PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Monday, January 12, 2004
6:30 - Room 2200
Evanston Civic Center

ALDERMEN PRESENT:  S. Bernstein, J. Kent, A. Newman, E. Tisdahl, M. Wynne

STAFF PRESENT:     J. Wolinski, A. Alterson, M. Baaske

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Newman

I. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Newman noted a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2003

Ald. Tisdahl made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2003 meeting. Motion seconded by Ald. Kent. Motion passed unanimously.

III. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(P7) Ordinance 110-O-03 - Vacant and Boarded Building Ordinance

This item was introduced at the meeting on November 24, 2003 and referred back to Committee; held in Committee 12/15/03. The Committee will hear public testimony on boarded buildings as Public nuisances.

James Wolinski, Community Development Director, stated that there were three experts (Commander Nilsson with the Police Department, Chief Berkowsky with the Fire Department, Steve Kochis, Appraiser) willing to speak tonight. Mr. Wolinski stated that what will be discussed tonight is the effect a boarded up building would have if it were boarded up six months and the effect it has been boarded for two years and more.

Commander Nilsson referred to a Broken Windows article published in the Atlantic Monthly 1982 publication. The philosophy of this article is the same philosophy the Police Department uses today, and that is that a broken or boarded up window left unattended for any length of time, social psychologists and police tend to agree that more windows will be broken. The analogy is that a boarded up house left unattended will be an attraction for wild dogs, vermin, criminals, drug dealers, drug
Evelyn Orange, 1100 Leonard Place stated that there are three buildings that are not boarded up, they are maintained on the outside but have had a very limited occupancy the last few years. The neighborhood has been lucky so far in that no one has tried to occupy these buildings illegally.

Betty Sue Ester, 1806 Gray said that there has not been any clear-cut testimony that states we need this law. There are other communities that have laws that deal with boarded up buildings, not buildings that are maintained. She felt that someone's property should not be taken because they choose not to live in it, but they keep it maintained.

Ellyn Szymanski stated that she would have to have a copy of tonight's P&D minutes in order to make amendments to the Ordinance. She asked that the ordinance be held. Ald. Bernstein moved to hold the Ordinance. Motion seconded by Ald. Tisdahl. Motion passed unanimously.

*A verbatim transcript of the proceedings of this P&D Committee case is on file with the Evanston Zoning Division. The Zoning Division is located in Room 3700 of the Evanston Civic Center.*

(P4) Ordinance 4-O-04 - Special Use - 824 Emerson Drive-Through
Consideration of the recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant a special use and variations for a drive-through bank.

Ald. Newman moved to approve the Special Use for 824 Emerson Drive-Through. Motion seconded by Ald. Wynne. Motion passed unanimously.

*A verbatim transcript of the proceedings of this P&D Committee case is on file with the Evanston Zoning Division. The Zoning Division is located in Room 3700 of the Evanston Civic Center.*

(P8) Ordinance 111-O-03 - Special Use for 3330 Central St. (Starbucks)
Consideration of a recommendation of the ZBA to grant a special use for a type 2 restaurant with drive-through window for Starbucks. Item was introduced at Council and referred back to Committee.


*A verbatim transcript of the proceedings of this P&D Committee case is on file with the Evanston Zoning Division. The Zoning Division is located in Room 3700 of the Evanston Civic Center.*
Ordinance 07-O-04 - Zoning Map Amendment: Rezoning of Kendall College

Consideration of a recommendation on the findings and report of the Plan
Commission and directive from the Planning & Development Committee to rezone
the area bounded by Sherman, Lincoln, Orrington and Colfax from U1 to R1.

A verbatim transcript of the proceedings of this P&D Committee case is on file with
the Evanston Zoning Division. The Zoning Division is located in Room 3700 of the
Evanston Civic Center

Robert Buono, principal of Smithfield Properties introduced his partner Bill Smith.
He stated that they are the owners of the Kendall College property. He said that
while Kendall College intends to relocate to a campus in Chicago, it will stay at its
current site until the end of 2004.

Mr. Buono explained how difficult it would be for Smithfield Properties to pursue
single-family development on this site. While it has been widely reported in the
newspapers what the property sold for, what has not been widely reported is that there
is an extensive environmental abatement that must be done because of the asbestos in
the dormitory buildings. The buildings must be demolished, and infrastructure must
be worked on.

