

MINUTES OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 30, 2011 - 3:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard

PRESENT: Commers, Kramer, Nelson, Spaulding, and Wickiser
ABSENT: Fernandez, Merrigan (excused), Wencil (excused)
STAFF: Matt Wolff, Samantha Langer, Patricia James, and Peter Warner

The meeting was chaired by Commissioner Kramer.

City of St. Paul - 11-143-721 - Rezoning from OS Office-Service to B2 Community Business, 745 White Bear Ave N, SW corner at Reaney

Matt Wolff presented the staff report with a recommendation of approval for the rezoning. Mr. Wolff also stated District 2 recommended approval, and there were 0 letters in support, and 3 letters in opposition.

Upon questions from the Commissioners, Mr. Wolff explained that this is the extent of the site plan at this time. They will need to apply for site plan review with the Department of Safety and Inspections. Ms. James explained that the decision to rezone to B2 Community Business instead of VP vehicular parking was because of the location on White Bear Avenue. Staff believed more options than parking should be available for a property that fronts White Bear Avenue. Mr. Wolff stated that the County has not submitted any feedback on this application.

The applicant, Nicole Cherry, 735 White Bear Avenue, Saint Paul, explained they currently have the required amount of parking, but she would like the extra eight parking spaces to take some of the cars off of the street. She would like to improve the appearance of the area by adding landscaping and fencing. She would also like to repave and restripe the Cherry Pit's current parking lot.

Chuck Repke, District 2 Community Council, explained the history and development of White Bear Avenue area. Mr. Repke stated the District Council has been encouraging the City of Saint Paul to sell this lot to the Cherry Pit so they can have extra parking and eliminate some of the street parking. He stated that there aren't many options for a parcel this size other than parking.

Upon inquiry from the Commissioners, Mr. Repke explained how parking has been difficult in the area. He stated that there is already a ten foot high retaining wall separating the Cherry Pit from the neighbors, and they will add an additional fence if the neighbor next door desires extra fencing. Mr. Repke stated it would be in the City's best interest to have the Cherry Pit responsible for the parking lot since they can monitor the activity. Mr. Repke explained the landscaping for the project, and the added fencing that would be consistent with the rest of White Bear Avenue.

Laura Kirchoff, 1774 Reaney Avenue, Saint Paul spoke in opposition. Ms. Kirchoff explained that her main concern with the parking lot is the exit onto Reaney Avenue. Having the exit there doesn't allow for a lot of room. She also has concerns with noise levels.

Chuck Repke, District 2 Community Council, explained the plan is to have the traffic come in on the alley and exit taking a right turn only onto Reaney Avenue. There would be no parking between the stop sign and the exit. It seemed sensible to have the traffic circulate in a clockwise direction.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Bob Spaulding moved approval of the rezoning. Commissioner Jon Commers seconded the motion.

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

Adopted Yeas - 5 Nays - 0 Abstained - 0

Drafted by:

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Samantha Langer
Recording Secretary

Matt Wolff
Zoning Section

Richard Kramer
Chair