



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
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Committee Members:

File Nos. 170562 and 170444 relate to an amendment to the land use recommendation for the Catalytic Project Area at 2372 South Logan Avenue within the Southeast Side Comprehensive Area Plan, part of Milwaukee's Overall Comprehensive Plan, and the change in zoning from Two-Family Residential, RT4, to Parks, PK, for recreational use on lands located on the block bounded by East Lincoln Avenue, East Conway Street, South Bay Street and South Logan Avenue, in the 14th Aldermanic District.

These files were initiated by Alderman Zielinski. This vacant site is a former U.S. Army Reserve base that is owned by the City of Milwaukee. It is located within the boundary of the Southeast Side Comprehensive Area Plan, which identifies this site as a catalytic project area for future residential development and enhanced public connections through the neighborhood. An amendment to the comprehensive plan is necessary, as this proposed rezoning is inconsistent with the recommendations of the Southeast Side Plan and will preclude the recommendations of the plan from being implemented, as this proposed Parks zoning district does not permit residential uses. The current zoning of this 5.6 acre site, Two-Family Residential (RT4), is consistent with the zoning of the residential neighborhoods to the west, north and south of the site.

Previously, a Request for Proposals (RFPs) was issued to develop this site as residential housing, consistent with the recommendations of the Southeast Side Comprehensive Plan. In October 2008, the Common Council declared the property surplus to municipal needs and authorized DCD to market the land with specific criteria, including the incorporation of sustainable design elements into the proposal. An RFP was issued in November 2008 and subsequently responded to by mid-January 2009. A residential development by the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee was selected as the desired project among the responses. Ald. Zielinski held a public meeting in May 2009 to review the HACM proposal, and subsequently all proposals were rejected in January 2010. The site has not been re-listed for sale in the intervening years, which generally coincided with the years following the downturn in the national housing market.

In October 2016, the City of Milwaukee Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2016-2021 (CORP) adopted by the Common Council (via File Number 160675). The CORP inventoried existing outdoor recreation spaces within the City of Milwaukee, identified gaps within the network of open spaces, set goals related to residents access to outdoor recreational spaces, and identified a set of strategies and projects that the City should undertake within the outdoor recreation spaces under City ownership to achieve these goals. The recommendations of the CORP were informed by data gathering and analysis that took into account current park coverage across the city and incorporated future playground restoration projects carried out under the MKE Plays Initiative as a key strategy to utilize the limited City resources available for park development. The CORP also mapped the density of households with children and households with children living in poverty as part of its analysis. These maps were utilized to inform the priority of projects undertaken under the MKE Plays and other initiatives being carried out by the City of Milwaukee to create new outdoor recreation space to achieve the City's goal that all residents live within a ten minute walk (1/4 mile) of an outdoor recreation space. The mapping carried out for the CORP indicates that 2372 South Logan is not within an underserved



area for outdoor recreation space and the creation of a park at this location would not create access for residents currently lacking access to outdoor recreation opportunities. All relevant indicators in the CORP depict priority sites for new outdoor recreation spaces as being primarily clustered in other areas of the City, including portions of the north side of the city where there is a much greater concentration of children in poverty combined with playgrounds having the lowest conditions rating – which is the variable from which MKE Plays selects its projects. In terms of equity, access, and existing conditions, the subject site does not warrant being a priority site for new City park development. The CORP did identify a number of other priority projects within the area, including the restoration of the City owned play areas at Bay and Lincoln and Bay and Allis, the restoration of the Grand Trunk Wetland north of Bay Street, and the creation of the “Powerline Trail” along a WE Energies utility line corridor generally located south of Howard Avenue.

Approximately 88% of all housing units in the 14th Aldermanic District are located within the ¼ mile buffer of existing recreation facilities that were used in the CORP Plan analysis. This includes all of the housing units that would fall within the ¼ radius of 2372 South Logan. Approximately 222 acres of land, or 5.9% of the total land within the 14th Aldermanic District are currently zoned PK. Analysis done in conjunction with the preparation of the CORP demonstrates that other areas of the City have significantly higher numbers of households without existing access to outdoor recreational spaces within walking distance.

On August 14, 2017, a public hearing was held and at that time, one resident spoke in favor of the rezoning, stating that she utilizes the space as a park currently. DCD staff provided a presentation, and stated that the department does not recommend the proposed amendment to the Southeast Side Plan or the rezoning of this site to Parks (PK) for the following reasons: The recommendation for housing development at the site was crafted with significant public input as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. The site continues to provide a unique opportunity to accommodate a variety of housing styles that would fit within the neighborhood context, add to the tax base, and could retain space for public access and recreation. Further, the site does not meet the criteria adopted within the CORP for determining where the City of Milwaukee should prioritize the creation of new outdoor recreation space. Finally, 2372 South Logan was identified as a catalytic project within the Southeast Side Area Plan. The current proposal to amend the Plan has been classified as a minor amendment, requiring minimal public outreach and engagement. Given the importance of this site within the Bay View neighborhood, staff would recommend engaging in a planning process that incorporates the same level of analysis and public engagement that occurred in the creation of the Southeast Side Plan prior to amending this catalytic project recommendation. The City Plan Commission recommended at its regular meeting on August 14, 2017, that these two items be Placed on File.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Zielinski