

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD JANUARY 13, 2016, 6:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor St. Marie-Carls at 6:37 PM.

Members present: Mayor St. Marie-Carls, Alderperson Debbie Fliss, Commission Members Eric Stemwell, Rick Grubanowitch, Charles Buechel, Eric Manders and Tom Kiepczynski.

Also present: Alderpersons Mike McSweeney, and Ray Klug, City Engineer/Director of Public Works Melinda Dejewski, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Craig Vretenar, Library Director Amy Krahn, Special Projects/Code Compliance Coordinator Todd Willis, SR Mills, Tim Mahone, Dan Szczap and Joe Schwenker of Bear Development, Tom Miller of Kahler Slater Architects, Pat Kressin of Graef, Dean Frederick of Thomson Companies, Paul Keehan of Sherman Associates Development, Colin Kaas of Wilson Architects, Richard Sciortino and Mike Rhone of Brinshore Development, PJ Early, Robert Zingara, Ann Carter-Drier, Richard Adamczewski, Shawn Feirer and other interested citizens.

1. Call to Order

2. Minute Approval

A motion was made by Alderwoman Fliss, seconded by Commissioner Kiepczynski to approve all the minutes as listed on the agenda. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

None. Comments related to agenda items would be heard under that item.

4. Discussion and Possible Action – Comprehensive Plan

A. Review of Final Draft

Mayor St. Marie-Carls explained the comprehensive plan and the review process that had occurred to date. City Engineer Dejewski added that she had reviewed the clarifying information that Graef had provided and suggested that Graef come to further explain the information they had provided. No action was taken on this item. It will be on the next agenda.

B. Resolution Recommending Adoption of an Update City of St. Francis Smart Growth Plan

No action was taken on this item. It will be on the next agenda.

4. Discussion and Possible Action – Bear Development – Next Steps

Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that at the last meeting, there had not been enough time to look over the items presented under the Next Steps agenda item. The Next Steps item is to introduce the interior and exterior concepts for the building as well as some additional information regarding the site.

SR Mills of Bear Development provided an overview of where the project was in the approval process. He stated that the design of the buildings and the site, to a point, are still being reviewed and refined. They have changed the pool area to be an outdoor pool instead of the indoor pool but the space will be upgraded. They have done soil borings to get the structural soil data needed to construct buildings and work on the environmental part of the development. Pat Kressin of Graef explained that the grades are being refined to get as much of a lake view as possible and the stormwater is still being done regionally as it was designed to be many years ago. Mr. Mills added that they are working with the Wisconsin DOT and the City on the second access. The main access will be at Tesch and there will be a second access. It is just a matter of whether the second access is public or emergency only. Their preference is public.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls asked each commission member for their questions and comments on the site plan. Commissioner Manders asked why there was a regional stormwater plan. Mr. Kressin stated that the entire

site had been pre-engineered and approved many years ago. Commissioner Grubanowitch questioned if there was still enough capacity in the regional system. Mr. Kressin stated that it could handle the entire Bear Development as presented. Commissioner Kiepczynski asked if the entrance on Tesch would be similar to the Park Shore entrance at Howard. Mr. Kressin stated that it would be similar to what exists on the site today. If the lake can be seen today, it will be able to be seen in the future. The site is being designed to slope toward the lake. Building Inspector Vretenar asked if the artificial berm was being removed. Mr. Kressin and Mr. Mills responded that any part of the berm that is on the property would be leveled off and that they are not raising the grade to try to achieve views of the lake.

