

**CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN  
CITY PLAN COMMISSION  
REPORT  
September 5, 2017**

➤ **AGENDA ITEM – 17-0579 (Jason Gilman)**

AN ORDINANCE to amend Subsection 115-110 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse transferring certain property from the Single Family District to the Traditional Neighborhood District - General allowing for rental housing at 225-227 and 231 21st St. N.

➤ **ROUTING:** J&A Committee

➤ **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

David and Elaine Olson are petitioning the City to rezone the properties at 225-227 and 231 21<sup>st</sup> Street North from R-1 Single Family Residential to Traditional Neighborhood Development General in order to replace the single family structure at 231 21<sup>st</sup> Street North with a 10 bedroom duplex and leave the existing structure at 225-227 21<sup>st</sup> Street North in place, but declare it part of the TND and therefore a conforming use.

The TND ordinance is generally a custom zoning district intended to allow for area standard flexibility to match more traditional neighborhoods where historic structures are closer to the street and alleyways allow for rear vehicular access among other things. The TND zoning process requires an initial General Development Plan for the public to review (hearing) and for the Planning Commission and Council to act upon, establishing the basic right of the applicant to use the property for the applied for land use. TND zoning is then completed when the applicant submits a Final Implementation Plan, showing more detailed and finalized site and architectural plans.

In order for the Planning Commission and Council to act on the TND General Development Plan, the following is needed by the applicant pursuant 115-403 of the City's Code of Ordinances explicitly lists the guidance in Wis. Stats. 66.1027 and UW Extension's Model Ordinance for Traditional Neighborhood Development as the principal documents to guide City decisions on TND applications. The Associated Legislative Council Information Memorandum on TND actions provides the administrative interpretation relative to the TND enabling legislation intent, noting TND's favor compact, mixed use neighborhoods, modeled after pre-World War 2 development patterns.

According to these guiding documents, in order for the City to enact legislation approving a TND, the model ordinance recommends the City require a General Development Plan (GDP) along with the application for rezoning. While these guidelines are discretionary, the Planning Department recommends at a minimum, the submittal show a site plan and the intended development and architectural style

representing the Traditional Neighborhood Development Model Ordinance intent. The content of the GDP should include a significant amount of information relative to the intended development of the property, including; a conceptual site plan, a conceptual storm water management plan which may be submitted at design review, a site inventory showing all natural features on the site, a conceptual contour/grading plan, identification of architectural styles to be constructed on site (representing the intent of the TND based on historic and/or compact mixed use styles) and covenants and/or maintenance agreements to be employed on the site.

Additionally, it is important to note the context of this development in conjunction with the comprehensive plan recommendations. These parcels are located in an “edge land use area” of the Comprehensive Plan, a geographic situation which allows some flexibility by the Planning Commission and Council to consider land use trends, outside of the boundary of legal parcels. Most professional guidance on future land use mapping, including that of the Center on Land Use Education at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, note that FLP’s are not an exact prediction or policy, but a guide for land use policy making.

Also, the existing development on the site includes a legal non-conforming use at 225-227 21<sup>st</sup> Street North, as the existing zoning is R-1 Single Family Residential and the existing structure includes a duplex and a single family structure currently being rented for student housing.

The developer-owner has expressed an interest in rehabbing the structure at 225-227 21 Street North in the future to better respond to current market conditions, given the age and configuration of the existing structures, and to replace the single family structure at 231 21<sup>st</sup> Street N, with a 10 bedroom duplex structure.

Neighborhood feedback on the proposal in June largely focused on concerns relative to lack of detail of the initial submittal and concerns over the extension of TND zoning (which may allow greater mixed densities), and potential issues with student housing densities farther into the core of the GENA neighborhood.

➤ **GENERAL LOCATION:**

225-227 and 231 21st St. N.

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

N/A

➤ **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

These parcels are indicated as Single Family Housing in the City of La Crosse Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

