

PLAN COMMISSION

Time and Date: The Plan Commission met on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at 5:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Robert Mielke, Eric Lindman, Gary Gisselman, Patrick Peckham, Bruce Bohlken, Andrew Brueggeman

Others Present: Brad Lenz, Brad Sippel, Dave DeSantis, Melissa Engen, Lance Leonhard, Michael Loy, Kelly Pospychala, Carole Machek, David Piehler, Matthew Cepass

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.

Approve the minutes of the February 19, 2019 meeting.

Bohlken motioned to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2019 meeting. Brueggeman seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on rezoning 224, 240 and 300 South 4th Street from M1, Limited Industrial District to B3, General Commercial District and approve a conditional use at 240 and 300 South 4th Street to allow for animal hospitals, indoor and outdoor kennels.

Mayor Mielke closed the public hearing.

Lenz said that the map shows the parcels that are up for zoning. 224 South 4th Street was added by city staff because it's the potential location for a dog park. The petitioner is looking to rezone 240 and 300 South 4th Street. All the properties would go to B3 zoning with a conditional use for 240 & 300 South 4th Street for a dog kennel and hospital for pet grooming.

Peckham said that that is a very good opportunity to have right next to the proposed dog park and it makes great sense.

Peckham motioned to rezone 224, 240 and 300 South 4th Street from M1, Limited Industrial District to B3, General Commercial District and approve a conditional use at 240 and 300 South 4th Street to allow for animal hospitals and indoor and outdoor kennels. Brueggeman seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0. This item will go to Common Council on April 9, 2019.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on amending the General Development Plan and Precise Implementation Plan at 2801 Westhill Drive to allow for a congregate living facility in a UDD, Unified Development District.

Mayor Mielke closed the public hearing.

Sippel said that this item is to amend the existing plans. It is currently being used as a medical clinic and they would like to use it for a congregate living facility. The building is the former ENT on the corner of Westhill Drive and 28th Avenue. There are medical and residential uses in the area. The building elevations and site plan are included in the packet. The signage panels will be replaced with new.

Peckham said that the directions given under the google earth photos seem wrong. Sippel confirmed this and said that they should be reversed one quarter. Peckham said that the drawings show a potential crossing of 28th Avenue and it talks about easier access between the hospital and this location. Peckham said that he questions the safety and if there is a crosswalk there now. It doesn't look like a good idea. Sippel said that they have followed up with the applicant and advised them to talk to Engineering about the crossing.

Bohlken motioned to amend the general development plan and precise implementation plan at 2801

Westhill Drive to allow for a congregate living facility in a UDD, Unified Development District. Brueggeman seconded and the motion carried unanimously 6-0. This item will go to Common Council on April 9, 2019.

PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion and possible action on amending the General Development Plan at 1100 Lake View Drive to allow for the renovation and removal of existing buildings and to construct a new skilling nursing facility and adult and adolescent CBRF facilities, in a UDD, Unified Development District.

Lenz said that there was a public informational meeting held the night before and he invited the applicants to provide a summary.

Lance Leonhard, Marathon County, thanked the commission for the opportunity and is excited about the project. This will enhance the services provided by the campus. North Central Health Care began as the county's obligation to provide care for those with substance abuse issues, mental health disorders and developmental disorders. In the 50-year history it has become more than that. It will provide better services and will help to provide long-term care through Mount View Care Center. In the 2017-2019 Life Report, the number one concern is for substance abuse and this would allow staff to do a better job providing the services. The second important thing of the Life Report was access to mental health treatment in the community. This is a large scale project and will have a significant impact on the neighborhood. There was fruitful discussion during the public informational meeting and they have taken the feedback to further improve the plan.

Michael Loy, North Central Health Care, said that programs are about the people inside the building. In this community, if someone has a mental illness or addiction and need 24/7 care, those people come into the behavioral health services continuum. It starts with an emergency and crisis service which is a 24/7 service that operates at the home campus here. There is a 16-bed acute psychiatric hospital and is licensed for anyone 13 years or older, but those ages 13-17 are not allowed to mix with adults. There will be a specific 8-bed youth hospital, which will be the bright green space on the site map. The crisis stabilization program currently has a 12-bed unit, which is a voluntary unlocked program, which will be the maroon colored space on the site map and will have 16 beds. There is also a medically monitored treatment program. There are currently 15-beds which will move to a 30-bed program and is a badly needed expansion in the community. The outpatient behavioral health will continue on the campus to include counseling and psychiatry, intensive day treatment, OWI assessment and a large community treatment program. The services assist 500 people in Marathon County. The other major program that is offered is for other major skilled nursing. North Central Health Care is licensed to have a 200-bed skilled nursing facility. This will be reduced to 176 beds. Most skilled nursing facilities like this are getting smaller. The traditional long-term care units have gone to homes. The memory care remains at 100 beds. Aquatic therapy will be a new construction. The main building was constructed in the 1970's. The Lakeview Professional Plaza will not be touched and is rented to tenants. The Lakeview Center was built in 1976 and the Mount View Care Center was constructed in 1983. Loy said that they wanted to take a comprehensive approach to the project. The project will cost \$73 million. The predominant issues are the location of the additional buildings near Marshall Street. They will go back and visit the locations and work on the locations in the coming weeks. This is not an expansion, but a renovation. This will have a smaller footprint with the same population with similar programs.

