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Proposed Kolak Center Zoning Compromise

Counter-proposal Would Reduce Apartment Density from 60 to 33 Units

September 2, 2015—The City of Beloit Planning & Building Services Division has received applications from Commonwealth Development to amend the City's Future Land Use Map and to rezone the Kolak Education Center property at 1633 Keeler Avenue from Public Lands & Institutions (PLI) District to R-3 Low-Density Multi-Family Residential District. Commonwealth's proposal includes 33 units in the existing building and 27 units in a 3-story addition for total of 60 units or a density of 10.5 units per acre.

Beloit's Planning Department supports some aspects of Commonwealth's proposal but opposes others.

The Department supports the concepts of adaptive reuse and historic preservation, both of which are important components of Beloit's revitalization. The Department also supports efforts to increase and modernize the City's housing stock. In addition the Department supports any efforts to avoid long-term vacancy and deterioration of this large historic structure.

Consistent with the positive attributes of this project outlined above, the Department is willing to support the adaptive reuse of the Kolak Center through its conversion into 33 or fewer multi-family units within the footprint of the existing building only. This would equate to a residential density of 5.8 units per acre or less which is compatible with the surrounding single-family neighborhood.

An adaptive reuse project of reduced scope would keep traffic levels comparable to current conditions, while keeping the character of the neighborhood intact. In addition, the open space between the Kolak Center and surrounding homes would be preserved.

The Department has requested Commonwealth amend their rezoning application to request a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District which would allow the Department's recommendation for developing 33 units. If revised applications are submitted, they will be considered by the Plan Commission on September 23, 2015 and could potentially go to City Council on November 2, 2015. If the applications are not revised by 5 p.m. Friday, September 4, 2015, they will go forward as submitted.

Official public notices will be distributed next week.

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