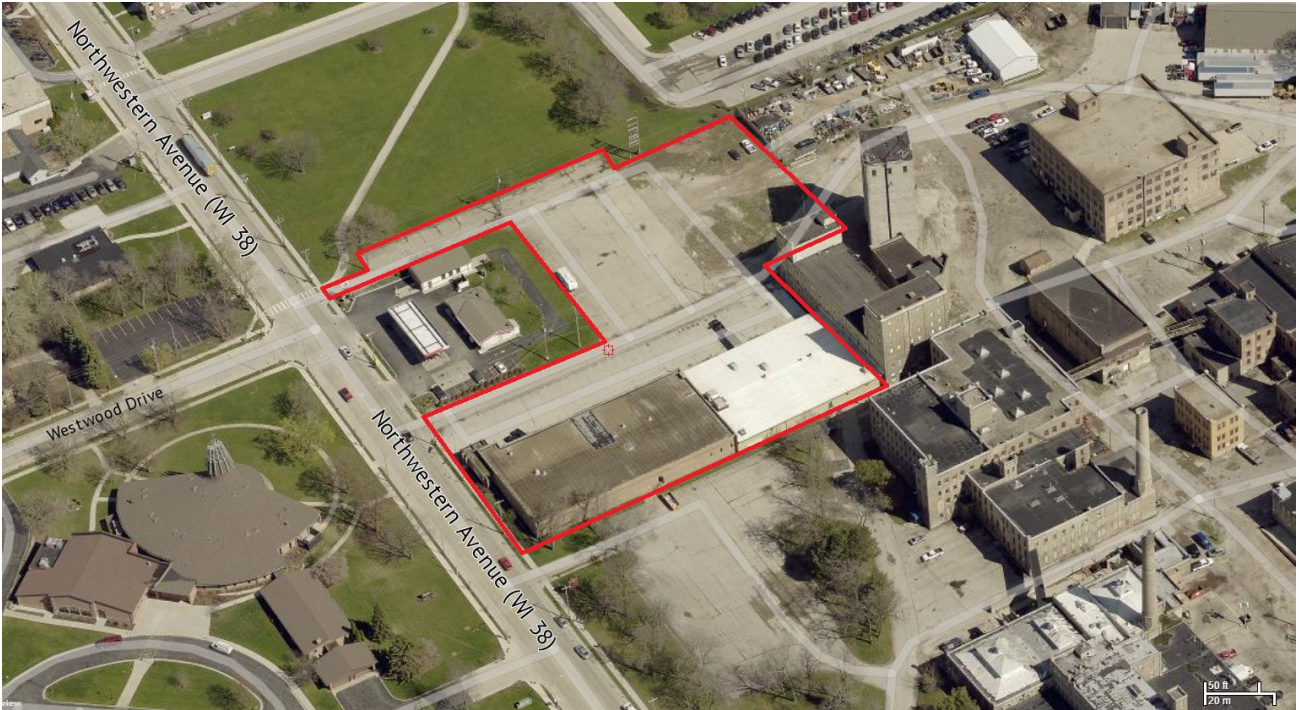
Location: 2220 Northwestern Avenue

Applicant: J. Jeffers and Company

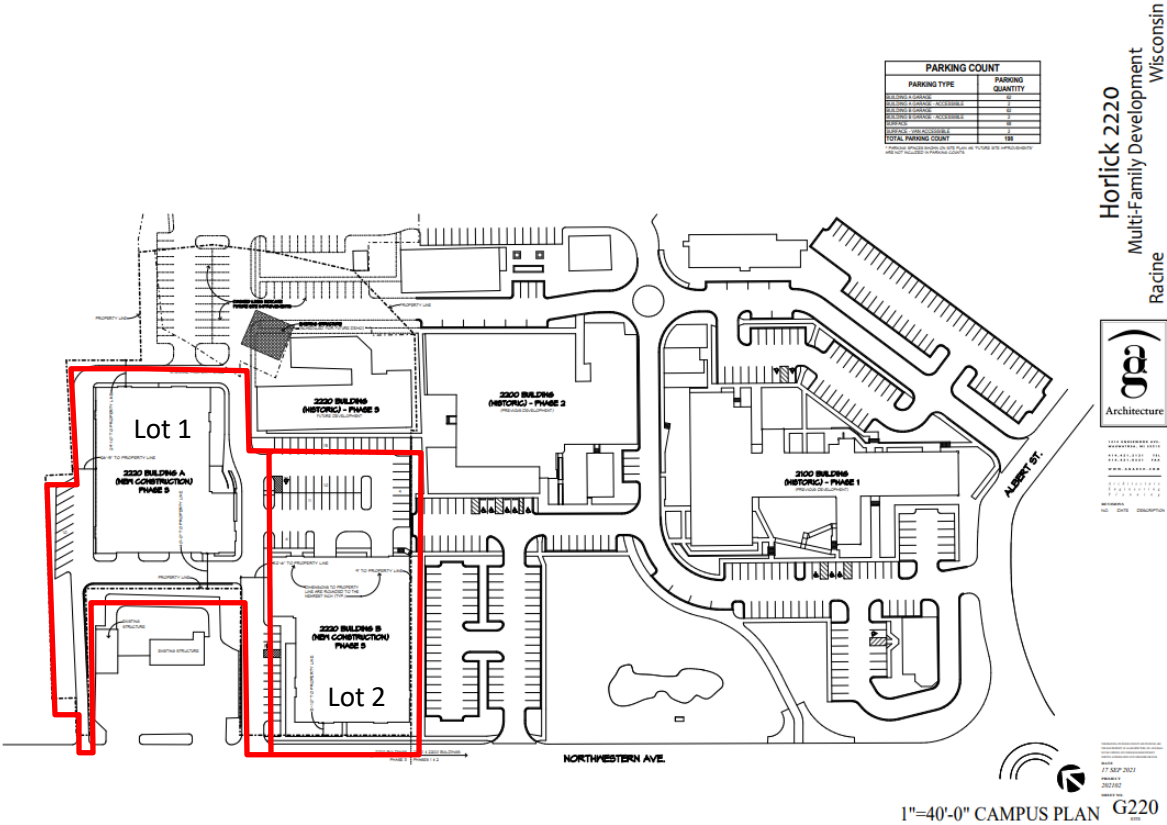
Property Owner: 2220 Northwestern Avenue, LLC

Request: Consideration of rezoning from I-2 General Industrial to R-5 General Residence at 2220 Northwestern Avenue, as allowed by Sec. 114-77 of the Municipal Code. Also a Conditional Use Permit for a waiver of yard requirements as allowed by Sec. 114-328. The proposed Zoning Ordinance is ZOrd.0003-21.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The plan for the site is to be a dense residential development. Existing building additions will be demolished and two new buildings will be constructed. The existing parcel will be split into three parcels. Only two of those parcels are a part of this Rezoning and Conditional Use request. Each parcel will have a single building on it. The building planned for Lot 1 will have 83 dwelling units 49 one bedroom, 30 two bedroom and 4 three bedroom units. The building planned for Lot 2 will have 84 dwelling units 49 one bedroom, 31 two bedroom and 4 three bedroom units.



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



Concept site plan for the property, submitted by applicant

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [08422010](#)

Property Size: Lot 1 1.57 acres, Lot 2 1.34 Acres

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Mixed Use Commercial Emphasis

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.
- Protect and enhance cultural structures, activities, historic sites and districts and their infrastructure.
- Preserve and enhance the historic and cultural resources and character of the City.

Corridor or Special Design District?: Horlick Overlay District

Historic?: Horlick Factory Site (none of the demolition will be original factory buildings). "To have given so much attention to aesthetics and to the design of architectural details, and to the landscaping of industrial buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was highly unusual in Racine and elsewhere. At one time the area east of the entry gates was attractively landscaped with a pond inhabited by swans--an impressive rural setting for the production of malted milk. These cream brick factories were embellished with bartizans and square towers, and are finished at the top with machicolated cornices, giving the impression of a medieval fortress. The ten acre site, acquired in 1876, had buildings on it since 1877 with the majority of them built early in the 20th century." – From historic reconnaissance survey

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: 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 a street system capable of accommodating relatively heavy traffic.

