

MINUTES OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
Thursday, November 21, 2017 - 3:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard

PRESENT: DeJoy, Eckman, Edgerton, Fredson, and Ochs
EXCUSED: Baker, Lindeke, and Reveal
STAFF: Tony Johnson, Cherie Englund, Allan Torstenson, and Peter Warner

The meeting was chaired by Commissioner Edgerton.

Scout Service Center - 17-210-652 - rezone from OS office-service to T2 traditional neighborhood at 393 Marshall Avenue, NW corner at Western.

Tony Johnson presented the staff report with a recommendation of approval for the rezoning. District 8 recommended denial, there were no letters in support, and 2 letters in opposition. In response to a questions by Chair Edgerton, Mr. Johnson said that Northern Star Council BSA plans to sell the property to Exeter Group and relocate to Fort Snelling. The building envelope in T2 is regulated by setbacks and floor area ratio, and lot coverage could exceed the 35% maximum lot coverage in RM2. Surrounding buildings that exceed the 35% maximum lot coverage in an RM2 zone are grandfathered in. T2 provides that the minimum amount of required parking may be reduced by 25% for buildings with more than 6 units. These are issues that will be looked at as part of project-specific site plan review.

Rob Stolpestad, Exeter Group, represented the applicant. He said they have a purchase agreement to buy this property from Northern Star Council BSA and propose to build a market rate apartment building with 150 to 175 units. He noted that the height limit for a building in RM2 is 5 stories and 50 feet. In T2 with appropriate setbacks the height could be 55', which is what is needed for a 5 story building with 9' finished ceiling heights. The proposed 55' building height would be less than the Aberdeen and the Christ's Household of Faith buildings across the street. Regarding parking, Mr. Stolpestad said that from a market standpoint it will be critical that they provide a greater than one to one parking ratio. While T2 may allow less parking, from a market standpoint they can't do the project with less parking. In response to a question by Commissioner Eckman, Mr. Stolpestad said that they will offer market rate apartments with no rent restrictions.

Charlie Neimeyer, 484 Portland Avenue, spoke in favor of the rezoning and in support of the development to help meet the need for housing. He said he owns a nearby woodworking shop and a triplex at Kent and Selby.

Ken Isaacson, Twin Cities Housing Development Corp., 400 Selby Avenue, owner of adjacent Liberty Plaza, said he is neutral on the rezoning but leaning negative because he doesn't have enough information about the proposed project to be supportive. He asked how he can get a copy of the staff report and who gets notified. He said he became aware of this application through the Early Notification System, and was unsure if they received any other notification. He said he would like to see development at this site, has concerns about building height, shadows and parking, and hopes to see more detail as part of site plan review.

Mr. Johnson said that public hearing notices were mailed to the owners of all property within 350' of the subject parcel 12 days prior to the hearing, and published in the official newspaper on November 9, 2017. He said staff reports can be found on the City's webpage on the Zoning Committee page under Planning Commission. In response to a question by Commissioner Fredson, Mr. Johnson said the Community Council 8 was also notified and provided a letter in opposition. He also received an email from a neighbor in opposition.

Peter Carlson, 482 Dayton Avenue and owner of a business at 524 Selby Avenue, said he is not opposed to the reuse of the land for a residential project but is against spot zoning. He asked about the advantages of rezoning to T2 and if T2 is right for the neighborhood. He said parking and density are issues and rezoning to RM2 would be better.

In response to questions from Chair Edgerton, Mr. Johnson said the uses permitted under the proposed T2 zoning are consistent with the uses under the existing RM2, T2 and B2 zoning along this part of Western Avenue, so it would not be spot zoning, and discussed density and parking requirements.

Darby Conner, 355 Marshall Avenue, said would like to see what the proposed building will look like because they overlook this property. She said they pay \$20.00 per year to park in front of their building and can't because of a restaurant 1½ blocks away. When the Aberdeen building opened it increased parking problems. Although she was against the Aberdeen due to the added traffic, it is a beautiful building that has increased their value. She said that there is a four way stop at Western and Marshall, and they hear noise from the intersection as well as ambulance noise due to a nursing home across the street. She noted that their limestone building at 355 Marshall Ave. is 160 years old, and construction of the Aberdeen building was monitored by the developers.

Mr. Stolpestad said the issues raised are valid, but many of these are for site plan review rather than rezoning. He noted that the plan is to locate the majority of parking below grade to meet their desired number of parking spaces. He said that they began a neighborhood outreach effort last week to meet with residents and business owners in the area.

Commissioner Eckman asked if they will be offering any affordable 4-bedroom units. Mr. Stolpestad said they are proposing a market rate project and 4-bedroom units are unlikely.

The public hearing was closed.

Chair Edgerton noted the discussion about traffic and street parking.

Commissioner DeJoy said these are issues that are addressed as part of site plan review.

In response to a question by Commissioner Eckman, Mr. Johnson said the rezoning to T2 would be consistent with the way this area has developed.

In response to Commissioner Fredson, Mr. Johnson reviewed the map that he handed out showing the units per acre of development within a quarter mile of the site. He said the proposal is to develop 1.7 acres which could be 88 to 103 units per acre, and pointed out the

comparable properties with their number of units per acre. He also shared the scale of the proposed building in comparison to the surrounding buildings. Mr. Johnson noted that they are proposing a five story building.

Commissioner Ochs said T2 fits into the neighborhood.

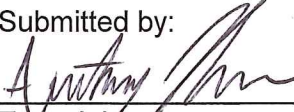
Commissioner Fredson moved approval of the rezoning. Commissioner Ochs seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

Adopted Yeas - 5 Nays - 0 Abstained - 0

Drafted by:

Cherie Englund
Recording Secretary

Submitted by:

Tony Johnson
City Planner

Approved by:

Dan Edgerton
Chair