

MINUTES OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 25, 2016 - 3:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard

PRESENT: Edgerton, Makarios, Merrigan, Nelson, Reveal, and Wickiser
EXCUSED: Padilla and Wencil
STAFF: Bill Dermody, Samantha Langer, Allan Torstenson, and Peter Warner

The meeting was chaired by Commissioner Nelson.

Wilson Ridge Apartments - 16-009-696 - Rezone from RT1 Two-Family Residential and RM2 Multiple-Family Residential to RM3 Multiple-Family, 1276 Wilson Ave, between Johnson Pkwy and English Street

Bill Dermody presented the staff report with a recommendation of approval for the rezoning. He stated District 4 recommended approval, and there was 1 letter in support, and 0 letters in opposition.

Steve Minn, 1701 Madison Street, N.E. Minneapolis, MN, provided information on the existing site that they acquired in June 2014. It has 102 units and was built in 1970. In the past 18 months they have invested 1 million dollars in private funds to renovate the apartment complex. They saw the site as an opportunity for transit-oriented density. It has been their intent from the point of acquisition to improve the 102 units of market rate units and add workforce housing on top. Mr. Minn discussed the proposed lot split they are currently requesting. He explained that the alley between their proposed unified property and the single family homes to the west will remain. They have vacated Wakefield Avenue running east/west with its corresponding utilities underground and an alley that was further north. The alley that will remain is essentially a forested boundary that the neighbors have indicated they want to remain intact. He explained the sketches and proposed site plan provided in the packet. They will have a total of 215 units on the campus. There will be 157 surface parking spaces and 80 parking spaces underground. Part of the purpose in seeking the up-zoning was that they needed to remain on a path where both zoning parking requirements and setbacks are attainable as well as the fire code separation between the two buildings. They have been working with the Dayton's Bluff Community Council since they acquired the property – they have been supportive of the rezoning and redevelopment. In addition, his group has met with the immediate neighbors on Johnson Parkway to explain some of their issues and to see if they had any concerns. They will incorporate any concerns into their final site plan and lot split future application.

Brian Flakne, 1701 Madison Street, N.E. Minneapolis, MN, provided background on the requested zoning. The request would be consistent with the nature of the proposed Gold Line and the new 2015 Gold Line Zoning Study. There have already been a number of up-zonings in the neighborhood that have taken place, as a result of the transit study, and this rezoning will be consistent. The staff report proposes the RM3 district and is supported by the increased density along the BRT Line particularly near the proposed stations. They support the development of the nearby stations and they will cooperate with any minor adjustments that might be necessary. The rezoning will also eliminate a triangular zoning district split on the underlying 4.3 acre parcel that might conflict with future requirements for parking setbacks and fire code separation between the buildings.

Chuck Repke, North East Neighborhood Development Corporation (NENDC), 1321 White Bear Avenue, spoke in support. Mr. Repke said Dayton's Bluff Community Council and the NENDC board both support this plan. He is very impressed with Mr. Minn and his willingness to get out in the community and talk to people in advance about the project. The most concerned property owners are the people to the west and they are very happy that the wooded buffer area will remain. Mr. Minn has been open and receptive to discussions. The neighbors at the community meetings have noted the positive changes since he has taken ownership of the existing apartment complex. He hopes the Zoning Committee can recommend approval.

No one spoke in opposition. The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Paula Merrigan moved approval of the rezoning. Commissioner Elizabeth Reveal seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0-0.

Adopted Yeas - 6 Nays - 0 Abstained - 0

Drafted by:

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Samantha Langer
Recording Secretary

Bill Dermody
Zoning Section

Gaius Nelson
Chair