To explain why he wanted to build townhomes on this property, Mr. Buono said that
over the last few years (2002/03) there have been 15 homes sold that were in excess
of $1.2 million, of the 15 homes sold, eleven have closed. The average home selling
above $1.2 million is $1.5 million. The size of these homes were quite large and
more than double the size of the lot that could be put on the site of Kendall College.
He added before he makes a profit if they were to build single-family homes, to
compete in the current market the home would have to sell for $1.7 million. The
current homes in excess of $1.2 million that are on the market today, have been on the
market for 235 days.

Mr. Buono stated that he would not be showing a project consisting of single family
homes, the project he was proposing consisted of townhomes. He showed the
architectural drawings of the project and explained it in detail. The project consists of
117 units and 186 parking spaces. The average size of the townhomes average 2,300-
square feet, there is nothing smaller than two bedrooms. There are some three and
four bedroom units. The purchase price would be approximately $600,000. The
price of a single family home, which they are not prepared to build, would range from
$1.9 million to $2.3 million.
Mr. Buono said that what he has tried to emphasize from the beginning is that while he does not believe in an R1 designation and the development potential that comes with that as a feasible development for his company, he is prepared to figure out a compromise and that this project is not written in stone. Mr. Gemmell responded that he was not interested in a compromise, in spite of months of requests they have not seen an alternate plan from Mr. Buono. He said that the property was purchased with an R1 plan and he and the people he represented wanted it kept R1.

James Wolinski, Director of the Community Development Department said that he thought the developer has a unique opportunity to develop quite an exclusive block of single-family homes. The teardowns that are currently being developed in Evanston are being sold (a lot of them on fairly small lots) for $1.1, $1.2, and $1.3 million. He added that building a home on a 7,200 square foot lot as close to the lake as this property is, in a very residential beautiful neighborhood, the opportunity to get what the developer wanted for their homes is something to be considered. Mr. Buono said that based on the lack of housing at that price point that has sold over the last few years and at a price that is less than he would have to sell the homes for suggests that that is not a market that would be worth that kind of development risk. He added it was less an issue of profitability, but he didn’t feel that there was a marketplace based on what they have seen.

Ald. Newman moved introduction of the Ordinance of R1. Motion seconded by Ald. Tisdahl. Ald. Newman said that this would be introduced before Council tonight and will be up for a vote on January 26, 2004. Ald. Bernstein said that he was concerned with keeping the character of Evanston. He said he wanted the developer to do well, but he wanted it done within the context of what the City of Evanston sees is appropriate for itself at this time. Ald. Kent said he was going to vote against this motion because what he is beginning to understand that he has to live in a neighborhood that has $300,000 and $400,000 homes to influence what goes on at this Committee. He said that this Ordinance only serves the people that can afford it. His concern was for the people that only wanted to live in Evanston. Ald. Kent said he was not against the motion and not for it, but would wait to see how it balances out. Motion passed 4 ayes 1 no.

Ald. Newman said there would be a meeting regarding the 6th Ward on January 20 at 7:30 p.m. For people wanting to discuss the Kendall Property development, the Aldermen will be available from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. that same night.

(P5) Ordinance 05-O-04 – Zoning Planned Development: 1100 Clark/1719 Ridge
Consideration of the findings and report of the Plan Commission regarding granting a Planned Development for approximately 237 dwelling units.
like to meet with Mr. Roszak.

Bruce Huvard responded that the decision to go with a plan that phased out after 15 years instead of another plan was intentional. He gave the reasoning behind the development’s affordable housing plan. Mr. Huvard added that he would be happy to meet with the Housing Commission.

Betty Sue Ester stated that she is working with a group of citizens to form the Citizens Lighthouse Community Land trust. She said that through a land trust condos can stay affordable forever, and when the condos are sold the owner does get some equity. Ms. Ester offered to discuss this at a later meeting with Mr. Roszak.

Ald. Newman said that Oak Street and Clark Street are in very bad shape. He asked Mr. Roszak if he could help out with that. Mr. Roszak said that he would pave the streets adjacent to his property. Ald. Newman thanked Mr. Roszak and said he would add that as a condition to the special use.

Ald. Newman moved approval of Ordinance 05-O-04. Ald. Wynne seconded the motion. Ald. Newman said this would be introduced tonight at City Council and would be brought back before this Committee.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Ald. Newman said that the items not discussed tonight would be discussed at the next P&D meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, it adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Baaske
Planning Division