

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD MAY 25, 2022, 6:30 PM**

Members Present: Mayor Ken Tutaj, Alderman Steve Wattawa, Commission Members Eric Stemwell, Tom Kiepczynski, Tim Niemiec, Richard Lentz and Charles Buechel.

Excused: None.

Also present: Alderman Don Brickner, Alderman Matt Damon, City Administrator Mark Johnsrud, City Engineer/Director of Public Works Melinda Dejewski, City Attorney Paul Alexy, Deputy City Clerk Rebecca Gagnon, Police Officer Conrad, representing Maker's Village Tom Gralewicz and Daniel Jonke, representing 3700 S. Lake Drive Mike Campbell, representing 4548 S. Delaware Avenue David and Susan Melaven, and other interested citizens.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Tutaj at 6:30pm.

2. Public Hearing

Front Yard Decorative Fence Permit Application – 4548 S. Delaware Avenue

Mayor Tutaj declared the Public Hearing open.

Tom Jones -2617 E. Armour Avenue

Mr. Jones stated that he lives 2 houses down from the fence house. He is an advocate for it. He stated it looks nice as a split rail fence. He is 100% for it. It will not block views. He used to work for parks and they used split wood for fences. He is 100% for it.

David Melaven – 4548 S. Delaware Avenue

Mr. Melaven stated he is the property owner. He feels it would be aesthetically pleasing. He asked if the Commission had any questions for him. He stated that this has been an ongoing process for 10 months but it had nothing to do with St. Francis. It was the timing in the year. The biggest concern was that it would inhibit view left or right. He looked at it and from the north on Delaware, to go east or west on Armour, not an issue. It will be an asset.

Commissioner Kiepczynski asked why a fence now.

Mr. Melaven replied he moved in on Labor Day of 2015 and has wanted to do the project for a while.

Commissioner Kiepczynski asked if there was a setback for the fence.

City Administrator Johnsrud stated that if not the front yard, the it has to be even with the front of the house. The address is on Delaware and it is the corner of Delaware and Armour.

Commissioner Kiepczynski asked if it was 2 or 3 rails.

Mr. Melaven responded that the fence is on his property, 2 feet in from the sidewalk, 2 feet into the interior of the yard. The fence is 2 rails with 3 foot posts.

Commissioner Kiepczynski stated that he has lived on corners all of his life and he understands about corners.

Mr. Melaven stated why install? It is purely for aesthetics. He did not know it would require so much.

Commissioner Stemwell stated that there is a similar fence next to the low he owns. It has been up for 10 years and needs to be taken down for replacement. What is Mr. Melaven's thoughts?

Mr. Melaven stated that he has driven around St. Francis to see how other fences look. One side of the cemetery not aesthetic looking. He will be installing 100% cedar, no dowel rods in post. He will have the post secured by a metal post. Overall lifespan doesn't know but is told that cedar is by far the best for longevity. If it became an eyesore to you, it would be an eyesore to him sooner. He would fix or take it down.

Commissioner Kiepczynski asked about a preservative.

Mr. Melaven stated when cedar is used, a preservative is not needed to keep out bugs and rot.

Commissioner Lentz asked if the posts would be cemented.

Mr. Melaven stated yes. They are 6 foot long posts – 3 feet in the ground and 3 feet above ground.

Tom Jones - 2617 E. Armour Avenue

Mr. Jones stated that most fences are pressure treated. Cedar is good wood and better looking than other fences.

Don Brickner – 2738 E. Denton Avenue

Mr. Brickner stated he is on the Common Council and that the intent of the rule is to stop cyclone fences or higher fences in front yards. A 2 rail cedar fence is not an issue. More money is being spent on equipment and product.

Susan Melaven – 4548 S. Delaware Avenue

Ms. Melaven stated that Dave puts so much effort into the fence. It won't look cheesy. It will look good.

