

**MINUTES**  
**PLAN COMMISSION**  
**City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Wednesday, October 6, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Chairman Weeden, Commissioners Toral, Ramsden, Robson, Anderson, Finnegan, and Councilor Preuschl were present. Commissioner Jacobsen was absent.

**2. MINUTES**

**2.a. Consideration of the minutes of September 22, 2021 Plan Commission meeting**

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramsden, seconded by Commissioner Robson to approve the minutes. Motion carried, roll call vote (6-0).

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**3.a. Consideration of an ordinance amending the zoning district map for the City of Beloit from C-1, Office District, to C-3, Community Commercial District, for the property located at 2420 Milwaukee Road**

Julie Christensen, Community Development Director, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Robson asked if the driveway to enter into the meat market and gift store will be from Highway 81 or from Willowbrook. Ms. Christensen said it would be from Highway 81 because there is no access to Willowbrook. Commissioner Robson stated she lives near there, and they go very fast and it could be dangerous if someone is turning into the business with people coming fast behind them.

Commissioner Robson asked if the Police and Fire Departments have looked at the proposal. Ms. Christensen stated that those departments do not review rezoning applications, and it is a state highway and designed to handle the high volume of traffic. Commissioner Robson stated that there could be large accidents because of people trying to turn into the parking lot. Commissioner Robson stated that Plan Commission should send it back to the Police Department to look at the traffic patterns.

Commissioner Robson asked what can be built on a C-3 zoning compared to C-1. Ms. Christensen stated that it is a variety of things; the use table is 3-4 pages long. Ms. Christensen stated that in general, C-1 is an office district, with office like uses and

low intensity commercial uses and C-3 allows highway-type commercial uses like hotel/motel and retail sales and service.

Commissioner Robson stated that recently the City of Beloit amended the Strategic Plan on September 20, 2021. Commissioner Robson states there is a process which includes the City Planners and Commissioners if they would consider whether or not the plan intrudes on residential areas or impacts the environment.

Chairman Weeden opened the public hearing.

Cynthia Salvador, 2441 Blarney Stone Drive, explained that she has lived in this neighborhood a long time, and recently a lady had died on Milwaukee Road who lived on Morgan Terrace. Ms. Salvador asks Plan Commission why the City would allow a meat market off the highway because it is a dangerous spot to put the market given the ongoing traffic.

Chairman Weeden closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Ramsden stated that he has nothing against meat market, but he thinks the location would be a serious traffic safety concern off Milwaukee Road. Commissioner Ramsden stated that there are cars going 40 mph, and the highway was not designed to have businesses driveways accessing off Milwaukee Road. Commissioner Ramsden stated that is why they have frontage roads next to Milwaukee Road.

Ms. Christensen mentioned to the Commissioners that the property is currently zoned C-1, so an office building could be constructed at the location without any review. This site is not limited to residential uses.

Commissioner Weeden asked if this is going to be considered part of the Willowbrook Corridor, wouldn't it make sense to have access off Willowbrook rather than Milwaukee Road. Ms. Christensen stated that the owner could get an easement for a driveway from the adjacent property owner, but the City cannot require the owner to do that. Commissioner Weeden expressed his concerns about the business being in the residential area.

Commissioner Robson stated that there are semis and large trucks that are more dangerous that come through Highway 81, and the Strategic Plan should be considered.

Councilor Preuschl stated that the Police Department studying the traffic impact was a valid suggestion, and he does not think that the amendment to the Strategic Plan related to sustainability really matters.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the City staff made a request to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding the driveway. Ms. Christensen stated that the City did not, the owner made a request to DOT about the driveway. Commissioner Anderson asked if DOT would need to put their stamp of approval on the traffic related items. Ms. Christensen stated that DOT would look at whether the driveway could be widened.

Commissioner Anderson asked if DOT would evaluate whether there needs to be a turn lane constructed. Ms. Christensen stated that DOT would not normally require a turn lane for a small retail shop. Ms. Christensen said she would have to check with Engineering to see what DOT's authority is over the highway because many of the state highways have been given to the City to maintain and make decisions on. Ms. Christensen said it could be under DOT's jurisdiction, but they would likely not make a recommendation as to whether this should be approved or denied. Milwaukee Road is a state highway that is built to handle the traffic generated by the commercial uses on Milwaukee Road.