Existing Land Use: Mini Warehouses and Car Storage.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|--|
| North | O/I Office/Institutional | Gilmore Middle School/ Apartments |
| East | I-2 General Industrial | Altus Vinyl/ Window's Windows/ WholeChem |
| South | R-5 General Residence Flex | Apartments |
| West | O/I Office/Institutional | Church/School |

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards:

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

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Lot 1 | | |
| Standard | Required | Provided |
| Lot Area | 63,800 square feet minimum | 68,484 sq. ft. |
| Lot Frontage | 50 feet minimum | 40.16 feet |
| Floor Area Ratio | 4.8 maximum | 1.28 estimated |
| Lot 2 | | |
| Standard | Required | Provided |
| Lot Area | 64,650 square feet minimum | 58,480 sq. ft. |
| Lot Frontage | 50 feet minimum | 170.17 feet |
| Floor Area Ratio | 4.8 maximum | 1.52 estimated |

Exceptions are being recommended from the lot frontage requirements for Lot 1 and for lot area requirements for Lot 2 to allow for better use of the parcel the odd shape of which seems to go back to at least the 1960s.

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

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Lot 1 | | |
| Yard | Required | Provided |
| Front (Northwestern) | 25 feet | 40 |
| Side (northwest) | 6 feet | 26.1 |
| Side (east) | 6 feet | 30 |
| Rear (south) | 35 feet | 30.8 |
| Lot 2 | | |
| Yard | Required | Provided |
| Front (Northwestern) | 25 feet | 13.8 |
| Side (northwest) | 6 feet | 9.1 |
| Side (southeast) | 6 feet | .8 |
| Rear (northeast) | 35 feet | 83 |

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): For multifamily residential structures, the planning, heritage, and design commission shall review the overall design for compliance with the spirit and intent of the standards for single-family and two-family residential structures. This report serves as that review and approval.

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

| Use Type | Required | Provided |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Lot 1 Multifamily | 124 | 74 |
| Lot 2 Multifamily | 126 | 124 |

Neither lot will meet the current codes requirements for parking for multifamily dwellings. An exception is being recommended from these standards to obtain better use of the lot and that it will be integrated with the surrounding new development which will allow for less need for parking.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): Adequate landscaping is being provided as a part of this plan. Yard and open space requirements will be waived as a part of the conditional use requirements.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage has not been included with this request. Signage would be reviewed by the Department of City Development prior to permitting and installation.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): Lighting is required to be installed in a way as to not be excessively bright beyond the property boundaries. The lighting plan provided meets all requirements.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): All trash is required to be screened from public view. Trash enclosures are being provided on the inside of the parking garages of both 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 are a mix residential, institutional and industrial uses; the overall feel of the general area is mixed use with businesses, school, religious institutions and

residential all nearby. The proposed zoning of general residence suits the area by allowing for more residential units in the area to take advantage of the mix of uses and is consistent with past rezonings. The proposed zoning would allow for uses and a scale which is more appropriate and consistent with adopted plans when compared to the existing zoning.

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

Staff Comments: The property is located in an area that is mostly zone office institutional and industrial. The surrounding zone districts are commercial and professional in nature. The property subject to this request was previously a storage facility which did little to improve the use of surrounding properties. The R-5 zoning will allow for greater residential density and allow for some commercial uses that will complement the surrounding zoning and help the use of those parcels improve.

