

**CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN
CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REPORT
October 4, 2021**

➤ **AGENDA ITEM – 21-0675 (Jack Zabrowski) (Referred)**

AN ORDINANCE to amend Subsection 115-110 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse transferring certain property from the Washburn Residential District to the Traditional Neighborhood District allowing for an apartment building at 1106-1108 King St.

➤ **ROUTING:** J&A 8.3.21

➤ **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

October 4th Mtg Update

At the August 31st Judiciary and Administration Committee meeting the applicant submitted a revised set of plans for two buildings. The applicant initially proposed a three and half story building with 16 single bedroom units upon four floors of occupied space. The developer has since reduced the number of units to four, three-bedroom units in two separate buildings. Each building is two stories tall with a below grade basement. Off-street parking is provided via four attached garages that replace the initially proposed surface parking lot. The new building is contextual sensitive to the surrounding historic neighborhood with a prairie style architecture. The parcel is 11,020 square feet or 0.253 acres.

This zoning change request was initially on the June 1, 2021 City Plan Commission (CPC) agenda, the CPC denied the application, the following day the Judiciary and Administrative Committee (J&A) denied the application. Following the denials, on June 8th the applicant requested a referral from the Common Council. On June 10th the Common Council recommended referral. Following the above meetings, the applicant met with the Washburn Neighborhood Association and hired a facilitator to convene a combined meeting with Washburn and Downtown Neighborhood Associations. Another referral was requested and granted on July 9th and August 12th respectively.

1106-08 King St. is currently zoned Washburn Residential district. The parcel is vacant and previously had one rental property that sustained fire damage and was removed. The adjacent buildings are one to two and a half stories in height. The surrounding zoning is primarily Washburn Residential with Public, Semi-Public across King St. The surrounding uses are; office, residential, and commercial, multi-family apartments.

In 2019, the Association of Retired Persons (AARP) recognized the Washburn Neighborhood “As one of the best places to live in the country.” The Washburn and Downtown neighborhoods have worked hard to become more walkable, bikeable, and livable by; calming traffic on Cass and 8th Streets, completing the City’s first Neighborhood Greenway on King St. and implementing pedestrian lighting. This investment has created an excellent opportunity to complete most tasks of daily living by bicycling or walking, within a 15-

minute walk are: restaurants, fitness facilities, three higher education institutions, two healthcare providers, transit stops, three parks, a pharmacy, a food Co-op, four schools and Downtown La Crosse.

We, as a City are facing, declining school (elementary, secondary, post-secondary) enrollments, nearly flat population growth and a migration of single and multi-family housing development to the suburbs. La Crosse needs to grow and encourage dense family-friendly urban infill development all while not increasing the burden, as voiced by neighbors, of an increase in cars and traffic.

Urban infill development has the added benefit of a smaller environmental impact than suburban development; reducing or eliminating work commutes time and distances thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving farmland and greenspace, and protecting water quality. A housing demand analysis was conducted as part of the Imagine 2040 plan, “The demand analysis shows potential for 700-1,000 units over 20 years, primarily in larger developments in downtown.”(Imagine 2040). Ignoring these issues and pushing dense multi-family housing to the suburbs only exacerbates the negative impacts of development and promotes suburban sprawl.

In summary, the Washburn neighborhood has been recognized as one of the best places to live and improving in many ways, predicted demand for housing units suggests future growth. The proposed location has access to many amenities and services that make urban living appealing. Urban infill has environmental benefits opposed to suburban sprawl. Development of affordable, dense, family-friendly housing is needed in La Crosse to encourage growth.

➤ **GENERAL LOCATION:**

The south-east corner of the intersection of King St. and 11th St.

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

N/A

➤ **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

The Future Land Use map in Confluence, our Comprehensive plan designates this parcel as Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND). The TND district provides for a mix of housing types and densities along with small-scale retail and service businesses. Some commercial buildings may have businesses on the ground level and housing (or office) above. This designation encompasses existing traditional neighborhoods as well as high-amenity or high-activity locations near downtown and major institutions.

Traditional Neighborhood Development pg. 4A-6 Confluence

Guidelines and Criteria

Minimum Density: 4 dwellings per acre

Maximum Density: 15 dwellings per acre

The parcel at 1106-08 King St. is **0.253 acres**. Using the maximum ratio prescribed by our Comprehensive Plan’s TND zoning district guidelines this would allow **4 dwellings**. The proposed density of this development would be consistent with our Comprehensive plan.

