

Craig, Sondra

From: Elsen, Nikki
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 10:23 AM
To: Craig, Sondra
Subject: FW: Floodplain Re-zoning Ordinance
Attachments: Motion to Refer.docx

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City Clerk
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-----Original Message-----

From: Chuck Lee <friendsofthemarsh@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 10:21 AM
To: ZZ Council Members <ZZCouncilMembers@cityoflacrosse.org>
Cc: Reynolds, Mitch <reynoldsm@cityoflacrosse.org>
Subject: Floodplain Re-zoning Ordinance

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Members of the Council and Mayor Reynolds,

Please see the attached memo from the Friends of the La Crosse River Marsh concerning the ordinance to re-zone a parcel of land that has floodplain implications. Please feel free to contact my in advance of the meeting if you have questions or comments.

Chuck Lee

March 7, 2022

To: La Crosse City Council Members

From: Chuck Lee, President
Friends of the La Crosse River Marsh

Re: Item # 22-0181 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 - Heavy Industrial District allowing for the same zoning across the whole parcel for future improvement and use at 2500 County Road SS.

The Friends of the La Crosse River Marsh requests that the council refer this legislation for 30 days. Last week the City Plan Commission voted to deny the Harter company's petition for a zoning change. One day later the Judiciary & Administration Committee voted to approve the ordinance. I attended both meetings and came away convinced that significant issues had not been adequately addressed – environmental issues.

The core of this legislation is whether, or not, the council will approve the removal of a parcel zoned multiple family dwelling and change it to heavy industrial. Doing so will open the door to the Harter company's plan to construct a road/lane south from CTHY SS down the hill to the low ground where they plan to store equipment and machinery in open storage. A vote to deny will block that development. A good portion of that low ground, which is the largest part of the parcel in question here is floodplain / floodway / flood fringe. It has flooded in the recent past and will again. I addressed both committees last week in person and by letter arguing that this site should not be zoned heavy industrial and certainly it should not be developed.

Last week neither committee heard from other agencies and committees with experience and expertise regarding the development of floodplain within the city. Both the Wisconsin DNR and FEMA have authority over floodplain issues. The city Floodplain Advisory Committee, the Climate Action Plan committee, and the environmental engineers Parks & Recreation have contracted with (SmithGroup, Inc.) to develop and implement a marsh restoration plan have each been charged with analyzing environmental conditions and developing remedies for problems within the city. That's five bodies, three of them funded by the city, that were not but now should be consulted before a decision is made by the council.

The Harter company did not make the case last week that something had to be done quickly. They did not present detailed plans regarding a building site, open air storage of machinery or the road they would construct. It appears there is time to give this matter careful consideration.

What we're asking for here is good government and sound policy, not a rush to judgment. If you have questions or comments, please contact me at 608-785-2205 or friendsofthemarsh@gmail.com. Please refer this legislation for 30 days.