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

Staff Comments: The property in question has not been used for any intense industrial use for quite some time. Previous to being storage the property was used for offices. The existing zoning classification is also inconsistent with the Land Use as a part of the comprehensive plan which calls for mixed use commercial emphasis. The change to R-5 would allow for a higher density of residential units that will allow for the mixed use to exist in this 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 was most recently used for mini warehouses and storage. The trend of development in general shows a need for more housing in the entire nation and this holds true in our community as well. With the recent development to the southeast the area is becoming more residential in nature and would be further advanced with this zone change. Housing stock in any community is always in need of updating from owner occupied to rental so current desires, styles, and arrangements can be supplied to the market. That trend is expected to continue and grow well into the future and especially as more buyers look to get into the housing market and own and as owners look to transition into units with less maintenance responsibility.

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

Staff Comments: The Comprehensive Plan calls for this area to be mixed use commercial emphasis on the land use element within the document. This proposal to rezone will help the area reach this land use. The proposed zoning district is the best choice for the property by allowing for a greater residential density that will help increase the number of people living in the neighborhood creating a bigger population to allow for the mix of uses to be successful. State statutes mandate municipality's

zone in accordance with an adopted comprehensive plan and as such, this request for a rezoning does fit with the objectives, goals and land use plan map for the City of Racine.

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.
5. Defer with a continuance of the public hearing to a date certain.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM DANIEL FISCHER OF AG ARCHITECTURE, INC. ON BEHALF OF J. JEFFERS AND COMPANY, SEEKING A REZONING FROM I-2 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL TO R-5 GENERAL RESIDENCE ZONE DISTRICT AT 2220 NORTHWESTERN AVENUE BE APPROVED AND THE ORDINANCE, ZORD. 0003-21 BE ADOPTED.

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

No Conditional Use shall be recommended by the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission unless it is found 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 code specifically mentions the waiver of yard requirements as a conditional use for higher density residential zones to allow for more creative use of land. Waiving the yard requirements for these properties allows the developer to creative use parcels that are of odd shapes. This waiver will leave plenty of open space over the few surrounding developments, just not generally in the way prescribed by the code. In these ways it will not be detrimental to, or endanger, the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare.

- 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: Allowing for the waiving of yard requirements will allow for two new 5-story buildings to be constructed. These new residential buildings should complement the existing uses around it by providing more people in the neighborhood.

- 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: The newest development in the area was very similar in size and scope. Future development will likely be the same. By adding additional population to the neighborhood this conditional use should allow for additional opportunities for development.

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

Staff Comments: The plans as submitted break the existing parcels into three new parcels. There are existing easements that allow for access to roads and utilities that will be adequate for the site.

- 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 plans as they exist combine the use of multiple parcels into one system for ingress and egress that will minimize the effects on traffic entering onto Northwestern Avenue.

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

Staff Comments: The land use plan for the City identifies this property as mixed use with commercial emphasis. This conditional use permit will allow for additional housing that would push toward this goal.

- 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: The basic use of multifamily residential is a permitted use in the zone district. The conditional use of altering yard dimensions will not impact the use of the property in other ways. Multiple exceptions are recommended as a part of this request to allow for the better use of the property due to the oddities of the parcel. With the exceptions the property will still meet the intent of regulations of the zone when considered with the existing development around it.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM DANIEL FISCHER OF AG ARCHITECTURE INC. REPRESENTING J JEFFERS & CO. SEEKING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO WAIVE YARD REQUIREMENTS FOR A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT 2220 NORTHWESTERN AVENUE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

