

Craig, Sondra

From: Jill Bernstein <jill@rivercityimageworks.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 11:59 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Cc: Hetti Brown
Subject: In support of the REACH Center zoning proposal

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Dear Council Members,

Here is the email I sent to Hetti Brown of Couleecap (copying my current City Council member Mackenzie Mindel and my former City Council Member Chris Kahlow) after the Zoom neighborhood meeting about the REACH Center's zoning request that was held on 1/31/2024. The letter was in response to a neighbor pointing out a long message against the zoning distributed via NextDoor.

"We have lived on 11th Street (at the corner of Cass St) for over 40 years, starting when Mayo's Optical department was across the street. The traffic and parking issues in the neighborhood have always been largely related to Aquinas, and everyone has been okay with that. On last night's call, Dr. Laurie Logan pointed out that when Mayo occupied the building, the number of people coming in and out was much larger than that projected for the REACH center; I believe she formerly worked for Mayo and now works for Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers. They say they have determined that the parking lot is sufficient and, should it become necessary, will make provisions for employees to park in another location -- but they do not foresee that happening. We also don't understand the negative comments about solar panels, which are in line with the City's Climate Action Plan.

Couleecap is NOT expanding the building and seems open to having the auxiliary parking lot change to residential housing. The building has been a healthcare-related facility ever since we have lived in La Crosse, and that does not change. Furthermore, the building is not in the 10th and Cass Historic District, although Hetti and her organization still are keeping that in mind. Last night, she suggested they put together a framework for communicating with the Center's neighbors regarding any issues that might come up in the future.

Hetti also referred to the surrounding "eclectic" neighborhood (the YMCA, Aquinas Schools, a dental office, single-family homes, apartments, and the new duplex being built); we think varied activities and people coming and going are healthy for a community. Yes, it would be nice if more property was added to the tax rolls, but the people of the REACH center are trying to make La Crosse better. Last night, we heard a lot of "not in my backyard" sentiment which is inappropriate for a vibrant community such as La Crosse."

Therefore, my husband and I support the zoning request and welcome Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers to the neighborhood. Some of the comments on NextDoor were from people happy to finally get dental appointments at Scenic Bluffs, where their dental insurance is accepted.

Thanks for listening,

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