



APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015
CITY OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS**

The Rock Island Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers at 1528 – 3rd Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Levin at 5:30 PM. Present were Commissioners Michael Creger, Andrew Dasso, Bruce Harding, David Levin, Jason Lopez, Norm Moline and Berlinda Tyler-Jamison. Commissioners Ted Johnson, Kevin Nolan, Bruce Peterson and Lorian Swanson were absent. Also in attendance were Alan Fries and Ben Griffith.

AN ORDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2015 MEETING

The Commission considered the matter of approval of the minutes of the January 7, 2015 meeting. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Creger made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Tyler-Jamison seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved said minutes.

PROCEDURAL EXPLANATION

Chairman Levin provided a brief explanation of the public hearing procedures for the benefit of the Planning Commissioners and those in attendance. He stated there was one public hearing with one interested party registered with the City Clerk's Office for Public Hearing #2015-01.

**PUBLIC HEARING #2015-01: REQUEST FROM ABR PARTNERS LLC FOR A REZONING FROM
R-4 (ONE TO SIX FAMILY RESIDENCE) DISTRICT TO B-3 (COMMUNITY BUSINESS) DISTRICT
AT 1116 – 11TH AVENUE**

Next there came before the Planning Commission Public Hearing #2015-01: a request for a rezoning from R-4 to B-3 at 1116 – 11th Avenue. Chairman Levin asked Mr. Fries to present the request. Mr. Fries stated that Planning staff had received no calls regarding the rezoning request and that there were was one interested party registered with the City Clerk's Office. Mr. Fries then provided a brief overview of the rezoning request, describing the physical characteristics of the site, and explained how the applicant intended to use the parcel as a driveway access from their building to 11th Street.

Commissioner Creger asked if there was a fence between the subject property and the three properties located to the east. Mr. Fries answered that he didn't think there was and an unidentified member of the public shouted out that there was none.

Commissioner Tyler-Jamison asked what type of delivery trucks were utilized by the applicant. Mr. Fries speculated they were tractor-trailers, but suggested the applicant could better answer.

Hearing no further questions from the Commissioners for Planning staff, Chairman Levin called the applicants forward. Mr. Brian Wagner of 119 – 17th Avenue in East Moline stepped to the podium and signed in, along with Mr. Scott Daly of 324 N. Williams Street in Geneseo. Mr. Wagner identified himself as a partner of ABR Partners/Lift Systems and stated the request to rezone the property with the intent to demolish the vacant house located there and to use the parcel as a driveway for delivery trucks to exit their loading dock, turn left onto 11th Avenue and then onto 11th Street. He stated that currently, delivery drivers must either back from the loading dock back into 11th Street from the alley, or else exit northwards through their employee parking lot, driving across the sidewalk, boulevard and curb, which had drawn complaints from the adjacent neighbor. Their plan would eliminate the need to back into 11th Street or cut across the parking lot, making it much safer for the delivery drivers and the neighbors.

Mr. Daly identified himself as the Lift Systems plant manager and stated that when an 18-wheeler has to back across four lanes of traffic onto 11th Street from the alley, it's always dangerous, even with a flagger or two in the street, because people absolutely will not stop.

Commissioner Creger surmised that with the new driveway, the delivery trucks would enter the alley from 11th Street, pull up to the loading dock and then exit to the north, turning left, or westwards, towards 11th Street, where they would then go either north or south onto 11th Street. Both Mr. Wagner and Mr. Daly confirmed this. Mr. Wagner stated that the larger trucks are flat-beds which are usually easier to unload from the alley and that they would be able to make the loop back onto 11th Street much easier since they didn't have to back up to the loading dock.

Commissioner Harding asked about delivery hours. Mr. Daly answered that deliveries were generally throughout the day from 8:00 to 5:00, but sometimes a little earlier or later, depending on when they arrived or how busy the plant was at the time. He also said that sometimes there would be a truck waiting for them in the alley when they arrived in the morning.

Commissioner Tyler-Jamison asked how long they had been there. Mr. Daly answered since 2009 and Mr. Wagner added that they had purchased the property from Quad City Engineering.

Hearing no further questions from the Commissioners for the applicants, Chairman Levin called the interested party forward. Ms. Carol Sue Melgoza of 1104 - 12th Street in Rock Island stepped to the podium, but did not sign in.

Ms. Melgoza stated that she was concerned because when she bought her property, she thought it was a neighborhood with families and now all she sees is trucks, especially 18-wheelers, which upsets her terribly, as well as her neighbor on the corner. She stated that it didn't seem right to have truck traffic coming in and out of the neighborhood all the time and that she sees nothing but trucks.

Chairman Levin asked Ms. Melgoza if she had specific questions to ask the applicants.

Mr. Wagner reviewed the proposed truck circulation pattern of entering the alley from 11th Street, exiting north through what would be the new driveway, then turning left (west) towards 11th Street. He

stated that they were trying to make it safer with as little intrusion and impact as possible for the neighbors to the east.