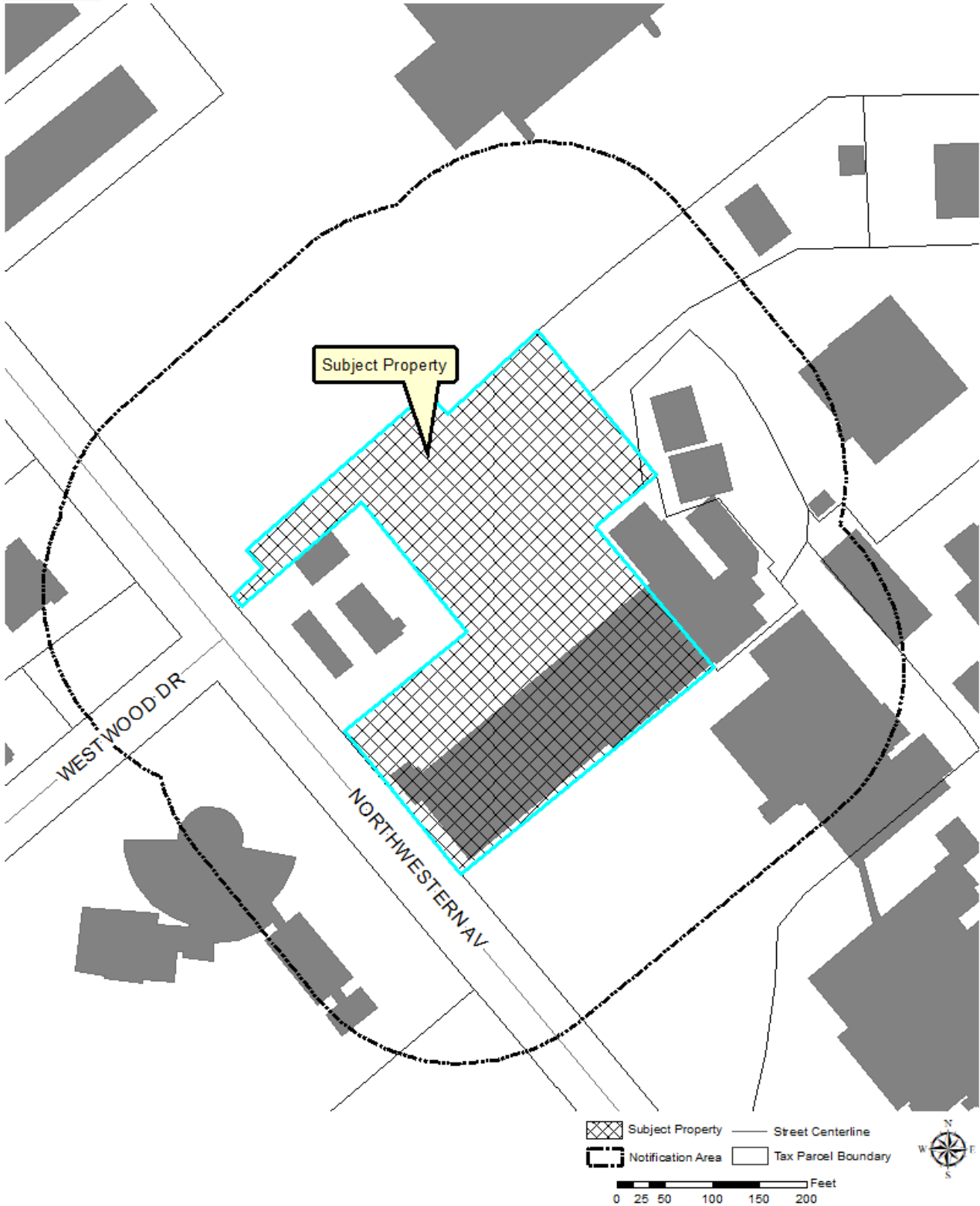
- a) That the plans presented to the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission on October 27, 2021 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all codes and ordinances be complied with and required permits acquired.
- c) That this approval serve as the review for the property as required by Sec. 114-735.5(a)(4).
- d) That the following exceptions be granted with this approval:
 - 1. Waiver of required yards (setbacks) as specified in the staff report.
 - 2. Reduction in total parking to allow for what is being provided as specified in the staff report.
 - 3. Reduction in total lot size and frontage as shown on proposed CSM and specified in this staff report.
- e) That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission, and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Common Council.
- f) That this conditional use permit is subject to Planning, Heritage, and Design 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 (view in legistar).

