

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY OF FORT ATKINSON
AUGUST 11, 2015
952nd MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Trebatoski in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL.

Members present: Commissioners Frame, Zastrow, Hartwick, Highfield, Greenhalgh, City Engineer Andy Selle and City Manager Trebatoski.

Others Present: City Attorney Chris Rogers, Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Ebbert and Inspector Brian Juarez.

APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2015 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.

Comm. Hartwick moved to approve the July 14, 2015 minutes of the Planning Commission, seconded by Comm. Frame and approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVE REQUEST FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT ALLOWING BLACKHAWK SENIOR RESIDENCE TO EXPAND THEIR FACILITY INTO THE FIRST FLOOR OF THEIR EXISTING BUILDING, AS WELL AS THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS OF THE ADJACENT BUILDING AT 214 SOUTH MAIN STREET.

Engineer Selle introduced the request from Andrew Logan for expansion of his property at Blackhawk Senior Residence. He is seeking approval to expand into the first floor former restaurant space and into the first and second floors of the adjacent building at 214 S. Main Street. The intent is to leave the façade intact as much as possible. They are requesting transom windows be replaced where operable windows are. No additional signage is requested. The use would expand a current adult care facility.

Selle stated this is zoned C-5, Downtown Business District. A CBRF is a permitted use in a C-5 zoned district however the intent of the Ordinance was not to allow residential facilities on the first floor in the downtown district however this is not clearly depicted in the ordinance. Staff is requesting the Commission take no action on this item but to seek information on the request and further define the ordinance to assist the Commission in future planning. Selle further provided to Mr. Logan that he could be grandfathered in with any ordinance change. Selle added that off street parking is necessary for approving CBRF facilities and all building and housing code requirements must be met.

Additional, this property is a historically recognized structure and approval would be needed from the Historic Preservation Commission for any changes.

Pete Weston, The Design Alliance Architects addressed the Commission. He stated the Commission should consider this opportunity as an open door and allow this project to take place regardless of what is recorded in the zoning code. He feels this is a viable project for a struggling downtown. He added this is the only opportunity for this building to become housing as it is not allowed to re-open as an eating establishment. Weston stated parking should not be considered as the current tenants do not have vehicles nor do they drive. They are proposing minimal change and anticipate reusing materials when allowed.

Attorney Rogers expressed concern with the off street parking requirement as there is no designated parking lot for Blackhawk residents or employees.

Inspector Juarez stated the code was written with intent to not have residential on first floor of Main Street and fears allowing this request would set a precedent for future requests.

Selle stated that parking is required as one parking stall per resident and one parking stall per employee. He asked how many additional employees will be added to accommodate the increased units. Logan replied that since 1991, they have been leasing 10 parking spaces of an adjacent lot to fulfill the required needs for employees. He anticipates adding 1 – 2 staff. Logan said he does not provide parking for residents.

Comm. Greenhalgh asked Juarez if he knew how many buildings in the downtown have historical status. It was unknown at this time. She asked if this request would have to be handled differently having historic status. The request is being reviewed by the Historic Commission on August 13th.

Juarez expressed concern for adjacent businesses that may not be in favor of residential houses next to their storefront. He added that communities can request the main level be raised to have a privacy buffer from residents to public sidewalk or walkways.

Comm. Hartwick asked if the existing eating area of the former restaurant be used as the dining room. Logan replied that was not the plan.

Rogers asked Logan to clarify the parking. Logan stated he is renting 12 parking spaces from Mr. Bell. Juarez reiterated the code requiring adequate parking for residents and employees of CBRF facilities.

Comm. Hartwick asked if the use of the units could change in the future, could they become units for youth versus the elderly. Staff was unaware of any restrictions.

Logan replied that parking exists for meetings and visitors in the rear of the building.

Comm. Zastrow asked if this was part of a TIF district. Trebatoski stated he did not believe this property was included.

Logan discussed the new elevator to be added that will access the floors along with interior firewall doors between the buildings on Main Street. He discussed the safety features in the event of a fire. The first floor will be advantageous to non-ambulatory residents.

Weston discussed the exterior changes that are proposed to the recessed window areas on Main Street. They are hoping to salvage the appearance and materials. Logan added they may have to do a bit more work to the former Ameriprise office as the windows are not level with the windows of the Blackhawk. They will also attempt to match the character of the existing building.

Manager Trebatoski summarized that Attorney Rogers will meet with Mr. Weston to clarify the zoning code requirements. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT.

Comm. Zastrow moved to adjourn, seconded by Comm. Greenhalgh. The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Ebbert Clerk/Treasurer