



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

Members Present: George Halik, Kiril Miritchev, Kristine Westerberg, Max Puchtel, Jeanne Lindwall, Brian Johnson, Myrna Arevalo, and Matt Rodgers

Members Absent: John Hewko

Staff Present: Acting City Attorney Alex Ruggie, Community Development Director Sarah Flax, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner Meagan Jones, Zoning Administrator Melissa Klotz, and Planning Manager Liz Williams

Presiding Member: Matt Rodgers

Call to Order

Chair Rodgers opened the meeting at 7:01 PM. A roll call was then done and a quorum was determined to be present.

Approval of July 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Halik recommended two minor edits. Lindwall made a motion to approve the Land Use Commission meeting minutes from July 12, 2023 as corrected. Seconded by Commissioner Puchtel. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 8-0.

New Business

A. Public Hearing: Special Use for a Planned Development | 1501 Central Street | 23PLND-0035.

Northwestern University requests a Special Use for a Planned Development to demolish the existing Ryan Field stadium and ancillary maintenance building to construct a new 116 ft. tall stadium with a 35,000 spectator capacity in the U2 University Athletics Facilities District. The applicant is requesting the following site development allowances: 1) 1,408 total parking spaces (515 on-site, 893 in parking lot within 1,000 ft.) where 4,364 are required for the principal uses on the zoning lot, 2) A landscape strip of less than 35 ft. (specifically, 16 ft. 3 in. at closest point at the north-south and east-west property lines at the northeast corner of the lot) where 35 ft. is required when abutting a residential district, and 3) Open parking area with a 6 ft. 10 in. interior side yard setback where 15 ft. is required. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case and the City Council is

the determining body in accordance with Section 6-3-5-8 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21. PINs: 05-35-310-015-0000, 5-35-310-020-0000, 5-35-318-015-0000, 5-35-310-007-0000, 5-35-310-019-0000, 5-35-310-022-0000 and 5-35-310-008-0000.

B. Public Hearing: Zoning Text Amendment | U2 University Athletic Facilities District | 23PLND-0010.

Northwestern University requests a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 6-15-7-2 Permitted Uses, to modify the list of permitted uses in the U2 University Athletics Facilities District and conditions required for public facing concerts. No changes are proposed to the U2 district boundaries. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case and the City Council is the determining body in accordance with Section 6-3-4-6 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21.

Dave Davis, Northwestern University's Senior Executive Director for Neighborhood and Community Relations, presented an overview and noted that due to community input received to date, they have reduced the request for additional events to fund a new Ryan Field from twelve to six. He stated that it will have 12,000 fewer seats than the current stadium and that police reports confirm that historic events have been well managed. He noted that the proposed six additional concerts represent a 3.5% increase in utilization. Financial highlights include that the new stadium is privately funded and of the \$800M investment, 35% is dedicated to local minority and women owned businesses. Luke Figora, Chief Operating Officer, Northwestern University, summarized the proposed text amendment language, components that would be in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and additional public benefits.

Darren Nielsen, HNTB Vice President, presented a site plan and architectural overview which targets a LEED Gold designation and uses universal design principles. Michael Godoy, CAA ICON, provided a general overview of concert venue operations. Peter Lemmon, Professional Traffic Operations Engineer, Kimley-Horn, reviewed event transportation characteristics of games and concerts, key aspects of the dynamic transportation management plan and emergency response. Greg Hughes, Lead Acoustician, Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon and Williams, reviewed the concert sound survey and sound model study and proposed mitigations. George Kisiel, President, Okrent Kisiel Associates, presented the applicant's approach to meet the special use standards for approval and belief that minor impacts are offset by the public benefits.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioners asked clarifying questions of the applicant on site development allowances, status of the capital campaign, final engineering design and construction timelines, stormwater management, parking and traffic. The applicant's owner's representative from CAA ICON summarized that demolition is intended to commence in December of 2023 with construction starting late Q1 or Q2 2024 continuing through Q3 2026 and that most of the funding is in place. A construction waste management plan

will be developed by the general contractor. Private and public parking utilization statistics, availability and operations for concerts and football games were reviewed. Orientation of the stadium as it relates to pedestrian entrances, internal programming and sound control was discussed. Design, amenities, and possible uses of the open space at the corner of Ashland Avenue and Central Street were described. Permeable pavement is proposed in various locations including portions of the plazas and parking lots.