Lenz said that a number of emails and letters were received and they were passed out at the beginning of the meeting.

Kelly Pospychala, 916 Ethel Street, said that she has been a registered nurse for 29 years with one of the local emergency departments and understands the need for the increase in mental healthcare. Pospychala said that she has lived on this side of town for the last 15 years. As a medical examiner, she sees the firsthand knowledge on what is needed and what is provided. Pospychala said that the group is not opposed to the issues, but is opposed to the location. Back in November, the location was way in the back. The berm is peaceful and there is a beautiful field. This is a passionate group about the neighborhood. Pospychala asked if it would be possible to redo the fiber optics. There was no contact from November until two weeks ago. They would like to maintain the beauty of the neighborhood.

Carole Machek, 1015 Weston Avenue, said that she is a new citizen to the area and moved here 7 years ago. Machek said that 20 years ago, she was a member of the Blue Ribbon Task Force in Brown County that was looking at expanding the mental health and substance abuse services. She said she truly understands the dilemmas. As a member of the southeast side, there is support, but asked if there is a timing issue on the funding. Machek said that she wants to make sure that there is enough opportunity for all the site. Machek asked if some of the surface parking will be repurposed for the two facilities. Machek asked if they are under timing issue to finalizing the plans or can the time be taken to finalize the details.

David Piehler, 1025 Weston Avenue, said that he wanted to point out some things from the Angus-Young report. There are currently 690 parking stalls and they are proposing 908 parking stalls, which would be an increase of 32%. Currently during the day, not all the stalls are utilized. With a 32% increase, it implies that there will be an increase of traffic. There hasn't been a traffic study done to show the impact. He said 25 years ago, Becher Hopper proposed a building for their office in the Downtown Airport and one of the concerns was increased traffic. This would be a major issue and foreseeable with this proposal. If the Social Services from Thomas Street will be moved here, there will be an increase of employees and clients. If the additional parking is not needed, some of the buildings could be relocated and would be a better fit. The green space buffer is being taken away. Piehler said that he doesn't know if there is an urgency to approve the general development plan. The public meeting resulted in a loss of trust because of the lack of information. The FFA would not give North Central Health Care the aviation permit for the clearance of the height of buildings. Piehler asked if it is prudent to tap the breaks for one month and bring it back with more information. There are a couple of public meetings scheduled for April. According to the staff memo, this would be a slight expansion. The expansion is over 30,000 square feet. Piehler said that he does not see a large green space, which is indicated in the staff report. This is not minimal and not the general consensus of the neighbors. Piehler asked the general development plan be fine-tuned.

Matthew Cepress, 924 Ethel Street, said that he lives on the corner on Marshall Street and Ethel Street and is in direct line with the additional buildings. Cepress said that he supports the entire initiative, but is just concerned about the placement. The site is 30 acres and they could recognize the needs of both sides. The discussion has been very diplomatic but the space should be reconfigured. This could end up to continue to be a positive neighbor relationship.

Mayor Mielke closed the public hearing.

Lenz said that the property is zoned Unified Development District and the action is for the general development plan. This stage includes approval of the placement of the buildings and parking areas. The uses will be essentially the same, where some areas will be increased and others will be decreased. The plans are being reviewed because it is an amendment to the UDD; in other zoning districts, the site plans would not need to be reviewed. He said he could address other issues brought up in the public hearing.

Peckham said that he would like to hear from the applicants in regards to traffic concerns, increase in the number of employees and clients, additional police calls, additional lighted areas and decreases of living pleasure. Loy said the volume will be about the same. The skilled nursing building will be smaller. There will be an increase in the behavioral health and medical monitored program. With the design, they will be at capacity. Any growth will have to come with a community based programming design in the future. Most of the staff will be off-campus. The overall net gain will just be slightly positive. The employees may decrease with the changes in the footprint and efficiency. The law enforcement traffic will actually go down. The same population will be dealt with. Currently people come here and get transported to other facilities. This will keep more people on the campus. Peckham asked if the buildings could be reconfigured so they are further away from the road. Loy said that they have a commitment to go back and take a look. If it is not an option, they will look into going back to the preferred location. Peckham asked if the buildings would be further back when the amendment to the precise implementation plan is brought to the commission. Loy said that the buildings will not be that close to the street, but is not sure on where the location will be.

