

February 12, 2008

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

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 070930 relates to a change in zoning from Industrial Light (IL1) to General Planned Development (GPD) on land located on the East Side of South Howell Avenue and North of East College Avenue, in the 13th Aldermanic District.

This file will allow for the construction of two hotels on the site. The hotels will be phased within roughly a year of each other. Both properties/hotels will have between 125 and 150 rooms. Common amenities will include swimming pools, business centers, exercise rooms, and some public space. Proposed hotel A will be constructed first, on the north side of the property. Proposed hotel B, on the south side of the property (where the church currently is), will contain a full service restaurant and between 3,000 and 4,000 square feet of meeting/function space. The hotels will primarily serve customers of General Mitchell Field.

On November 26, 2007, at the request of DCD staff, this item was referred back to staff so that DCD could work with the developer to explore alternatives, if feasible, to relocate the church either on the site or at a new location.

On January 28, 2008, City Plan Commission held a public hearing on this proposal. At that time, several members of the St. Stephens Congregation spoke in favor of the proposal, stating that the church needs to sell the land in order to relocate its facilities to Oak Creek. A representative of the Airport Gateway Business Association ("AGBA") stated that the group is not opposed to a new hotel, however a site near 6th/Layton would be more appropriate given the effort to create a cluster of similar uses at 6th/Layton. Similarly, the manager of a nearby hotel also stated that a site near 6th/Layton would be more appropriate. A letter was submitted to the CPC from a contract management team member of the Southeast Side Area Comprehensive Plan that stated the plan's draft recommendations for the area on Howell Avenue would be for industrial use, and again stated that 6th/Layton would be more appropriate for a new hotel.

Since there was not any public testimony regarding the retention of St. Stephen's church, the comprehensive area plan is still underway and there are not specific land use recommendations at this time, and the proposed land use is consistent with existing surrounding hotels, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on February 11, 2008 recommended approval of the subject file conditioned upon the receipt of a no objection letter from the Federal Aviation Administration and continuing to work with staff over the next year to relocate the existing church.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Terry Witkowski