

November 8, 2010

To the Honorable Members of the
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 100767 relates to a change in zoning from Single-Family Residential to a General Planned Development known as Growing Power, on land located on the north side of West Silver Spring Drive and west of North 55th Street, in the 9th Aldermanic District.

This rezoning was requested by Growing Power, Inc., and will allow for the development of a facility that will consist of a five-story vertical farm building with classrooms, staff offices, and other accessory uses, in addition to the existing greenhouses, hoop houses, and farm yard. Currently, a Certified Survey Map (CSM) is underway to add land from 5532 West Silver Spring Drive, to accommodate on-site truck turnaround space.

The facility, on a 1.74 acre parcel, consists of the existing greenhouses and hoop houses with hydroponic and aquaponic uses, and a farm yard for cultivation, composting and temporary seasonal hoop houses. A proposed 34,000 square foot, five-story vertical farm building is aimed at being as carbon neutral and energy/water efficient as possible. The vertical farm will contain food and fish growing, classrooms, staff offices, a demo kitchen, a retail food outlet, and food processing.

This use is not inconsistent with the Northwest Side Area Plan. During the planning process, Growing Power was described as a strong community partner and a unique and innovative asset on the Northwest Side. The Citywide Policy Plan discusses the importance of urban agriculture and healthy food systems in multiple chapters.

On November 8, 2010, a public hearing was held and at time nobody spoke in opposition to the project. One neighbor, who lives to the north of the site, had a few questions regarding the future use of the site that were answered to her satisfaction. Since the proposed change is consistent with the Northwest Side and Citywide Policy Plan recommendations, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on November 8, 2010 recommended approval of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Robert Puente