Gisselman asked if the general development plan would approve the exact placement of the buildings and

if flexibility would come with the general development plan. Lenz answered that it depends on the changes; the wording on the agenda could reflect an amendment to the plans. They will have to come back for approval of the precise implementation plans so both could actions could occur at the same meeting. Gisselman asked if there is a timing issue. There are informational meetings scheduled for April. Gisselman asked when the warm water pool is planned for construction. Loy answered that the pool is scheduled for Phase IA and will hopefully start in June or July. The fundamental part of the project, which is the new tower and aquatic therapeutic pool, they'd like to get moving. The two buildings are separate from the rest of the plan. Leonhard said that the increase in employees from Social Services will fund the same body of work and programs and services. The Marathon County Health Department currently operates here. A lot of the services support each other. There is a lot of bleed over. The construction plan will last 3 ½ years. There is time to continue dialogue with the community and increase the privacy for those getting treatment.

Peckham said that the social services building has 100 employees and asked how many would be moving. Leonhard answered that over the 3 ½ - 4 years, the number would be determined. Technology is changing business and it will be figured out. It is important to be open to change and better serve the populations. The services will be consolidated. Leonhard said that he lives in the neighborhood too and wants it to be a real asset. Public input sessions are scheduled for April 4 and April 11.

Mayor Mielke asked if it would be detrimental if the commission decided to hold this one month and said that he has a lot of questions on this. Loy said that the pool is a flashpoint and is a problem. The pool is a project that is long due and they would have liked to start the project last year. Brueggeman said that there may be a couple of moving pieces and asked if the committee could single out the green and maroon buildings. Some of the planning is for future circumstances. There is a concern that it may happen in the future since there are a bunch of ideas in the air. Lindman said that the pool and tower should not be a problem tonight. There are currently 690 parking spaces and not sure if the additional are needed. The general development plan and precise implementation plan can come back at the same time. Mayor Mielke said that throughout the day he had been thinking about how the plan could move forward and also said that he can understand where the residents are coming from. The residents need to be heard. Loy said that this is the body that will make the ultimate approval. It would be a detriment for the youth hospital. It is a decade passed the time that it was needed. Every youth that gets diverted takes law enforcement out of the community for three hours at a minimum. The hospital is also tied to the buildings. Millions of dollars that could be better used for services. It is a substantial issue with the local police departments. The CBRF is gaining a little capacity and the impact scale is approximately \$2 million. Mayor Mielke asked if there is another location. Loy said that it needs to be evaluated.

Lenz said that the general development plan is usually taken as a whole site, even if some buildings are shown as placeholders. The reason why some people come forward with a general development plan is to give them confidence before more time and money are invested in design. The committee could approve only part of the general development plan, but it could cause a hindrance in the design work as the whole site is linked together.

Mayor Mielke motioned to table it for one month so that many of the questions can be answered. Lindman seconded. The motion failed 2-4.

Peckham said that in front of the commission there is an honorable applicant. If the precise implementation plan comes back without the building location changed, the plan will not be approved. This is a good faith effort.

Peckham motioned to amend the general development plan at 1100 Lake View Drive to allow for the renovation and removal of existing buildings and to construct a new skilled nursing facility and adult and adolescent CBRF facilities, in a UDD, Unified Development District. Brueggeman seconded.

Lindman said that the general development plan will need to be amended at a later date. Peckham said that he would be in support of a special meeting, if it is needed. Gisselman said that the committee and citizens want to see some movement and expect movement. Mayor Mielke urged the petitioners to listen to the residents.

The motion carried 4-2. Mayor Mielke and Lindman voted against the item. This item will go to Common Council on April 9, 2019.

Update on the South Riverfront Master Plan.

Sippel said that seven proposals were received and distributed to the stakeholders. The proposals were in front of the Economic Development Committee meeting two weeks ago and were included in that packet. A recommendation will be brought to that committee during the first April meeting. Sippel asked the commission to see him if anyone would like to see the plans.

Gisselman asked if staff is looking at them. Sippel answered that they are being reviewed and will be making a recommendation.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2019.

Adjournment.

Brueggeman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Peckham. The motion carried unanimously 6-0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

The Plan Commission is next scheduled to meet at 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2019.