

**CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN
CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REPORT
June 21, 2017**

➤ **AGENDA ITEM – 17-0681 (Tim Acklin)**

Application of Bethany Evangelical Free Church for a Conditional Use Permit allowing a building addition at 3936 County Highway B.

➤ **ROUTING:** J&A Committee, Public Hearing 6/21/17 4:20 p.m.

➤ **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This application is for a Conditional Use Permit on the property depicted on attached **MAP PC17-0681** to allow the existing church on the property to construct a 14,000sqft addition. The new addition is intended to be used as a multi-purpose worship center that will be able to seat approximately 450 members. It will also include additional restrooms and classrooms. The development of this addition would allow the church the ability to repurpose portions of the existing building for their youth and children programs. Plans for the proposed addition are attached as part of the legislation.

Churches are not permitted in R2-Residence unless they were constructed before 1989. While this church was constructed prior to 1989, the proposed addition intensifies the use nearly doubling the size of the existing building which now requires that they meet current code. Current code requires either a Conditional Use Permit churches in R1 or R2 zoning or a rezoning of the property to R3, R4, R5, or R6 where churches are a permitted use. The applicant chose to apply for a CUP.

Due to the zoning and use of the property this project will not go through the City of La Crosse's Design Review process.

➤ **GENERAL LOCATION:**

3936 County Highway B.

➤ **RECOMMENDATION OF OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

N/A

➤ **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

This parcel is designated as Low and Medium Density Housing in the Comprehensive Plan. The current use as a church is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. While the use of the property may not be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan the current

zoning of the property of R2-Residence is. Additionally, churches can be tremendous assets in neighborhood revitalization, stability, and/or future vitality.

➤ **PLANNING RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff has no concerns with Bethany Evangelical Free Church’s proposal to build an addition and expand their services. Churches are very valuable assets to neighborhoods. Staff’s only concern is with some of the design elements associated with their proposed addition. Their design, particularly the portion that includes the assembly area, consists of a flat-roofed, box shape with corrugated metal and aluminum siding and no windows. While this project does not have to go through the design review process there are criteria in place when reviewing Conditional Use Permits. Staff is concerned this project does not meet the intent of the following ordinance criteria:

115-347(c)(3)e Any differences in appearance or scale (from the surrounding area) will be mitigated through setbacks, screening, landscaping, or other design features;

The design of the existing church includes brick masonry, windows, roof pitch, and variations in the form of the building that culminates into the overhang. (See Below)



The church located to the south also consists of brick/masonry materials, includes windows, and includes a roof pitch and other architectural details. (See Below)



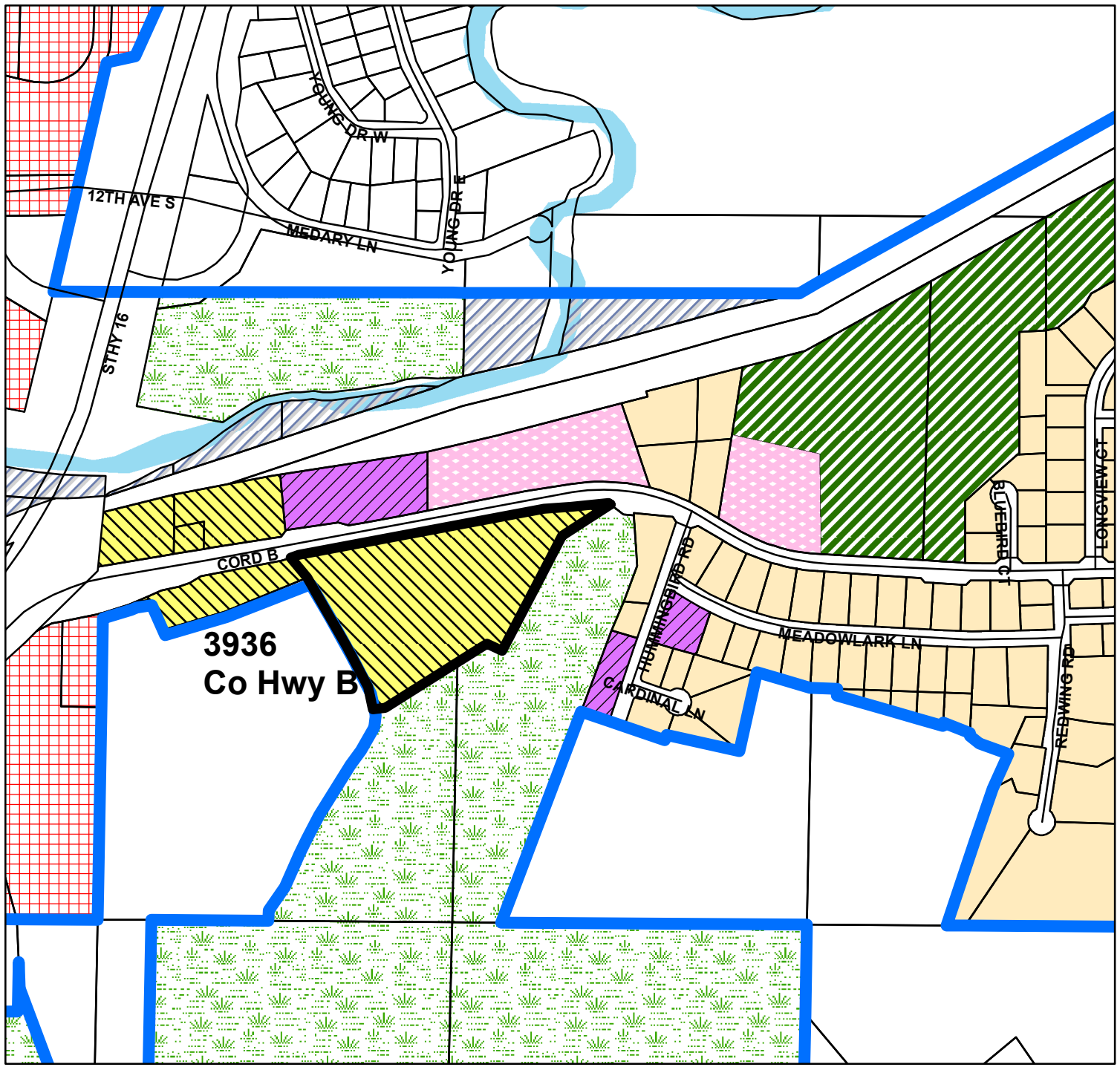
Even the building across the street, which was the former indoor tennis center, includes some masonry on the street facing façade and some variation in form. (See Below)



If this project was to go through the design review process the lack of windows, exterior material type and building form would likely not meet the standards.

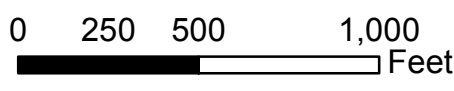
Even though this project meets the rest of the criteria in place for reviewing CUP application staff has concerns the one criterion that is not met is one of the most critical in this instance. This application is recommended for approval with the following conditions:

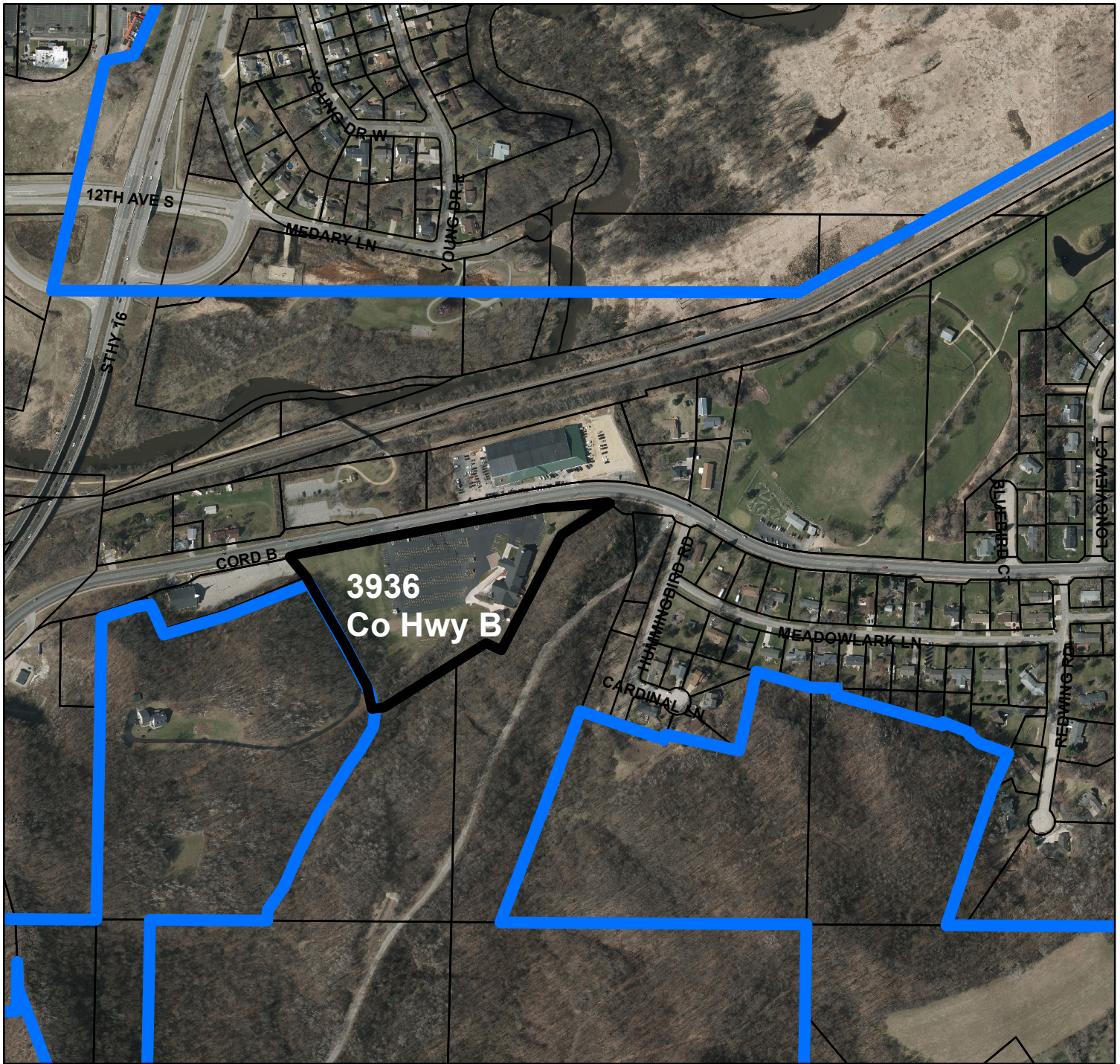
- 1) Project must meet all of the required off-street parking requirements.**
- 2) All new parking lot islands must be landscaped with grass and/or plantings.**
- 3) More masonry materials are used in the exterior to match the existing building. At the very least staff recommends that a brick or brick veneer material be used as an exterior wainscoting or knee-wall around the street facing/street viewable facades in place of the Corrugated Metal-Field Dark.**
- 4) Revise the north façade of the building to incorporate a roof pitch or variation in form to break up the long/large roof line, particularly if they would do not want to install windows.**









BASIC ZONING DISTRICTS

- R1 - SINGLE FAMILY
- R2 - RESIDENCE
- WR - WASHBURN RES
- R3 - SPECIAL RESIDENCE
- R4 - LOW DENSITY MULTI
- R5 - MULTIPLE DWELLING
- R6 - SPECIAL MULTIPLE
- PD- PLANNED DEVELOP
- TND - TRAD NEIGH DEV.
- C1 - LOCAL BUSINESS
- C2 - COMMERCIAL
- C3 - COMMUNITY BUSINESS
- M1 - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- M2 - HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- PS - PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC
- PL - PARKING LOT
- UT - PUBLIC UTILITY
- CON - CONSERVANCY
- FW - FLOODWAY
- A1 - AGRICULTURAL
- EA - EXCLUSIVE AG
- City Limits
- SUBJECT PROPERTY





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