

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Tuesday, October 18, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Mielke, Gisselman, Bohlken, Peckham, Lindman, Zahrt, Brueggeman

Others Present: Lenz, Hebert, DeSantis, Weyers, Elliott, DeLeer, Daniel Sczygelski, Norma Sczygelski, Brummond, Penn, Volhard, Drayna, Hinker, Bauer, Foster, Jaeger, Rasmussen

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

Mayor Mielke called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. noting that a quorum was present. Mayor Mielke welcomed Brueggeman to the Plan Commission. Brueggeman said that he is looking forward to this opportunity.

Approve the minutes of the September 26, 2016 meeting.

Peckham motioned to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2016 meeting, as amended and distributed. Zahrt seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on rezoning 1000 West Campus Drive from R1, Single Family Residence District, to R4, General Residence District. (Northcentral Technical College)

Lori Weyers introduced herself, Rob Elliott, and John DeLeer to the commission. A handout was passed out to the commission and audience. Weyers said that this is a partnership with Northcentral Technical College and a private developer. This would move forward a 3-story privately managed apartment community complex that would have furnished apartments with a maximum capacity of 132 individuals. The occupants would include students of NTC, Medical College of Wisconsin, and other business partners. Weyers said that they have done a study over the last year looking at affordable housing. Greenheck and Church Mutual of Merrill have interns coming in from around the country and they cannot find affordable reasonable housing and are involved with programs at this college. Greenheck Fan Corporation has about 20 University of Wisconsin students that come from all around the state that cannot find appropriate housing and are also involved with programs at the college. Weyers said that last year, they were approached by their business partner and were told they needed to do something to keep their residents in northcentral Wisconsin. This is an economic crisis and we need to keep more of the workforce here. If they leave, they do not come back. Last year, 75 students left northcentral Wisconsin to have educational opportunities elsewhere because of the lack of affordable housing near the campus. Weyers said that they were very fortunate to find a private developer, DeLeers Construction, that would work with the development. Weyers said that she wanted to assure everyone that NTC will provide all of the exterior maintenance, landscaping and snow removal. It will be aesthetically pleasing and they are committed to be a respectful neighbor. Weyers said they will also provide security for the perimeter of the complex. Weyers said that they intend to put up a nature trail that will be lit and for the neighbors to enjoy. There will be containers for dog waste on the trail. The walking trail will go all around the college, past the housing complex, and out towards Arby's. Weyers said this is an important partnership. It will improve the city's tax base, as it will be privately owned. It is an opportunity for more jobs, keeping jobs here, and for affordable housing. There will be a large greenspace, as the complex will be placed back where the gazebo is. It is across the street from an existing apartment complex and across the street from a church. After speaking with a neighbor, the driveway location is changed to being off of 3rd Avenue, instead of Summit Avenue. All activities will be located at the college and the hours of operation are expanded. Weyers said they are trying to be very respectful and trying to be a positive influence in the neighborhood. This is a crisis and affordable housing is needed.

Mayor Mielke said that there are 14 petitioners against this project, and will all be noted and on record. Mayor Mielke asked the audience members how many were against the proposal and how many were within one block of the proposal. A majority of the audience members said they were.

Daniel Sczygelski, 1505 Fernwood Drive, said that he applauds the goals and there is a necessity. He said that he is saddened by the lack of openness and transparency and this is the first time that he has seen

anything in writing and finds this disturbing. There used to be an exercise trail and asked what happened to that. At this point, there hasn't been any plans and doesn't know how the driveway has changed. Sczygelski said that it is hard to make an informed decision if you do not know the details. The campus has a lot of land, but he is worried about what happens in the future if they run out of land. There may not be much land in the future if you look long term. Sczygelski said that he hesitates to give some of the land away for housing and it is not in the jurisdiction of a 2-year campus to provide housing. It goes against what the State of Wisconsin stands for. There are other options that would meet these goals. There are other properties on the other side of Campus Drive that are for sale that may work, but was unsure of the size requirements that are needed. Sczygelski asked about the area across from Kwik Trip and McDonalds, as there is a lot of green space there. It would come on a nice 4-lane road that is designed for higher traffic, has a sidewalk and a faster time to get onto the highway. Sczygelski said that he is concerned about the safety of being in a residential area where there are children in the neighborhood and people getting the mail. Sczygelski said he appreciates any consideration.

