Planning & Development Committee Meeting
Minutes of July 23, 2018
7:00 p.m.
James C. Lytle Council Chambers - Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center


STAFF PRESENT: M. Masoncup, S. Mangum, J. Leonard

OTHERS PRESENT:

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Fiske

I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM: ALDERMAN FISKE, CHAIR
A quorum being present, Ald. Fiske called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 9, 2018
Ald. Rainey moved to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2018 meeting, seconded by Ald. Rue Simmons.

The committee voted unanimously 6-0, to approve the July 9, 2018 minutes.

III. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(P1) Vacation Rental License for 2001 Orrington Avenue
City staff recommends approval of a Vacation Rental License for the property located at 2001 Orrington Avenue. The Vacation Rental meets all of the Standards and Procedures for license approval. Following public comment at the Planning and Development Committee and in a neighborhood meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted to address concerns from neighboring property owners. Approval of the Vacation Rental License can be conditioned upon execution of the MOU.

For Action

Ald. Rainey moved to approval of the item, seconded by Ald. Rue Simmons. The Committee voted 6-0 to approve the item.

(P2) Vacation Rental License for 615 Central Street
City staff recommends approval of a Vacation Rental License for the property located at 615 Central Street. The Vacation Rental meets all of the Standards and Procedures for license approval.
For Action

At Ald. Fiske’s request, Ms. Leonard stated that the house is owner occupied with the ability to rent the entire house and that it is not clear in the application if the owners will be present when the house is rented. She stated that this is not a requirement of the current code.

Ald. Revelle stated that the council members have not made a decision amongst themselves regarding restrictions on owner occupied rentals. Ald. Revelle spoke in support of granting the one year license and noted that additional recommendations can be made later in the evening regarding restrictions on owner occupied rentals.

Ald. Revelle moved approval of the item, seconded by Ald. Wynne. The Committee voted 6-0 to approve the item.

(P3) Ordinance 40-O-18, Amending Subsection 6-4-1-9(B)(1) of the City Code, “Permitted Obstructions in Required Yards: General Provisions”
The Plan Commission and staff recommend approval of Ordinance 40-O-18 to amend the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the required front yard setback for open porches in order to allow front porches with a usable depth without the need for zoning relief.

For Introduction

Ald. Rainey moved to introduce Ordinance 40-O-18, seconded by Ald. Wynne. The Committee voted 5-1 to introduce Ordinance 40-O-18.

(P4) Ordinance 81-O-18 Granting Major Zoning Relief to Establish a Third Dwelling Unit in an Existing Two-Family Residence at 1822 Lyons Street
City staff and the Zoning Board of Appeals recommend adoption of Ordinance 81- O-18 granting major zoning relief to establish a third dwelling unit in an existing two-family residence in the R4 General Residential District. The applicant requests relief for lot size, lot width, and to add zero parking spaces where two additional parking spaces are required. The applicant has complied with all zoning requirements and meets all of the standards for a variation for this district.

For Introduction

Ald. Rue Simmons spoke in favor and stated that the property was already three units before the applicant purchased it. Ald. Rue Simmons noted that the applicant has been compliant and cooperative while going through the process to legalize the third unit and has agreed to keep one unit as an affordable unit, which is needed by the community.

Ald. Rue Simmons moved to introduce Ordinance 81-O-18, seconded by
Ald. Wynne. The Committee voted 6-0 to introduce Ordinance 81-O-18.

(P5) Ordinance 77-O-18 Granting Major Zoning Relief to Eliminate Parking and Add Fencing for Firehouse Grill at 750 Chicago Avenue

City staff and the Zoning Board of Appeals recommend adoption of Ordinance 77-O-18 granting major zoning relief to eliminate one ADA parking stall (with one remaining) and install a 3’ tall fence (planter box) fronting Chicago Ave., and denying major zoning relief to install an 8’ tall wood fence with a 0’ street side yard (Madison St.) setback, in the C1a Commercial Mixed-Use District. The applicant has complied with all zoning requirements and meets all of the standards for a variation (for parking and the 3’ fence) for this district.

For Introduction

Ald. Wynne spoke in support and explained that Firehouse Grill is a terrific restaurant, noting the recent change in ownership and new menu. She stated that Firehouse Grill has been a neighborhood restaurant for a long time, explaining how this is an example of adaptive reuse given that the property was once a firehouse, then it was one of the first Subaru dealerships in the United States and now it is a terrific restaurant. She encouraged her colleagues to support, stating that the Firehouse Grill has been an asset to the community.

