Planning & Development Committee Meeting
Minutes of January 23, 2012
City Council Chambers – 7:15 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center


STAFF PRESENT:  G. Chen, G. Farrar, S. Griffin, M. Lyons, D. Marino,

PRESIDING OFFICIAL:  Ald. Holmes

I. DECLARATION OF QUORUM
A quorum being present, Chair Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 9, 2012 MEETING MINUTES
Ald. Fiske moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Ald. Wynne.
The minutes of the January 9, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously 5-0.

III. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(P1) Ordinance 6-O-12, Granting a Special Use for a Child Daycare Center at 1629 Orrington Avenue

For Action

Staff recommends approval of Ordinance 6-O-12 as proposed to be amended, granting a special use permit for the operation of a Child Daycare Center at 1629 Orrington Avenue. The proposed amended Ordinance 6-O-12 reflects P&D Committee direction to address two aspects of the application for special use by Bright Horizons Childcare Centers LLC. This ordinance was introduced at the January 9, 2012 City Council meeting, and will be considered again at the Planning & Development Committee meeting January 23, 2012.

Chair Holmes called the public who wanted to speak to the podium:

Marsha Fincher of 1400 Ashland, owns an in-home daycare center. She said her first concern is for safety and she is concerned that so many children could be evacuated from such a large space in a serious emergency. She is also concerned with the safety of the children when being picked up and dropped off in such a congested area. She said she is not only concerned with safety but also best practices regarding the rooftop playground, as children need room to run and grass to play and roll around in and she believes this play area will not provide such an atmosphere. Ms. Fincher said
best practice would provide the consistency and familiarity that one caregiver a child becomes used to seeing, which provides security and confidence and she does not believe this model will provide that. She estimated that with 13.25 children per each of the 26 rooms proposed, there would need to be 10 teachers in 2 classrooms to provide optimal development for each infant or toddler. She stated that many children in Evanston are behind in their development and education. She asked whether the City is more concerned with filling budget gaps than the development of the children. She asked whether the City really needs another day care center.

Chair Holmes thanked Ms. Fincher.

**Ald. Wilson moved to recommend Ordinance 6-O-12 as amended for action, seconded by Ald. Rainey.**

The Committee voted unanimously 5-0 to recommend Ordinance 6-O-12 as amended for action.

**IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**(PD1) Discussion of Draft Ordinance XX-O-12, Amending Various Portions of the Zoning Ordinance to Expand the List of Prohibited Home Based Businesses**

Staff recommends that the Planning & Development Committee refer the enclosed draft Ordinance to the Plan Commission for consideration and recommendation back to the Planning & Development Committee as a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

**Ald. Rainey moved to refer Draft Ordinance XX-O-12 to the Plan Commission for consideration, seconded by Ald. Wynne.**

Ald. Rainey said she has a few landscapers in her ward who have trucks and equipment which they keep in the rear of the homes and she would hate to see them not allowed to run their businesses out of their homes, which are beautifully landscaped, and about which no neighbors have complained. Neighbors, in fact, employ them as their landscapers.

Ald. Wilson agreed that he has a similar concern in that he does not want to harm those whose businesses do not impose on their neighbors. He added, regarding Subsection C, which addresses storage, that there are young people who mow lawns and keep their lawn mowers in their garages. He said the Ordinance needs to be tailored further.

Chair Holmes said the complaints in her ward are about landscapers who keep trucks and supplies and other equipment in their garages and whose trucks take up parking spaces on the block, and that people have a right to peace. She understands that some are not nuisances but wondered how a law can exclude only some. She said a computer repair business is different than having soil and bushes stored in garages.
Ald. Wilson argued that the law should not prevent someone from, for example, fixing bicycles in his or her garage. He said he would hate to take away someone’s livelihood that needs to work out of their home.

Steve Griffin, Director of Community and Economic Development, clarified that the intent of the Ordinance is that the business would not be set up to run completely out of the garage. He reminded the Committee that landscaping was one of the bigger concerns. He suggested that the Ordinance be worded to work around incidental use of the garage as opposed to complete use of the garage.

Ald. Rainey suggested that the Ordinance require landscapers to get a special permit which requires a specified amount, of signatures, for example 100, from neighbors stating that they approve of the business. She said she does have one landscaper who is a nuisance in her ward, but most are not. She agreed with Ald. Wilson about not wanting to put someone out of business and said home based businesses may be a result of the economy, to which Chair Holmes replied that this problem has been going on for 5 years and she does not want to blame the economy.

The Committee voted unanimously 5-0 to refer Draft Ordinance XX-O-12 to the Plan Commission for consideration and referral back to the Planning & Development Committee.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbie Newman