

CITY OF WHITEWATER  
PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION  
Whitewater Municipal Building Community Room  
October 9, 2017

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

**Call to order and roll call.**

Chairperson Meyer called the meeting of the Plan and Architectural Review Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Greg Meyer, Kristine Zaballos, Lynn Binnie, Sherry Stanek, Tom Miller, Bruce Parker, Andrew Crone (Alternate). Absent: Tom Hinspater. Others: Chris Munz-Pritchard (City Planner), Wallace McDonell (City Attorney).

Chairperson Greg Meyer introduced the new Plan and Architectural Review Commission Alternate Member Andrew Crone.

**Hearing of Citizen Comments.** No Comments.

**Approval of the Plan Commission Minutes.** Moved by Zaballos and seconded by Stanek to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2017 Plan Commission meeting. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote. The minutes of September 11, 2017 were not available for review.

**Review proposed 70 unit hotel & conversion of the existing vacant grocery store building into a multi-office facility at 1260 W. Main Street, Tax Parcel /WM 00001 and /WM 00002 for WWHP LLC. (Troy Hoekstra, Managing Partner).** Kristine Zaballos recused herself from this item as she works at the University.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard stated that the applicant had come to the last Plan Commission meeting and was approved for a conditional use permit to have more than one principal structure on a lot.

Plan Commission Member Binnie invited the applicants to go through the recommendations and explain their proposal.

Scott England, Architect from DJR Architects, and Eric Drazkowski, from Excel Engineering, explained their proposal. Scott England explained that they were working with UW-Whitewater on the exterior of the existing building. They will be taking down the canopy and will bring a lot more windows to the building. There will be a transparency to the front of the building. They are working on the interior of the building, specific to UW-Whitewater. There will be meeting space for the general population. There are two entrances off Main Street; the hotel will be surrounded by parking. The existing building will use the north 1/3 of the parking between the hotel and the existing building. If necessary, they will have parking on the north side of the existing building. The loading dock is on the northwest side of the back of the building with the doors facing east.

Consequently there was some concern that the entrance on the northwest side will be largely hidden by the loading dock. The Fire Department would like the extension of Yoder Lane extended to have a better access to the north side of the site. The developer would like to use a gate or bollard for the Fire Department to have access, but not provide for a cut through for other vehicles. They have been attempting to work with Walmart to have a connection from the west side to the back of the building.

Eric Draskowski, Engineer, explained that in their discussions with the Fire Department and connecting roads to the east, they would like to create a grass area to drive over at Salisbury Lane and not have the circulation of the general public from the east. There are 253 stalls, but can fit more if there is a traffic problem. They are planning for 123 stalls for future use at the north end of the building. The Engineering Report #8 requests that 3 to 4 stalls are to be removed on the east side of the east entrance off Main Street. Mr. Draskowski thought that it would be unnecessary, as at this point, there is 50 feet which would cue two vehicles in the drive lane if someone is backing out.

Scott England explained that the delivery area at the NE corner of the property would be coordinated with the tenants. There will be minimal deliveries and no maneuvering problems as deliveries will be made in van or box truck size. A full size semi is not going to be needed by the UW. When asked about the back of the building becoming the front entrance and hoping they could do something with the building to make it look less like a loading dock, Eric England stated that they will be working on the landscaping.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard was concerned about the circulation plan, walking the 22 feet from the back of the building to the front of the building, particularly at night.

Scott England stated that it was not their intent to cut off pedestrians but they were looking to limit vehicular traffic, which is why they only want Fire Department access off of Yoder Lane. Florence Street dead ends to wetland. The north parking lot will be mainly for the people working the building.

Chairperson Meyer opened for public comment. There were no public comments.

Chairperson Meyer closed public comment.

Plan Commission Member Parker explained that there are parking issues. Sentry was designed to meet the ordinances that we have now. At the time Yoder Lane and Salisbury Lane were constructed, there were single family homes and the residents did not want the vehicle traffic, but they wanted pedestrian access points. The area has changed since then. Yoder Lane is to have a connection point, not Salisbury Lane.

Plan Commission Member Binnie went through the Planner recommendations to make sure everything was addressed.

City Attorney McDonell stated that it is in the ordinance that Plan Commission can allow a lesser amount of parking stalls but to do so, the site must have sufficient land and the developer must install the parking if it becomes necessary.

When asked if they had considered a traffic signal in the area and if they would potentially contribute to it, Scott England stated that they had not considered it, but they would participate in the discussion and the planning of it. He also noted that they are alright with the conditions of approval and have a level of understanding. They are on a tight time schedule. They do not have a problem with the items set forth in the motion and having further conversations about the traffic light. But they do need to move forward.

City Attorney McDonell stated that having an acknowledgement of the possibility of a traffic light was all that could be done at this time. The developer could request a special assessment specification for a traffic light.

Moved by Binnie and seconded by Stanek conditional approval based on the recommendations of the City Planner, City Engineer and Fire Department of the proposed hotel and conversion of the existing vacant grocery store building into a multi-office building at 1260 W. Main Street with the additions of: understanding regarding parking, that the requirement could be met with a shared agreement with Walmart, and consideration of a lesser amount of parking by ordinance but required to have a plan to add stalls if proved to be necessary; an agreement be reached for a fire access to be provided on the west side of the office building or an emergency access from Yoder Lane. They need to have plans submitted prior to building permit being issued. An acknowledgement by the developer that they agree to participate in the discussion in regard to traffic signals and that there might be special assessments involved. Ayes: Binnie, Stanek, Crone, Parker, Miller, Meyer. No: None. Recused: Zaballos. Motion approved.

**Discussion of possible improvements to Scott Street.** Chairperson Meyer opened the discussion.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard explained the increase in density to the area and that Scott Street was essentially designed as an alley way. The increase in density over the years is requiring the City to look at improvements to upgrade the infrastructure in the area. Chris Munz-Pritchard spoke with Chuck Nass, the Streets Superintendent, and came up with a viable option of removing the north end of S. Scott Street where it exits onto Whitewater Street and turn Scott Street into a one way street. No utilities would be affected by this change.

Streets Superintendent Chuck Nass stated that this would be the simplest solution. The intersection at Whitewater Street is very narrow. The City would curb this South Street section on both ends and make the north end part of the driveway for the duplex on the corner of Janesville and Whitewater Streets. Nass stated that the parking on the street is causing the problem. The best solution for that would be to remove the parking on Scott Street. He said part of Scott Street is curbed, but some is not.

Plan Commission Members voiced that: making Scott Street one way is a good first step and if that doesn't work, can look at the parking; everyone has garages off the alley (Scott Street) and a parking pad, so there is no shortage of parking for the residents.

Chairperson Meyer opened for public comment.

Donna Henry, 347 S. Janesville Street, stated that no physical change to the street is going to fix the problem. She didn't feel it would help to make the street one way. The kids are not the problem. It is the vehicles that are the problem. She feels the solution would be to have a parking lot where they can park.

Dennis Knopp, 323 S. Janesville Street, recommended that parking be eliminated on Scott Street completely. Landlords should take care of their parking. He did not like the idea of removing the part of Scott Street that goes to Whitewater Street because that would put a cul-de-sac at his driveway.

Thomas Hoffman, 363 S. Janesville Street, stated that the street is getting more congested due to new residents. They park all along the street. It is basically a one way street. Can't plow to the curb in winter time so the street gets even narrower. The street is narrow on both ends. He doesn't know what the solution would be. One way street seems to be the better of the solutions.

Chairperson Meyer closed the public comment.

Plan Commission Member Stanek would like to see the part of S. Scott Street that empties out to Whitewater Street vacated, eliminate parking and make it a one way street.

City Attorney McDonell stated that these decisions would be City Council decisions. He recommended that the Plan Commission recommend to the City Council for a conceptual review by Council. City Council may decide that Plan Commission should hold the public hearing with notices to all affected property owners.

Plan Commission members voiced concerns of: suggested a roundabout at Walworth Ave. and Janesville Street; suggestion of parking on Scott Street by permit only; if allow parking for 2 hours – do heavy enforcement for a time; speed bumps would slow vehicles down; simple resolution would be to have no parking on the street – leave the street the way it is; if cars are not on the street there is not a problem; still like to see the elimination of the short section of Scott Street out to Whitewater Street.

Moved by Binnie and Crone to request the City Council have a concept review of the issues related to traffic and parking on Scott Street. In particular, banning parking except by special arrangement on Scott Street and also consider a discontinuation of the section of S. Scott Street entering onto Whitewater Street. The sidewalk is to be maintained on the portion of Scott Street to be eliminated. Ayes: Binnie, Crone, Zaballos, Parker, Stanek, Miller, Meyer. No: None. Motion approved.

**UW-Whitewater Representatives to speak about the University Housing – per request of Plan Commission.** Joel Nilsestuen, Coordinator of governmental relations and outreach for the University, and Frank Bartlett, Director of U.W. Housing, were present to talk about the University Housing plans. UW-Whitewater enrollment is down 206 this fall. Seven out of the past eight years, they have had record enrollments. This year colleges across the area are down. The University is working to address and reverse this situation. The new residence hall (410 beds) is scheduled to open in the fall of 2019. Eight other residence halls are in need of renovation. They will start with the west side of campus, following the utilities and then to the east side with Knilans and Wells halls. At this time they are leasing 2 properties off campus. Next year they will only be leasing one. The scope of renovation for Wells Hall, 600 to 1200 beds for 1 to 2 years renovation in order to bring the building up to code. For freshmen and sophomores, UW housing is required. About 93% of freshmen live in residence halls. They are bending the rule for sophomores at 60% who live in the residence halls. They want to create a balance between UW residence halls and Community Rentals. They want to make everyone happy, have a partnership with the community.

Plan Commission Members voiced concerns: asked if they were aware of the City of Whitewater looking to stabilize residential neighborhoods and preserve family neighborhoods; balance, when there is new development to take the pressure off of residential areas; asked landlords to be a part of the discussion; communication needs to be an ongoing process; Don't want to make a decision on the basis of lack of information.

Joel Nilsestuen stated that the University will keep an open dialog.

Frank Bartlett, when asked about the rumor of the destruction of Wells, explained that the possibility of getting new residence halls is not good. So they are renovating existing residence halls. When Bartlett came to Whitewater in 2000 the on campus population was 3800, and then it was declining. In more recent years the population has been booming. This year was a "what happened", but the hope is to continue growing. The community needs vital on campus and off campus housing to make a good University. They added Starin Hall which added 456 but they also eliminated 410 beds. They plan to keep one remaining off campus facility that has individual kitchens. When they take buildings off line, they need places to put students. Swing space is key.

Plan Commission Member Binnie stated that one of the main concerns about housing in the community is that the rental ratio is very high. We are at about 2/3 of the properties being rental properties. The average is far lower than that, even for other comparable university towns. This makes the average property value for the City of Whitewater higher. People will go to Fort Atkinson because they can live there for a lesser amount.

Plan Commission Members voiced concerns of: lost single family homes between downtown and campus, lack of affordable quality housing, lack of a grocery store, maintaining enrollment in school district; do a study between UW and City, an increase or decrease of off campus housing and what the need is?; suggested the University provide, to the City, preliminary numbers – enrollment and the number of open beds- once a year. The next time to send the City data would be September 2018. Right now we are making decisions without a lot of data. Residential

homes are being turned into student rentals. We would like to have an idea of when we can start to say no.

Chairperson Meyer opened for public comment. There were no comments.  
Chairperson Meyer closed public comment.

Plan Commission Members thanked Joel Nilsestuen and Frank Bartlett for coming to the Plan Commission and sharing their information in regard to housing.

### **Discussion of potential future housing study.**

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard explained that we are looking at doing a future housing study – needs assessment for the City of Whitewater. She received a quote from Vandewalle Associates, the City Planning Consultants, for \$15,000 to \$20,000 for a housing study.

Jeff Knight stated that the Greater Whitewater Committee was doing a study for single family housing. They will be hosting a series of forums to try to get the impetus to get more single family housing. The meetings will be held during the day. They are not looking at student housing. They are looking at single family and how to get it in the community.

Plan Commission Members voiced concerns of: keeping in mind the existing neighborhoods; incentives for flipping rental to single family.

Jeff Knight suggested Community Development Block Grant money for repairing neighborhoods.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard suggested a possible plan to look into the “LaCross Promise Program” which is a grant incentive program.

Chairperson Meyer closed the public comment.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard is putting funds in the budget for 2018 and 2019 for a housing study – needs assessment. She was looking for guidance from the Plan Commission. The needs assessment shows what the City has and where it is going. Munz-Pritchard suggested setting up a sub-committee to figure out what we want to explore and how to convert it, sitting down and setting goals. It was decided the Housing Sub-Committee would consist of City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard, Kristine Zaballos, Sherry Stanek and Andrew Crone.

### **Public hearing for Formal Action for future land use designation for Parcel # /WUP 00325 (Walworth Ave. Parcel). (This parcel is located west of the “bridge to nowhere”).**

Chairperson Meyer opened the public hearing. It was noted that property owners within 800 feet along Walworth Ave. were notified. Any formal action would be a recommendation to the City Council.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard explained that there are no proposals in process for this area. Mixed use is a good fit for this area. The property is zoned Agricultural Transition. This is a request for the future land use map.

Jeff Knight, 405 S. Panther Court, stated that he is against the change in the document. He wants the land to remain single family. At one point there was to be residential up to the bridge. There is restricted street parking, truck traffic on Walworth Ave. Students, heavy truck traffic at night. Whitewater has a shrinking population. The parcel is in the TIF District. It should be townhomes and condos. Noise and traffic should be considered for a residential area. The parcel would be better as residential than heading toward commercial.

Plan Commission Member Binnie stated that any description given to an area gives difficulty. Future neighborhood is primarily a single family development. It is natural to go to the commercial side of it. Regarding the promises that were allegedly made that the property will always be residential, in reality the only way to permanently designate a property is by deed restriction.

City Attorney McDonell stated that some deed restrictions can be changed. Promises are not enforceable.

