

REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 26, 2012
MINUTES

1. Call to Order. Chairperson Kelly Stravens called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Other commission members present were Bobbie Beese and Josey Booth. Dan Hansen was excused. Staff present: Tom Richardson, City Planner, and Brian Werst, City Attorney.

2. Approval of Minutes. Mr. Stravens moved to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Beese. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Hearing: CUP 12-01 Millwood Presbyterian Church

Mr. Stravens opened the hearing on the conditional use permit (CUP) for the church's multipurpose building at 6:02 p.m.

Mr. Werst stated that Dan Hansen has recused himself from hearing this issue due to his involvement in planning the project with the church. Mr. Werst reviewed the Appearance of Fairness doctrine and reminded commissioners that if they had any conflict of interest or any ex parte communication with respect to the application they should disclose it at this time. Mr. Werst said that an invitation to the church's neighborhood meeting last week had gone out to a large number of property owners including the planning commission members who live in the neighborhood. Ms. Beese said she had a conversation with a fellow historian concerning historical dates and facts but no opinions were shared, it was totally factual. Mr. Stravens asked if anyone in the audience would like to comment on the appearance of fairness issue. There was none.

Mr. Richardson reviewed the CUP process. The zoning code requires a conditional use permit for churches in the UR-2 zone. The zoning code states that a conditional use may not be expanded or enlarged until a CUP is obtained; the proposed project is larger than the building it will replace.

Pastor Craig Goodwin presented the project and explained the history of the church's plan to build a multipurpose building. He described the church's plans for the campus dating back to the 1940's. He said the existing building is functionally obsolete. It is not handicap accessible; to make it accessible would require a huge ramp that would wrap the building. The building is essentially shut down now. The church has always wanted a recreational space, but these uses have changed over the years and the church now needs a large multipurpose space. He described the many community activities that the building has hosted before and will continue in the future, including scouts, community recovery meetings, WV co-op preschool, monthly Second Harvest food distribution, WVSD youth activities in the Crossing Youth Center, Hutton School home school, and others. The plan is to move activities currently held at the Crossing to the new facility. The new facility will allow the church to strengthen its relationships with the community. He described the ongoing work with the city on the vacation of the alley. He said

three people attended the neighborhood meeting last week. Their two concerns were on-street parking and the hours of operation. He said the hours would not change much. Typically the uses are done by 9:00 p.m.

John McLean, the church's architect, explained the process they have gone through to make the new building compatible with the existing church buildings and the neighborhood. They will preserve trees and green space, and will not move the building closer to the street than necessary. He said there are several architectural styles used in the church campus and they need to select the look that the congregation wants. He displayed architectural concepts that are being considered. They are trying to use aspects of the 1920's portion of the original building along with the 1950's modern style of the sanctuary. They intend to use the brick accents and follow the style of the church's original entrance facing Euclid. He asked if there are other buildings in Millwood they should look to for design elements. He has fifteen years experience as an architect and has worked on numerous projects across the country. He worked on the Arbor Crest (Riblet) mansion reconstruction which is one of the most significant local historic reconstruction projects; they were successful in keeping the building on the historic register.

Ms. Beese said the building should use horizontal design elements which are typical for the existing CEB and the historic district, rather than the vertical elements used in the sanctuary and the IEP mill. Mr. McLean noted that the district has a mix of different styles. There was a question as to whether the existing CEB building was technically on the historic register as a contributing property to the district. Mr. Richardson said he would contact DAHP to ask about this.

Bobbie Beese said the staff report and the SEPA checklist were wrong where they state that the existing CEB is not a contributing property to the historic district. Mr. Richardson said he was using a map on file in the office; he had tried to locate the description of the historic district nomination on the DAHP website but was unable to find it. He said Ms. Beese sent it to him the day of the hearing and found that the CEB is listed as a contributing structure. Ms. Beese said she was concerned that this error may have misled DAHP, and that they may have paid more attention to the SEPA review if it had accurately identified the CEB as a contributing property.

Pam Furness said she likes the designs presented so far. She asked about previous plans for an outside recreation area. Mr. Goodwin said the church has abandoned its previous plan for a park on the west side of Dale; the church has sold the property. There has been some discussion about a fenced play area between the building and Euclid, but it is not a priority. They are focusing on indoor recreation.

Ms. Beese asked about the floor area of the MPR shown in the staff report. Mr. Richardson noted that he had misread the plan submitted with the application and had used the wrong number for the area of the multipurpose room. Mr. McLean clarified that the building would be 6,000 sq ft. The actual dimensions of the MPR are 41' x 74.5' (3,054.5 sq ft). Mr. McLean said the occupancy of the new building would be approximately 200 people. The staff report will be corrected to show the total occupancy of the building will be 200 people; the zoning code would normally require 33 parking spaces.

Mr. Goodwin said the project would leave 12 parking spaces in the CEB lot, and there are 84 spaces in their lot on Marguerite. This is a total of 96 parking spaces. Also, there are 25 spaces on the UPRR property on the south side of Euclid which church users frequently use. He said most people using the new building would be coming from an activity in the church such as a service or a wedding. The typical use for the MPB would be a cub scout meeting or basketball game involving perhaps 50 people. Based on the zoning code requirement of one space for each six occupants, the 96 spaces would be enough for 576 occupants. Mr. Goodwin said the church would normally be well below this occupancy.

Kevin Lehinger, 3306 N Dale Rd, said his main concern is how the new building will affect on-street parking on Dale. He said the problem is not bad now but he is concerned that the new building will increase the use of Dale. It would help if the west-side entrance was designed so as not to call attention to it as a main entrance. Mr. Goodwin said the primary access will be from the church building. He said people would be encouraged to use the Marguerite parking lot. The new building would not make a significant difference in the main parking demand occurring on Sundays.

