

PLAN COMMISSION

February 25, 2016

Members present: Burchill, Morrissette, Yoerg, Potter, Rhoades and TeWinkel

Others present: Michael Leverty, Ryan Cari, Mike Hoefler, Matt Hoefler, Roger Humphrey and Denny Darnold

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Burchill.

A motion was made by Yoerg, seconded by TeWinkel to approve the February 11, 2016 meeting minutes. **Motion carried.**

Final plat, Cedar Valley subdivision, 15 one-family lots, town of Hudson (extraterritorial subdivision review) –Kernon Bast. Darnold noted that this subdivision has been previously reviewed in the concept and preliminary plat stages. The final plat is in conformance with the preliminary plat; and he recommended approval, Darnold added. He further explained that the street names were changed since the preliminary plat submittal and that the town of Hudson is okay with the proposed street names. A motion was made by Yoerg, seconded by TeWinkel to approve the final plat of Cedar Valley subdivision as proposed by Kernon Bast and to recommend approval to the Common Council. **Motion carried.**

Final development plans, Hudson Boat Works (request to re-review the access restriction) – HAF RED and MLME Holdings. Darnold noted that the plan commission's recommendation at the 2-11-16 meeting was approval of the Hudson Boat Works final development plans with the condition that the access be limited to right turn only exiting the site. MLME Holdings requested that the plans be removed from the 2-22-16 Common Council meeting to allow MLME Holdings and HAF RED to have additional discussion in regard to the proposed access restriction. Darnold commented that he had not received any information from MLME Holdings or HAF RED in regard to what they may propose.

Ryan Cari representing MLME Holdings explained that HAF RED has a purchase agreement with MLME Holdings to purchase the parcel where the Hudson Boat Works project is proposed and which there is a shared access with the Northwestern Mutual office site. Cari noted that the proposed restriction impacts both the proposed and existing commercial developments including the Northwestern Mutual office building. Cari expressed that the issue is the amount of traffic during the weekday afternoon periods, but that time of heavy traffic is limited to about two (2) hours per day and that for the remainder of the day (22 to 22 1/2 hours per day) there is no significant traffic issue. The restriction of a right turn out only for exiting traffic imposes an unnecessary hardship, Cari opined.

Cari suggested that the MLME Holdings and HAF RED would prefer that the right turn not be a physical barrier (median) and the exit be signed and restriction of no left turn limited to the period of 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven (7) days per week, and signage would protect the public interest. Cari commented that the Stillwater bridge issue has added traffic to this area and that there used to be a bank at this location that had greater traffic generation than the existing business.

Burchill asked about projected traffic from the overall development proposed.

Mike Hoefler noted that the proposed restaurant will have about 25 vehicles during the two hour period of 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The architectural firm will have about five (5) to six (6) vehicles. Hoefler noted that he may be bringing six (6) Minnesota based businesses to Hudson and that the no left turn restriction is an issue. Hoefler expressed that with the other two (2) buildings proposed he cannot have the restriction of no left turns for the entire day.

Burchill asked if the developers had considered conducting a traffic study. Hoefler responded no.

Yoerg commented that he disagreed that the hours of restricting the no left turn for a period of 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. is not sufficient, and he would suggest a time period of 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. is more appropriate. Yoerg added if signed only it may show intent, but will be difficult to enforce; and he asked "Who will obey?"

Potter noted that this issue of traffic backing up along areas of Second Street is not unique in downtown Hudson adding that at 6:25 p.m. tonight the traffic backed up through downtown where left turns were difficult to make.

Yoerg responded that he felt the issue north of Coulee Road intersection is different in that it is a single lane each way and the traffic is limited to 25 mph. Potter asked if a request to WisDOT to lowering the speed limit may take a long time to get a response. Darnold noted the speed limit was one of several issues that WisDOT suggested to be considered to address the matter of traffic congestion south of the Coulee Road intersection.

TeWinkel expressed his concern is that the area south of the intersection of Coulee Road is four lanes of traffic and varied speeds in the different lanes.

Burchill asked if there had been any consideration of moving the access further south. Hoefler noted that would require a long drive, about 300 feet, with all traffic to access through the Northwestern Mutual site. Burchill suggested left out at that location may be allowed. Burchill asked how far it may be from the existing access to the south property line. Darnold estimated 500 feet.

Hoefler explained that the speed limit needs to be reduced to 25 mph as the proposed commercial buildings will have zero setbacks; and when the dedicated northbound right turn is extended, the curb line will be adjacent to the sidewalk as in downtown Hudson. Burchill suggested a right turn exit only.

Burchill asked if the development may be able to wait until the speed limit issue may be addressed. Hoefler explained that there are a number of unique development issues with this site including relocating a natural gas line that may take up to eight (8) weeks.

Cari suggested that the two parties may be agreeable to extending the time period of the no left turn to be from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. as suggested by commissioner Yoerg.

Michael Leverty suggested that traffic conditions should improve as the speed limit may be reduced, the St. Croix Crossing bridge is opened for traffic, the extension of dedicated right turn lane to Coulee Road is implemented and if duration of the green light for northbound traffic may be extended during the p.m. peak period.

Morrisette commented that safety must be addressed, and he believes this is a good project and wants the project to move ahead but does believe the access restriction is necessary and may be an inconvenience, but not a hardship.

Cari responded that MLME Holdings and HAF RED are here not to be adversarial, but to try to work out a restriction that the plan commission may be willing to accept; and he hoped the suggestion of the signage and time period of the no left turn would be acceptable.

Yoerg suggested that he would be willing to reevaluate the access restriction if the speed limit can be lowered to 25 mph and a review if a second access may be possible.

Potter asked if the matter of lowering the speed limit to 25 mph is possible and how long that may take to implement. Darnold responded that he has discussed the speed limit issue with WisDOT officials, but that city needs to make a formal request. Darnold stated he does not know how long it would take to make a decision whether to lower the speed limit.

Hoefler expressed concern that if a median is required that it will be ignored and that may contribute to traffic accidents as well. Yoerg expressed the median will be a deterrent to motorists wanting to turn south.

Burchill reiterated that if a traffic study would be conducted and can show that signage or other methods are acceptable then the city will reconsider, but with the 45 mph cross traffic he remains concerned of the left turns leaving the site during the afternoon heavy traffic period.

Rhoades and Morrissette expressed that they would be open to re-reviewing the access matter if the speed limit is lowered to 25 mph including the provision for restriction by signage and hours of the day that the restriction would be implemented.

A motion was made to recommend approval of the final development plans for the Hudson Boat Works as proposed by HAF RED, LLC with the condition that the access be restricted to right turn only for exiting traffic and that if the speed limit is reduced to 25 mph the plan commission will re-review the access issue including restricting the access to right out only by signage and with the restriction limited to a specified time period. **Motion carried.**

Other business for discussion purposes only. Darnold reiterated that the plan commission meetings in March will be March 10 and 31 and with only one meeting scheduled in April on the 21. The meeting on March 31 will serve as the second meeting in March and the first meeting in April.

A motion was made by TeWinkel, seconded by Rhoades to adjourn. **Motion carried.** 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Darnold, Secretary