

## PLAN COMMISSION

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Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on February 17, 2015, at 5:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Oberbeck, Gisselman, Bohlken, Rosenberg

Others Present: Lenz, DeSantis, Chmiel, Gehin, Burt

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

In the absence of Mayor Tipple, Brad Lenz called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. noting that a quorum was present.

### **Item #1 Approve the minutes of the January 20, 2015 meeting.**

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Bohlken motioned to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2015 meeting. Rosenberg seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

### **Item #2 PUBLIC HEARING: Approve a conditional use at 915 Woods Place to allow for a part-time medical clinic in an existing hangar, in an R2, Single Family Residence District.**

The public hearing was opened by Lenz.

Dr. Glenn Burt, 9033 N. 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Merrill, WI (the petitioner) asked that this item be approved so he can utilize the hangar to conduct flight physicals for pilots.

John Chmiel, Manager of the Airport indicated that this issue passed at the Airport Committee with one dissenting vote. At approval, one request came from members that hangar tenants have the opportunity to be informed and attend this Public Hearing. Some of the tenants are here today. Chmiel said the Airport Committee meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the Month and he would like to know if this vote whether it passes or not could be contingent on how the Airport Committee feels about it at their next meeting. Rosenberg said he doesn't believe a contingent approval can be done. Rosenberg asked if by viewing the hangar would the public know that this private hangar is different from the others. Dr. Burt said there would be a small sign outside the hangar.

Sydney Cohen, 705 Kent Street, is a hangar tenant and is in favor of this conditional use. This would be very convenient for pilots to have a physician on the field and bring in other pilots to the airport.

Rick Cole, Marathon, is in favor of this conditional use. All physicals for pilots are necessary and he supports this 100%.

Robert Star, Weston, is an active pilot and tenant, and he agrees that Dr. Burt should be able to do this. It would bring in revenue for the Airport and this would be a great asset to the Airport and the community.

John Chmiel is concerned about how parking would be handled and how Dr. Burt's customers would gain access to his hangar since it is located in a secure area. There is a pedestrian gate directly behind Dr. Burt's hangar. Parking could be done in the parking area of the airport. He is not in favor of allowing all customers have an access code as it defeats the purpose of the secured area. He would suggest that Dr. Burt give temporary access to customers on a one-on-one basis through the pedestrian gate.

No one else wished to speak to this issue, therefore the public hearing was closed.

Lenz clarified that the petition this evening is to allow a conditional use which is a zoning issue within the city. Public notices went out to neighbors and being that the Airport is one property, they received one notice, even though there are multiple hangars on the property. There were no objections to the proposed use from neighboring properties. Lenz said that zoning is mainly concerned about effects to surrounding

property and the general public, including potential for future development. This conditional use doesn't look to be problematic from a zoning viewpoint and he recommends that it be approved. He said if there are other issues that need to be discussed internal to the airport, he thinks that is outside the purview of this commission.

DeSantis asked if an architect has been hired due to a change in use of this hangar. Burt said that no architect has been hired because the tenant lease doesn't require it. DeSantis stated that anytime you make a modification of a commercial building you need to submit plans for approval. The plans would need a complete review to make sure they meet the requirements of a hangar and a medical facility. Detailed plans should be submitted to the Inspections Department. Discussion followed.

A motion to approve the conditional use was made by Rosenberg and seconded by Oberbeck. Motion carried, 4-0.

Chmiel said the next Airport Committee Meeting is scheduled in March and they would need to discuss the minimum standard ordinance they have in place. Lenz said this would go to the full Common Council for a vote at the March 24, 2015 meeting.

**Item #3 PUBLIC HEARING: Approve a conditional use at 602 E. Kent Street to allow for signs, including sponsorship signs, for the Marathon County Sports Complex, in an R3, Two Family Residence District.**

Lenz opened the public hearing. The petitioner is Peter Knotek and he is not in attendance however Lenz spoke with him today. No one else wished to speak to this issue, therefore Lenz closed the public hearing.

Lenz said this sign is designed to be minimally intrusive but necessary to get people around the property. It is not a lit sign and it allows a company to place their name on the board to sponsor the fields. The site is buffered by a cemetery, railroad tracks, and industrial property, so they are not likely to be visible from any occupied property, except for maybe one residential property. He said the main signs contain a sponsorship sign, so we should take those into consideration. The City can allow them by conditional use. Staff recommends approval of the signs as they are proposed.