Ms. Melgoza stated that her neighbor, Ms. Davis, was not looking forward to seeing additional truck traffic in the neighborhood. Commissioner Tyler-Jamison asked Ms. Melgoza if fencing and/or landscaping help her concerns. Ms. Melgoza answered that it probably would since she wouldn't have to look at trucks all the time, adding that 11th Avenue is not very wide and many neighbors were concerned when they parked their cars on the street in front of their homes.

Commissioner Moline asked Ms. Melgoza if she had talked to the property owner on 11th Street and whether anyone else on 12th Street had any concerns. Ms. Melgoza answered that she knew Ms. Davis and that most of the properties on 12th Street close to her home were owned by the church and the others were rentals. Commissioner Moline asked Ms. Melgoza if any of the trucks leaving Lift Systems went by her house heading to 12th Street. Ms. Melgoza answered none that she knew of, a few here and there, but wasn't sure who they were.

Ms. Gina Davis of 1100 – 11th Avenue in Rock Island, approached the podium, but did not sign in. She stated that trucks come in through the alley and then go over the curb on 11th Avenue to get back onto 11th Street, adding that 11th Avenue was not wide enough to accommodate large trucks and that she could not park on 11th Avenue in front of her home because of the truck traffic. Ms. Davis asked if the applicant was going to knock down the curb so they can enter and leave.

Commissioner Creger answered that it was his understanding that the house would be demolished so they could build a driveway so that trucks entering from the alley could exit northwards onto 11th Avenue and then onto 11th Street. Ms. Davis stated that she still would have a problem since adding a driveway would impede access to the front of her house. Mr. Fries stated that the applicants would need to design and build the driveway to City Code for access onto 11th Avenue, adding that Ms. Davis would have better access if the applicant had a driveway and curb cut instead of exiting through the parking lot across the sidewalk, boulevard and curb, as some drivers currently do.

Ms. Davis again stated that 11th Avenue was not wide enough to accommodate large trucks and parking on the street. Commissioner Creger asked if parking was allowed on both sides of the street and Ms. Davis answered that it was so that they could park in front of their houses. Commissioner Creger stated that the applicant was proposing to make a three-aisle-wide parking lot so that the trucks can safely exit and not tear up the sidewalk, boulevard and curbing. Ms. Davis asked what this would do to the people parking on 11th Avenue who don't park on the street now because they're worried about trucks. Commissioner Creger pointed to the aerial photo on the screen and stated that the houses on the north side of 11th Avenue were further to the east of the proposed driveway and shouldn't be impacted by trucks exiting the driveway heading back out onto 11th Street.

Commissioner Tyler-Jamison asked Mr. Wagner if that was what he intended to do. Mr. Wagner stated that he intended to install the driveway as far to the east as possible to help trucks turn safely onto 11th Avenue, adding that the City will need to issue a curb cut permit. Commissioner Tyler-Jamison asked Ms. Davis and Ms. Melgoza if they would still have concerns. Ms. Davis answered that 11th Avenue was still too narrow to allow trucks. Ms. Melgoza answered that when there are cars parked on the street in front of houses, there was not enough room for trucks to get by. Commissioner Moline stated that it looked like the houses were east of where the trucks would be turning out from the parking lot.

Commissioner Creger stated that there appeared to be three vacant lots directly across the street from the driveway.

Hearing no further questions from the audience, Chairman Levin asked the applicants if they wished to provide a response. Mr. Wagner stated that Mr. Will Birch, owner of three of the vacant lot across the street from where the driveway is proposed, had called him and expressed his support of the rezoning. Chairman Levin then closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Lopez stated that he used to visit the Church of Peace regularly and didn't think the business was much of a nuisance, adding that what the applicant has proposed would be an improvement of traffic safety for the neighborhood and 11th Street.

Hearing no further discussion among the Commissioners, Chairman Levin asked if anyone would care to make a motion.

Commissioner Lopez made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning from R-4 to B-3 to the City Council, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Creger. Commissioner Moline stated that if approved, he would ask the applicant for landscaping to create a buffer for the property owners to the east. Commissioner Tyler-Jamison added that there be a clear understanding that the proposed driveway be as far to the east as possible to allow trucks to safely exit the property onto 11th Avenue.

Hearing no further discussion among the Commissioners, Chairman Levin called for a vote. The Planning Commission voted unanimously (7—0) to recommend approval of the rezoning to the City Council. Chairman Levin stated that the item would be placed onto the March 16th City Council agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Griffith stated there would be a public hearing for the Downtown Revitalization Plan for the April 1st Planning Commission meeting and that the deadline for non-advertised items wasn't until the following week. He asked if any of the Commissioners knew whether or not they would be absent on April 1st. Mr. Griffith concluded by asking the Commissioners to be mindful of any *ex parte* communications and to contact the Planning Office with any questions regarding any items on upcoming agendas.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no other business, Chairman Levin asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lopez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:09 PM, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Moline. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission is Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 5:30 PM in the City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,



Ben Griffith, AICP, Secretary