Tom Miller of Kahler-Slater presented the architectural renderings of the buildings. He stated that the Bear team had received many comments from the neighborhood meeting held on Monday, January 11, 2016 at the Lion's Center. Their key considerations for the buildings are: very high quality materials which weather well and they want the development to be marketable across generations. They are also concerned with how well do the buildings relate to the neighboring developments. Park shore has 5 story buildings and Bear is 3 or 4 story. The adjacent buildings have gabled roofs but the Bear proposal does not but they have parapets and screens for the HVAC units. Also they heard concerns that the buildings looked very stark. They are investigating more relatable colors. There are additional color alternates in the materials handed out. The configuration of the buildings works well on the site with the wrapping around the courtyards. It allows every apartment to have a balcony. Commissioner Stemwell stated that Park Shore has peaked roofs but there is no peaks proposed for the Bear Development. Bruce Peacock of Park Shore suggested adding parapets to screen the HVAC since their midrise buildings have fake peaks. Mr. Miller stated that the buildings will have parapets and screens for the HVAC units. Commissioner Stemwell continued that he thought that the buildings were too sharp and if the edges could be softened, they would blend better. Mayor St. Marie-Carls added that the FBI building was using some new screening materials that were very weather resistant. Commissioner Grubanowitch stated that he appreciates how Bear is taking the citizen comments seriously. Commissioner Kiepczynski added that he likes that Bear has added alternatives to review. Commissioner Manders stated that the buildings have good proportion and lots of depth. He thinks that the landscape and the human scale are very pedestrian friendly. He also thinks that the materials are complementary to the other developments. It makes the area look like a campus – not all the buildings look alike but all are similar in materials and color scheme so they look like they go together. Alderwoman Fliss stated that she knows that it is a work in progress and there will be changes along the way.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls then took comments from the public.

Bob Zingara of 4049 S. Lake Drive

He stated that he lives across the street from the development. He is concerned about the colors. He wants the colors to tie in more to The Landing and Park Shore. He appreciates all the work Bear is doing. He also stated that sitting in a car, Lake Michigan cannot be seen. He thinks that the land needs to be level with Lake Drive to see the lake. City Engineer Dejewski stated that the sidewalk is sloped toward the street and that cannot change. Bear can only change the grade from the property line east.

Mike Meador of 3872 S. Lake Drive #304

He stated that Park shore has a balcony issue that they have wood balconies so they cannot have grills on the balconies. He has been both an proponent and an opponent of the project. He opposes using the land for a park as was suggested by others. He want the project to be of a quality that matches the neighbors. He was surprised at the design. It is a design they are doing in the Third Ward and elsewhere. He has spent time researching developments in St. Francis. Almost all of them are red brick and stone. He is suggesting that Bear look at building in brick and stone. The River West area is also building in brick and stone.

Bruce Peacock of 3930 S. Lake Drive #107

He stated that he has received on question from people in the Park Shore complex. Their concern is that if the apartments do not rent, that the development will change to low income housing. He would like a guarantee that Bear will not change.

Alderman Ray Klug

He agrees with Mr. Peacock. Mr. Klug then quoted the draft Comprehensive Plan regarding housing statistics in St. Francis.

Kathy Carey of 4069 S. Lake Drive

She inquired if there was a view of the development from Lake Drive available. Mr. Miller showed a board with an architectural rendering of the proposed development from Lake Drive at Tesch. She understands that it is just a rendering but what are the chances that the style will change. She does not like the style because she does not believe it is timeless.

Commissioner Grubanowitch asked which building would be built first. Mr. Mills stated that they are planning on starting with the center building, then the northern building and last would be the southern building. He also stated that views of Lake Michigan are a marketing benefit so they understand the importance of being able to see the lake from Lake Drive.

Building Inspector Vretenar questioned the staging of the construction and the construction materials. Mr. Mills stated that there would be a schedule included in the developers agreement.

Alderman Klug inquired about when the construction is anticipated to start. Commissioner Grubanowitch asked how long the project would take to complete. Mr. Mills stated that the project was scheduled to start with grading in the spring of this year and that it would take about 4 years to complete. But the completion and when the buildings start is based upon prelease sales.

The presentation was concluded and no action was taken on this item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grubanowitch, seconded by Alderwoman Fliss to suspend the agenda to move to the Sherman and Associates Introduction under Discussion and Possible Action items since it is a concept for another lakefront development. Motion carried.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls introduced Paul Keenan of Sherman Associates Development and Colin Kaas of Wilson Architects who were there to introduce a concept for a possible development on the lakefront.

