



Department of City Development
City Plan Commission
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee
Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation

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To the Honorable Members of the
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 180045 amends certain land use recommendations within the West Side Area Comprehensive Plan (“WSCAP”), part of Milwaukee’s Overall Comprehensive Plan, for the property at 5800 West Hope Avenue on the east side of North 60th Street and south of West Fond du Lac Avenue, in the 2nd Aldermanic District.

At the request of the property owner of 5800 West Hope Avenue, the former Lowe’s site at Midtown Center, a proposal to amend the West Side Area Comprehensive Plan is under consideration by the Common Council. The property is also located within the Midtown Center Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) that requires approval of site and building design by the City Plan Commission. The property owner is proposing an indoor warehouse and distribution facility at the former Lowe’s building which is not consistent with the WSCAP land use recommendations, nor the permitted uses within the DIZ. The subject file would modify the land use recommendations contained within the WSCAP for the property to indicate that if it is determined that commercial is no longer a feasible use for the former Lowe’s store, a broader range of uses may be considered, including distribution and light manufacturing.

On December 1, 2009, the Common Council adopted File No. 090849, which approved WSCAP as an element of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Milwaukee. The creation of the WSCAP involved extensive public outreach, input and cooperation with the public and neighborhood stakeholders following the public engagement process created for the development of the City’s fourteen area plans. The WSCAP establishes policies for commercial land uses (pages 58-59), and recommendations for the “Midtown Center District” (pages 88 and 94). The WSCAP establishes recommendations for catalytic projects including the “Midtown Gateway Area” (pages 109-112) and redevelopment opportunities for “Midtown Center,” and identifies the former Lowe’s Store at 5800 West Hope Avenue as a redevelopment opportunity for a commercial “big box” compatible with other Midtown Center Uses (pages 132-133). The plan notes that, for greyfield uses, where the market will no longer support a retail use or a similar use cannot be reinstated, consider office or business services that support the commercial focus of the district or commercial corridor. The former store at 5800 West Hope Avenue became vacant in 2009 shortly before the approval of the WSCAP and has remained vacant since that time due to an inability to attract a new retail tenant.

On December 13, 2016, the Common Council adopted File No. 161076, which approved an amended Update and Amendment Procedure for Comprehensive Planning governing the



process for making amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. That procedure set forth a process whereby an impacted property owner may request a Minor Amendment to modify an Area Plan when that modification impacts an area generally smaller than a “district” or “corridor” within the Plan. The owner of the property at 5800 West Hope Avenue has requested that the WSCAP be amended to allow for a future redevelopment of the property to include a broader range of uses such as distribution and light manufacturing. This proposal takes into account changes in the national retail market and allows for a broader range of uses at 5800 West Hope Avenue that will not adversely affect the surrounding areas or conflict with ongoing efforts to develop the remainder of Midtown Center as a mixed use district. The procedure for making a Minor Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, including a properly noticed public hearing, has been followed. If approved, the amended WSCAP shall include as an appendix a text reference that states the following:

The recommendations contained within the West Side Comprehensive Area Plan for the former Lowe’s store at 5800 West Hope Avenue have been modified via the adoption of Common Council File No. 180045. If it is determined that commercial is no longer a feasible use for the former Lowe’s store, a broader range of uses may be considered, including distribution and light manufacturing. These modifications apply only to the property at 5800 West Hope Avenue, also described as Parcel 2 of Milwaukee County Certified Survey Map No. 7388. The design and operation of any uses at this site shall be designed to not cause conflict with adjacent uses and to support the other recommendations of the West Side Area Comprehensive Plan for the Midtown Center District. The remainder of the Midtown Center District should continue to emphasize a mix of retail, office and residential uses.

At its May 7, 2018 regular meeting, the City Plan Commission held a public hearing for the minor Plan amendment subject file and determined that since the former Lowe’s store has been vacant for several years, an indoor warehouse and distribution facility was an appropriate land use for the former Lowe’s site at 5800 West Hope Avenue, within the Midtown Center DIZ and approved the deviation to allow the indoor warehousing and light industrial use and modifications to the building and site design conditioned upon the Common Council’s approval of the proposed minor plan amendment.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Johnson