MINUTES
EVANSTON PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 19, 2005 / 7:00 p.m.
Evanston Civic Center, Room 2403

MEMBERS PRESENT.......................... Douglas Doetsch, Albert Hunter, Steve Knutson,
................................................................. James Woods, Lawrence Raffel, Alice Rebechini,
................................................................. Lawrence Widmayer (Chair)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PRESENT .......... Steve Samson

MEMBERS ABSENT............................. Kenneth Rodgers, Sharon Bowie

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS ABSENT .......... Richard Cook

STAFF PRESENT .................................. James Wolinski, Arthur Alterson, Dennis Marino,
................................................................. Andrew Huckman, Tracy Norfleet

I. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM
Chair Widmayer noted that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING MEETINGS
Chair Widmayer reminded members that there will be joint meeting of the Plan Commission,
Economic Development Committee, and Parking Committee on Wednesday, January 26, 2005 at
7pm in the Civic Center. The purpose is for follow-up on the downtown visioning sessions held
last spring. The February Plan Commission meeting date was discussed. It had been switched
from February 9 to February 10, but due to scheduling conflicts among various members, it was
switched back to the original date of Wednesday, February 9, 2005 at 7pm in the Civic Center.
The Plan Commission annual retreat was discussed, which will be on Tuesday, March 8, 2005 at
6:30pm in the Civic Center.

III. CONTINUATION OF PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE MAP & TEXT
AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING
ZPC 04-11 M&T Special Multi-Family Zoning District
To consider amendments to Chapters 3, “Implementation and Administration;” 4, “General Provisions,” 7, Zoning
Districts and Map, 8, “Residential Districts;” 15, “Special Purpose and Overlay Districts; 16, “Off-Street Parking and
Loading;” 17, “Landscaping and Screening;” 18, “Definitions;” and any other related sections of the Zoning
Ordinance, to amend the text and/or the map of the Zoning Ordinance establishing new zoning districts characterized
by having certain residential uses, including without limitation, single-family detached and two-family dwellings,
allowed as permitted uses “as-of-right” and having certain other residential uses, which may presently be permitted
uses “as-of-right” allowed only as special uses, consider and amend where necessary lot and bulk regulations for said
new zoning districts, and to remap all or parts of the following indicated areas from the R4, R5, or R6 General
Residential Districts into one of said new zoning district or other appropriate zoning district or overlay district. The
properties that are the subject of potential map amendment recommendations by this Plan Commission hearing
comprise, more or less all properties within the R4, R5, or R6 General Residential Districts bounded by Ridge Ave. on
the west, Emerson on the south, Orrington on the east, and Colfax on the north.
Mr. Arthur Alterson, Zoning Administrator, distributed proposed language to Members. Mr. Andrew Huckman, Staff Attorney, requested additional time for the Legal Department to review the proposed language. Chair Widmayer asked if there were any concerns. Mr. Huckman referred to several sections, and discussion followed. Mr. Alterson noted on the draft that he listed several questions for Members:

- Whether residential care homes, category II, should remain as permitted uses: Following discussion, Members agreed yes.

- Whether the limitation on street fronting garages now in the R1, R2, and R3 districts should apply to R4a: Following discussion, Members agreed yes.

- R4a boundaries: Ms. Jane Evans stated that Gaffield should be included for continuity since it has single family homes. Following discussion, Members agreed that the R4a district should be bounded by Sherman, Orrington, Foster, and Emerson, assuming that no Northwestern University property is included in this area.

- Whether the ‘student residential’ classification is appropriate:
  - Mr. Jeff Smith, 2724 Harrison, stated that he used to live in this area as a student, and he noted that no students were present tonight. He spoke at a student council meeting about this issue, but students thought they had representation through the Alderman. Mr. Smith thought this was an anti-student ordinance. He thought that Northwestern did not have enough student housing and that it will continue to grow. He noted that Northwestern could buy more property and take it off the tax rolls when they have instead returned land to the tax rolls. He was not sure if the area in question was ‘predominantly’ single family. He thought that singling out students was like singling out other groups, although students are not protected from discrimination like other groups.
  - Chair Widmayer thanked Mr. Smith for his comments. He noted that this is not downzoning but rather, a means to address concerns by neighbors and the City. He clarified that the problem is with landlords, not students.

Chair Widmayer acknowledged the request for additional time for review by the Legal Department and continued the matter to the next regular meeting of the Plan Commission scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, 2005 at 7pm in the Civic Center.

A verbatim transcript of the proceedings of this Plan Commission case is on file with the Evanston Zoning Division. The Zoning Division is located in Room 3700 of the Evanston Civic Center.
IV. CONTINUATION OF PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING

ZPC 04-07-T Build to Lot Line Requirements (Business/Downtown Districts)
To consider amendments to Chapters 4, "General Provisions," 9, "Business Districts;" 11, "Downtown Districts;" 17, "Landscaping and Screening;" 18, "Definitions;" and any other related sections of the Zoning Ordinance, to amend the text of the Zoning Ordinance to review and amend the yard requirements for the Business and Downtown districts. Specific areas of review are the front yard and side yard abutting a street requirements at the following sections for the following districts: §6-9-2-7 for the B1 Business District, §6-9-3-7 for the B2 Business District; §6-9-4-7 for the B3 Business District; §6-11-3-8 for the D2 Downtown Retail Core District; §6-11-4-7 for the D3 Downtown Core Development District; and §6-11-5-7 for the D4 Downtown Transition District. This hearing will address modifications to the "build to property line required; parking prohibited" yard requirements of the Business Districts and the "build to front property line; surface parking prohibited" yard requirements of the Downtown Districts.

Mr. Arthur Alterson, Zoning Administrator, distributed draft language and a map to Members. Chair Widmayer asked for public comment.

Mr. Jeff Smith, 2724 Harrison, stated that he lived by the area in question. He thought that the idea behind the build to lot line requirement may have been to put windows close to the sidewalk for shoppers, but he did not think that it is practical for drivers or that it makes the area more attractive. He distributed photos comparing Central Street as it exists now to what it could look like at a higher density (e.g., Halsted Street). He thought that increased density could affect schools and the racial mix if it is in the form of high-priced units.

Associate Member Samson stated that two solutions to the canyonization of Central Street are being presented tonight. The first is a 3’ setback (with some exceptions), and the second pertains to height (the next agenda item). Mr. Smith suggested a mix of housing. He thought that the B2 district in this area was a mistake because of the build to lot line requirement and lack of parking.

Member Hunter stated that the idea behind the build to lot line requirement had been to create a street wall where Central Street has varying setbacks. Chair Widmayer clarified the city’s two commercial zoning categories: C1 and C2 allow for shopping centers with parking in front, and B districts allow for neighborhood shopping. He noted the issue of changing the look of a business district that has been around for 70-80 years by going taller and more dense. He clarified that the proposal is for a minimum 3’ setback.

Discussion followed on parking issues, especially at corner locations. Member Hunter proposed that there be no parking between a building and the street.

Member Doetsch motioned that the Plan Commission approve the new standards for the build to lot line requirement contained in the materials presented with the amendment suggested by Member Hunter. He read into the record the findings of fact. Member Rebechini seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

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V. CONTINUATION OF PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE MAP & TEXT AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING

ZPC 04-06-M&T  B2 Districts Along Central Street

To consider amendments to Chapters 3, “Implementation and Administration;” 4, “General Provisions;” 9, “Business Districts;” 10, “Commercial Districts;” 15, “Special Purpose and Overlay Districts;” 16, “Off-Street Parking and Loading;” 17, “Landscaping and Screening;” 18, “Definitions;” and any other related sections of the Zoning Ordinance, to amend the text and/or the map of the Zoning Ordinance to affect the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance as applied to that area of the City presently within the B2 District on properties adjacent to or in the vicinity of Central Street and/or to remap all or parts of the following indicated area from the B2 Business District into another appropriate zoning district or overlay district.

Mr. Arthur Alterson, Zoning Administrator, distributed draft language to Members. Chair Widmayer asked for public comment.

Mr. Jim Hughes, 2518 Hartzell, stated that not many people knew about this matter and that people who lived behind the area in question were interested.

Mr. John Walsh, 2736 Hartzell, clarified that this proposal pertains to reducing the height, which it is, and he supported the proposal. Associate Member Samson clarified the area in question, namely, it is the west-most B2 district on Central Street and does not include the area by Green Bay Road.

Mr. Nelson Saltman, 2737 Harrison, asked about fine-tuning in terms of maximum height, feet, and floors. Chair Widmayer stated that the Zoning Committee is working on the B1 zone in terms of the number of stories, number of square feet to be devoted to ground floor space, etc.

Member Raffel motioned to recommend that the existing area designated B2 along Central Street roughly bounded by Bennett and Marcy be changed to B1 zoning. He read the findings of fact into the record. Member Woods seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

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VI. COMMITTEE UPDATES AND REPORTS

• Zoning Committee—meeting set for February 18 at 8am in the Civic Center.
• Downtown Visioning—meeting set for January 26 at 7pm in the Civic Center.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The Plan Commission adjourned at 10:30pm. The next regular meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, 2005 at 7pm in the Civic Center. A special meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, February 23, 2005 at 7pm in the Civic Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy Norfleet
Planning Division