Mr. Stravens asked what would be the typical usage of the building that we don't have now. Mr. Goodwin said the youth group gatherings at The Crossing typically includes 30 to 50 kids, plus leaders. An athletic event might attract 50 people. The scout's pinewood derby might attract 100 people. The Hutton Settlement's annual banquet would be approximately 150 maximum; this would be the functional limit. These activities are currently taking place in other parts of the campus but would be moved to the new building.

Ms. Beese said she was concerned that the new building would make it possible to schedule multiple events at the same time which would increase parking demand. Mr. Goodwin said they would not schedule two major events at the same time, due to planning and staff limitations.

Debbie Lehinger, 3306 N Dale Rd, asked what the "worst case" maximum use capacity. Mr. Goodwin said the occupancy of the church sanctuary is 350. The maximum use for the campus at one time would probably be 400-500 people. In the unlikely event that both the church and the MPR would be filled at the same time the occupant load could be around 700.

Mr. Richardson said it is generally not recommended to provide enough parking for the maximum occupancy scenario; for example shopping malls which are very sensitive to the need for adequate parking do not plan for the largest shopping days of the year; they plan for enough parking for all but the peak 10 to 20 days; when the peak demand days occur they make adjustments such as off-site employee parking.

Jerry Dillon, 3303 N Hutchinson, said a lot of people currently use on-street parking. He also asked about the water main in the alley. Mr. Goodwin said they are working with the city's planning and public works departments on vacation of the alley and putting the water main in a sleeve to allow the building to be built over the main. Mr. Richardson said this is the same method used when crossing under railroads and freeways, and the public works department

appears willing to approve it. Mr. Richardson said vacating the alley and retaining a utility easement would allow the two parcels to be merged.

There was discussion of the use of the railroad's right of way for parking. Mr. Booth asked what the city's liability is for encouraging people to park where there are no marked crosswalks on Euclid or Marguerite. He is concerned about safety. Mr. Goodwin said he would be interested in marked crosswalks and in fact had discussed that with the city during the last remodel.

Ms. Beese said she was concerned that we have concept drawings that do not show where the doors will be, and that do not show the north side of the building. Mr. McLean said the architectural brick detail features would be on the east, south and west sides. The north side would use the structural masonry.

There was discussion on the use of horizontal banding which might make the building look commercial like a grocery store. Mr. McLean said the subtle use of brick detailing would be a way to add horizontal features without making it look too commercial. Ms. Beese said she has been doing a lot of reading in the last few days on what would be appropriate for new construction in historic districts; it should follow the general feel of a neighborhood which is horizontal, rather than pointing up to the sky like the modern styled sanctuary. This is a residential neighborhood. Mr. McLean pointed out how the proposed concepts have taken design elements from the neighborhood including the existing church and the IEP building.

Ms. Beese said she was concerned that DAHP has not had the opportunity to comment on the proposed designs. The SEPA checklist that was sent out was not correct. She would like to give the DAHP the opportunity to be given the correct information and comment on it. She said the last thing we want in the middle of the historic district is an empty huge church building, but we need to do this right. She is more concerned about the design. Mr. Stravens asked if we had heard from the Millwood Historic Society. Debbie Lehinger said she could speak for the Society; their main concerns are parking and noise. They do not have comments on the design concepts at this time.

Mr. Richardson said it was not realistic to ask for construction-detail drawings at this point in the process. It would be reasonable to ask the applicant to invite public comment on its plans when they are available later in the process, and that the conditional use permit could specify general design characteristics to be included.

Ms. Beese asked about the language adopted last year in the Comprehensive Plan on historic preservation. Mr. Werst read the relevant goals from the Comp Plan.

Ms. Beese explained the process for obtaining the historic district status. Mr. Goodwin asked if the state could force them to implement historic design guidelines. Ms. Beese said no, but it would give direction to the city on ideas for mitigation under SEPA. Mr. Werst said that the error in the SEPA checklist was mitigated by the statement that the property was in the historic district. It was his legal opinion that the error with respect to the building's status as a contributing property to the historic district in the SEPA checklist was a harmless error.

Mr. Goodwin asked the commission to consider all the work they have done to make the new building fit in with the existing church complex and the neighborhood. He said they have an architect who has done one of the most high profile restorations in the Millwood/Spokane area. He said they are willing to continue to work with Millwood's historic preservation community, and they have no desire to impose anything on the neighborhood. They are very interested in keeping on schedule and keeping the project moving forward. He noted the recent changes in the C-2 zone proposed to allow off-site parking. He said it is important to note that the building is shuttered now. Making the existing building ADA compliant is not feasible.

Kevin Lehinger said we would lose the leverage we have now with getting mitigation measures if we approve the permit without more information.

Mr. Werst clarified that the commission needs to be sure that it has enough information to make its decision.

Mr. Stravens moved to continue the hearing two weeks to April 9 at 6:00 p.m. to allow staff to contact DAHP concerning the building's status in the historic district, and to develop a draft written recommendation for approval with conditions as discussed this evening. Motion seconded by Ms. Beese. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Written Recommendation – CPA 12-01 3 JT LLC. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

5. Approval of Written Recommendation – CPA 11-03 Maximum Lot Coverage. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. Staff Report. Mr. Richardson gave a brief update on the status of the Shoreline Master Plan Update. He said the Hilderbrand sign is now in the hands of code enforcement. There was a discussion of the SEPA process.

7. Public Comments. No comments.

8. Adjournment. There will be a special meeting on Monday, April 9 for the continued hearing on CUP 12-01. The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on Monday, April 30. There being no further business, Mr. Stravens adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary