

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council or Committee: Planning & Development

Date: January 22, 2007

Observer: Nancy Bashook

Aldermen Absent/Present: All Present

Staff Present: James Wolinski

Media Present: Evanston Review, RoundTable

Meeting began: 6:53 p.m (the aldermen walked in at 6:45 p.m)
Meeting was held in the Council Chambers

Items for Consideration:

- (P1) **Ordinance 07-O-07 – Planned Development 1700-1722 Central Street**
Appropriateness for the Demolition of the Evanston Landmark at 1722 Central Street
Consideration of the application appealing the Preservation Commission's denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition of the Evanston Landmark at 1722 Central Street. This item was held in committee on December 11, 2006 and January 9, 2007.

The representative for the developer presented the slightly modified plan, which included 51 dwelling units, rather than the 48 in the Plan Commission's plan. There are 19 parking spaces behind retail that will park on a 55 degree angle with access from alley. This parking is for retail employees only. There are 81 indoor parking spaces. Meets the requirements. Mass of building is setback from alley.

There were about 75 people attending who belong to the newly incorporated group, "Central Street Neighbors Association." They were wearing SAVE CENTRAL STREET badges and carrying signs such as, UNDERGROUND PARKING THE ANSWER, WE DON'T WANT A SECOND STADIUM ON CENTRAL, and MEET SETBACK REQUIREMENTS. These people were very vocal and had done their homework. They were prepared to speak to the issues of concern. Twenty neighbors had signed up to speak; eleven of them spoke. Their concerns are listed here.

- Central Street will lose its village appeal; plan counter to neighborhood vision.
- Needs a wider alley for two-way traffic.
- Where will customers park?
- Should have three-space loading dock
- Granting variances puts undue hardship on people behind building.
- People move here for more green space – don't need to overdevelop area.
- Amount of garbage dumpsters totally insufficient.
- Three wards affected by this development – 1st, 6th, 7th.
- New construction in Evanston has been approved piecemeal, not within the context of any plan – Council should take a long-term view.
- Destroys small businesses in area.
- To approve because no other developer came forward is dangerous.
- Increased traffic congestion – to find parking spaces, people will drive around on all other streets.

- One couple who lives behind movie theatre had positive comments: likes alley, plan controls number of cars in alley (only 19); setback is more than before; developer working with them on lighting and paying for fences; building looks more attractive.

Developer's response to comments and questions:

- Will comply with all aspects of zoning
- 8-10,000 cars a day on Central Street
- All garbage dealt with internally
- Retail rear door placement depends on what retail needs.
- Employees enter from front.
- 11,250 sq. feet of retail – no change from original.
- Three loading spaces on Central. On-street parking remains the same.
- Building and fire codes to be reviewed thoroughly at time submitted for permit.

Ald. Tisdahl is concerned about the potential for a restaurant to be in the building and Wolinski explained the requirements for a Type 1 and type 2 restaurant.

Ald. Tisdahl said the 7th Ward is split on this issue. With that comment the neighbors booed and said everyone is against the development. Tisdahl explained that she gets many calls and letters from those who have a positive opinion. She said that the development is denser than she would like, but less than maximum density. She feels that this is a good project, that is not perfect, and it would bring life to Central Street. She moved that this issue come back to P & D at its next meeting.

Ald. Moran attended the Plan Commission meeting on this project. He heard a rumor that Blue Stone Restaurant on Central will open a restaurant on northeast corner of the development and wanted to know if this is true and what impact it will have. Developers had a preliminary discussion with Blue Stone but no formal business conducted. Ald. Moran stated that in one week discussions on the vision for Central Street will take place and he feels this should be considered.

Ald. Tisdahl amended her motion: if there is to be a restaurant on the property, this should come back to City Council for approval.

Motion was approved. The vote was 6 to 3 The ordinance will be introduced and brought back to the P&D Committee.

(P2) Application Appealing the Preservation Commission's Denial of Certificate of Appropriateness for the Demotion of the Evanston Landmark at 1722 Central Street.

Consideration of the application appealing the Preservation Commission's denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition of the Evanston Landmark at 1722 Central Street. This item was held in Committee on December 11, 2006 and January 8, 2007.

Hold in Committee until February 12, 2007.

(P3) West Side Master Plan for Sub-Areas 1,2 and 3

Consideration of the recommendation from the Plan Commission to approve the West Side Master Plan for sub-areas 1, 2 and 3, including its recommendations related to land use, building type and location, public streets and pedestrian accessibility.

This was the last item addressed. Ald. Wynne suggested there was not enough time to talk about this. It is a time-sensitive issue with a moratorium of February 10. The Committee doesn't meet again until February 12. A special meeting will be held on January 29, at 6:15 pm for this topic.

(P4) Ordinance 08-O-07 – Special Use Request for a Retail Services Establishment at 1908 Greenwood

Consideration of the Zoning Board of Appeals recommendation to approve the proposed application to operate a dog daycare and training center at the subject property.

Approved.

(P5) Planned Development Time Extension – 645 Custer Avenue

Consideration of Clearwater LLC's request for an extension on the construction schedule for the planned development at 645 Custer. The City council adopted the planned development on July 25, 2005 and City Council further granted a six-month extension to the one-year standard limitation that construction begin. This extension is for an additional six-months. A letter requesting the extension is transmitted herewith.

Approved.

(P6) Ordinance 09-O-07 – Major Variation Request for 800 Brummel/142-144 Elmwood

Consideration of the recommendation from the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant a major variation for a multi-family residential use at 800 Brummel/142-144 Elmwood.

Applicant is converting building. There are no parking spaces on site. They went to the Zoning Board for three parking spaces and these were granted to get cars off the street. Ald. Rainey said the three parking spaces were always there. She encouraged P&D to support this. This is the first building south of the tracks with balconies and she is very excited. The neighbors are supportive of this project.

Approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Comments:

Ald. Baptiste apologized for starting the meeting late. He explained about all their other meetings beforehand and that many of the aldermen had attended a funeral for Denise Martin's husband.

The neighbors repeatedly booed and clapped and interrupted the aldermen and developers as they were speaking. Ald. Baptiste made an effort to keep the Central Street neighbors orderly. He had forgotten that the speakers needed to be sworn in. When he remembered, it caused some confusion, but each speaker did get sworn in as they went to speak.

It is much easier to hear and to see slides in the Council Chambers than in one of the committee rooms. But the aldermen still need to remember to speak directly into their mikes.