➤ **PLANNING RECOMMENDATION:**

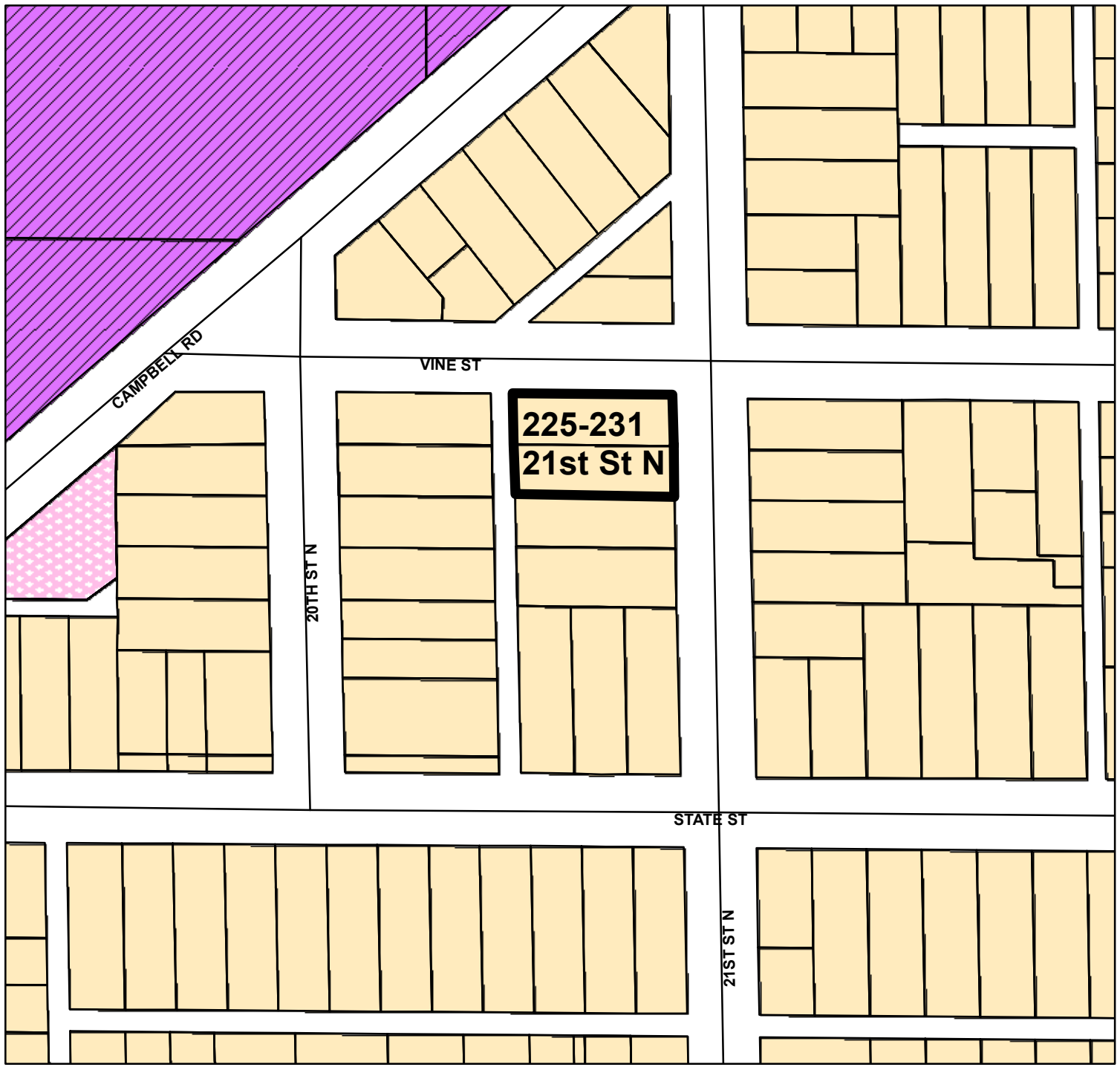
**The City's Comprehensive Plan indicating Single Family Residential at these parcels, however, the applicant is proposing a future upgrade to existing non-conforming structure and a replacement housing project of an existing aging student rental structure and the applicants submittal illustrates a structure that may be compatible with single family attached housing within a traditional neighborhood development, therefore the Planning Department Recommends this ordinance be considered for approval.**

While this proposal is not consistent with the parcel-level land use plan, we believe several factors must be considered in this decision:

- The edge land use nature of this location-near Campbell Road which allows the Planning Commission some discretion by common land use planning and future land use plan practices.
- The market viability of the existing legal non-conforming structures and aging student rental and the consequences of not permitting adequate reinvestment of the existing structures on the neighborhood
- The marginal proposed density change (7 persons) (3 in the existing 231 structure, 10 proposed in the new duplex) and the impact of this accommodation in pre-existing student rentals rather than a new conversion elsewhere.
- The proposed conversion from a 5 space outdoor parking area to indoor parking, preserving neighborhood character
- The configuration of the proposed attached single family dwelling (duplex) (understanding it is the owners intent to provide for student housing), which is potentially convertible for urban family housing demand.

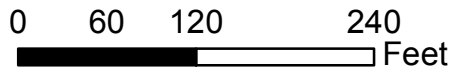
**Lastly, it is recommended this approval be conditioned upon the design review and design development take into consideration the character of existing homes in the neighborhood, avoiding the appearance of long-uninterrupted exterior walls and using colors and external features like foyers or porches similar to that of homes in the area.**

**The Planning Department would also recommend conditioning this approval on the reduction of bedrooms to 4 maximum per unit, due to the goals of the Traditional Neighborhood Development guidance to preserve the integrity of historic neighborhoods as adjacent 5 bedroom homes are scarce and a 10 bedroom configuration would cater largely to high density student rentals in this particular area of the City. Four or less bedrooms is arguably more convertible and consistent with exiting housing and TND goals in the neighborhood should a young family want to rent one of the units.**



## 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





225-231 21st St N

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