David Melaven – 4548 S. Delaware Avenue

Mr. Melaven stated that within several months of Labor Day in 2015, he installed a vinyl fence between him and neighbor. He didn't think it would be a deterrent since it replaced a cyclone fence. It was a 6 foot vinyl fence. After the fence was put in, neighbors said how nice it looked.

Mayor Tutaj called the Public Hearing three times and declared it closed at 6:44pm.

3. Minute Approval

A motion was made by Alderman Wattawa, seconded by Commissioner Kiepczynski to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2022 meeting. Motion carried.

4. Correspondence

Letter from Daniel Jonke, Management Partner, Makers Village Investors Group, LLC

Re: Amendment to PUD Zoning to Permit Outdoor Storage

City Administrator Johnsrud stated that Makers Village is located at 2517 E. Norwich Avenue. A Planned Unit Development (PUD) was requested and approved by the Planning Commission and the Common Council. The parking of vehicles overnight was not in the original PUD ordinance. Makers Village is requesting to be allowed to park vehicles overnight in a portion of each lot – upper and lower. It is before the Planning Commission because it is a change to the PUD ordinance. City Attorney Alexy clarified that this request is a minor amendment to the ordinance therefore the ordinance itself would not change, but the approving resolution would change. A motion by Alderman Wattawa, seconded by Commissioner Lentz to place the letter on file for discussion. Motion carried.

On the discussion:

Commissioner Kiepczynsk asked if a maximum number of vehicles can be set. He also stated that Makers Village has been a model group for the Police Department to work with. Mr. Jonke stated that they were not requesting any more spaces than indicated in the letter and shown on the plan.

Alderman Wattawa stated that he is not a fan of the busses parked in the lot. They have lights on in them. He also asked where do they work on the busses. Mr. Jonke stated that the lights are security lights due to where the busses were parked previously. The one bus is a former city bus which is being converted into an RV and that bus will be in the lot for a while.

Commissioner Lentz asked if fencing for security or some kind of screening could be installed. Mr. Jonke stated that there was fencing but they took it down.

Mr. Gralewicz stated that all the work on the pieces of the vehicles is inside the building.

Commissioner Kiepczynski stated that before the meeting, a City resident wanted to discuss renting a parking space for their RV. Mr. Gralewicz stated that he advised them that there are other locations, that it is not for general storage.

Alderman Wattawa asked about the tow truck parked at the site. Mr. Jonke responded that the owner uses it as a tow truck and leaves it one out of three nights. He parks it in the lower lot.

Alderman Wattawa asked how they could screen the busses. Mr. Jonke stated that they could revise the plan and park the busses in the lower lot. Commissioner Lentz stated that in the lower lot, there would not be any need for additional screening. Alderman Wattawa asked where the busses would be moved to in the lower lot. Mr. Jonke replied that they would be next to the dumpster. Alderman Wattawa requested that all the vehicles be moved to the lower lot. It was stated that 5 parking spaces would be lost. City Administrator Johnsrud stated that the spaces would be used by tenants of Makers Village and parking long term so there is no loss of parking. There is no renting of parking spaces. City Attorney Alexy stated that the plan would need to be updated.

Mr. Bill Bristol of 3119 E. Crawford Avenue stated that he was a science teacher and a member of Makers Village. He is impressed by the encouragement, intelligence and comradery of all the members there.

A motion was made by Alderman Wattawa, seconded by Commissioner Lentz to recommend to the Common Council to approve the revised PUD plan to allow outdoor vehicle storage as noted on the plan and as discussed at the meeting to permit the RV, bus, camper parking to the area designated for utility trailer parking and to only permit outdoor vehicle storage for vehicles owned by Maker Village/Maker Space members. Motion carried.

4. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Front Yard Decorative Fence Permit Application 4548 S. Delaware Avenue

City Attorney Alexy began by reading Code Section 198-6(G) to the Commission. He emphasized that the fence is only to enhance the yard, not across the entire front yard. He also informed the Commission of items to be considered by the Commission per Code Section 198-6(G)(3)(d): [1] visual clearance for motorist; [2] visual clearance for pedestrians; [3] public access abutting such property; [4] whether the proposed structure fully complies with the definition of the term "front yard decorative fence" as defined in Subsection A above; [5] aesthetics of the proposed structure in light of existing structures on the principal and neighboring properties.

City Attorney Alexy advised that when making a motion or having discussion on the item, to use these items for the basis of consideration.

Alderman Wattawa stated that it appears that it is allowed. Commissioner Stemwell stated that they have this type of fence in Trestle Creek and the owner states he will maintain the fence. Commissioner Niemiec stated that the owner will need to repair in time.

City Attorney Alexy asked if the Commission found the fence to meet the definition of "front yard decorative fence". There was discussion about whether the fence went across the entire front yard. Mr. Melaven stated that the fence is not actually in front of the house. It goes between structures and along the side of the house but not in front of the house as it faces S. Delaware Avenue.

Commissioner Kiepczynski stated that he has lived on a corner for a long time. He has had shrubs and a fence on either side of the drive and corner. He liked his fence until it got into too much disrepair. In looking at the regulations, this fence would not be president setting. Commissioner Niemiec concurred that it appeared that the fence met the code.

Alderman Matt Damon – 3272 S. Koenig Avenue stated that looking at the plan he did not think that it was outside of the requirements.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stemwell, seconded by Commissioner Niemiec to accept and approve the application. On the question, City Administrator questioned if the motion needed to be more specific.

Commissioner Stemwell made an amendment to his motion to include that the fence shall be a 2 rail, cedar fence with 3 foot cedar posts. Commissioner Niemiec concurred with the amendment.

Motion carried.

A. 3700 S. Lake Drive – Revised Detailed PUD Plan

City Administrator Johnsrud stated that the proposed development is a two phase development by Campbell Capital who developed 4200 on the Lake. Originally it was going to be 485 units. It is now reduced to 280 units in phase one and 200 units in phase 2. Phase one had the reduction in units. The original proposal had 48 “no bedroom” units. The City required them to change those units to all one bedroom units. City Attorney Alexy stated that there have been some minor modifications in the developer’s agreement. In the original proposals, it had stated specifically bocce ball, now it states outdoor athletic fields; originally it state glass tile shower, now it states tile; originally it stated spinning room, now it states gym room as examples.

A motion was made by Alderman Wattawa, seconded by Commissioner Lentz to recommend to the Common Council to approve the plans as revised. On the question, Alderman Wattawa asked for clarification on the A1 unit listed on the spreadsheet. City Administrator Johnsrud stated that A1 is the smallest one bedroom unit. There are 2 different sized one-bedroom units. Alderman Wattawa wanted to know about the areas listed “not heated”. Mr. Mike Campbell stated that those are usually the balconies. City Engineer Dejewski confirmed that the unheated spaces would be the balconies. Motion carried.

B. Powerline Trail Extension Into City of St. Francis Study Participation

City Engineer Dejewski stated that at the April meeting, she had provided the Commission with background about the project. It is an existing Powerline Trail that utilizes former We Energies power and/or We Energies rail corridors to create a trail system through the area. This is a multi-modal trail system. The concept is to extend it easterly to connect to the Oak Leaf Trail and the Nojoshing Trail which would complete the east-west leg. The communities that are impacted by the extension are Milwaukee County and the cities of Milwaukee, West Allis, Greenfield and St. Francis. There is funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for a study to find the best route for the trail expansion. The City of Milwaukee has offered to prepare an application for funding of the study necessary to determine the feasibility and routes for the extension of the trail. The study is a 80/20 split with the State paying 80%. The 20% is split between the communities based upon the amount of trail in the community. St. Francis’ share would be \$10,000. Commissioner Lentz stated that the City should participate. Commissioner Buechel stated that the City should participate. A motion was made by Commissioner Kiepczynski, seconded by Commissioner Niemiec to participate in the study if funding is approved. Motion carried.

6. Unfinished Business

None.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Alderman Wattawa, seconded by Commissioner Buechel to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:21pm.