Northwestern University staff explained various text amendment intentions regarding outdoor lecture limits, venue capacity, temporary events and traffic control in the U2 District and agreed that clarifying language could be drafted. The applicant has discussed with city staff that a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding components such as a traffic management plan would be part of the City Council project approval and a final MOU would be considered during the permit process or prior to the first event. Further discussion on coordination with CTA, pedestrian sidewalk and street capacity, and other traffic management issues for events were discussed. The applicant's representative explained that the economic estimate for local jobs for their MWBE commitment includes partnerships and targets: 1) construction firms within the 3-county area; 2) ongoing operations; and 3) local businesses. Construction traffic impact on Central Street will be detailed once construction contracts are finalized; additionally, there will be a stormwater management plan, dust control mitigations and street repairs as necessary.

Public Comment

Chair Rodgers called for public comment from organizations and specific requests for continuance.

Stephen Harper, 640 Gregory Avenue, Wilmette, requested a continuance in writing regarding noise pollution and the Arup Report.

Senta Plunkett, President, Village of Wilmette, and Jerry Smith, Trustee, Village of Wilmette, 1325 Gregory Avenue, Wilmette objected to the proposed text amendment specific to outdoor concerts at Ryan Field and support construction of the stadium for university program and school athletics.

Dan Shapiro, Most Livable City Association (MLCA), Evanston, requested continuance for reasons provided in writing regarding text amendment clarifications. At the meeting he also requested: 1) additional time to review any potential new information (traffic management, rebuttal to Arup Report, peer review of the groundwater report, concert operations plan, CTA operational increase discussions, truck traffic and waste removal routing); and 2) the opportunity to ask cross-examination questions of the applicant.

Jane Grover, Field of Opportunities, 2677 Prairie Avenue, Evanston, supports the project and suggested equity be considered during the process.

Michael O'Connor, 1315 Jenks Street, Evanston, and Field of Opportunities supports the project as a resident adjacent to Ryan Field.

Leslie Williams, Community Alliance for Better Government, 2516 Prairie Avenue, Evanston, questioned the proposed economic public benefits including MWBE and considered the additional sustainability, accessibility and educational benefits not dependent on a commercial zoning change.

Peggy Baxter, 1320 Jenks Street, and 40 neighbors within 1,000 feet of Ryan Field support the proposed text amendment and special use proposal. She believes the improvements will increase adjacent home values.

Raj Ghate, 2505 Jackson Avenue, Evanston, supports the stadium proposal and the potential opportunities it could provide.

James Hebson, 1321 Rosalie Street, Evanston, supports the proposal and the potential economic benefits for Central Street.

Jeff Smith, 2724 Harrison Street, Evanston, representing Central Street Neighbors Association (CSNA), and believes that the proposal does not meet the standards for approval regarding neighborhood compatibility and parking.

Garrett Karp, Evanston Chamber of Commerce, 1007 Church Street, hosted informational sessions and received feedback that businesses are positive about short and long-term opportunities of a stadium, its private funding, and there is overall support for both aspects of the proposal.

Scott Gingold, 1326 Isabella Street, requested a continuance due to potential additional documents to review. He also asked to see details on related future city revenue and to cross-examine witnesses.

Fiona McCarthy, requested a continuance to ask questions on land use qualifications and noise and its subsequent health impacts.

Dana Hoffman, 1219 Central Street, submitted paperwork requesting continuance to ask questions regarding concert operations.

Deborah Thiersch, 624 Isabella Street, Wilmette, submitted paperwork requesting continuance to address new information.

Yvi Russell, 1724 Livingston Street, Evanston, submitted paperwork requesting continuance regarding the text amendment and materials not yet distributed.

Mary Rosinski, submitted paperwork requesting continuance regarding the Tripp Umbach Economic Impact Study.

Chair Rodgers provided direction on the presentation length including cross-examination for organizations (30 minutes) and individuals (10 minutes).

Commissioner Lindwall made a Motion to continue hearing Items A and B to the September 27, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Westerberg. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed, 8-0.

Communications

There was none.

Adjournment

Commissioner Westerberg motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Lindwall seconded, and the motion carried, 8-0.

Adjourned 12:14 PM.

The next meeting of the Evanston Land Use Commission is a Special Meeting to be held on **Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.**

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Ahner, AICP, Planning Consultant

Reviewed by,
Meagan Jones, AICP, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner