

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF FORT ATKINSON
MINUTES
APRIL 27, 2010
881st MEETING**

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

Members present: Wilmet, Camplin, Rybicke and Woods

Members absent: Highfield and Stroinski

Others present: Brian Juarez, Kathy Smejkel, Julie Fritsche, Tony Deichl, Don Mayer, Laurie Laatsch, Timm Mephram, Joe Ester, Rob Williams, Paul Strohbusch, Hal Koenig and Mark Eberle

John Wilmet said that a request has been made to move Item #3 to the first discussion item because of a previous commitment the designer has, and if anyone on the Commission would object to moving that item. There was no objection from the Commission members.

Item #1: Review and Approve site plan for Glacier Trails Apartments, west of Klement Business Park on Janesville Avenue.

Jeff Woods said the property had recently been rezoned to R-3, Multi-Family Residential, and that multi-family apartments are a permitted use. The parcel is 562,795 square feet in size, with 83,635 square feet in wetland area that is not developable. This would leave 478,635 square feet of developable land. Based on the Code requirement of 3,000 square feet per unit would allow for 160 units on this parcel. They are proposing 120 units, which is below the maximum. The plan meets the setbacks; they are providing 70 feet in the front, 210 and 121 feet on the sides and 110 feet in the back. Code requires 50 feet front, 10 feet, with a total of 20 feet side, and 30 feet back. The building coverage is at 13%, total impervious at 36% and green space at 64%. The Code requires 35% maximum for buildings, 70% maximum for impervious and 30% minimum for green spaces. A permit for the sign will be submitted at a later date. The Fire Department has requested that the sign contain the address for the buildings. The plan provides for two stormwater detention ponds to address the runoff requirements. There will need to be a Construction Erosion Control Permit, because more than one acre of land will be disturbed. Based on the plan and our current Stormwater Utility, the fee for the completed development will be about \$1,700. There is a credit application the Developer might want to investigate to determine if a credit is possible. The development will be served by a private sanitary sewer main and a public water main. The water main can be reduced to 12-inches, with the connection to the existing 16-inch main revised to a tee and valve to allow for future extension of the 16-inch main. There will need to be proper clearances between the 12-inch main and the power poles, and the lateral connections need 5 feet of separation between each lateral. The plans for the public water main will need to be submitted to the State for their approval. A Developer's Agreement will be put in place to document the future assessment of the 12-inch main when it is extended. This document will be recorded with the property. The utility crossings and driveway openings will need to be approved by Jefferson County, because this section of Business 26 is

under their jurisdiction. There is an existing access easement for a farmer that goes across the property and this will need to be addressed with the farmer. The landscaping plan has been submitted, but the number of plantings in the buffer area does not meet Code requirements, because there is not enough room in the buffer area to contain all of the plantings. The plan proposes to add additional plants to the parcel to meet the total number. The Fire Department did have two additional items. The fire connections on each building will be discussed with the sprinkler design and a final approval given at that time. Each building needs to have a key box, to hold all of the needed keys for that building.

Cm. Camplin said that when this proposal first came to the Commission he indicated that this is the gateway to our community and that he is looking for something aesthetically distinct, and would continue the nice architecture that we have in the City. Cm. Camplin indicated that he finds this design to be aesthetically bankrupt. This is at an entrance way to the community and this will in some way brand and help sell the community. Cm. Camplin asked how many apartment complexes has TDI designed in Wisconsin?

Rob Williams, of TDI Associates, said they have done thousands of apartments and condo buildings in Wisconsin. The company has been in business for 30 years, so it is a large number.

Cm. Camplin asked that since they have done a large number if this design is one that could be plugged into this site, there wasn't much to consider except for the site itself. This would have been a design that was used before and could save the Developer some money in the design phase of a project.

Rob Williams said they have some standard layouts and designs that are used that are continually updated for Code requirements, and to change the architecture so the same building is not always being looked at. There is a general layout that makes sense to build larger buildings.

