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Alderman James Bohl, Chairman, ZONING, NEIGHBORHOOD & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,
City of Milwaukee

Regarding 1236 W. Pierce St., Milwaukee, WI.

Item No.3 on the Agenda for the meeting scheduled, Tuesday, June 5, 2012. 9:00 AM

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this meeting in person. I am committed to another appointment at that time. However, I am strongly in favor of the change in the zoning ordinance from Industrial-Heavy to Industrial-Mixed for this property. This is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Zoning Plan and other similar properties in the immediate surrounding neighborhood.

The building is currently zoned for IH occupancy. In my professional opinion, as a Wisconsin Registered Architect in Milwaukee since 1974, this structure is not conducive and is outdated for use as heavy industrial occupancies in our modern society. There are no facilities on this property for loading docks and other areas for semi trucks and other large vehicles associated with heavy industrial occupancies. Also, there are no outdoor storage facilities usually found with heavy industry. In urban environments, such as this, many older buildings are being revitalized to better serve neighborhood requirements. Heavy Industrial developments are currently being located in areas that are better suited for their needs, such as the Menomonee Valley. Therefore, I believe this building should be rezoned IM as to allow for commercial, office, retail, recreational, restaurant and hospitality, residential, educational and service occupancies. There are many new developments taking place in this area, such as mixed-use residential-business-retail occupancies. Public transportation is also readily available only one block from this building.

Currently, I am the architect of record for alterations and additions provided for this building. I have been working with this project since March of 2009. Additions included a three-story passenger elevator constructed and attached to the exterior of the building on the North side. Interior alterations included providing for code compliant entrance and egress areas including stairways. Also, the entire third floor was altered with partitions and classroom areas for educational purposes. In addition, toilet rooms and other features were altered to provide for full accessibility. Also the exterior façade was restored and all new windows installed. Mechanical installations such as, heating, electrical, plumbing and fire sprinkler systems were updated to be code compliant. It was my understanding at that time that the second and third floors of this building were appropriately zoned and approved by BOZA for elementary-secondary school occupancy. Architectural plans and details were prepared for all required building permits obtained per City and State code requirements. At considerable expense, the building Owner completed construction as per the approved plans and obtained occupancy for the use of the third floor and other accessory areas as educational facilities.

Off-street parking areas have been questioned. Currently, the Zoning Code requires no off-street parking facilities for industrial uses, except for very specific occupancies. In addition, no off-street parking is required for educational uses, specifically school, elementary or secondary as per previously approved plans. If the zoning is changed to Industrial-Mixed, off-street parking areas shall be required for specific occupancy uses as required by Code. Per the approved plans for additions and alterations for a school facility, the current unpaved outdoor area was to be utilized as a fenced in play area for the school. Since the city has revoked the occupancy permits for use as a school no further improvements have been completed, including any required paving.

Also, several citizens have raised traffic and safety issues and concerns. Although I am not a daily resident, since 2009 I have had numerous opportunities to be at this property for design and observations of the construction work in progress. On no occasion did I find any traffic situations to be an obstacle. There was always an available parking space in front of the building. In addition, there are many, many other schools within the City of Milwaukee that are located on much busier thoroughfares. Proper safety precautions are in place and maintained to prevent any incidences.

My current architectural business and residence is located at 214 N. 76th St. This street is a highly traveled four-lane boulevard with street parking on both sides. Pius XI High School is located only one block away from me and some of those students park on the street. In addition, St. Vincent Pallotti Catholic School, PK-8, with 186 students, is directly across the busy 76th Street from my building, which is also mixed-use. I have been at this location since 1989. My office window faces directly at the school's outdoor play yard, also used for church parking during non-school hours. Parent's vehicles and school busses daily drop-off and pick-up students, on the street, during peak traffic times. In all the time I have been there, I have seen absolutely no safety concerns or incidents with regard to the children's safety even though balls are regularly bounced into the street. The children are continually supervised and are well behaved.

There are many areas currently within the city of Milwaukee that are providing charter schools for local neighborhoods. I believe that this building is ideally suited for such purpose as well as many other occupancies.

Therefore, I highly recommend that this property be rezoned to IM to allow for the use of the First, Second and Third floor areas for mixed-use including educational occupancy as all of the previous costly improvements were provided and intended for such use. In addition, there are ample outdoors-recreational areas for student use.

Sincerely,



Douglas A. Gallus.

Wisconsin Architect.

Past President- Association of Licensed Architects-Wisconsin