Norma Sczygelski, 1505 Fernwood Drive, said that a lot of it was summed up and she stated she had also submitted a letter. The traffic is the biggest concern. Fernwood Drive has been affected a lot by the NTC development. Parking lots for other additions were to exit onto Fernwood Drive, until the residents expressed their opposition. In order to avoid stoplights, people will use Fernwood Drive and Summit Drive. 3rd Avenue has been affected by Thomas Jefferson adding a driveway. This is a neighborhood, with children walking to the pool or sledding hill. The apartment complex answers a need for a temporary timeframe. Currently the Wausau School District is having a decrease in students and will eventually trickle to the college. There is no control over who it houses, as it will be a separate entity. There is another proposed apartment complex over by Randolph Street, where there are other condos.

Mayor Mielke asked the petitioners to show the plans. DeLeers presented the plans to the commission members and audience members. Weyers said that the city will receive property taxes on the facility. Weyers said that since she has been president, they are at a 51% growth and have become a regional educational hub. UW Stout, UW Green Bay, Medical College of Wisconsin, UW Oshkosh and Michigan Tech are located on the campus. DeLeers said that there will be one driveway coming out on 3rd Avenue. There would be an opportunity for a controlled intersection, if the city would choose to do so.

Jeff Brummond, 1547 Beechwood Drive, said that they were not given any information and it seems like it was a big secret. The technical college had ball diamonds that were used by everyone in the neighborhood and without the approval occurring, the ball diamonds disappeared. They already assumed they had the approval. The traffic is a big thing as the vehicles come zooming through and just cruise through the stop signs. Brummond said that the college should look at the parking lots; they are always less than 50% full. The land on 12th Avenue is owned by city and could be used for a complex.

Lindy Penn, 1502 Beechwood Drive, asked what happens to the property value when an apartment building like this gets built. Penn said that her and her husband have lived in this neighborhood for many, many years and have seen the development and have been victims of groundwater seeping around the foundation. Whenever there is building going on, the groundwater gets rerouted and goes somewhere. Bos Creek is right there and everyone knows the problems with Bos Creek. There was a sinkhole on this land this past spring and Penn said she doesn't understand why the building needs to be in this area. It will add to the density of the area and wants to see the neighborhood stay quiet and safe. NTC has plenty of land to put this someplace else. Penn said that she does not personally see why NTC feels they are the ones that need to provide housing. Penn asked where is the guarantee that this will be affordable and asked that affordable housing be defined.

Michael Volhard, 1625 Summit Drive, said there will be all kinds of noise and asked what will happen when some kid gets killed on the road. There have been 4-5 accidents near the stop sign and the police cannot police the area.

John Drayna, 1536 Beechwood Drive, said he has similar concerns. Drayna said he would like affordable housing defined and asked if the housing would be provided at a substantial discount. Drayna asked who would control the building. Drayna asked if the Memorandum of Understanding between the tech and developer is binding and how long is it in effect. Drayna said that he lives on the corner on Beechwood Drive and Fernwood Drive and said he also has traffic concerns. He has seen many people roll through

the stop signs.

Ronald Hinker, 1604 Summit Drive, said he would like to know how far north or southwest will they go. Nobody knows and may be no end to this.

Melanie Bauer, 1544 Summit Drive, said that she is newer to the area and picked this neighborhood because of the quietness. Bauer said that she has a 9-month old and is excited about raising him in a safe, low-traffic neighborhood, and is very nervous about this development and how traffic and safety will be affected.

Deborah Foster, 1523 Beechwood Drive, said that she is also concerned about the traffic in the neighborhood. Foster said they have lived in the neighborhood for 5 years and specifically picked the neighborhood because it was quiet. Students can safely walk to school and would hate for other young people not be able to safely walk to school or the pool. Foster said she is very empathetic as an educator with the plight of NTC, but this area was picked because it was quiet and a technical college, not a 4-year institution with campus housing. Foster said that she also runs in the neighborhood and is concerned about safety in this area.