Mr. Keenan introduced the firm of Sherman Associates Development. They are from Minnesota and have done independent and assisted living developments around the area. They are currently working on a development in Shorewood. This proposal is for 100-160 independent living apartments and 80-120 assisted living apartments. They are not proposing to use tax credits. They believe that there are 1000-1100 available renters in the area and that their development will pull from a larger area than just the south shore.

Mr. Kaas continued with the presentation of the architectural concepts. He stated that the target ages for the development is 55 and older. There are 2 buildings proposed connected by a center community area. They are starting to look at the view corridors. This development is proposed to have many amenities including possibly a small putting green. It is important for the buildings to connect. Often couples move into independent living but one then has to move to the assisted living part. With the buildings connected, they can easily meet and have time together. There is no skilled nursing so the development needs to be walkable. The Bear Development is targeting a younger demographic but the two developments can work together. The Sherman Associates development will probably have a more traditional design but a more modern approach is good in the area to draw many people to the area.

Commissioner Grubanowitch thought the presentation was good and likes the concept. He also asked how many stories the buildings would be and what size the units would be. Commissioner Manders stated that when he looked at the material examples, they appear to be stucco and/or cement board. He would want to see better materials. He also thought that the building was too long; that it needed to be broken up. Commissioner Kiepczynski inquired as to who would be responsible for the management of the facility. Mr. Keenan stated that Sherman Associates would hire a firm to be the on-site management and that the buildings would be 4 stories. Commissioner Stemwell questioned how will be development transition as the demand for senior housing goes down; what will the development be repurposed to.

Mr. Kaas responded that they have seen many individuals transition into apartments and assisted living. As people age they need more help and less space and there is more money spent on the services offered than the rent. The demographic projections show a continuous pipeline of seniors in need of this type of development so they anticipate that there will always be a demographic to serve. He continued that the unit sizes in the independent living are around 1500 square feet and will generally be 2 bedrooms and a den. The assisted living will be 450-750 square feet and only one bedroom. The design concepts are still working on storage and how to help people transition into downsizing their homes. Each part of the development has different amenities. The independent living has fitness equipment compared to the assisted living which has more chair exercise space.

Alderman Fliss stated that she likes the concept and understands the need for the development. She also believes that the developer has heard the importance of the lake and its views. Mayor St. Marie-Carls agreed with Alderman Fliss especially on the additional view corridors. She then received comments from the public.

Alderman Ray Klug

He stated that the proposed building looks like a wall. He also asked about the parking. Mr. Kaas responded that assisted living needs less parking than the independent living.

Mike Meador of 3872 S. Lake Drive #304

He would like to see the materials on the building be red brick and stone.

That concluded the presentation. No action was taken on this item.

4. Discussion and Possible Action – St. Francis Animal Hospital Letter of Intent

Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that this item was on the last agenda but the Commission did not have a lot of time to have a full discussion on the proposal. She also stated that she had asked the City Assessor to develop a value for the land which was determined to be \$110,000. The Hospital will need to spend some additional money on engineering because the site is unique. Lastly, their former building will not be converted to residential; it will stay commercial.

Commissioner Stemwell suggested that the City investigate purchasing 3872 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue and combining it with the property that the City already owns. Then that lot could be included in the sale of land to the Hospital. The Hospital is a good fit on the corner of Howard and Kinnickinnic but it would be a better fit if the property at 3872 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue were included in the transaction. A motion was made by Commissioner Stemwell, seconded by Alderman Fliss to recommend to the Common Council to consider the purchase of the property at 3872 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue to be combined with existing City property on the northeast corner of E. Howard Avenue and S. Kinnickinnic Avenue and to negotiate the sale based upon the letter of intent of all or part of the City owned property at the aforementioned location to the St. Francis Animal Hospital

There was discussion on the motion. Commissioner Kiepczynski asked if the structure was north of south of the drainage ditch. It was clarified that the structure was north of the drainage ditch.

Shawn Feirer of 3036 E. Waterford Avenue

He stated he did not believe that this development should be held up by the sale of an additional property. It is important to have quality development and retain good businesses.

Motion carried.

