

Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
June 16, 2010
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: A. Parent, J. Hickey. Chairman; C. Rypma, C. Gornowich, T. Schweitzer, T. Byle, D. Brown, and M. Huizenga. Absent: T. Korfhage. Also Present: F. Wash, Planning Director, and P. Dlouhy, CDD-Planning Asst.

Chairman Hickey opened the meeting and C. Rypma gave the invocation.

Approval of Minutes - May 19, 2010

Motion by C. Gornowich, supported by T. Byle to approve the minutes of May 19, 2010.
Motion carried.

General Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

Case #10-573 – Standale Downtown District City Sponsored Rezonings –
Public Hearing

Chairman Hickey read the item for the city-sponsored rezoning of sixty (60) parcels between Wilson and Kinney, along Lake Michigan Dr. (M-45) consistent with the Standale Downtown Ordinance Regulating Plan.

Motion by D. Brown, supported by C. Gornowich, to open the public hearing. Motion carried.

Planner Wash reviewed his staff report. He provided REGIS orientation to the subject area.. Wash related that this effort involves implementation of the new Standale Downtown District Zoning Ordinance. He reviewed the process to date, including master plan implementation, the 4-corners project and two open houses.

Wash reviewed the Standale Downtown District Regulating Plan. Wash also reviewed the current zoning maps, the Downtown Standale Master Plan Map, the 2009 Color Ortho photos with selected properties, and the highlighted parcels for rezoning, including lots owned by city or DDA.

Wash related that notices were sent to property owners of parcels proposed for rezoning. Wash stated that public hearing notices were sent in accordance with the State of Michigan

law. He related that this rezoning proposal will include a recommendation to the City Commission.

Wash related that a total of sixty (60) parcels are proposed for rezoning. The parcels cover approximately sixty-seven (67) acres. These parcels are noted as “Primary and Secondary Frontage Zones” on the SDD Regulating Plan. Wash related that the city owns 5 properties in this proposed district.

Member Schweitzer asked about residential properties within the district and if they were also planned for rezoning? Planner Wash stated that the city was not going to initiate rezoning of any existing residential single family properties/ homes, as this would create non-conforming issues for the houses.

There were no public comments offered.

Motion by M. Huizenga, supported by A. Parent, to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

Motion by M. Huizenga, supported by C. Gornowich, to recommend approval to the Walker City Commission for the rezoning of sixty (60) parcels, consistent with the Standale Downtown District (SDD) Ordinance Regulating Plan for Primary and Secondary Frontage Zones, from commercial, office and industrial to Standale Downtown District (SDD). Motion carried 8-0.

Discussion Item: Dolci and VanPortfliet Commercial Zoning
– Wilson and Remembrance Area

Planner Wash related that this is a discussion item only. The Planning Commission introduced this item at the May 19th meeting. Wash included several REGIS maps with his staff report, including:

1. 2009 color orthophotos with parcels highlighted in purple.
2. 2010 zoning showing the existing commercial classifications.
3. 1998 master plan map showing “LDR” future land use designation.
4. Current public water and sewer lines plus spot elevations.

The Planning Commission should examine the current master plan, existing zoning, and discuss what happens if Wilson Avenue widens to five lanes.

The subject property owners, the Dolci’s and VanPortfliet’s, were present.

Wash reviewed his staff analysis and recommendation and indicated that this item is significant from a strategic planning and zoning standpoint.

Wash related that Wilson is not on the state's "radar" now, but if this becomes a project for MDOT, it would likely result in a 5-lane cross-section from the Grand River to Remembrance Road. To avoid converting the M-11 Wilson Avenue corridor into another East Beltline or Alpine Avenue, the City of Walker has adopted master plans and zoning ordinances to prevent such an occurrence.

Wash stated that the Dolci property is zoned C-2 and C-1, and one half of both long-lots owned by the VanPortfliet's are zoned C-2. Wash stated that the current situation is there are 40 acres zoned commercial, almost all are vacant .

Planner Wash asked the planning commission if the 1998 master plan designation of "LDR" Low Density Residential is still appropriate for these parcels?