Keith Jaeger, 1619 Summit Drive, said that he has been in the neighborhood for 15 years and has the same concerns. This is a quiet neighborhood and is disturbed by the arrogance. The ball diamonds were always used, especially in the spring. They were taken down before the hearing. Jaeger asked why the development needs to be brought further into a residential neighborhood, instead of on Campus Drive and 3rd Avenue.

Mayor Mielke closed the public hearing.

Weyers said the ball diamond was scheduled to be taken down. It just happens to be a coincidence. The insurance agency said it was a liability; there were people on it that did not have permission to be on it. Weyers said they could not afford to maintain it. Weyers said that she would own and apologize for it and said that it doesn't look very good. It was done from a liability standpoint. Weyers said that she did not mean to be arrogant or disrespectful of the neighbors. Weyers said that she believed this was the place for the beginning discussions. Weyers said that she had spoken to a neighbor on the phone and told the person the neighbors would be informed as they progressed and discussions would also take place. Weyers said that she thought that was the appropriate process and will involve with the neighbors in the future.

Mayor Mielke said that he met with Weyers and Elliott on May 13th at 1:00 p.m. and is in favor of the project for economic development and attracting millennials. At that time, he requested that the neighborhood be kept involved in the process. Mayor Mielke said that he has seen enough of these hearings that if the neighbors are not kept informed there is a situation like this. Weyers answered that she had told Mayor Mielke during this meeting that she did not have approval from the Wisconsin Technical College System; she was not allowed to discuss it with anyone until it went through the board. That approval was not received until much later in the summer and she was bound by the rules that she needs to follow. Weyers said that at the time of the meeting, there wasn't anyone that was interested in working with NTC.

Mayor Mielke asked Weyers if they wanted the complex to be ready in the fall of 2017. Weyers said that is correct. Mayor Mielke asked what the latest time for approval would be if the item would be tabled tonight. He said it would give the residents the opportunity to express their thoughts and input and look at the location of the building to see if this could be adjusted. The residents should have been kept in the loop and he understands the constraints that Weyers was under. DeLeers answered that timing is of the essence, as soon we will be in the Wisconsin winter – which could be mild or wild. It could push the project back and potentially push it back one year. Weyers said that the board needs to approve property that they sell. Some of the locations that were discussed are not the property of NTC. Weyers said they did a search of some of the properties around the area that would work and some of those properties are already sold, some are on swamp areas that there isn't enough land to build on, or are landlocked. The area near the McDonalds is an area that has the potential for classroom space. The area on the hill facing Merrill Avenue was looked at and the board was not comfortable with it in case classroom space would

need to be expanded. Weyers said if the project is not able to move forward, it would seriously hamper the activities with their partners the Medical College of Wisconsin, Greenheck and Church Mutual. This will have a huge impact on the enrollment in the fall of 2017.

Peckham said that he looked at an overview of this before the meeting and it does seem from an uninformed viewers perspective that you chose the worst spot you could have. He said it is an excellent idea and will serve the community well. Peckham said he wondered if the neighbors would be more amenable if this area were to be used for classrooms in the future. That way it would only be occupied for limited portion of the day. Norma Sczygelski said that would be desirable as far as she is concerned. Elliott said that the board and state board looked at it. When the state board looks at a technical college selling a piece of land; it figures that if it is a piece of land that could someday be used, it should not be sold. Elliott said that there is a large natural runoff at Bos Creek that separates the parcel of land from the rest of the campus. This site was the area that was chosen by the board. Elliott said that this process has been going on for over one year. If it is tabled and a different area is chosen, the process would be more than one year out again. Elliott said that he is working with Becher Hoppe to design a new grate for the pond. Right now when the pond goes into overflow, debris gets caught up against the grate. A new design is being working on so the debris gets pushed up, so it doesn't get plugged up anymore.