Ald. Wynne moved to introduce Ordinance 77-O-18, seconded by Ald. Rue Simmons. The Committee voted 6-0 to introduce Ordinance 77-O-18.

(P6) Ordinance 76-O-18 Granting a Special Use for a Type 2 Restaurant, Reprise Coffee Roasters at 710 Main Street

The Zoning Board of Appeals and City Staff recommend adoption of Ordinance 76-O-18 granting a special use approval for a Type 2 Restaurant, Reprise Coffee Roasters in the B2 District and oDM Dempster-Main Overlay District. The applicant has complied with all zoning requirements, and meets all of the standards of a special use for this district. Alderman Wilson requests suspension of the rules for Introduction and Action at the July 23, 2018 City Council meeting.

For Introduction and Action

Adam Poronto, business owner, explained how he would like to extend the brand to Evanston. Mr. Poronto described the proposed coffee shop, noting their awards in coffee agricultural practices and roasting.

Ald. Wynne moved suspension of the rules to introduce and approve Ordinance 76-O-18, seconded by Ald. Revelle. The Committee voted 6-0 to suspend the rules to introduce and approve Ordinance 76-O-18.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
(PD1) Vacation License Rental
Staff seeks direction on potential revisions to the vacation rental license to address the ongoing interest by property owners to convert units to vacation rentals.

For Discussion

Ald. Revelle stated that she is interested in requiring a form of owner occupancy.

Ald. Wynne agreed.

Ald. Revelle explained the difference between hosted sharing and unhosted sharing and recommended that amendments to the short-term rental ordinance be drafted to reflect a form of required owner occupancy.

Ald. Fiske agreed.

Ald. Rue Simmons suggested that vacation rentals be resident owner occupied without having to live in the unit. She explained that an Evanston resident could have a rental license but occupy the property in order to avoid absentee vacation rental owners and operators.

In response to Ald. Fiske, Ald. Rue Simmons explained that the owner of the property could be a resident in Evanston, but not live on the property.

Ald. Wynne noted the potential problem with someone who is an Evanston resident that lives outside the area for parts of year.

Ald. Rue Simmons noted that based on feedback that she has heard from the community, absentee landlords that are from out of state are not managing their properties and have misbehaving guests. She explained that Evanston residing landlords are more likely to be accountable and committed to the community standards and are less likely to be negligent property owners than investors.

Ald. Rainey, stated that Evanston residency is not a valid argument and that it is not as much of a guarantee as having the owner close and nearby.

Ald. Rue Simmons noted that this situation can be applied to the unhosted vacation rentals, where owners can be elsewhere for an extended period of time.

Ald. Rainey noted that a not attentive landlord who owns many properties in Evanston actually lives in Skokie. She explained how someone who is an Evanston resident who will be out of town for a few months is not going to be
something to worry about. She noted that someone who lives here, votes here, and is a resident here but goes on vacation a lot is probably a person who we want to be able to part of the vacation rental community.

Ald. Fiske noted that another problem is the ability to discern the amount of short-term vacation rentals in Evanston.

Ms. Leonard noted that staff has observed unlicensed vacation rentals.

In response to Ald. Rue Simmons, Ms. Leonard stated that the ordinance specifies that a vacation rental license is required if you would like to rent your property while you are not present for a period less than 30 days.

In response to Ald. Fiske, Ald. Revelle expressed concern with investors buying properties that could potentially be affordable housing for residents of Evanston. She stated that it is not just a matter of maintenance and behavior of guests and requested that staff draft language with hosted and unhosted requirements.

Ald. Rainey noted that more complications and requirements could increase the number of unregistered short-term vacation rentals.

Ms. Leonard explained that when drafting the new ordinance, a relationship between owner of the property and Evanston will be preserved. She noted that some additional guidance might be needed if they want something that is based on the sources that she cited about limits to the number of rental nights for a particular property in a calendar year. She noted that they could simply begin with owner occupancy and go from there.

Ald. Rue Simmons stated that the committee would prefer to go the Evanston resident route instead of the owner occupied route.

In response to Ald. Fiske, Ms. Leonard states that the staff will come back with something at a meeting in September.

In response to Ald. Rainey, Ms. Leonard stated that there are about four applicants waiting to get before the committee. She noted that these applicants are currently going through inspections and zoning review. She also explained the review process and noted that there have been no complaints of vacation rentals that have been approved by the committee.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

VI. ADJOURNMENT
Ald. Wynne moved to adjourn, seconded by Ald. Rue Simmons. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Scott Mangum
Planning and Zoning Administrator