

June 1, 2005

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

Dear Committee Members:

Attached is File No. 031746, being an ordinance relating to the change in zoning from Institutional (TL) and Two-Family Residential (RT2) to General Planned Development (GPD) known as Columbia St Mary's for land located on the North side of West North Avenue and West of North Terrace Avenue, in the 3rd Aldermanic District.

Columbia St. Mary's is proposing a major modernization/replacement and consolidation of its Milwaukee-based facilities. New facilities will include the Water Tower Medical Commons (WTMC), a new main hospital and other make ready work and minor renovations throughout the medical campus. Design standards relating to the massing and form, landscaping and screening of surface parking and open space and facades are also described in the proposed general plan.

The WTMC facility will occupy the existing Hill and North Point building footprints between Lake Drive and Terrace Avenue. The project will contain a multi-use program that includes a one level Cancer Care Center, space for five levels of medical office suites and a five story parking structure. This project is anticipated to commence in November, 2005. The WTMC facility will be comprised of three distinct massing elements; a one story above-grade podium and terrace, a 5-story medical office tower and penthouse and a 5-level parking structure separate from the medical office building. Consistent use of materials and similar fenestration similar to the main hospital and the recently approved Prospect West medical office building.

The new main hospital will have any or all of the following uses: Medical Office, Health Clinic, Hospital, Medical Research Laboratory and Accessory Parking Structure, with a gross square footage up to 850,000 GSF and a maximum number of nine stories. The new main hospital will engage the pedestrian realm along W. North Ave. by creating entrances and a pedestrian corridor along the street edge. The building is composed of several distinct elements; the institutes and bed towers will have a tall glass spine element along with lower masonry elements that are similar to the historic East Facility, the parking structure, and the glass concourse and lobby at the street level. Likewise, a consistent palette of material is proposed for the main hospital.

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The third component of the project includes various site preparation projects such as the installation of new and/or relocated utilities, reorganization of entrance points, driveway and parking space and multiple interior renovations. Columbia St. Mary's proposes to develop temporary and construction, freestanding and wall sign standards to provide wayfinding during and after construction for a cohesive campus feel.

The total number of parking spaces provided would be 2,572 stalls total; of which, 50 will be surface stalls with the remaining being structured. The WTMC facility will include a five level parking structure located on the north and west edge of the site that will be directly connected to the cancer care center and the medical office suites. The new hospital will have a seven level parking structure on the north edge of the site that will be attached to the Core Hospital with a bridge extension of the concourse. Loading for the hospital will occur in the lower level of the parking structure and will be accessed off Prospect Avenue. It will include 6 truck bays and two compactor bays. Ambulances will also use the lower level of the parking structure for loading. There will be 6 spaces for ambulances that will be accessed from Prospect Avenue.

On July 18, 2005, the City Plan Commission held a public hearing. At that time the Co-Chairman of the Water Tower Landmark Trust spoke in favor of the proposed General Planned Development. They formally submitted a letter indicating their support. At its regular meeting on May 9, 2005, the City Plan Commission recommended approval of the substitute ordinance conditioned on: revising written narrative to include temporary, construction, freestanding and wall signage standards; including axonometric models as part of the general plan submittal to describe massing and height of proposed buildings; revising written narrative to include more detailed screening and open space landscaping and site element standards; clarifying loading dock information for the WTMC building.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. D'Amato
File