Cm. Camplin said that these buildings look like the same buildings he has seen in other communities that have a large apartment complex. The design of the buildings does not suit him, but he is only one person on the Commission. He then asked who initiated the idea to propose apartment buildings for this area.

Rob Williams said the property owner come to TDI with the idea to construct apartments on this parcel. The owner chose TDI for the design of the project based on past relationship with the company for design of commercial buildings.

Cm. Camplin said the new apartments will be filled up and will compete with the existing apartments that are in the City. He did not feel that there is a demand for additional apartment space and questioned the need for building more living space when there might not be any demand for them. He indicated that he is not in favor of this development; it could be injurious to existing property owners. The plan is not what he would like to see in this area. It distracts from the development that has already taken place in that area, Central Coast for example. This design goes in the direction that he does not want to see the gateway go, and he said that he would be looking at the design of these buildings when this proposal was originally brought in. This is a design that does not reflect the pride that the community is looking for and exhibits in many areas, and as such is not in favor of this plan as submitted.

Rob Williams said the lower, darker portion of the buildings will be brick and the upper lighter portion will be a vinyl siding. The building shown on the colored drawing with the lower exposure will be sited toward the bike trail/wooded area. The side exposed to Janesville Avenue will not have an exposed lower level, and will be the upper building on the drawing. This project has the landscaped buffer yard that is required in the Code. This will be an enhancement to the project and will have a berm and all of the landscaping. When that landscaping matures in 20 years, it will actually hide the building from view on Janesville Avenue. Mr. Williams asked if the City wants the architecture and gateway look, why are the landscaping requirements so dense that you can't see the buildings? The buildings and proposed landscaping will create a nice gateway entrance for people driving on Janesville Avenue. These people will not be driving through the development, so the only thing they can see is what is from the road.

When asked by Cm. Camplin, Rob Williams said the owner will be applying for HUD Financing for this project. It will not be subsidizing the project, but is just another way of getting a guaranteed loan. John Wilmet said there are other projects in the City that have HUD financing; mostly apartment buildings. Rob Williams said there is a lot of information that is required for a HUD loan and nothing has been submitted at this time.

Rob Williams said the schedule for construction is to do the work in phases. They will be built one at a time. The first one will be built and rented; and then the need determined for additional buildings before they are constructed. The first one to be built will be No. 5, which is the northern building closest to Janesville Avenue. They will not build all five buildings without any renters. In this economy it could take five years before all of the buildings are constructed.

Cm. Camplin said this development is unwarranted at this time, and the architecture is not something that he would want in Fort Atkinson. The use of a standardized design is something that he would like to resist, and do something that is more inventive that you would not want to hide.

John Wilmet said that he did not think there was a good way to build a medium income apartment complex with this many units that is both economical for the owner and architecturally attractive.

Pete Weston, of Design Alliance, said that he has not done any apartment design here in town and is not here to defend some work that might someday be his. The concern that he has as a taxpayer is that these apartments will be rented and filled up, and those people will be moving from other existing apartments. There may or may not be a need for these additional housing units. From a business model standpoint he does not feel that these units are needed at this time. The buildings themselves are aesthetically devoid of anything architectural; that is a matter of fact. The building should be redesigned, but he is not going to do it. The building is devoid of texture and the qualities that we would like it to have, but the business model won't always support the design that we want. As a taxpayer, he does not understand the business model.

Dennis Rybicke asked on what basis can we make our decision. John Wilmet said that based on the comments here today. He did not know if a market analysis had been done. Rob Williams said that an analysis had not been done at this time. John Wilmet said the City has not done anything to document the need for additional apartment units.

Cm. Camplin said that it is unfortunate that there is not a full Commission here today to discuss and react to this proposal. John Wilmet said this would be Dennis Rybickie's last meeting and then there would be two new members to complete the Commission. Our action would be to table, approve or deny the request.

Motion by Cm. Camplin to deny the approval of the site plan for Glacial Trails Apartments, west of Klement Business Park. The motion died for lack of a second.