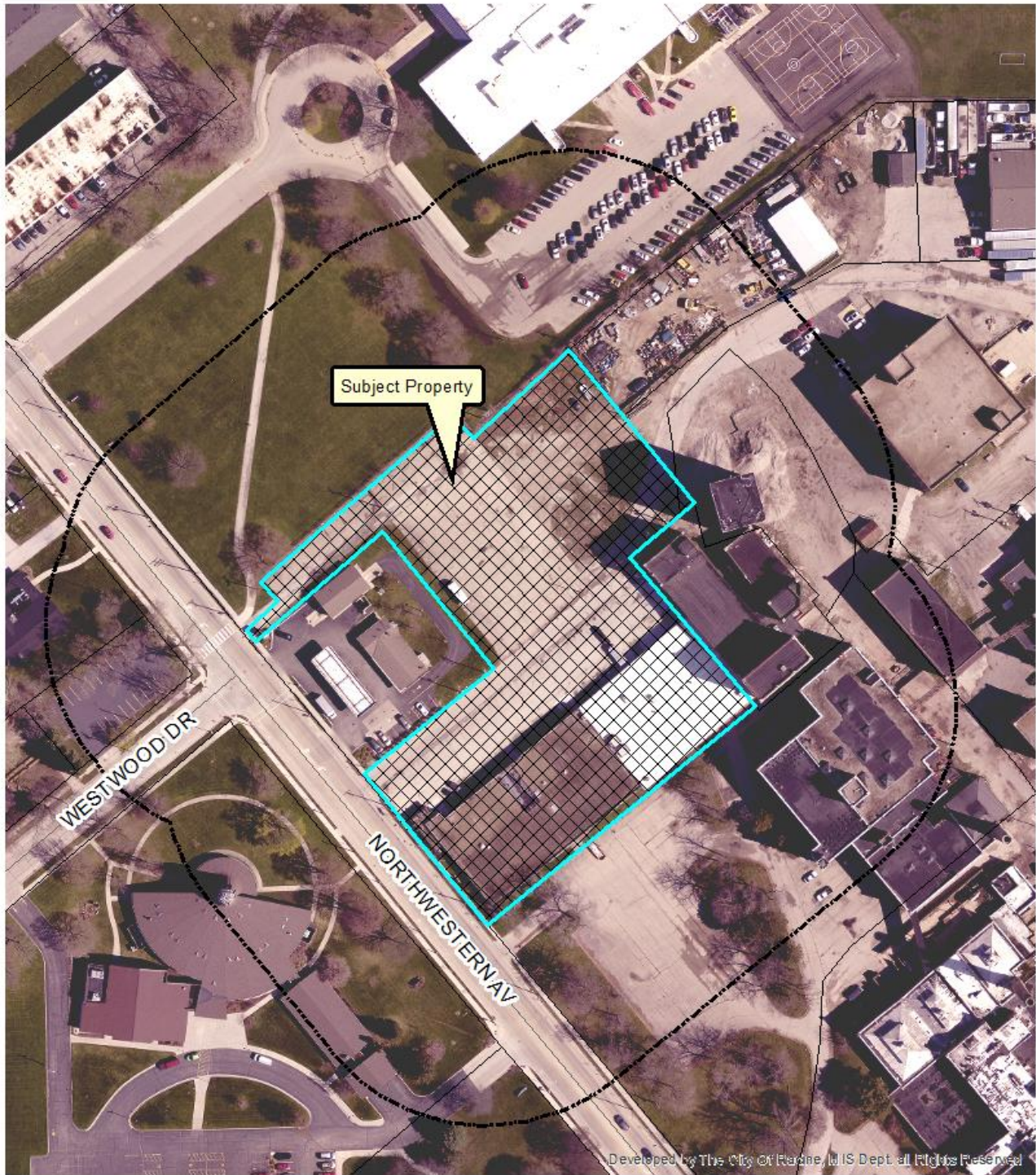


Zone Change Request - 2220 Northwestern Avenue

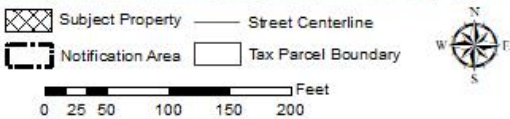




