

**CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN
CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REPORT
November 29, 2021**

➤ **AGENDA ITEM – 21-1190 (Tim Acklin) (Referred)**

AN ORDINANCE to amend Subsection 115-110 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse transferring certain property from the Multiple Dwelling District to the Special Multiple Dwelling District allowing for a four-story building at 2575 7th St. S.

➤ **ROUTING:** J&A 11.30.21

➤ **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This item is related to Agenda Item# 21-1192. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property depicted on attached **MAP PC21-1190** from the R5-Multiple Dwelling District to the R6-Special Multiple District in order to construct a four-story addition to the existing building with 60 one-bedroom units, a dining hall and nursing support spaces.

The applicant has stated that no new occupants are being added to the site. They currently have 60 units with double occupancy (2 bedrooms). They would like to upgrade these units into one-bedroom units and construct an addition that will house the 60 occupants being displaced. The applicant needs to rezone the property to the R6-Special Multiple District because the maximum height allowed in R5 is 3 1/2 stories. The applicant is proposing a 4-story building. The proposed addition is located in the middle of their current campus. The applicant is currently going through the City's Multi-Family Design Review Process.

Zoning to R6-Special Multiple from R5-Multiple Dwelling would allow the following:

- Building height increased from a maximum of 45ft to a maximum of 100ft.
- Lot area per family/dwelling unit is decreased from 1,500sqft per unit to 400sqft per unit.

Plans for the proposed addition are attached to the applicant's petition.

➤ **GENERAL LOCATION:**

2575 7th Street S immediately south of Bethany Lutheran's Eagle Crest facility and Swift Creek.

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

This item was referred at the September 9, 2021 Common Council meeting in order for the applicant to hold a public input meeting with the surrounding property owners.

This item was re-referred at the October 14, 2021 Common Council Meeting in order for the applicant and the surrounding property owners to explore a deed restriction option.

➤ **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

The Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan depicts this parcel as LDH-Low/Medium Density Housing. This land use category includes single- and two-family housing plus carefully integrated townhouses or other housing forms with individual outdoor entrances. Multiple unit buildings should not have more than 6 housing units per building. The density is expected to be not more than 10 housing units per net acre. Mixed use development may be allowed through a PUD in locations at intersections or along busier roads. The proposed zoning and use are not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

➤ **PLANNING RECOMMENDATION:**

The applicant held a public input meeting for the surrounding property owners and general public on September 23, 2021. The applicant explained the need for the project, particularly the desire of their residents to have their own room for privacy, dignity, and to have their own restroom. They also stated that at this time they would only need to add an additional six employees total and that they would be spread out over their different shifts. They also indicated that they have more than enough parking to handle the additional employees. Additionally, they also stated that the proposed height of the addition is approximately the same height as the existing steeple on the chapel. Lastly, they also stated that construction and staging would take place on the north side of the facility so as to minimize the impact to the neighborhood.

The attendees/adjacent property owners at the meeting had concerns about an increase in traffic and inadequate parking due to the new addition. They also were concerned about the height. Lastly, they were concerned about what R6 zoning would allow the applicant to do in the future.

While the addition and continued use of the property as a senior living facility is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it has been used as such for a long time and will continue to be used as such well into the future. Additionally, due to current deed restrictions only a non-profit use can occur on the property. Staff does not have a concern about an increase in traffic or parking. The project is not adding additional rooms for new tenants, which would bring more visitors, increased traffic, and a need for more parking spaces. Current parking issues that were cited by the adjacent property owners revolved around employees parking in the street for reasons that were not due to the applicant not having sufficient off-street parking. The applicant stated at their public input meeting that they had addressed this issue with their staff and are requiring them to park in their parking lots. There is also enough existing parking to accommodate the additional, anticipated employees as the applicant has stated that their existing lots are never at full capacity. Staff does not feel that the height and density concerns associated with R6 zoning will come to fruition as there is little to no space available on the parcel to construct any additional buildings of this scale and size. The applicant would have to completely tear down the existing facility and build new. This seems unlikely due to the large cost associated with this effort, as well as the required displacement of their current residents as they build something new. Additionally, the applicant stated that the State of Wisconsin is not licensing any more beds, which is what they would need to do if they wanted to add more for more tenants.

November 2021 Cycle Update

This item was referred from the October 2021 cycle by the Common Council in order for the applicant and the surrounding property owners to explore a deed restriction being placed on the property so that only the proposed four-story building can be built if it is rezoned to the R6-Special Multiple District. As of October 26th, an agreement on the deed restriction has not been reached.

Staff is in support of the rezoning to R6 Special Multiple due to the reasons stated above. Staff would prefer for the property to be zoned outright to R6 however, if the applicant and the surrounding property owners agree on a deed restriction staff would support that in an effort to move the rezoning process and project forward.