Dennis Rybickie asked if the item would be tabled would that have an effect on the construction of the project. Rob Williams said they would like to start sometime before the winter season so the building could be closed in and construction could continue on the interior. There is still time to begin construction and have the building weather-proof before the winter. Rob Williams said they would look at providing a needs study for the units and would look at any architectural comments that would come from the Commission that could be incorporated into the design.

John Wilmet said the issue that he has is that the development turns in to a cluster development. It is not an apartment complex that is mixed in with other single family and duplex residential units. In other areas of the City, the apartments blend in with the surrounding development. Here it would not; it would be clustered and doesn't look like it is part of the community. Cm. Camplin said that he would even question the R-3 zoning, if we are going to create a development that is not part of the community. Rob Williams agreed that this area is separate from the rest of the community and the buildings are bigger than normal. But this area is across from the Business Park, where there are going to be larger buildings. If these buildings were small, then scale-wise when compared with the buildings in the park, they would look tiny. Also, the development would be separated from the rest of the community, but it would become an apartment complex for the residents.

Motion by Dennis Rybickie, seconded by Cm. Camplin, to table this item. The motion passed by a 4-0 voice vote.

Item #2: Review and approve request for conditional use for an Adult Family Home at 1103 Peterson Street (tabled at the April 13, 2010 meeting).

John Wilmet said that in order for discussion to take place on this item there would have to be a motion to remove it from the table. Motion by Dennis Rybickie, seconded by Cm. Camplin, to remove this item from the table. The motion passed by a 4-0 voice vote.

Jeff Woods said the parcel is currently zoned R-1, Single Family Residential, and an Adult Family Home requires a conditional use permit. The criteria used in the review of the permit are:

- The facility shall be licensed under Wisconsin Administrative Code HFS-83, which deal with the regulations and standards of care, treatment, health, safety, rights, welfare, and comfort of residents of a CBRF.
- The facility shall not create an unreasonable financial or administrative burden on Municipal Services, including Fire, Police, EMS, Water, Sanitary Sewer, Streets, and Park & Recreation.
- The facility shall provide adequate off-street parking, requiring one stall for each resident over 16 and one for each staff, at the most heavily staff shift.

- The facility shall meet the requirements of the City Building and Housing Codes.

The facility will have a maximum of four residents and two staff, which would require six parking stalls. There is parking in the garage for two vehicles and in the driveway for four vehicles, so they meet the parking requirements. The owners will need to get a waiver from the Council of the 2,500 foot and 1% population requirements. This will be requested at a future Council meeting. The notice was sent out to all of the adjacent property owners with 100 feet and there are several property owners here. If approved, the conditional use permit would be for Arbor House at this location.

John Wilmet said that it appears one of the reasons this item was tabled was that the owner of the property was not at the last meeting. Kathy Smejkel apologized for not attending the last meeting; she did not know that her attendance was required.

Julie Fritsche, who will be living at the house, addressed questions from the audience. She indicated the residents would be downs-syndrome and mentally disabled. As far as the number of people at the house, there would be two staff members, two permanent residents and one space for respite care, for a total of five. Respite care is for temporary care for a resident whose caregiver is going on vacation or needs a rest themselves. They would have three, but are asking the State to license them for four. Eventually the staff bedroom would move into the basement, leaving the main floor three bedrooms for the residents.

Dennis Rybicke said there was also a question of vehicles and parking. At most, there would be four vehicles, with two in the garage and two in the driveway. If there would be additional vehicles, there is still room for an additional two vehicles in the driveway. Kathy Smejkal said that if there would be any in-staff training or meetings it would not take place here but at a different location.

Don Mayer, 1110 Peterson, asked what the maximum number of people that would be living at the house. Julie Fritsche said the maximum number of people at the house will be five. Don Mayer said his main concern with the number of people is that the house is very small, and that is a lot of people to be living there. John Wilmet said they will get a license from the State that will give them the maximum number of people that are allowed in the house. They cannot go over that number without going back to the State to get their license revised.

Motion by Cm. Camplin, seconded by Dennis Rybicke, to approve the conditional use for an Adult Family Home at 1103 Peterson Street for Arbor House. The motion passed by a 4-0 voice vote.

