



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, February 29, 2012

4:15 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

Mayor Dickert called the February 29, 2012 Plan Commission meeting to order at 4:25 p.m.

PRESENT: 7 - Elaine Sutton Ekes, Vincent Esqueda, Jud Wyant, Eric Marcus, Tony Veranth, Aron Wisneski and John Dickert

Others present: Matthew Sadowski, Principal Planner
Jill Johanneck, Associate Planner
Brian O'Connell, Director of City Development
Ken Plaski, Chief Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator
Alderman Jim Kaplan

Approval of Minutes for the Febraury 8, 2012 Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Wisneski, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 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 recapped the history of the request, concentrating on the concerns expressed regarding parking and set-up for funeral processions. The parking/staging/procession plan submitted by the applicant was reviewed. Mr. Sadowski advised 23 parking spaces are required for funeral establishments per the zoning ordinance. The plan provided to commission members that included possibilities for processions, indicated areas of parking spaces including 37 on-street parking spaces outline on the plan, that includes street parking south of the YMCA. On days of funerals, those street spaces would be reserved for funeral parking. The

plan also identifies more than 190 public parking spaces located behind Memorial Hall to which shuttle services would be provided.

Mr. Sadowski reviewed the options presented by the applicant for staging and routes for processions provided. He also read comments, both for and against, this use. Some of the 'against' comments include concerns about parking, viability of the shuttle service, the unknown of how many attendees may be present at the funerals, traffic concerns, especially if there are 2 funerals at one time, traffic management, negative impact on neighboring businesses, competition for parking on Main Street, and the viability of the staging plans. Comments in support include the idea of staging off-site and the use of shuttles to reduce parking demands, noting that 90 percent of funeral services are usually held at the deceased church and would not be a major use issue at this facility, the ability of the applicant to maintain this building/facility as it is falling into disrepair, placing the property back on the tax rolls, and that this is a historic building will remain and be used.

Alderman Wisneski asked if the YMCA has offered the parking near their building to Mr. Frazier. Mr. Sadowski noted this is a public lot and usable by anybody.

Mayor Dickert asked the applicant about other events that will take place at the location. A representative for Mr. Frazier, Mr. L.Z. Owens, advised they intend to keep up the activities held by the Woman's Center. Mayor Dickert also reiterated the public concern about the parking issues, and that the shuttle service may not be feasible.

Alderman Marcus described his concern over the procession issue noting currently there are 6-12 funerals per week at this location (Meredith Funeral Home), and if more are added, and there are 2 funerals at one time how would this be handled from a traffic perspective. Mr. Sadowski referred to Mr. Frazier's plans and that options were presented if this scenario occurred, which would re-direct the procession to alternate routes to help avoid traffic conflicts.

Commissioner Veranth brought up the comment where 90-percent of funerals are held at churches and inquired what other uses will there be and how many vehicles are normally in a procession? Mr. Owens indicated there may be around 25 vehicles in a procession. Mayor Dickert indicated his confusion and asked what, then, will they be using the building for. Mr. Owens noted they would hold a few funerals there, but will use the building for other things such as conferences and other events similar to those held by the Woman's Club.

Alderman Marcus also noted confusion, and if there will be so few funerals there, that they may be able to eliminate the allowance for processions. Mr. Owens said they do have some funerals, and do not want to eliminate the ability to have processions.

Alderman Wisneski asked if they were going to secure this building and the ability to have funerals here, and if they would be keeping both buildings. He also noted that what is kicking off this conditional use is the fact they want to hold funeral services there, otherwise the request could be approved without the Plan Commission. He mentioned there will be some overlap of services, even with the proposed conditions in place, and that down the line it may prove to be that to have these two similar uses in such close proximity will present long term problems with parking and traffic in the area.

Mayor Dickert advised he is not concerned about competition of the 2 funeral homes, but the competition for parking, since they are closing the other location, activity at this location will increase which causes concern for more intense use of the site.

Commissioner Wyant indicated a conditional use is required because of the intensity of the parking and possibility of traffic issues, and this is on a major thoroughfare, not because this is a social organization.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes noted she too is conflicted about the proposal, stating she is familiar with the parking issues downtown, which is common down there, and any use of the structure is going to cause a parking concern. She brought up the possibility of limiting the number of funerals per week and coordination of processions with the other funeral home.

Alderman Wisneski received clarification on the parking lot referenced at the previous meeting. Mr. Sadowski indicated there is a parking lot currently owned by the bank, and that Mr. Frazier is not interested in purchasing it. Alderman Wisneski is concerned with this request that there is too much activity being forced into a small physical area and is concerned it will be too much for the area.

Mr. Howard Lowe, 2007 W. Mequon Rd., Mequon, WI, noted the Plan Commission instructed the applicant to formulate a parking plan and it was done. He said he and Mr. Frazier have talked to the bank about the parking lot, and reiterated that Mr. Frazier is not interested in purchasing it.

Mayor Dickert summarized the concern of the volume of vehicles that will be in this area when there are funerals and processions occurring. It affects other businesses, the Fire Department, and others and that the ability or capacity to handle this much traffic in this area does not exist.

Alderman Marcus commented on the processions versus the parking. All the other proposed uses with this application are permitted uses, and would cause some traffic and parking issues, but the processions are causing more of an issue and traffic congestion due to the nature of the business. There is no way to know when the funerals will occur and the unique characteristic of this use, the processions, do not enhance this as being desirable in this location for another funeral use. If it can be resolved, he is not opposed to this, but believes more work is needed to address the concerns.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wyant, seconded by Alderman Wisneski, that this item be deferred to give another opportunity for the applicants to resolve the parking/staging/processional problem and address the traffic concerns to the satisfaction of the Commission. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Alderman Wisneski also asked Staff to communicate with Meredith Funeral Home about their typical processional plan.

[12-7292](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Review of a conditional use and conditions set for a message sign at 2031 Lathrop Avenue (Buckets Pub) for possible revocation. (PC-12)

Attachments: [CUP Res.10-2090 \(2031 Lathrop Avenue\)](#)

Associate Planner Johanneck had a brief discussion with the Commission members, informing them the sign structure had been removed on February 27th, and the base removed February 29th. Mr. Brandt, the owner of Bucket's Pub, advised the hole has been filled with gravel until weather permits, at which time it will be paved.

With the enforcement action rectified, a motion was made by Alderman

Wisneski, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to receive and file. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARINGS**4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARINGS****12-7423**

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request from Micah Waters, representing Porters of Racine Building, seeking a conditional use permit for up to eleven (11) ground-floor residential units as part of a mixed-use development containing additional upper level living units and ground floor commercial space at 301 Sixth Street and 608 Wisconsin Ave. (PC-12) (Res. 12-3042)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-29-12: That the request be approved subject to conditions.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [PH Notice - 301 Sixth St](#)
[\(12-7423\) CU 301 Sixth Street](#)

Public Hearing opened 5:15 p.m.

Commissioner Sutton Ekes noted she will be abstaining from this item.

Principal Planner Sadowski introduced the item, reviewing the surrounding uses, zoning, parking areas, existing façade and floor plans for the proposed new use of the building (former Porter's Furniture). Thirty-seven apartments located on 3 floors are proposed along with the commercial/retail development. This is before the Commission as the request contains ground-level residential. This will also require Downtown Area Design Review Commission for architectural review, which has been submitted and scheduled for March 1, 2012.

The architect, Allen Olson, presented proposed floor plans and façade treatments, which are somewhat art-deco. The applicant, Micah Waters, also provided information on the proposal, emphasizing the first level is mixed-use of residential and commercial.

The façade's of the building elevations were discussed and materials to be used clarified. Also clarified were the proposed areas of residential versus retail, number of units, and size of spaces within the building.

- 1. Wayne Kingman, 236 Jones St., spoke strongly in support of the proposal.*
- 2. Alderman Jim Kaplan, 400 Kewaunne St., spoke in favor of the proposal, emphasizing this is a family organization, a qualified architect, will have a huge impact and is a large investment of the downtown area, and it makes sense for stabilization of the neighborhood.*
- 3. Devin Sutherland, 425 Main St., spoke in support of the request and feels this is the highest and best use for this property. Also, this proposal is in line with the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.*
- 4. Ken Brown, 334 Main St., spoke in favor of the plan and is enthusiastic about it.*
- 5. Lorna Rivera, 310 6th St., owner of Lornacopia, spoke in favor of the proposal and feels it would be a great place to live.*
- 6. Robin Sutherland Coventry, 1815 S. Main St., spoke in support of the request.*
- 7. Doug Erretts, no address provided, spoke in support of the request.*

8. Tony Larsen, pastor of the neighboring Unitarian Universalists Church, supports the request.
9. John Murphy with Architectural Associates, supports the development and has confidence in the applicant and the developer.
10. Bill Thompson, 1703 Washington Avenue, spoke in support of the request.
11. Alderman Keith Fair, 507 6th St., spoke in support of the request.

Public Hearing closed at 5:45 p.m.

A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commissioner Esqueda, to approve the request subject to staff conditions. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote with Commissioner Sutton Ekes abstaining.

12-7336

Subject: Communication from the Director of City Development requesting to create Tax Incremental District No. 17 for the purpose of providing financial assistance for the redevelopment of the buildings at 301 Sixth Street and 608 Wisconsin Avenue. (PC-12) (Res. 12-3043)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-29-12: That the creation of Tax Incremental District No. 17 promotes orderly development in the City.

Further recommends that Tax Incremental District No. 17 be created with the boundaries designated in the Project Plan.

Further recommends that the Project Plan for Tax Incremental District No. 17, as adopted by the City Plan Commission on February 29, 2012, be approved.

Fiscal Note: The purpose of this District is to foster the rehabilitation of the vacant buildings and surface parking lot that comprise the District and restore their economic vitality by renovating them for mixed residential and commercial use. The project plan calls for \$1.1 million to be provided to assist the renovation. The \$1.1 million will be advanced from the Intergovernmental Revenue Sharing Fund and will be repaid by the tax increment over 25 years at 3 percent interest. Sufficient funds are available in the Intergovernmental Revenue Sharing Fund (919) account.

Attachments: [Racine TID No. 17 DRAFT Project Plan - 2 25 12](#)
[Res. 12-01 \(Re: TID No. 17\)](#)
[CPC Res. 12-01 Exhibit A \(Legal Description\)](#)
[CPC Res 12-01 Exhibit B \(Project Plan\)](#)

Public Hearing opened at 5:47 p.m.

Principal Planner Sadowski identified the boundaries of the proposed TID.

Todd Taves of Ehler's and Associates reviewed the TIF information and provided a general summary about the proposed TID and how it would assist the development come to fruition.

1. Wayne Clingman, 236 Jones St., spoke in support of the TID.
2. Alderman Jim Kaplan, 400 Kewaunee St., spoke in support of the TID for this project.
3. Dennis Navarahl, 43 Parkwood Ct., is unsure about the proposal and would like to see more information on it.
4. Ken Brown, 334 Main St., spoke in support and feels this is a good idea for this project.

Public Hearing closed at 5:50 p.m.

Alderman Marcus moved to approve subject to staff recommendations. Seconded by Commissioner Esqueda.

Discussion by Alderman Marcus on how the district will function was provided.

Alderman Wisneski questioned Ehler's about one of their documents about "Equalized Value", which was clarified.

Director O'Connell advised there is a resolution provided in their packet and to contact him with any questions.

A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commissioner Esqueda, that this item be recommended for approval, subject to Staff recommendations. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

12-7421

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request by Abdel Karim Yasin for conditional use approval to operate a second-hand sales establishment involving the buying and selling of second hand merchandise and jewelry at 1733 Douglas Avenue. (PC-12) (Res. 12-3015)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 2-29-12: That the item be approved subject to conditions.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [PH Notice - 1733 Douglas Ave](#)
[\(12-7421\) CU 1733 Douglas Avenue](#)

Alderman Marcus left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Associate Planner Johanneck summarized the request, provided background information on the location, zoning, and surrounding uses. It was emphasized this request is not for a pawn shop, and is the former location of Image Realty/Builders. The site plan was reviewed, and it was noted the building is in good condition, and was recently re-surfaced and striped, and that the site entrance is off of Hagerer Street.

The dumpster location was noted and is to be installed within 30 days of approval. Staff will require details on the dumpster enclosure prior to construction. Additionally, 3 spaces will need to be re-striped due to the angle and ability to back in/out safely. Hours of operation will be 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Per the City Clerk's office, the applicant (who is also the building owner) holds a second-hand dealers and jewelry license for this location.

Public Hearing opened at 6:00 p.m.

1. Alderman Jim Kaplan, spoke in opposition of the use. He would like a new retail sales establishment considering all the improvements being made in the area. He also noted the safety of the people in the district as a concern.

2. Mr. Abdel Yasin, 2724 16th Street, is the building owner and applicant. Noted he has ran this type of business without problems for many years.

Public Hearing closed at 6:05 p.m.

Mayor Dickert asked Mr. Yasin if there were any relation between him and the owner/business operator on Main Street. Mr. Yasin advised that is his son.

Mayor Dickert asked if anything had been heard from the Douglas Avenue Review board. Principal Planner Sadowski advised there had not.

Alderman Wisneski asked why this item is on the agenda. Ms. Johanneck advised because it is located within a corridor area.

Commissioner Ekes asked if this were an expansion or a replacement for his current location. Mr. Yasin advised this is an expansion of his business.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wyant, seconded by Commissioner Sutton Ekes, to recommend approval of the item subject to Staff recommendations. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: 4 - Elaine Sutton Ekes, Vincent Esqueda, Jud Wyant and Tony Veranth

NOES: 1 - Aron Wisneski

EXCUSED: 1 - Eric Marcus

NON VOTING: 1 - John Dickert

Administrative Business

12-7424

Subject: (Direct Referral) Technical correction to conditional use approval for McDonald's at 2610 Green Bay Road. (PC-12)

Associate Planner Johanneck advised the McDonald's at 2610 Green Bay Road is requesting a modification to their approved hours to allow them to be open from 5:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sutton Ekes, seconded by Alderman Wisneski, to approve the request. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Adjournment

Mayor Dickert adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m. without objection.