Mayor Mielke said that he understands the difficulties of tabling this item, but asked how soon a meeting could be scheduled to make a presentation to the neighbors. Weyers said that they would not be able to meet their timelines and the demands of the students if it was tabled another month. Weyers said that she had spoken to a neighbor and told her that she would contact the neighbors to schedule a neighborhood meeting. Weyers said that they cannot change the location, but have looked at moving it back and changing the driveway. Weyers said that they have gone through a lot to get it approved at the state level and if they would have to go back to the state, it would put them behind at least one year. It is a very complicated process. Tabling the item is not a good option based on all the rules that need to be followed from the state. Weyers said that she doesn't want to penalize the effort and NTC because she didn't realize the proper protocol. A meeting will be held immediately. Weyers said they do need to move forward. Mayor Mielke asked Weyers if there is a dollar figure of the economic impact of this project. DeLeers said that approximately \$4 million will be brought to the tax roll.

Hebert asked if the 132 occupants will be 132 single units. DeLeers said that there will be a mix of 132 beds. There will be single and double units. Hebert asked that the questions of affordable housing be addressed. Weyers said that a survey was done of the students and a survey was done with apartment availability. The threshold of what the students can afford is \$450-\$499 per month. There is a shortage of available units in this price range. These units will be fully furnished. If the project is not allowed to move forward, the project will be dead. Weyers said that they are the first technical college that has been able to get this approved; it is not something that can be done again. Weyers said that they are in a situation where it is not simplistic and is very important to move forward. Mayor Mielke said that he imagines that this would be voted on tonight. The Plan Commission would send this item as a recommendation to the Common Council on the November 9th meeting. Mayor Mielke strongly urged NTC to get in contact with the neighbors.

Peckham said the final say will be at the council and asked if there are any drawings on how this will look if someone drives down the street. DeLeers said that they are not done yet, but hopes to be done in the next day or so. Peckham said that the case may have improved significantly if those would have been handed out. Peckham said that part of the concern is that the neighbors don't know what they are getting. They hear three-story building, but do not know how it will look. Weyers said they will have it ready. They will meet with the neighbors first and then bring it to the Common Council. Weyers said that they have spoken to the Board of Trustees and are willing to put up some trees across the property, if it is needed. It will be very aesthetically pleasing and will match the college. Mayor Mielke asked if Weyers had the means of getting in contact with the neighborhood. Weyers said that she will speak to the Marketing Department and get a date setup before the next council meeting.

Gisselman asked how many parking stalls there will be. DeLeers said that they have a 1:1 ratio. Gisselman asked if that is the rule per the ordinance and said that he is concerned about the traffic with 132 vehicles at the intersection. Elliott said that it will have 132 parking stalls. More than 80% of the students receive financial aid and some may not have vehicles. It is thought that the students would walk

from the dwelling unit to the campus. Elliott said that he does not know how much more activity this will bring, but think it will not be as much as the residents think it will. The students will not be leaving to go to work every day or the grocery store. All of the amenities will be on campus. Weyers said that they intend on having meal plans at the campus and said that they will try to contain them. Weyers said that they have expanded their hours and will have activities at the college. Gisselman asked if these are dorms or apartments with kitchens. Young people will be going out for entertainment, going to the grocery stores and moving about. Weyers said that is possible.

Lindman said that the commission is to determine the zoning change from R1 to R4. These details are the plans and working through the details. A recommendation could be made that a civil traffic count for 3rd Avenue be conducted. It may help with the residents. There may be 132 parking stalls, but may not have 132 vehicles coming and going.

Gisselman asked Hebert if the 1:1 ratio would be compliant with zoning. Hebert answered that it is 1 ½ parking stalls per unit, not per resident. DeLeers said that there will be approximately 75 total units. Hebert said that would put them in compliance.

Zahrt asked what the exterior of the building will look like. Zahrt said he was in the real estate business for 40 years and is concerned. There is a need for the facility, but he is concerned about traffic and looks. Weyers said that they are also concerned about the looks; they have tried very diligently to improve the quality on how the college looks. Weyers asked DeLeers to pull up a picture of the Green Bay facility, which will look similar to this campus. Zahrt said he would like to see it and said he is still concerned about the traffic. Mayor Mielke said that everyone should see it. A picture of the Green Bay campus was shown to the commission members and audience members. DeLeers said that the housing complex will emulate the campus. If someone finds the campus pleasing, they will find this addition pleasing.

Peckham asked about the elevation of the land where the building will sit. Elliott said that it will be similar to the curb height of Summit Street.

Brueggeman said there are a lot of comments about traffic and asked if there is anything that the city, as part of the development, can do. Could traffic be redirected? Mayor Mielke said that this will be a CISM or Parking and Traffic Committee issue and it goes back to the time factor. Lindman said that signs don't typically work. The private developer would need to present the ideas to redirect or alter streets to the City. It is a private development.

Mayor Mielke said the notice that was sent to the neighbors stated that the decision at Council would occur on October 25th. Lenz said that it can go to the normal scheduled of November 9th Council. Gisselman asked that the neighbors be noticed of the change. Lenz said that could be done. Gisselman said that this will be the last time that this will come to this commission. Gisselman said he has issues with the 132 parking stalls and is not sure where he is sitting.

Rasmussen said that mid-summer she saw a conceptual plan for this process. Rasmussen said that when she first heard student housing, her mind went to a place where she did not want it to go. But, these won't be typical students and adult learners will be housed. Communication can move mountains. The neighbors have been taken by surprise and felt that there was an element of silence surrounding the project. Rasmussen said that she hopes that if Plan Commission moves this forward, that NTC conducts a neighborhood meeting before the council meeting on November 9th. When a neighborhood unifies and brings concerns to the council, it can have influence on the council members. The council may stop the project and zoning change if there are the same concerns. Rasmussen asked to be part of the informational meeting and said that Summit Drive and Bos Creek Drive are traveled by her residences. 3rd Avenue is a better exit than Summit Drive. A meeting needs to be held soon. Rasmussen said that she had asked the developer and NTC to have a meeting with the neighbors prior to this meeting.

Gisselman said that he has issues on the 132 vehicles and is not sure how the vehicle issue will be resolved after the neighborhood meeting. Gisselman said that he reserves at the council meeting to see how this goes.

Peckham motioned to rezone 1000 West Campus Drive from R1, Single Family Residence District, to

R4, General Residence District.

Peckham said he had read that the average person takes five trips per day and asked if this was right. Staff was not sure. Peckham said that there would be less for this population and estimated it as three trips per person. There was anguish on the design for the 400 Block and it really didn't mean anything to anybody until they received some nice drawings. Peckham said that NTC should provide better visuals to inform neighbors and council.

Lindman seconded the motion.

Daniel Sczygelski said that he finds it very disturbing that Weyers isn't taking any heat for the lack of communication, the neighbors are. Sczygelski said that they have been promised many different things by NTC. It was promised that noise abatement structures would be put up. They never did it. Sczygelski said he does not trust them. Sczygelski said that nobody has talked about the aesthetics of the building. Sczygelski said that they are concerned about their livelihood, their children. There are no sidewalks and will need to share the street with the 400 vehicles and walk to the public mailboxes. This has not been carefully planned. There were no discussions for an alternative place until just now. Sczygelski said we get to take or leave it. Sczygelski said that they did not create the schedules for the state or districts, it is not our fault. Some students were told about this during registration in August. Sczygelski said he is extremely skeptical.

Norma Sczygelski said that one element that has gotten glazed over is that there are springs and solid granite. When the science building was built, the basements shook, cracked some and knocked down a retaining wall. We have all learned that the springs pop up. The ground water will not flow away. NTC is built on a pond and was drained and graded. There is still a water issue that is not addressed.

Gisselman asked why this zoning was requested versus a UDD. More detailed plans would be reviewed with the UDD zoning. Lenz said that is a benefit of the UDD zoning, however this project would fit within R4 zoning. He said the UDD should not be applied in cases where it is not appropriate. Some cases are unique and a special zoning district is needed. This is one building on one property and the petitioners were aware of the requirements to fit within the R4 district.

Brueggeman said that he needed to abstain from the vote due to a potential conflict of interest.

Lindman said that the storm water management plan will be reviewed by the city and state, since it is over one acre.

The motion carried 4-2, with one abstention. This item will go to Common Council on November 9, 2016.

Mayor Mielke strongly urged NTC to schedule a meeting. Weyers said that they will discuss dates this evening and get notices out within the next two days.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on making the following amendments to the Wausau Municipal Code: (a) Amend Wausau Municipal Code by deleting Section 23.32.020(22) "Warehouse and wholesale establishments, and storage other than accessory to permitted retail uses" and add same language to Section 23.32.030. (b) Amend Wausau Municipal code by creating Section 23.26.065 Screening of commercial refuse and recycling containers. "Commercial refuse and recycling containers visible from the city streets shall be effectively screened by a wall, fence, or densely planted hedge of at least 50 percent opacity.

Lenz said that at a previous meeting the changes were introduced and a public hearing was authorized. Self-storage facilities are currently permitted in B3 districts. Over the years, we've looked to improve certain streets and gateways into the city. Staff would like the ability to review proposals for self-storage and mini-warehouses. It would become a conditional use to review the proposals on a case-by-case basis, rather than being automatically permitted.

Lenz said the second item is in regards to screening of trash containers. The City has tried to improve

residential trash collection, but it doesn't apply to commercial property. He said when there is a Unified Development District or a development agreement with someone, it is a practice to require screening of dumpsters. But it is not listed in the zoning code as being required and staff feels that it should be added.

Gisselman asked how a commercial dumpster is defined and asked if it would be a dumpster or a residential cart. Hebert answered that it is intended for a cart or larger dumpster. It is a question staff gets and they try to persuade people. The persuasion has not been as effective recently. It can be tucked away or a fence or landscaping can be used for screening. Gisselman asked if it would be for commercial only. Lenz said the amendment is being made to the code in the business zoning districts.

Peckham said that both of these items are good ideas.

Mayor Mielke closed the public hearing.

Peckham motioned to amend Wausau Municipal code by deleting Section 23.32.020(22) "warehouse and wholesale establishments and storage other than accessory to permitted retail uses" and add same language to Section 23.32.030 and to amend Wausau Municipal code by creating Section 23.26.065 Screening of commercial refuse and recycling containers. "Commercial refuse and recycling containers visible from the city streets shall be effectively screened by a wall, fence, or densely planted hedge of at least 50 percent opacity". Brueggeman seconded and the motion carried unanimously 7-0. This item will go to Common Council on November 9, 2016.

Discussion and possible action on approving the Precise Implementation Plan at 1418 North First Street to allow for a 29-unit multi-family housing project.

Lenz said that the precise plans are in the packet for Atrium Lofts, formerly known as Sav-O Supply and Badger Lofts. The general development plan was approved earlier this year. Hebert added that UDD zoning was used for this project as it is an existing building. It would not have met the setback requirements.

Peckham asked if there is a requirement that when packages like this are submitted that it be in a colored rendering. Lenz answered no, only that certain plans are submitted. It can be requested, but it is not currently required.

Bohlken asked if the building will be painted. Lenz said that the exterior skin will be completely redone and new windows will be installed.

Gisselman motion to approve the Precise Implementation Plan at 1418 North First Street to allow for a 29-unit multi-family housing project. Peckham seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0. This item will go to Common Council on November 9, 2016.

Discussion and possible action on dedication of land - Hiawatha.

Lindman said that this property was donated to the city. It is a housekeeping issue. It needs to be dedicated to be used as public right-of-way. It has gone through CISM.

Bohlken motioned to approve the dedication of land - Hiawatha. Zahrt seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0. This item will go to the Common Council on November 9, 2016.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2016.

Peckham asked if there will be more code revisions. Lenz said that code revisions are usually brought to the commission as staff discover them. The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed next month. A major revision to the zoning code after the comprehensive plan may occur.

Hebert said that the credit union off of Randolph Street will be coming next month for a rezoning. There

is a possible UDD on 17th Avenue that may come next month also.

Adjournment

Brueggeman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Peckham. Motion carried unanimously 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

The Plan Commission is next scheduled to meet at 5:00 p.m. on November 15, 2016.