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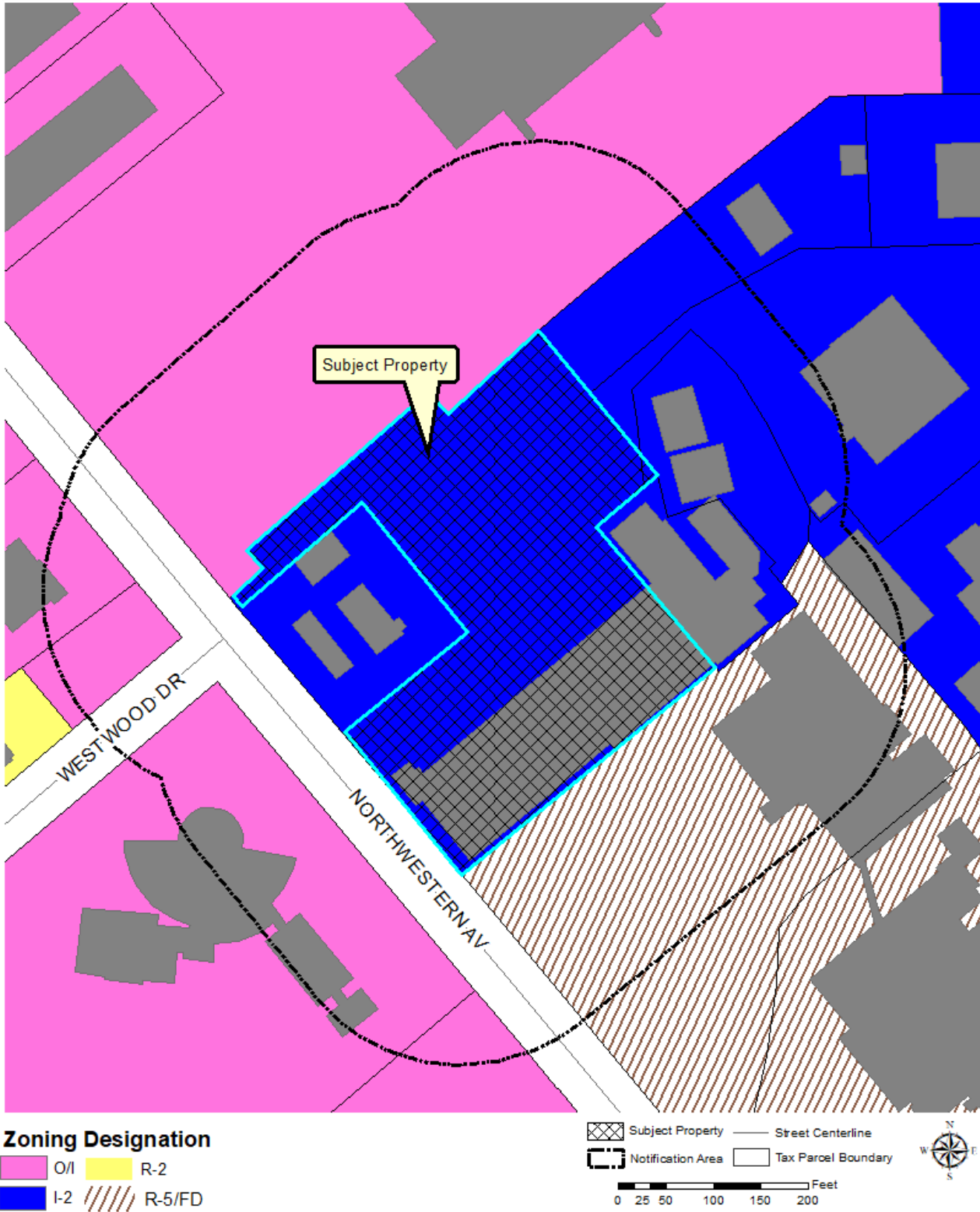