Wash stated that the intersection of Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson is 5 lanes. Other Wilson Avenue intersections have been improved. Richmond and Wilson will eventually be improved.

Member Huizenga asked what would be typical for intersection improvements for the intersection near Remembrance Road? Member Byle stated that a round-about might work. He stated it is set up for a 5-lane cross-section both ways.

Vito Dolci stated that he doesn't remember how long ago it was when he bought the property; maybe 15-20 years ago. He said there isn't anything on the books right now as far as possible development. He would like it to stay the same commercial zoning. Vito stated that he has considerable costs invested with this property, taxes, appraisal, etc. The intent is to develop it commercially at some point.

Chairman Hickey asked Vito Dolci if he has had any conversations with the VanPortfliets to the west? Vito stated no. Vito felt that there is a good buffer where the church starts for a residential buffer along Wilson Avenue.

Member Schweitzer asked what the right-of-way is in this area along Wilson Ave.? Planner Wash state 100 feet. If MDOT goes through with a project, it maybe 120', but that is totally preliminary at this point.

Member Parent stated if we leave it at C-2, could there be a condition for driveways to be off of Remembrance, not Wilson Avenue?

Planner Wash stated that there could be a reasonable argument, with 1,700 feet of frontage along M-11, to have the right to access once or twice on Wilson Avenue.

Chairman Hickey stated that the M-11 access management plan showed 450 feet between driveways. He stated that there would be no way through the businesses on Remembrance, as

it would be too close to the intersection. The most we would be looking at is (2) driveways, to be in accordance with the M-11 access management plan.

Planner Wash stated as far as uses go, we would be looking at permitted uses in the C-1 and C-2 district. If a project came in now and it met all the standards of the ordinance, it should be approved.

Member Schweitzer added that this might be appropriate for a commercial node as opposed to strip commercial frontage.

Planner Wash stated that a buffer between residential development and this prospective commercial property would be required but might not be significant.

Member Huizenga stated that we should have a focused approach. He felt that traffic information and design standards should be updated for the area. He stated that the planning commission should take deliberate time to see what will fit and not fit. There should be a reasonable compromise between the uses allowed in the future on these properties.

Member Byle stated that we need to decide how to buffer the two properties from the residential plat to the west.

Planner Wash stated that we can initiate a master plan exercise, like we did for the Cabela's site.

Member Huizenga stated that the planning commission will work with the owners and MDOT to make good use of the property.

Chairman Hickey stated that a round table discussion would be beneficial to all.

Member Rypma asked what does Planner Wash see happening to the homes on Wilson? It was determined that these are mostly rental homes; master planned for "office."

Mr. and Mrs. VanPortfliet stated that they are not interested in rezoning to commercial; they prefer to leave their properties residential. Mr. VanPortfliet stated there is too much truck traffic coming from Grandville to the North Ridge Industrial Park. Mrs. Van Portfliet asked if they will be forced into selling their land. Planner Wash stated no, land owners initiate sales.

Member Byle added a problem is that Tallmadge Township doesn't allow truck traffic, and Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue is the only way to go with trucks.

Mrs. VanPortfliet stated that the only way they would consider selling is if they sell their house and properties together.

Member Brown is concerned about a buffer if the property is developed commercially. Planner Wash stated if the back half of the VanPortfliet lots was changed from commercial to residential, a 20' buffer would be required.

Member Schweitzer stated that MDOT's involvement would be beneficial.

Chairman Hickey stated that Planner Wash should start working with MDOT.

Planner Wash stated that we can reserve a meeting for September 15, 2010 for a master plan sub- area plan session. Wash stated that he will keep the property owners and MDOT informed. We will have a session like we did for Orchard Park.

Chairman Hickey stated that he would appreciate some good ideas from the property owners. He appreciated all of the comments.

Commissioner and Staff Update

The next meeting will be held on July 7th – Millenium Park boat House site plan review.

Adjournment

Motion by A. Parent, supported by D. Brown, to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried.

Administrative Approval

Carol Gornowich, Secretary
Walker Planning Commission

