

**CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN  
CITY PLAN COMMISSION  
REPORT  
October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

➤ **AGENDA ITEM - 18-1255 (Tim Acklin)**

Application of Tomah VA Medical Center for a Conditional Use Permit allowing Community Living Arrangement at 3120 Farnam Street.

➤ **ROUTING:** CPC & J&A

➤ **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The applicant (Tomah VA Medical Center) is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to use the property depicted on attached **MAP PC18-1255** as part of their Transitional Residence Program. The property would be donated to the applicant by the current owners and be used to house up to 10 people. According to the applicant's petition the Transitional Residence Program is designed to provide veterans with an opportunity to develop and practice responsible, positive life skills as they prepare for community reintegration.

The applicant states that they would like to have this facility in La Crosse as there is a large veteran population here that is being underserved. Also La Crosse offers more job opportunities than Tomah. This house is also an ideal location for this facility as it is located on a bus route and is less than a mile away from La Crosse's CBOC on State Road. The existing home has 7 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, and a large community area. The applicant has stated that a few of the residents would have to double up in some of the bedrooms but would be able to meet the Federal Criteria for room size and square footage per person. Their application has stated that they will be able to provide approximately 4-5 off-street parking spaces. Visitors and staff would have to park on the street. They have stated that the majority of their residents in the program do not have cars and would not need to provide 1 parking space per resident.

There would be 1, 24/7 paid VA staff member, 1 house manager and 1 assistant house manager that would all reside on the premises and be in charge of the facility. The 2 house managers would also be participants in the program. Additional information can be found in their cover letter, petition, and VA Handbook that is attached as part of the legislation.

Though not licensed by the State, this type of facility falls under the City's Community Living Arrangement Ordinance and must meet the distance and density requirements. Since this facility is within 2,500ft of 4 other facilities it does not meet the distance requirement. Adding an additional 10 people would not exceed the density restriction. Since they do not meet the distance requirement the applicant must apply for a Conditional Use Permit.

➤ **GENERAL LOCATION:**

3120 Farnam Street.

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

N/A

➤ **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

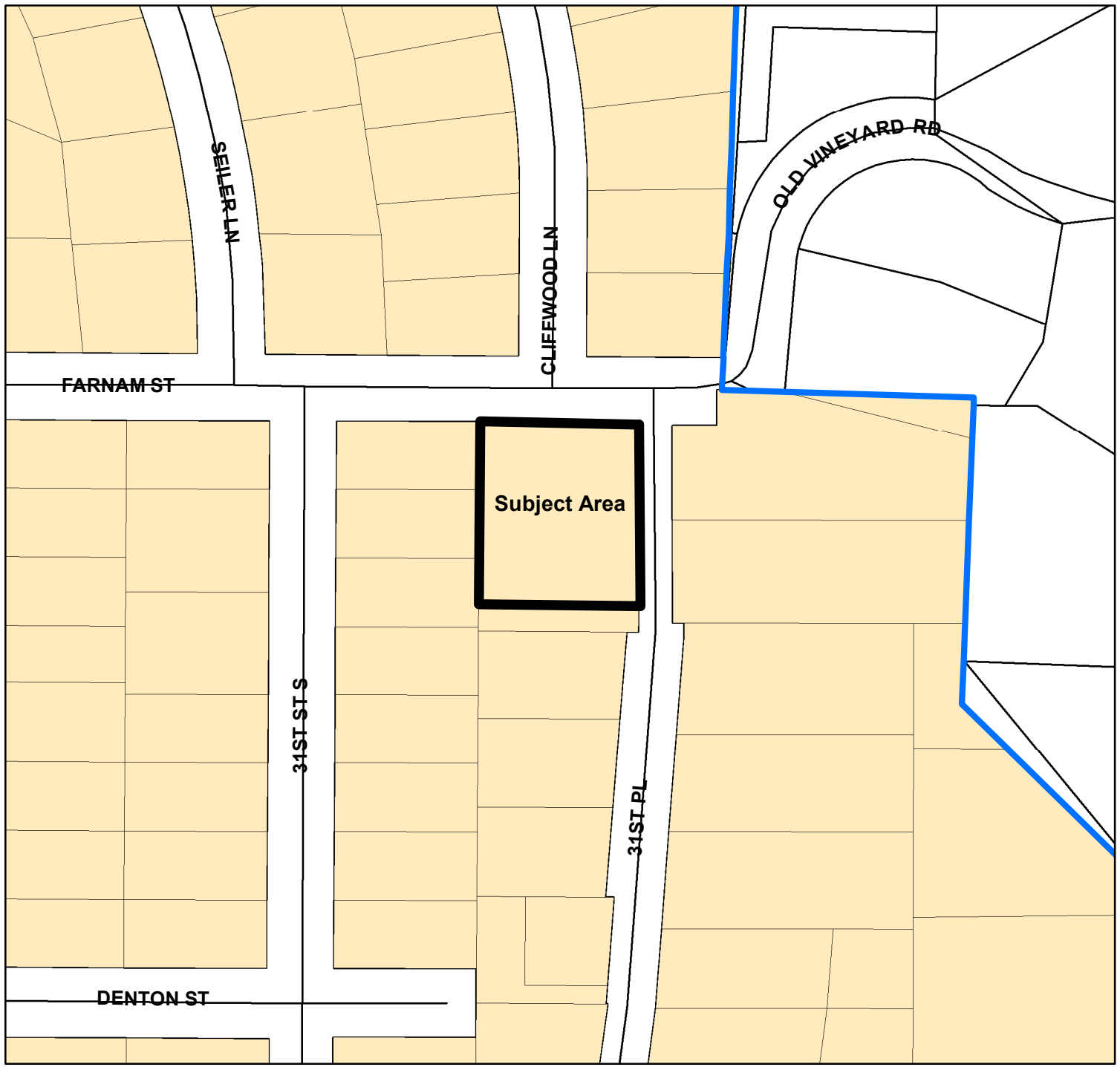
N/A

➤ **PLANNING RECOMMENDATION:**

The Bluffside Neighborhood Association discussed this item at their Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Several neighborhood residents expressed their concerns for safety, the number of people that would be living there, the decline of property values, lack of off-street parking, and inadequate staffing.

The Tomah VA held a listening session at their clinic on 2600 State Rd for the surrounding neighbors. The listening session included the Director of the Tomah VA and 7 other staff members. They provided more detail on the scope of the program, how this facility fits into the overall program, where the residents that would be allowed to live in this facility are at in their treatment and the program, and the levels of security, rules, and how the facility is managed. The neighbors asked many questions and voice their concerns. One of their largest concerns was the conflicting information between what was stated to them at this meeting versus the information that was included as part of their petition. The Director was concerned about that suggested that the application should maybe be withdrawn or referred so it can be revised. Other concerns by the neighbors included safety for their families, potential decline of property values, too large of a facility with too many people, possible future expansion, loss of tax base, budget for continued maintenance of the house, not compatible with the surrounding single family neighborhood, inadequate staffing or qualified staff with credentials, and lack of off-street parking.

**As of September 28, 2018 the applicant has submitted a request to the City Clerk's Office to refer this item for 30 days so they can revise their application. Until staff is able to review their revised application this item is recommended to be referred for 30 days.**



## 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