A motion was made by Gisselman and seconded by Bohlken. Motion carried 4-0. This will go to council on March 10, 2015.

**Item #4 Discussion and authorization of public hearing for a zoning text amendment regarding educational institutions on parcels 25,000 square feet or larger.**

Lenz said that currently the zoning code is somewhat restrictive on where schools can go, even though they are permitted in residential districts. He said the code requires that educational institutions locate on parcels 40,000 square feet or larger, which is almost an acre. He thought this was written for traditional schools that would have a lot of students and a large campus. Currently, if a smaller, non-traditional school wishes to locate in a residential area it is difficult for them to find suitable properties. An option would be to allow educational institutions the opportunity to look for parcels on something less than 40,000 square feet. He said a minimum of 25,000 square feet of property would still be at least twice the size of a minimum lot allowed in a residential neighborhood. He said by making it a conditional use, the school would need to go through plan commission and council and we'd be able to determine whether a particular spot would be a good location or not. Staff's recommendation is to authorize a public hearing for this zoning text amendment. Discussion followed.

Oberbeck asked what is driving this request. He said 25,000 square feet is a typical lot on the outer edges

of the city. He said that with a building, parking lot, and buffer to the neighbors, it may be a challenge to build a school on this sized lot.

Lenz said that this arose because at least one school was looking to rent existing properties in the city – former religious and institutional buildings that are already there. He said in the central part of the city, the lots are smaller and some properties seem like they would be appropriate for a small school, but the lot sizes don't meet the 40,000 square foot minimum.

Oberbeck asked if we would be limiting this to existing buildings. Lenz said it wasn't initially thought of that way, but language could be added. Oberbeck said he could see this ordinance applying to existing conditions in the central part of the city, but maybe not going outward on a new lot. Lenz said the intent of setting this up as a conditional use was to give the city the ability to review the schools on a case-by-case basis, not to try to permit schools automatically where they may not be a good fit.

Gisselman said this action would be just to set up a public hearing. He thought we may want to hear from the players who want this change. He said he is dubious himself, but if they can make the case he is willing to listen. He said we can still say this isn't a good thing after the public hearing. Lenz agreed, and said he could make invitations, and that the ordinance could be tweaked or scrapped altogether after a public hearing.

Oberbeck agreed with Gisselman to investigate this because some of our neighborhoods and way we develop are changing.

A motion to authorize the public hearing was made by Oberbeck. Seconded by Rosenberg. Motion carried 4-0. An ordinance will be drafted and a public hearing will be held at a future meeting.

#### **Item #5 Vacating and discontinuing a portion of the existing Curling Way cul-de-sac.**

Lenz said CISM held a public hearing on this item at their last meeting. He referenced a map in the packet showing the area of the cul-de-sac to be vacated. He said this portion is no longer needed with the street extension, and that it would go back to the Curling Club. He didn't see a reason why the city would need to hold onto it, so staff recommends approving the vacation. Motion was made by Bohlken and seconded by Oberbeck. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0. It will go to Common Council on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

#### **Item #6 Discussion and possible action on an Amendment to the Official City Map to establish the new exterior lines of the realignment of Bridge Street from Westwood Drive to 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Pine Ridge Boulevard from Plaza Drive to Bridge Street.**

Lenz said this item was at CISM last week, and has been at CISM on numerous occasions. It had been tabled a number of times as details between property owners could be discussed. He said the City has been planning the realignment and widening of this street, as well as Pine Ridge Boulevard, as shown on the map in the packet. CISM has considered this before with Connexus and Aspirus. Those discussions did not turn out to be as fruitful as hoped by some parties, but they are all in agreement to move it forward at this time. He said the action is to place the alignment on the official city map – so we would just be reserving the corridor at this time, with the specific design of the street to be finalized later. He said CISM ultimately recommended the mapping, with consent by Connexus. He said staff recommends mapping this alignment.

Rosenberg asked about the large box at the intersection of the two streets. Lenz said that is right-of-way, but would be for a stormwater management facility, not for the street. He said the new street would go through the stormwater pond that is out there now, on the north side of Bridge Street. Rosenberg still

didn't know why the City would be constructing this instead of the private property owner. Discussion followed. Motion made by Gisselman and seconded by Bohlken. Motion carried, 4-0. This will go to Council on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**Item #7 Discussion and possible action on the dedication of a portion of 730 Crocker Street for road right-of-way for Crocker Street.**

Lenz said the City is looking at reconstructing the streets shown on the attached map. He said the City is still working out the details with property owners, but that the right-of-way shown would be needed to bring the streets up to current design standards. He said this item went to CISM to start the conversations about obtaining the property for right-of-way. Staff is looking for approval to proceed with the dedication of this land.

Oberbeck asked why the street is moving outside of the right-of-way, and said it looks like more property will be needed to the north. Lenz said that the majority of land needed is at the corner to improve the turning radius, but didn't know exactly why it was drawn with a jog at the north end, perhaps to make the surveying easier or for grading the land outside the curb. He said he could verify with our engineers and surveyor why it is shown this way.

Motion made by Gisselman, and seconded by Oberbeck. Motion carried, 4-0.

**Item #8 Discussion and possible action on the dedication of a portion of 729 South 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue for road right-of-way for 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.**

Lenz said engineering is looking at reconstruction of 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. What is shown on the map is right-of-way needed for proper reconstruction. He said staff has talked to property owners who are initially in favor of dedicating the land, and staff will continue those discussions. CISM approved this unanimously at their last meeting. Motion was made by Gisselman and seconded by Bohlken. Motion carried, 4-0.

**Item #9 Discussion and possible action on the Transportation Project Plat for STH 52, Project ID 6999-03-28**

Lenz provided background that the city is working with the DOT and CBS Squared (the consultant) for the resurfacing from 17<sup>th</sup> Ave to 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Stewart Avenue). These maps are difficult to read but all the property acquisitions are on there. This project is basically a resurfacing but a few minor improvements will be made at some intersections to make them accessible. Along the south-side near Marathon Park there will be some temporary easements to widen the streets for bicycle accommodations. The other improvements are for the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue that will be getting new signals with pedestrian crossings - this will require some real-estate acquisition. Those are the small real estate needs for this project. The City will be the real-estate agent but we will be working with the consultant to do the transactions and will be reimbursed by the DOT.

A motion to approve was made by Rosenberg, seconded by Oberbeck. No further discussion was held. Motion carried unanimously 4-0. This item will go to the City Common Council next week on 2/24/15 as the DOT needs this as soon as possible.

**Item #10 Future agenda items for consideration**

Gisselman said the issue of Brokaw, its development and the City's role, is a topic that this Commission should take up. He said if it doesn't involve Planning, he's not sure what it does involve – this is where the conversation needs to take place. He said it involves a lot of different players and coordination as we go forward. He would at least like to start a conversation as to how the City moves forward.

Gehin, acting public works director, echoed Gisselman's comments – no one has talked about all of the infrastructure and how to deal with that, if we are a part of it or not. We need to pay close attention to what we would be getting, by doing our due diligence.

Jacobson, city attorney, said she has been in contact with the attorneys from the other communities. She has some correspondence from them to share with the Council. She said both the Economic Development and Finance committees have this on their agendas on a regular basis, and she agrees with Gisselman's comments, but she recommends getting the whole Council together before it appears on a third committee's agenda in open session.

Gisselman said the issue of Brokaw involves E.D. and Finance, but we're really talking about a future plan for this City, which really needs to come out of this commission. We're charged with larger issues about how this city is going to grow, and it really does belong within the parameters of the plan commission.

Jacobson agreed, but said she would like to get the whole body together first. Lenz said that the Mayor, as chairman of the plan commission, and as someone who is plugged into the other committees and council, will likely be the gatekeeper on the appropriate time to bring the discussion to plan commission.

Lenz said on a different topic, we received authorization from the Finance committee to go ahead with the regional planning commission to help us with our comprehensive plan. So that will be happening soon.

Oberbeck asked if we had an update on urban planning from Graef. Lenz said that there are two different projects – one is for citywide urban design standards, which staff recently received a draft of. The other is for a streetscaping plan for the Near West Side. He said that project was stalled until some of the contamination issues were worked out, but we should have final plans for that shortly.

Oberbeck said it would be beneficial to look at the urban design guidelines and the west side plan, because that area could be a test lab for new urban planning. Discussion followed.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Bohlken, second by Rosenberg to adjourn. Motion carried, 4-0. Meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.