

CITY OF WHITEWATER
PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION
Whitewater Municipal Building Community Room
December 12, 2011

**ABSTRACTS/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL
ACTIONS OF THE PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION**

Call to order and roll call.

Vice-Chairperson Binnie called the meeting of the Plan and Architectural Review Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Meyer, Binnie, Dalee, Parker, Coburn, Miller.

Absent: None.

Others: Wallace McDonell (City Attorney), Latisha Birkeland (Neighborhood Services Manager/City Planner).

Hearing of Citizen Comments. No formal Plan Commission action will be taken during this meeting ON CITIZEN COMMENTS although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Items on the agenda may not be discussed at this time.

There were no citizen comments.

Approval of the minutes of November 14, 2011.

Moved by Parker and seconded by Coburn to approve the Plan Commission minutes of November 14, 2011. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Review proposed 34 foot by 31 foot open steel roof structure addition to the existing outdoor covered test area to provide a weather covering over generators being tested (running) at 757 N. Newcomb Street for Generac Power Systems, Inc. Neighborhood Services Manager/City Planner Latisha Birkeland explained that the site plan proposes an addition of 34 feet by 31 feet next to the current test facilities on the south side of the building. The current facilities were approved in 2001. The new fencing will match the existing fencing which is opaque to shield the area from view. Latisha Birkeland received a comment from one neighboring property owner to the west stating that the noise is quite loud and that he would like to see a wall or berm added on the west side to dampen the sound from the generators being tested. Latisha stated that the wall lights on the building will not be seen from the street; and there would be one additional light over the exit.

Plan Commission Member Coburn asked about the tone of the noise and how often do they run the generators. Coburn stated that when she viewed the site, she did not hear anything. She would still like to see a buffer installed. If the sound is a constant sound, it can be invasive.

Tim Hearden, from Generac Power Systems, stated that the opaque slats are consistent with the existing for the noise and proprietary requirement. Hearden stated that they test generators

around the clock. There would be no excess noise with the new addition. They are willing to put up sound absorbing material on the west end (not a permanent wall).

Plan Commission Member Bruce Parker asked to have the times clarified that the generators are run. He noted that there were cabinets on the west side of the existing structure.

Tim Hearden explained that the generators are tested around the clock, seven days a week. There are no walls on the structures because the generators need to have air flow in order to run and are also exposed to the weather. The existing outdoor covered test area holds 16 generators currently. The new addition would allow for 10 more generators.

Vice Chairperson Binnie stated that when he drove by the noise was pretty loud. If the windows of the neighboring residences were open during the summer, it would be a stressor to hear this noise continuously in the background.

Coburn asked if the noise should be tested now. She would like to see what the noise level is at this point.

Parker explained that the best thing to do would be to take a noise meter decibel reading at the lot line. The muffler exhaust stacks on the generators are DNR approved. Parker suggested that the metal decks (roof structure) give off noise also.

Kenneth Stock, from Heartland Group LLC., explained that any absorption would help. It would not matter how many generators were there, the noise level would have the same frequency and loudness.

Neighborhood Services Manager/City Planner Birkeland explained that a sound decibel in a wind speed of 10 mph would be invalidated.

Vice Chairperson Binnie stated that the noise would be an annoyance. The neighbor stated that his guests wonder what the noise is. If a concrete wall was put up, it might help to divert the sound elsewhere.

Plan Commission Member Meyer explained that a sound deadening material would be better than a concrete wall.

Vice-Chairperson Binnie suggested that the applicant bring information on the noise level and the sound deadening material to Latisha for staff approval. If, after that, there are still concerns, it could come back to the Plan Commission.

Kenneth Stock stated that he would have his consultant take a look at the engineering to see how much sound will be diminished by the materials and will submit the calculations/report to Latisha.

Tim Hearnden stated that they will take a look at the sound, taking a reading on the west lot line and compare with decibel reductions to when they put sound absorbing materials on the west wall.

City Planner Latisha Birkeland recommended the following conditions of approval with respect to the proposed site plan in her report dated December 5, 2011.

1. All development shall be according to the submitted plans (which shall become part of the record) except changes to plans shall be indicated below.
2. The proposed chain link fence surrounding the LP tank area and the new testing area shall match the current fence and shall be outfitted with opaque inserts (slats) to block visibility of this area.

Move by Coburn and Meyer to approve the application conditioned upon Latisha Birkeland (Neighborhood Services Manager/City Planner) approving a sound deadening plan; and the conditions included in the City Planner's report dated December 5, 2011. Motion approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Update on status of the Zoning Rewrite.

Latisha Birkeland explained that last Wednesday was their second meeting. They distributed summaries from the Stakeholder interviews which were prioritized by major or minor priorities and technical issues. They discussed many items which included: number of unrelated, parking on site, the rental registration map, potential district changes and zoning changes. Their next meeting is planned for February.

Plan Commission Member Meyer, who is also a Zoning Rewrite Committee Member, suggested that the Plan Commission members receive all the information from these meetings. Meyer felt that the next meeting would get into more details.

Latisha Birkeland was going to send out the Zoning Rewrite information to the Plan Commission on Tuesday, December 13th.

Future agenda items

Neighborhood Services Manager/City Planner Birkeland stated that there may be a certified survey map for the technology park, a conceptual review for a possible development of the Mound Meadows Subdivision by a new developer. The proposed development would be similar to the duplex development that was previously proposed. And a conditional use permit request for the expansion of use, adding equipment to the kitchen and a bar for the "Greenhouse Café" (formerly "Sugar Bay").

Vice-Chairperson Binnie requested that the Plan Commission have an election of a new Chairperson at the next meeting. Greg Torres, the former Chairperson, resigned from the Plan Commission in November.

Next regular Plan Commission meeting- January 9, 2012.

Moved by Parker and seconded by Coburn to adjourn at approximately 6:40 p.m. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Vice-Chairperson Lynn Binnie