Commissioner Finnegan said he has the same concerns as the other commissioners, and was wondering who owns the other triangular lot on the map. Commissioner Finnegan stated the realtors could speak with the owners to create the easement, since it could help the owner develop his lot as well.

Motion was made by Commissioner Robson, seconded by Commissioner Toral to lay the item over to allow staff to analyze the traffic and evaluate this project in relation to the Strategic Plan. Motion carried, roll call vote (4-2).

#### 4. REPORTS

##### 4.a. **Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a drive-through coffee trailer and outdoor seating area in a C-3, Community Commercial District, for the property located at 635 Broad Street**

Julie Christensen, Community Development Director, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Weeden asked Ms. Christensen if Drew Pennington, Director of Planning and Building Services, and Shauna El-Amin, Downtown Beloit Association, had met with the applicant. Ms. Christensen stated that DBA was supposed to make contact with the applicant about DBA's concerns and that she did not know if they connected. Ms. Christensen explained that she talked individually to the Economic Director and City Manager, and they did not feel prohibiting outdoor vending in the downtown was something they wanted to do.

Commissioner Robson asked if the DBA had a conversation with the applicant. Ms. Christensen stated that she did not know, but they could ask the applicant. Commissioner Anderson asked if the coffee bar starts wanting to serve sandwiches

for lunch if things would be different. Ms. Christensen states that it changes things with Rock County Health, but not with the City of Beloit as a use or conditional use. Ms. Christensen stated that Plan Commission is reviewing this application for a drive-through use and an outdoor seating area.

Councilor Preuschl stated that the lot is newly striped, and there were six cars parked where they are showing seating on the site plan. Councilor Preuschl stated that seating is not in a very safe location, and there is about a dozen or more people there.

Commissioner Finnegan stated he had a same thought as the other Commissioners, but he is thinking there is a way that it could be dealt with such as putting parking blocks or cement planters so no one gets hurt.

Commissioner Weeden asked if Ms. Christensen's understanding was that it would be for a 12-month operation. Ms. Christensen said that she thought the drive-through would be year-round but the outdoor seating would not be.

Paige Hoops and Joyce DesJardin, owners of Rise and Grind Coffee house, stated as far as the outdoor seating goes they were planning on putting up planters with partitions so that it is clear that no one could park there. Ms. Hoops stated that she has spoken with the business and have a good relationship with the owner of the business, and are willing to work with them. Ms. Hoops stated that the owner plans to redirect the employees to park elsewhere once they get their business up and running. Ms. Hoops stated that they plan to put up planters with lattice so that it is clear that it is a seating area, so no one could park there.

Councilor Preuschl asked if the Plan Commission could add something into the conditional use language, so it is clear what kind of expectation we have for the outdoor seating area. He would feel comfortable if there was an agreement in writing.

Commissioner Weeden asked if the Plan Commission could add a condition that the seating area needs to be marked and safe around the parking spaces. Ms. Christensen stated that the Plan Commission needs to provide a rationale for the condition.

Councilor Preuschl stated could they put in substantial protective barrier to protect the people in the seating area. Commissioner Anderson asked if it made sense if the Plan Commission just approved the drive-through now so they could up and running and then we could look at the outdoor seating area in the spring.

Commissioner Finnegan stated that we should add language such as needing a protective barrier that is able to stop a car.

Commissioner Robson asked if there is a reason they have not put up the trailer yet. Ms. Hoops stated that the trailer is not finished yet, and the whole reason why they wanted the trailer is so they could have a drive-through with outdoor seating.

Commissioner Weeden asked when they would get their business up and running with the trailer. Ms. Hoops stated they are hoping to be opening by mid-November. Commissioner Weeden asked if they would be okay if they came back in two weeks, if that would push them back. Ms. Christensen stated that item would not go to Council until the second week of November if Plan Commission pushed it back two weeks.

Commissioner Toral stated he can send the Commissioners a link that shows from a safety prospective why having a barrier around people is significant.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Finnegan to add a condition that the applicant must provide a substantial protective barrier for the outdoor seating area which includes parking blocks. The final design will be approved by staff. Motion carried, roll call vote (6-0).

**5. STATUS REPORT ON PRIOR PLAN COMMISSION ITEMS**

Ms. Christensen updated the Plan Commission on the actions taken by City Council related to a variety of items previously reviewed by Plan Commission. The next Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for October 22, 2021.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Commissioner Ramsden, and seconded by Commissioner Robson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried, roll call vote (7-0). Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

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Timothy Weeden, Chairman