



MEETING MINUTES

LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 22nd, 2024

7:00 PM

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

Members Present: Matt Rodgers, Brian Johnson, Kristine Westerberg, George Halik, Myrna Arevalo, Jeanne Lindwall

Members Absent: John Hewko, Kiril Mirintchev, Max Puchtel

Staff Present: Neighborhood Land Use Planner Meagan Jones and Zoning Administrator Melissa Klotz

Presiding Member: Matt Rodgers

I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

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

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: February 28, 2024

Commissioner Lindwall suggested several edits to the meeting minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Lindwall moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Seconded: Commissioner Westerberg

Ayes: Rodgers, Johnson, Westerberg, Lindwall, Arevalo

Nays:

Abstain: Halik

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing: Special Use | 1601 Simpson Street | 24ZMJV-0022

John Cook, builder/contractor, submits for a Special Use for a Daycare Center – Child, the Infant Welfare Society, in the B1 Business District (Section 6-9-2-3). The Land Use Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-5 of the Evanston Zoning Code. PIN: 10-12-421-022-0000

John Cook, representing the applicant and builder contractor, introduced the project for a special use permit for a daycare center at 161 Simpson Street. The application is in accordance with Section 6-9-2-3 of the zoning code for the B1 business district. Tiffany Culpepper provided more information on the programs that are currently offered and need to stay in the community to service families.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Halik inquired about drop-off and pick-up procedures. Ms. Culpepper clarified the typical procedures.

Commissioner Westerberg asked about the impact of nearby school construction on parking.

Commissioner Lindwall asked for clarification on licensing and permit requirements for the daycare center locations. Ms. Klotz clarified requirements for Special Uses of the proposed and current spaces.

Commissioner Johnson confirmed that the current operating hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) would not conflict with the proposed special use hours (6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

Public Comment

None.

Deliberations

Commissioners discussed the special use permit conditions, including limiting the permit to the applicant and not running with the property. Emphasis was placed on ensuring pickup/drop-off procedures are handled efficiently to minimize traffic congestion. They then discuss possible conditions.

The proposed Special Use must follow the Standards for a Special Use (Section 6-3-5-10) For the Land Use Commission to recommend that the City Council grant a special use, the LUC must find that each proposed special use:

6-3-5-10 Special Use Standards

1. It is one of the special uses specifically listed in the zoning ordinance; Daycare for children is listed in this district. This standard is met.
2. It is in keeping with purposes and policies of the adopted comprehensive general plan and the zoning ordinance as amended from time to time; This group has existed for over 100 years and this is a minor request for an entity that is assisting families, something pointed out within the Comprehensive Plan so this standard is met.

3. It will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when its effect is considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood and the effect of the proposed type of special use upon the City as a whole; Is a commercial area and is being used with similar hours.
4. It does not interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood; Daycare is for small children and people will likely not notice the use so this standard is met.
5. It can be adequately served by public facilities and services; The building has been redeveloped within the last 20 years and had to meet requirements at that time so this standard is met.
6. It does not cause undue traffic congestion; If pick-off and drop-off is managed well and parking suggestions followed, it should not cause great increase in traffic. Standard is met.
7. It preserves significant historical and architectural resources; Not historically or architecturally significant so this standard is met.
8. It preserves significant natural and environmental features; Exterior changes not proposed so this standard is met.
9. It complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation. Daycare use has state regulations in addition to life-safety regulations that must be maintained and has not seemed to have had any issues. Standard is met.

Motion: Commissioner Lindwall moved to recommend approval of the special use permit with the following conditions:

- 1. Hours of operation shall not exceed 6:00 am - 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.**
- 2. Employees shall not use metered street parking while working, using off-street parking located on the subject property or at an alternative location which does not displace required parking for those properties.**
- 3. On-street child drop-off/pick-up is only allowed in available on-street parking spaces or off-street on the property or off-site with a parking lease.**
- 4. The Special Use shall run with the Applicant for the length of lease.**
- 5. Substantial compliance with the documents and testimony on record.**
- 6. Ordinance granting the Special Use recorded with the Cook County Recorder of Deeds.**

Second: Commissioner Westerberg

Ayes: Rodgers, Johnson , Westerberg, Halik, Arevalo, Lindwall

Nays:

Abstained:

B. Public Hearing: Special Use | 518 Main Street | 24ZMJV-0020

Bryan Wietrzykowski, Vice President of Construction, submits for a Special Use for an Animal Hospital, GoodVets, in the C1a Commercial Mixed-Use District (Section 6-10-3-3). The Land Use Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-5 of the Evanston Zoning Code. PIN: 11-19-401-024-0000

Michael Bush provided an overview of the proposal. The application seeks special use permission to open a neighborhood veterinary clinic in a 2,200 sq. ft. commercial suite at 518 Main Street. The facility will include 4 exam rooms and cater primarily to dogs and cats and the goal is to serve the local neighborhood with minimal reliance on vehicular transport. Katherine L. Woods detailed the architectural and soundproofing aspects, specifically the space featuring soundproofing measures, including layers of drywall and sound insulation. Ventilation and exhaust will be directed through the alley, not the storefront.

