

December 6, 2010

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

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 100874 relates to the change in zoning from Industrial Light to a Detailed Planned Development (DPD), for a charter school, on lands located on the north side of West Florist Avenue and east of North 73rd Street, in the 2nd Aldermanic District.

This zoning change will permit the construction of a new, for-profit charter school on the currently vacant 8-acre site. The project will encompass a K-8 public elementary school building, a parking lot, storm water management facilities, playfields, a play area with play structures, and a temporary marketing trailer. The building will be one story, having a maximum gross square footage of 55,000 square feet, with a maximum height of 40 feet. Setback of the facility will not exceed 130 feet, which is consistent with the plans that were approved for the future church to the west of the site. No parking is located between the building and the street. Playgrounds are located away from the street, adjacent to the building and separate from parking and traffic flow.

The specific exterior materials proposed are as follows: Walls will have a brick or cultured stone base with simulated stone cap and a board and batten siding above. Select areas and locations near doors will have additional masonry accent for durability and compositional interest. Roof material will be asphalt shingles with occasional standing seam metal roof accents.

The school will initially open with kindergarten through 5th grade. The 5th grade students will progress through to the 8th grade, resulting in full occupancy of the facility within three years of opening. Full occupancy is 710 students, and 65 teachers and staff. There may be a future addition of two classrooms for National Heritage Academies' "Young 5's" program. Though National Heritage Academies has schools in several states, this will be the first school in Wisconsin.

On December 6, 2010, a public hearing was held and at that time, four people were opposed to the proposal. Two owners of industrial land to the north of this site spoke in opposition of the file, stating that the land should remain industrial in order to be compatible with the land to the north. Two neighbors to the south stated that they don't think there is a need for another school in this area. Some commissioners agreed that the land should remain industrially zoned for the possibility of future job-producing, manufacturing development, while others acknowledged that the land has been vacant for many years, and no viable industrial users have expressed interest in this site so far. Additionally, commissioners expressed concern regarding the design of the building. Since the majority of the commissioners felt that the land should be retained as industrial, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on December 6, 2010 recommended opposition of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Joe Davis