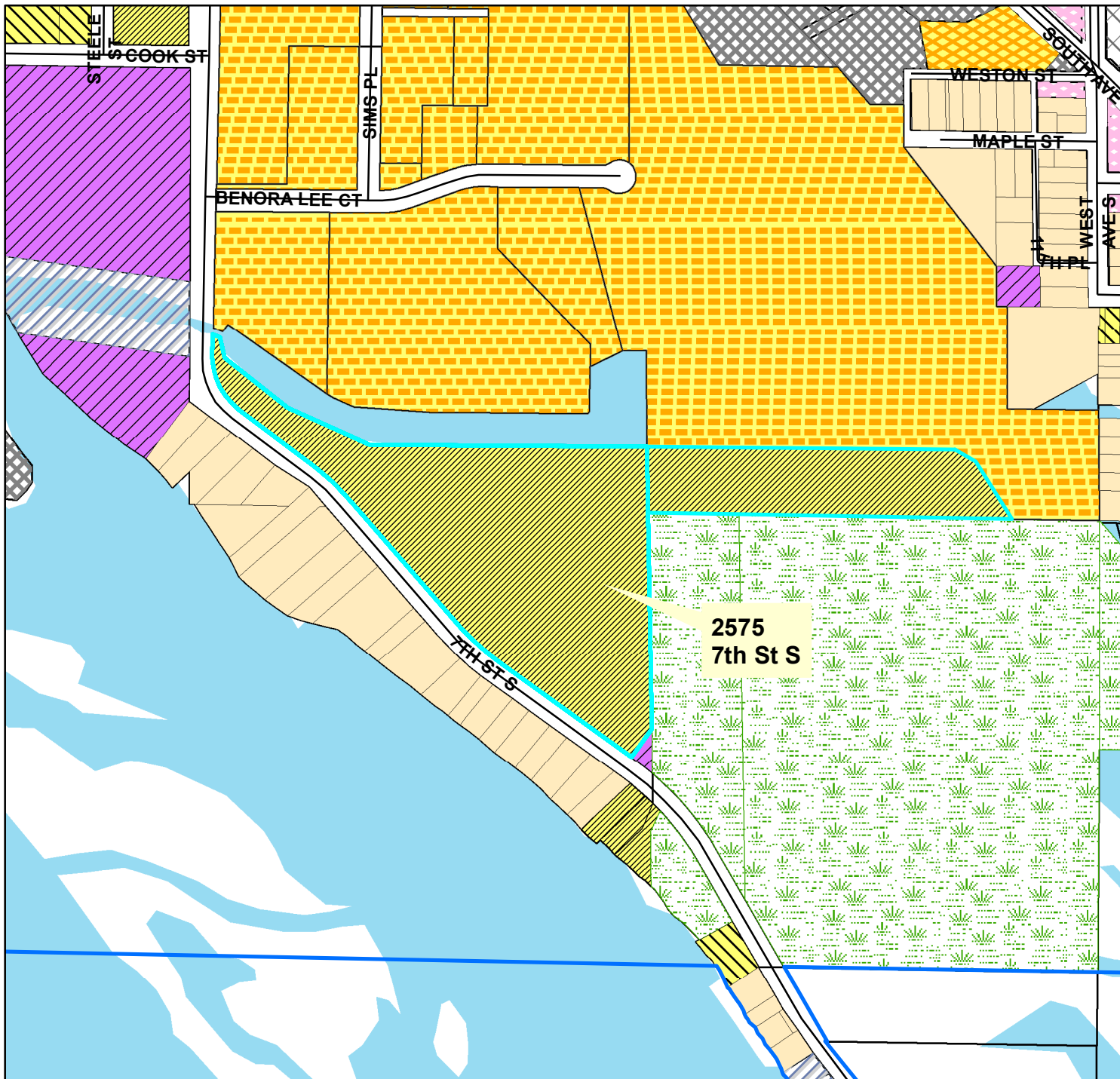
Staff is also looking at amending the height restrictions in some of the current residential zoning districts to vary the height limitations so that there is more of a gradual variation in permitted height.

December 2021 Cycle Update




















This item was referred from the November 2021 cycle by the Common Council in order for a proposed ordinance amendment to the R5-Multiple Dwelling District that increases building height from three to four stories and an overall height from 45ft to 55ft to be reviewed and acted on. This amendment would allow the applicant's proposed building to be constructed without requiring a change in zoning to R6. While this option may alleviate concerns from the surrounding property owners about future buildings being constructed ten stories high, there are still concerns about multiple future buildings being constructed four stories high.

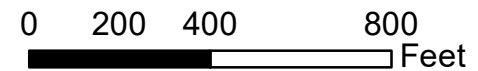
Staff supports this proposed ordinance change and is confident that the height of future buildings can be regulated through the design review process depending on where they are located on the parcel. Should this ordinance pass staff would recommend that this petition be withdrawn.

If the ordinance change is not approved, then this item is recommended for approval.



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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