Commissioner Questions

Chair Rodgers inquired about general hours of operations, staffing and sound/smell proofing.

Mr. Bush and Ms. Woods clarified that typical hours are 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM on weekdays, with shorter weekend hours and occasional extended hours. Initial staff will include a veterinarian and three additional staff members, growing to 10-12 as needed. Ventilation and exhaust will be included in the design and the space is located with few adjacent neighbors, soundproofing will be added. No boarding of animals will occur.

Commissioner Westerberg expressed concerns about double parking and parking arrangements for staff and clients were discussed.

Commissioner Halik asked for clarification on procedures for cleaning up inside the facility and external waste disposal plans; both were clarified.

Public Comment

Katherine Gotsick, Executive Director of the Main Dumpster Mile emphasized the importance of maintaining the small, independently owned character of the district. She expressed support for GoodVets if they actively participate in community events and support local businesses.

Deliberations

The Commission reviewed conditions and compliance with special use standards, including impact on property values, traffic congestion, and environmental resources.

The proposed Special Use must follow the Standards for a Special Use (Section 6-3-5-10) For the Land Use Commission to recommend that the City Council grant a special use, the LUC must find that each proposed special use:

1. It is one of the special uses specifically listed in the zoning ordinance; An animal hospital is listed as a special use in this zoning district. Standard is met.
2. It is in keeping with purposes and policies of the adopted comprehensive general plan and the zoning ordinance as amended from time to time; Some policy is to encourage business development; this space has been vacant outside of a few pop-ups over the years and the use will be filling that space. Standard is met.
3. It will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when its effect is considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood and the effect of the proposed type of special use upon the City as a whole; Expect to see a number of special uses due to this being a commercial district; this use is not expected to cause a negative impact so this standard is met.
4. It does not interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood; Soundproofing and other items will help lessen impact on neighbors so this standard is met.
5. It can be adequately served by public facilities and services; This is a newer modern building with updates so this standard is met.
6. It does not cause undue traffic congestion; should not see a huge amount of additional traffic, many walk with their pets and parking is available in the building. Standard is met.
7. It preserves significant historical and architectural resources; None as this building as it is newer construction so this standard is met.
8. It preserves significant natural and environmental features; Not changing the exterior of the building. Standard is met.
9. It complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation. Other health and safety regulations will need to be followed. NO reason to believe these will not be followed. Standard is met.

Motion: Commissioner Lindwall moved to recommend approval of the special use permit with the following conditions:

- 1. Hours of operation shall not exceed 8am - 9pm, 7 days a week.**
- 2. One outdoor refuse container is required along with a pet waste station that includes pet waste bags.**
- 3. Employees who drive to work shall utilize the off-site surface parking lot at 935 Chicago Avenue if available, and shall not park on-site at The Main.**

4. No more than 20% of the storefront windows shall be covered as allowed by the Sign Code.
5. Signage discouraging pedestrian activity in the alley shall be installed by the Applicant if deemed necessary at any time by City staff due to safety concerns or complaints.
6. Substantial compliance with the documents and testimony on record.
7. Recordation of the special use ordinance with the Cook County Recorder of Deeds is required.

Second: Commissioner Westerberg

Ayes: Rodgers, Johnson , Westerberg, Halik, Arevalo, Lindwall

Nays:

Abstained:

C. Public Hearing: Map Amendment & Major Variations | 1611 Church Street | 23PLND-0045 & 23ZMJV-0047

Thomas Gourguechon of CSE1611 LLC, applicant for the property owner, submits for a Map Amendment and Major Variations for an adaptive reuse to convert an existing industrial/office building into 7 dwelling units and one ADU, and for additions/new construction for amenity space and parking. The applicant requests a Map Amendment to rezone the property from the current WE1 West Evanston Transitional District and the oWE West Evanston Overlay District to the R4 General Residential District (Section 6-8-5). The applicant requests Major Variations for townhome orientation that does not face the right-of-way (Section 6-8-1-12), and detached accessory structures between the principal structure and the front property line but not within the required front yard (Section 6-4-6-2-D), in the R4 General Residential District. The Land Use Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-4-8 of the Evanston Zoning Code. PIN: 10-13-222-004-0000

Thomas Gourguechon provided an overview of the project which involves the adaptive reuse of an existing bow-truss warehouse building into seven two-level dwelling units. The proposal includes requests for variances due to the unique characteristics and location of the existing building.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Halik asked for clarification on ADA requirements and the co-housing idea. Mr. Gourguechon provided clarification on various regulations for cooperatives, condominiums and co-housing.