The Washburn Neighborhood plan states, “While the overall goal is a reduction in the number of rental properties, encouraging larger, high-density rental properties can work to retain density. The main issues to consider for these properties will be their location, their design, and provisions for parking.” The Imagine 2040 plan has prescribed that high-density housing in Washburn should be located at 4th and Jackson Streets. The City’s Planning and Development Department staff are in the planning and design phases of this development.

The recently completed Imagine 2040 plan, that includes the Washburn, Downtown and Goosetown Neighborhoods recommends townhomes at 1106-08 King St. site (Figure 1) at a density of 14 units per acre(Figure 2).



Figure 1 Imagine 2040 Plan pg. 64



Medium-High Intensity Housing Development

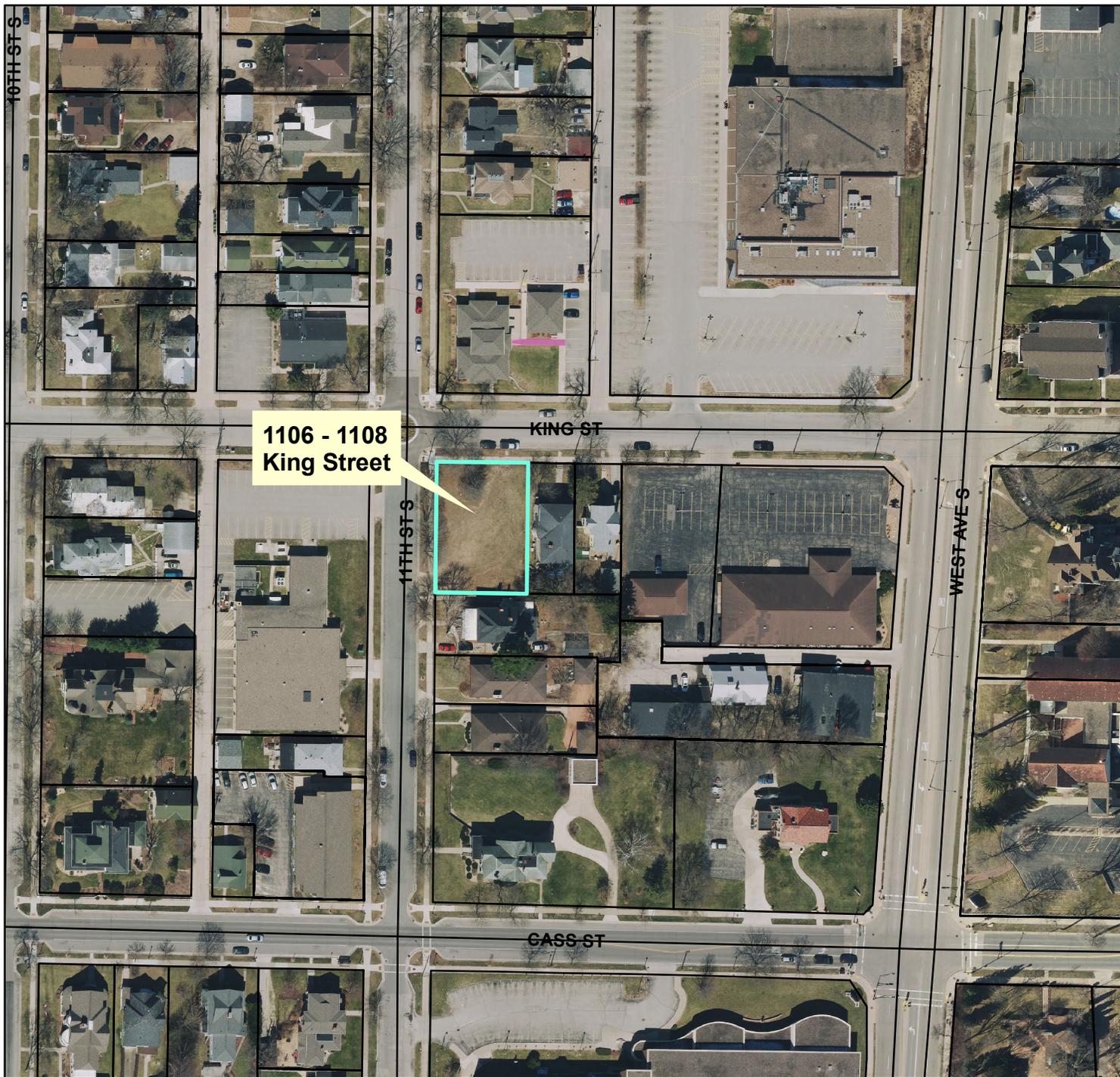
Density: -14 DUA

Townhome or rowhomes with shared common space provide currently unavailable housing types that can be built in a full-block or half-block or even quarter block configurations.

Figure 2 Imagine 2040 pg. 67

➤ **PLANNING RECOMMENDATION:**

On September 29, 2021 the applicant made a formal request to withdraw his rezoning application. The request transferring certain property from the Washburn Residential District to the Traditional Neighborhood District at 1106-08 King St. **is recommended to not be adopted per the request of the applicant withdraw.**

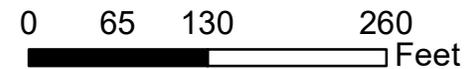


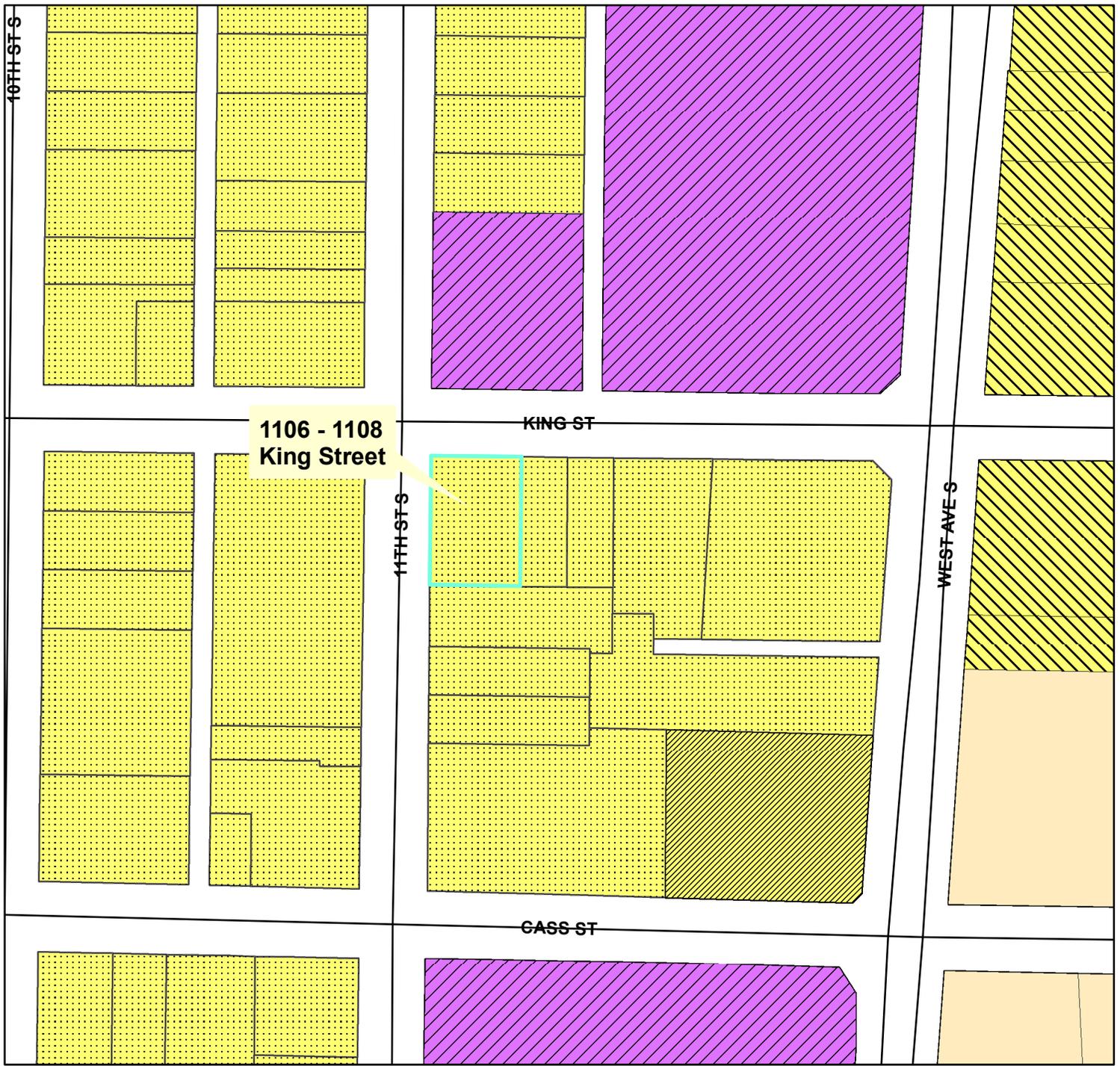
1106 - 1108
King Street

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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