Plan Commission Member Binnie stated that there are four intersections with the bypass; three of them are Highway Commercial and Community Business. This intersection, Walworth Ave. and Highway 12, was Community Business. In reality, (an example would be the grocery discussion), what people think is not necessarily what works. The section close to the bypass is a high noise impact zone which is not appropriate for single family. The larger area immediately adjacent to the High School would be an ideal location for single family. A designation of mixed use, as in the mixed use description, careful planning must be done. Approval granted only after submittal, public review and City approval of detailed site plan, landscaping, signage, lighting, erosion control, and utility plans often as part of a Planned Development. The Plan Commission is aware of the concerns of the neighborhood and would take it all into consideration if a proposal is brought to this body. As designated, it is not very likely that even a project welcomed by the neighbors would be seen by the developer as being potentially acceptable.

Terrie Parenteau, 518 S. Ventura Lane, stated that if there is commercial in the area, there is traffic. An increased number of lives are affected. Making decisions is a big responsibility. Whatever is decided, accept the consequences.

City Planner Munz-Pritchard stated that whatever would be developed in the area, there would be a traffic study done.

Mark Parenteau, 518 S. Ventura Lane, on the east side of Indian Mound Parkway, stated that when looking to relocate in the City of Whitewater, he was made aware of the lots on the west side of Indian Mound Parkway. There was no question in his mind that this was the most beautiful neighborhood. He would like to see this neighborhood maintained. Don't detract from this neighborhood.

John Hoffmann, part owner of the parcel south of Walworth Ave., stated that we are a society of rules, laws and ordinances. He commended the City for taking the time to review. There were 161 notices sent out, only three comments. John Hoffmann stated "Don't do what is right for the few or what is right for me, do what is right for the City".

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard explained that this is the future land use that the Plan Commission is trying to decide upon to reflect mixed use versus future neighborhood designation. It is not the zoning map or the current land use map.

Plan Commission voiced concerns of: the long term plan for Highway 12 is to be 4 lanes; it was noted that when the comprehensive plan went to the City Council and it was determined to be “future neighborhood” rather than “single family”, the Plan Commission had been bypassed. There was no public hearing and never on the Plan Commission. Maybe with changing the map and designation, we should change the definition. Need to look at water, noise, traffic and use when considering a development. Turtle Mound Lane was not supposed to be a dead end. It just was never developed. A compatible neighborhood business is not a truck stop.

Plan Commission Member Binnie stated that they were looking at higher end housing; there would be more moderate pricing of single family parcels up against the bypass. The definition of mixed use includes higher density residential. Maybe include in the motion further specification such as: Plan Commission preference is that there be single family included in this parcel in addition to other potential uses.

City Attorney McDonell explained that a change to the Comprehensive Plan would have to be noticed at a different meeting. The process to change the Plan would start with the City Council, go to the Plan Commission and then back to the City Council. A mini plan designation could be made for this property. They are hard to develop. Changing the future land use is not the owner’s call, it is the City call as to what is best for the City (as John Hoffmann had stated).

The Plan Commission asked what they need to do today. City Attorney McDonell stated that the Plan Commission is to recommend to the City Council. If nothing is done, it will still go back to the City Council. He stated that the Plan Commission could come up with language for a particular area, a small designation. Plan Commission Members suggested: that they hold open the public hearing and work toward a recommendation to the City Council; mixed use, carefully planned with some allowance for regular residential.

City Attorney McDonell noted that zoning and comp plans are difficult. This property may need to be considered for a hybrid approach (Planned Development). The area doesn’t fit and needs a special set of rules for a specific area. You need to beware so that you don’t micro-manage a piece of property.

City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard stated that the definition can be revised for mixed use. It doesn’t have to be high density. Ultimately it would be a Planned Development.

John Hoffmann stated that when the comp plan was adopted, it was adopted as a reviewable guideline. It was made to be flexible. He asked that it be kept flexible.

Chairperson Meyer closed the public comment.



City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard suggested that she draft a proposed revision for the definition of “mixed use”.

Moved by Binnie and seconded by Stanek to request that the City Planner do some research and bring possible options for the Plan Commission to consider and that we would not close the public hearing so to not have to notice this item again. Aye: Binnie, Stanek, Zaballos, Parker, Miller, Meyer, Crone. No: None. Motion approved. This item will be on the next Plan Commission meeting.

City Attorney McDonell stated that in case there ends up being different Plan Commission members at the next meeting, suggested that anyone who was not at this meeting review the meeting in order to have this information as part of their information base.

**Information Items:**

- a. Possible future agenda items. City Planner Chris Munz-Pritchard stated that we did not have anything at this time for the next Plan Commission meeting.
- b. Next regular Plan Commission Meeting – November 13, 2017.

Moved by Parker and seconded by Stanek to adjourn. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:10 p.m.

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Chairperson Greg Meyer