Item #3: Review and approve site plan for new building at Blodgett's Garden Center, 1222 Janesville Avenue.

Jeff Woods said this property is zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial. A garden center is a conditional use, which they have. The proposal is to move and construct several buildings on the existing lot. A new 15' x 15' gazebo-check out structure will be built in the display area. The existing 20' x 48' greenhouse will be relocated south toward the lot line. The existing 30' x 70' greenhouse will remain where it is, but a new 20' x 80' covered tarp area will be added to the north side. A future 35' x 35' maintenance shop building will be constructed on the north side of

the lot. Along Janesville Avenue, a new parking area will be constructed in the southeast corner of the parcel. A new landscape wall will be constructed to separate the new parking area from the display and sales area. The site plan meets the setback and lot coverage requirements. The project will remove eight parking stalls, but create 18 stalls for a total of 33 stalls that are provided. Based on the Code, the required number of stalls is 33. There will be no change in signage, lighting or storm drainage as a result of this project. There will not need to be a Stormwater Erosion Control Permit because they will be disturbing less than one acre of land. The proposed plan will change their Stormwater Utility Fee based on the change in impervious area. This will be adjusted at the end of the project.

Brain Juarez asked if there was a handicapped parking stall that will be part of the project. Laurie Laatsch, of Blodgett's, said there is a handicapped parking stall that is currently in front of the entrance to the store that will remain after the project. Brian Juarez said that only one stall is required by Code, and that stall needs to be a van accessible stall.

Timm Mephram added that as part of this project the main store building will be resided, reroofed and the front porch entrance area will be rebuilt. The new layout will give better flow and display areas and will eliminate the drive through traffic that is there now. It will be safer and operate better.

Motion by Dennis Rybicke, seconded by Cm. Camplin, to approve the site plan for the new buildings for Blodgett's Garden Center at 1222 Janesville Avenue. The motion passed by a 4-0 voice vote.

Item #4: Review and approve site plan for parking lot and detention pond for Opportunities, Inc., 200 East Cramer Street.

Jeff Woods said the proposed development is on the north side of East Cramer Street, for their proposed parking lot and detention pond. The parcel is zoned M-2, Heavy Industrial, and parking is an approved use. The parking lot is needed to provide the required parking stalls that will be displaced as a result of proposed building program on their main lot. The new lot will provide 68 stalls. The lot coverage, as calculated when the construction is completed, is 46% for building coverage, 79% for impervious coverage, and 21% for green spaces. All of these meet the Code requirements. The setbacks will meet the Code requirements. There will not be any change to the signage or lighting for this project. The construction of the lot and pond may or may not need a Construction Site Erosion Control Permit, they are close to the one acre cut-off. This will need to be investigated further. The addition of the parking lot will affect their Stormwater Utility Fee, which will be adjusted when the construction is completed. The pond will be removing 28% of the sediment, as opposed to the 40% that is required. The City's ordinance does allow for a "maximum extent practical" if the requirement cannot be met. With the size of the lot and the high ground water, the pond could not be constructed deep enough to meet the 40% removal requirement. This is the best that can be achieved from this site. They have not submitted a landscaping plan; Jeff Woods recommended that a plan for the completed project be submitted at the end instead of submitting several small plans.

Brian Juarez suggested that if the site plan for the lot and pond would be approved, it should be made contingent on the future submittal of a landscaping plan that will cover this area.

Motion by Dennis Rybicke, seconded by Cm. Camplin, to approve the site plan for a parking lot and detention pond for Opportunities, Inc., 200 East Cramer Street, contingent on the future submittal of the landscaping plan for this project. The motion passed by a 4-0 voice vote.

Item #5: Approval of Minutes and Adjournment.

A motion to approve the Minutes of the April 13, 2010 meeting was made by Cm. Camplin, seconded by Dennis Rybicke, and passed by a 4-0 voice vote. A motion to adjourn was made by Dennis Rybicke, seconded by Cm. Camplin, and passed by a 4-0 voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey L. Woods, P.E.
Secretary