Developed by The City of Racine, WI Dept. of Public Works



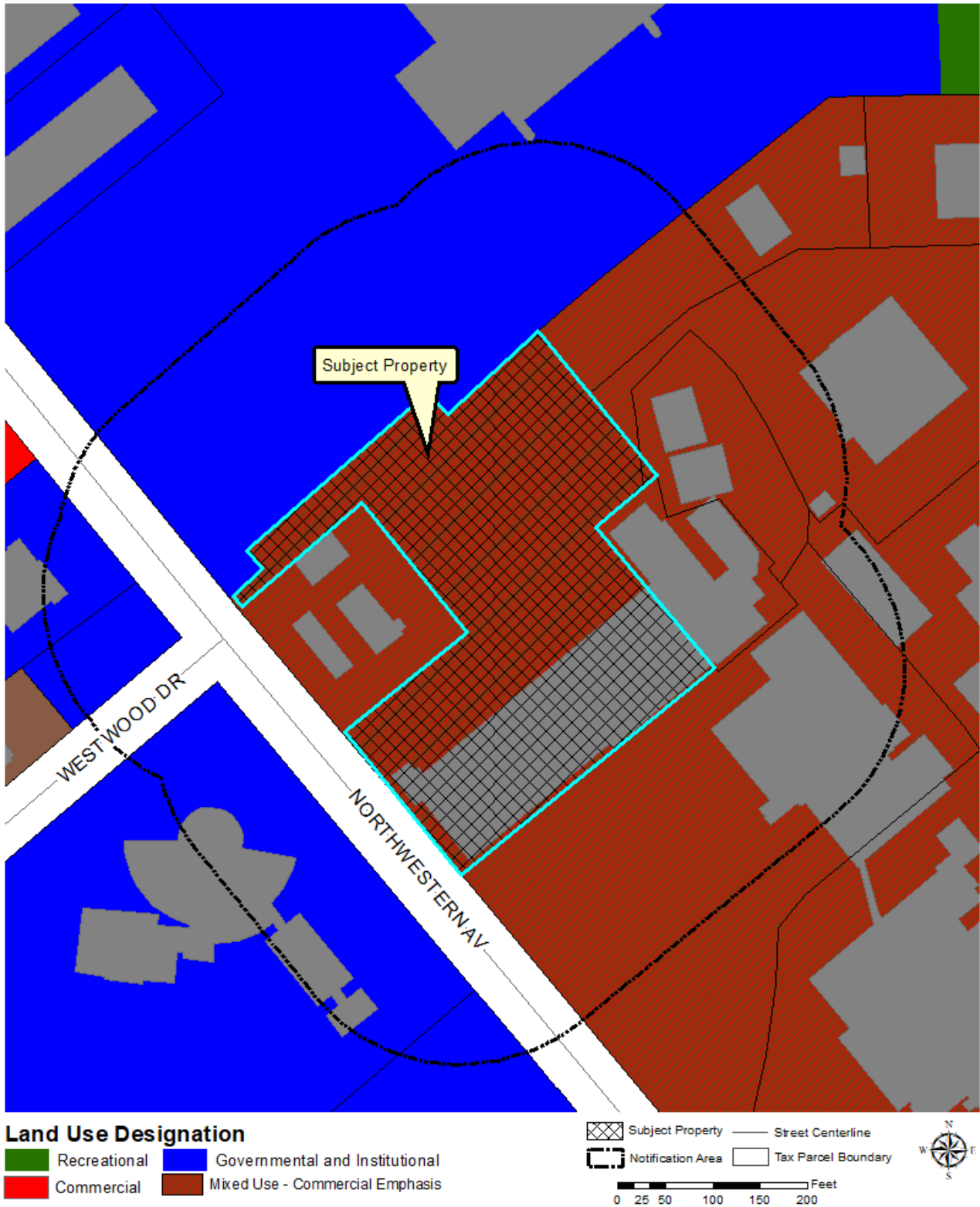


Zone Change Request - 2220 Northwestern Avenue





Zone Change Request - 2220 Northwestern Avenue



Site Photos



Looking northeast at property from Northwestern Avenue



Looking North at property



Looking south from north side of property



Looking northwest along Northwestern Avenue



Looking southeast at subject property



Looking southeast along Northwestern Avenue