

**Observer Report
Planning and Development Committee
January 26, 2009**

Observer: Nancy Bashook

Aldermen Present/Absent: All present

Staff Present: Dennis Marino and others

Media Present: Evanston Review, Roundtable

Meeting began: 6:45 p.m.

Meeting ended: 8:40 p.m.

Items for Consideration

(P1) Consideration of Draft Downtown Plan – Recommendation for Approval from Plan Commission

Plan Commission recommendation to approve the Draft Downtown Plan as revised by the Plan Commission.

Ald. Moran explained that the plan is meant as a vision and a conceptual document for a downtown plan. Specific proposals, such as the Chicago Avenue park concept and a downtown Civic Center would be dealt with as time goes by. In other words, the plan would be accepted as a concept but there may be alterations in the future. It was moved and seconded that the plan be approved. Motion passed.

Ald. Rainey suggested that a statement be added to whatever is passed clarifying the comments made tonight. She is concerned about where the money will come from, but realizes that all of these things could happen at a future date. There was discussion about how the Civic Center proposal should be worded in the Plan, but Ald. Hansen clarified that the language already states that a downtown location is dependent on all kind of factors, and the wording is appropriate the way it is.

Ald. Rainey moved that the document, as amended, should be referred to the consultants for a redline copy with all discussion and changes shown, and will be brought to the P&D Committee and Council on February 9 for approval. Motion passed.

(P2) Consideration of Recommendation to Provide Marketing Assistance and Sales Incentives for Three Affordable Housing Providers (Reba Place Development Corporation, Evanston Community Development Association, and Citizens' Lighthouse Community Land Trust), Using Federal HOME Funds Supplied by HUD.

Request approval of \$30,517 in HOME funds for marketing activities and sales incentives to help three affordable ownership developments complete sales by June

30, 2009. The funding consists of \$5,517 for marketing and up to \$25,000 for broker incentives.

Eric (?), new chair of the Housing Commission, explained that the ramifications for failure, if the funds are not forthcoming is great. The City of Evanston would need to return the money to HUD if the housing goes to foreclosure. Ald. Rainey said this might be a lesson to learn and that this has been a failure. She made a motion for approval, based on payment only after invoices are received, therefore giving the City control of the funds. Eric was in agreement with this method of payment. Motion passed.

- (P3) Consideration of Request for a 2-Year Retroactive Extension for the 1560 Oak Street Approved Special Use (Museum of Time and Glass) Ordinance 36-O-07. Consideration of a request for a 2-year retroactive time extension for the 1560 Oak Street Special Use, received from the applicant after the formal one-year expiration date of the Special Use, May 1, 2008. The requested extension would be until May 1, 2010.**

The architect for the property explained that there were unexpected delays. They were unaware that special use expired in one year. Ald. Rainey saw some of the pieces going into the museum and said they are magnificent.

Approved.

- (P4) Consideration of Request for 1813-1819 Hovland Court Plat of Subdivision Consideration of a proposed plat of subdivision for the property at 1813-1819 Hovland Court.**

Approved.

- (P5) Ordinance 4-O-09, Granting A special Use for a Convenience Store at 812 Davis Street in the D3 Downtown Core Development District Consideration of a ZBA recommendation of Approval with Conditions for a Convenience Store at 812 Davis St. in the D3 Downtown Core Development District.**

Four citizens spoke against this recommendation claiming that another liquor store is not needed in the area and is a block away from a methadone facility, which doesn't make sense. There are homeless people hanging out in Fountain Square and this liquor store is too convenient for them. They talked about this store creating more congestion on Davis. No permits were obtained for the work on this store. Don't have trust that the restrictions put on this applicant already will be followed.

The attorney for the applicant explained that the store is on the first floor of a thirteen story building. The ordinance says that a food store is permitted unless it is under 3200 sq. ft. This store is 1500 sq. ft. so is labeled as a convenience store. It is actually a fine wine and liquor establishment and carries sundry items you would find in a fine liquor store. It is not a classic convenience store, but called that under terms of the ordinance. This causes discomfort to the neighbors. The Zoning Board of Appeals voted favorably (4) and recommended passage of special use.

Ald. Rainey pointed out that they do not have a liquor license. Attorney said it depends on zoning and special use and that a liquor license cannot be granted until this is approved.

Ald. Bernstein said he judges a person's potential actions on his past actions. This owner has abused Evanston ordinances. He went forward without the benefit of Counsel. Other aldermen expressed their concerns.

Bill Buckely, staff, explained that liquor stores are not mentioned in zoning ordinances – only 'a retail establishment' or 'a food store establishment. This would be a food store, but because it's under 3200 sq. ft. it is called a convenience store. Evanston does not have an ordinance for convenience stores. There is no applicable liquor store license for them to apply for.

Ald. Bernstein made a motion to overrule the Zoning Board of Appeals and deny application for special use. His motion was approved.