4. Discussion and Possible Action – 4235 S. Nicholson Ave Site – RFP Review

Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that Requests for Proposals had been sent out for the redevelopment of the site. The City received two RFPs. Special Projects/Code Compliance Coordinator Todd Willis updated the Commission on the status of the existing building razing. He stated that the contractor is waiting for the asbestos to be removed and the gas and electricity to be removed. Once those are accomplished, the building can be razed.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls then introduced the two firms that submitted the RFPs. They were Bear Development and Brinshore. Mayor St. Marie-Carls had Bear present first to the Commission.

SR Mills and Joe Schwenker of Bear Development presented their proposal for the redevelopment of the site. Mr. Mills gave a historical prospective of workforce housing and how it changed in 1986 from “government housing” to housing of all ranges of rents. He continued that workforce housing is not appropriate for all locations and all communities but it can help to solve problems. Workforce housing is usually not utilized for new sites but more for redevelopment and typically has a high degree of participation from multiple agencies in the funding of the project. This project is proposed as a workforce project and would necessitate financial assistance from the City and State. The WHEDA application would not be submitted until 2017. Only one-third of the applicants who submit to WHEDA are successful. Bear has been working on a 57 unit workforce project in Cudahy which opens tomorrow. There were 8 sources of funding. Bear is committed to quality and recognizes the need for public participation in the process.

Mr. Schwenker of Bear Development stated that he has gotten to know the market in the area from working in Cudahy and in St. Francis. Infill development is difficult at times. They believe that there is a gap in workforce housing in the area based upon the market analysis they have done. One positive for the project is the library across the street. Their proposal is for a 60 unit, 3 story building with 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units. There would be 60 underground parking stalls and the materials would be masonry and hardy plank. Mr. Schwenker showed a drawing of what they were proposing for the site.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls thanked Bear for their presentation and introduced Brinshore.

Richard Sciortino and Mike Rhone represented Brinshore Development. They have partnered with Excel Architects from Fond du Lac and BCM LLC as the general contractor.

Mr. Sciortino gave some background on Brinshore Development. Brinshore is located in Northbrook, Illinois. They have developments all around the area including Milwaukee Wisconsin. Their most recent development in the area is Century City Lofts on Capital Drive in Milwaukee. It is workforce housing to support the redevelopment of an industrial park in the City. Their proposal is very conceptual. They are proposing 37-40 units all being 2 or 3 bedroom. They also see the library across the street as an asset to the development. They want to complement the library by incorporating community rooms in their development and do cross-programming with the library. They are considering veterans as a target market in the area. Their buildings would be energy star compliant and utilize current conservation techniques. Also the development would have a fitness room, in-room laundry, on site management and an area of secure bike parking. Mr. Sciortino then presented the financing plan which included financing from many

different entities including WHEDA and the City. If they were successful in the RFP process, their application to WHEDA would be helped if there was seller financing for the land.

Alderwoman Fliss stated that it is early in the process and she is interested in learning more as the process moves forward. At that time, Alderwoman was excused from the meeting.

Commissioner Stemwell stated that senior housing was mentioned. St. Francis is strong in senior housing. It has many senior housing developments so developers may not want to pursue senior housing. He does like both proposals. Commissioner Grubanowitch stated that he appreciated the efforts and both look beautiful however he believes that St. Francis has enough workforce housing. He also stated that he lives across from the proposed development site. He believes 4 stories as proposed by Bear is too high but understands that 2 stories many not make the development feasible. He also mentioned that the library is utilizing the parking lot of the site now and parking is a challenge for the library. He thinks that 60 units would take up too much parking space. He thinks that market rate apartments would work on the site. Commissioner Kiepczynski stated that the density and size seems too big for the site. He is considered about parking and traffic especially with the school so close. He would like a less dense proposal. He is concerned about the gap that the City would have to fund. Commissioner Manders stated that the area is successful because the 2 sites [library and former City Hall] work together. He thinks that pitched roofs will blend better. He also thinks that shielding the apartments to the west helps but need to look at the scale and break up the building. He suggested a "front yard" concept. City Engineer Dejewski stated that parking was a very big concern of the entire area as well as traffic flow. Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that she talked to the School Superintendent and he stated that the schools need families. Workforce housing often provides families. Commissioner Grubanowitch asked the developers if there had been any consideration to market rate on the site. Both stated that they did not believe that an all market rate development would be feasible on that site. Mr. Mills also stated that 60 units is a "sweet spot" in the WHEDA funding program. Commissioner Stemwell inquired if both developers can compete with WHEDA at the same time for the same site or does the City have to choose a developer first. It was stated that to be able to apply for WHEDA funding, the site must be secured so only one developer would be able to apply. Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that both proposals were similar. The Bear proposal had a larger request for City funding because the number of units was larger than the Brinshore proposal. So the question to the developers was "Why should the City chose you?"

Mr. Sciortino stated that they, as a firm, partner with local community groups to work together to be successful. They envision working with veterans in the area. They also often partner in other ways such as supporting initiatives like a sinking fund to support the library. They want to work with the community.

Mr. Mills stated that they want a partner on the public process. They will be flexible on the unit count and the parking may drive the unit count. Mr. Schwenker added that they believe they have a good handle on the local market due to the development they have in Cudahy.

Library Director Amy Krahn state that families are good for the library and they like the idea of families across the street. She continued that the library is lacking parking and that the green space adjacent to the library may have to go away to supply more parking. So any effort the new development can make to assist in those areas would be appreciated.

Ann Carter-Drier of 4110 S. Lake Drive #48

She inquired about underground parking. Mr. Schwenker stated that their proposal included underground parking.

Shawn Feirer of 3036 E. Waterford Avenue

He stated that St. Francis schools do not have enough St. Francis students to help with the costs. Lots of effort has gone into senior housing and condos are high end but no one is building family housing. The

current low income housing is not up to standards. St. Francis is not drawing families in because it does not have affordable houses. St. Francis needs to have a way to attract young families. Once those families are “on their feet”, they are already invested in the community so often they will stay.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that the Planning Commission has discussed the former City Hall site many times. Developers have not gotten to hear comments from the Planning Commission and Library until tonight. They will need to look at their market research and the area. Synergy is important and families are important not only to the schools but to the library also.

Commissioner Grubanowitch stated that these types of projects are a hot button so could the Council give direct to the Planning Commission on the WHEDA component. Alderman McSweeney stated that not all alderpersons may completely understand the WHEDA process and may need time to gain additional information to understand. He also inquired if there was any minimum income requirement for workforce housing. Mr. Sciortino stated that there are compliance aspects of the WHEDA application but no one typically comes to check after the project is complete. The reason developments are kept up to standards is due to the need of the developer to keep their reputation good. Mr. Schwenker stated that the income range to qualify for workforce housing is \$15,000 to \$45,000 compared to market rate which would be \$50,000 to \$60,000. In Cudahy, the absolute minimum monthly rent is \$412 and the maximum is \$730 per month.

PJ Early of 2921 E. Whittaker Avenue

She asked how WHEDA projects affect taxes for the City. Mr. Schwenker stated that generally the City would collect about \$1000/unit in taxes.

Commissioner Grubanowitch inquired if the City would move forward, could the developers consider the Norwich Avenue site.

Richard Adamczewski of 2513 E. Van Norman Avenue

He stated that getting a recommendation from the Council may not help since it is an election year and there may be new Council members who would want to go a different direction.

Mayor St. Marie-Carls stated that she would send the WHEDA funding information that she has to the Council for their information and that this item would be placed under Unfinished Business for discussion in February.

4. Discussion and Possible Action – Clarification of roles of the Planning Commission in economic development issues in relation to that to the Community Development Authority

This will be on the next agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stemwell, seconded by Commissioner Manders to receive and file the report and review at a future meeting as it relates to the comprehensive plan. Motion carried.

5. Adjourn

The next meeting will be January 27, 2016 at 6:30pm. A motion was made by Commissioner Kiepczynski, seconded by Commissioner Stemwell to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:28pm.