

**Observer Report
Planning and Development Committee
May 29, 2007**

Observer: Nancy Bashook

Aldermen Present/Absent: All present

Staff Present: Wolinski, Herb Hill, others

Media Present: Evanston Review, RoundTable

Meeting began: 6:40 p.m.

Meeting Ended: 8:50 p.m.

Special Order of Business

1618 Sherman Plan Presentation

Presentation of a plan for a mixed-use high rise 37-story residential project by R.D. Horner & Associates

Ald. Bernstein felt it was out of order to bring the discussion of acquisition of city property, i.e., subterranean rights under Fountain Square for parking, to this committee. Herb Hill assured him that the purpose was to hear a presentation of the proposal for Fountain Square 2. Then they could go into Executive Session to determine sale price of real estate. A motion was made to go into Executive Session. Aldermen voted not to go into Executive Session.

A very nice video presentation was made for a mixed use 37 story building with 35,000 square feet of retail and 250-275 units (7 units per floor and 3 penthouse units). This project would sit on two of three parcels of land, which would include the Hahn Building and the Fountain Square building. A 2-story restaurant is planned with outdoor seating. The restaurant is planned on 1500 square feet of city property. Planters and benches will be around the fountain and the location of the war memorials will be maintained. Lower level illumination will keep the ground lighted. The subterranean garage will be semi-heated and will keep the plaza somewhat snow-free. The overall design is planned to mitigate creation of wind.

Proposal must go to the Plan Commission and then back to P&D. Issues of restaurant and parking on city property are P&D issues

Items for Consideration

- (P1) Ordinance 45-O-07 – Planned Development Request for 1890 Maple Avenue
Consideration of a Plan Commission recommendation to approve a planned development request for the property at 1890 Maple as a mixed-use commercial and multi-family residential project.**

There were numerous meetings with area neighbors on this project and changes were made to accommodate their concerns. This is located at Emerson and Maple Streets and would be a LEED certified building.

A very thorough presentation was made by the developers and architects and explained the transformation of Evanston since 1986. In the past nine years there has been considerable development, but the Emerson corridor was not included during this time period.

Proposal

- parking no longer in open lots
- more visible outdoor dining
- upper floor residential uses with taxes to pay
- streets are defined architecturally; creates idea of 'sense of place'
- bulk broken, different materials used
- only zoning matter is height of 148'
- Maple St. different from Emerson side
- Rooftop garden shared by all tenants
- tower for residential only 33% of site
- includes apartments, townhouses, retail, parking
- 18,000 square feet retail; 313 parking spaces; townhouses have private patios
- garage entry at rear out of sight from University Place
- LEED certified building

A traffic study was done. There is heavy traffic on Emerson going West. A proposal to improve traffic includes a four lane highway from Elgin to Asbury, but this would create the loss of 25 parking spaces. With or without the project, improvements needed on Emerson.

Developers have reduced the amount promised to the city from \$150,000 to \$50,000, to be used for affordable housing and toward upgrading of traffic signals. Also wants to increase construction time from one year to two years.

Citizen comments re increased traffic on University Place and lack of social responsibility in planning. Citizen who lives across the street from project believes it is well conceived. Asking to look at Emerson Street as a whole to make a thoughtful decision.

Motion to introduce and bring back to P&D approved.

(P2) Ordinance 57-O-07 – Moratorium on New building Construction in the Downtown Area for 180 days

Consideration of a request from Ald. Holmes to impose a moratorium on new construction in the downtown area for 180-days expiring November 25, 2007.

A downtown planning study will start on June 7 and will make recommendations for future development. Ald. Holmes feels strongly that any new development should wait until after this study is completed. Ald. Wollin was in agreement and is already telling developers that their projects will need to wait until completion of the study. Ald. Rainey

disagreed and is afraid that, like other moratoriums, it would be extended again and again. Some projects would not be affected because they are in the 'pipeline' – further enough along in city hearings. Ald. Holmes brought up the issue of how 'pipeline' is defined. There is legal opinion about what is in the 'pipeline'. This includes issues of building permit, building analysis, etc.

All voted in favor of moratorium being introduced at this meeting.

Comments:

After an audience member spoke up about not hearing well, the aldermen began to use the mikes, which really do work if they speak into them. They finally may be convinced that the mikes are not just for recording purposes.

It was a large agenda, especially with the presentation of the Fountain Square project. Having two major development presentations in one night was too much. Ran overtime without completing agenda.