Commissioner Westerberg had concerns about Overlay District Requirement and the proposal's deviation from existing overlay district regulations and asked for clarification on keeping industrial land. Ms. Klotz explained the intent of various areas within the

West Evanston Plan and requirements of the overlay district. Commissioner Westerberg then confirmed that any environmental concerns had been remediated.

The Commission discussed balancing amenities and units, ensuring the project provides sufficient amenities without compromising the housing unit count.

The Commission then discussed economic impact touching on considerations regarding the financial aspects and feasibility of the project.

Deliberations

The Chair then reviewed the Standards for Amendments (Section 6-3-4-5).

1. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive General Plan as adopted and amended from time to time by the City Council. The Comprehensive Plan is not a stagnant document and part of its intent is to think of ways to incorporate adaptive reuse so this standard is met.
2. Whether the proposed amendment is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property. The plan has been to convert this area to R4, and is currently a transitional district with other uses demonstrating such. This standard is met.
3. Whether the proposed amendment will have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent properties. Only a quarter of the existing building has been used and is not a fully active use. Bringing in housing will increase property values in the area. Standard is met.
4. The adequacy of public facilities and services: applicant mentioned that could be served by existing facilities and are making efforts to decrease the amount of impact on utilities with use of solar panels.

Standards for Approval In order for the Land Use Commission to approve the requested variation, the proposed request must meet the Standards for Major Variation (Section 6-3-8-12-E):

1. The requested variation will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment or property values of adjoining properties; Nothing in the proposal leads to belief that adverse impacts will occur. Will turn some paved areas into landscaping and help with water runoff. Standard is met.
2. The requested variation is in keeping with the intent of the zoning ordinance; Covered in map amendment, Evanston has seen a decrease in industrial uses that will likely not come back to the same extent. Providing houses meets plan intentions as well. Standard is met.
3. The alleged hardship or practical difficulty is peculiar to the property; Building exists in current state, proposal will increase footprint to help meet requirements so this standard is met
4. The property owner would suffer a particular hardship or practical difficulty as distinguished from a mere inconvenience if the strict letter of the regulations were

to be carried out; Working in predefined footprint so asking for additional items would cause undue burden. This standard is met.

5. The purpose of the variation is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income from the property, or while granting of the variation will result in additional income to the applicant and while the applicant for the variation may not have demonstrated that the application is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income from the property, the Land Use Commission or the City Council, depending on final jurisdiction under Section 6-3-8-2 of the Zoning Code has found that public benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole will be derived from approval of the variation, that include, but are not limited to any of the standards of Section 6-3-6-3 of the Zoning code; Providing additional housing units and a unique use is a benefit. Proposed amenity space takes up more of the load than the residential and minimal gain will likely be obtained by the developer so this standard is met.
6. The alleged difficulty or hardship has not been created by any person having an interest in the property; Building has existed for 100 years, no new problems being created and new garage building is being done sensibly, so this standard is met.
7. The requested variation requires the least deviation from the applicable regulation among the feasible options identified before the Land Use Commission issues its decision or recommendation to the City Council regarding said variation. Not oversized units, not adding greatly to the footprint of the building and balancing a good living environment and considering sustainability. Standard is met.

Motion: Commissioner Lindwall moved to approve the map amendment and major variation.

Seconded: Commissioner Westerberg.

Ayes: Rodgers, Johnson , Westerberg, Halik, Arevalo, Lindwall

Nays:

Abstained:

IV. COMMUNICATION

Staff provided an update on the Envision Evanston 2045 process and a short discussion followed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Westerberg moved to adjourn the meeting

Commissioner Lindwall Seconded

Ayes: Matt Rodgers, Brian Johnson , Kristine Westerberg, George Halik, Myrna Arevalo, Jeanne Lindwall

Nays:

Abstained:

The next meeting of the Evanston Land Use Commission will be held **on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 7:00 pm**, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Bock, Administrative Lead

Reviewed by,
Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner