

Minutes
TWNA Meeting
February 14, 2008

Steering Committee members present: Harriet Allen, Stan Carpenter, Curtis Goodson, Jeremy Gragert, Rick Kayser, Sue Kayser, Pat Kurtenbach, Katie McQuillan, Bob Schwartz, Catherine Sinkewicz.

Other Attendees: Carlyn Conway, Bernie Hoefgen, Roger Adams, Jeane Casey, Ken Fulgione, Pamela Lovelien, Mark Lovelien.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 P.M. by Chair Stan Carpenter.

1. (Moved to the front of agenda)

Presentation by Pamela Lovelien regarding site plan for 1240 S. Farwell St.

Pam thanked the committee for allowing her to present and gave the following handouts: Photo of current home, front and side view drawings, and site plan. Pam later handed out copies of their "Rules and Regulations" and their "Nonstandard Rental Provisions."

Pam agreed that the house was "tired" looking. She acquired the home in mid-October 2007, and the Health Department noted bad windows, a "tired" roof, and peeling paint. She said her goal is to make the home attractive again by keeping the historic character of the pillars in front. She said she owns two other properties (Stan later showed photos of them on the TV screen).

Pam said the home is licensed for 11 people currently. The plan would be to upgrade the house to 4 units. The existing house is approximately 1,700-1,800 square feet total. The upgrade to the home would create four 1,395 square foot units. 11 parking stalls would be added behind the home on existing green space. Pam said the property only legally allows for one off street parking space.

A few quotes:

"The more people you have in one house the more problematic the house is." – Pam

"This is our retirement project here." – Pam (saying they plan to own the house for at least 20 years.)

A question was asked about green space.

Pam said 41% of the lot would be green space after the project is complete. She said the house would be 35 feet from the sidewalk, just as it is today. She said it was almost double the green space required for the lot, and said most of the trees on the

side and the back of the property would remain. She said the square footage of the property is 13,000. When asked about adding trees in the front she said there were no plans for trees in the front. Pam said cars park on Farwell Street, as a result of not having parking on the property. Concern was raised that the “front yard becomes the back yard”, implying that activity of residents will be in front of the house because of the parking lot in back. Pam said there will be small decks in the back and the garage would be removed.

Pam said there were 5 bedrooms in the house currently. She said smaller units have a higher quality of tenant, and she is a very hands-on landlord that visits the tenants monthly.

Concerns were raised the house had extensive mold damage in the walls, and possibly animals living in it. Pam said she was not aware of either.

Ken Fulgione asked if the property would cash flow as 3 units instead of 4. Pam said it wouldn't. She said the cost per tenant would be \$350, but they would be paying for quality: hardwood floors, ceramic floors, oak cabinets, etc.

Rick Kayser asked if this was an odd block to try to rent such expensive units, with the frequent parties next door to the north. Pam said she would like to acquire more properties in the area and help create a culture of revitalizing the block.

Stan Carpenter emphasized that the proposal meets the city code, and that the neighborhood could only really point to the size of the proposed renovation as a reason to deny it. Stan said the neighborhood plan says that there should be no increase in density. The sheer size of the property, being more than twice as large as other houses in the area, is a reason for concern as well. Stan pointed out many “for rent” signs in the area, implying that there are vacancies in the area.

Pam said many landlords leave signs out year-round, and when people call they can refer people to other properties they own or set up leases far into the future.

Curtis Goodson pointed out that the house could have as many as 14 people after the renovation. He referred to the size of the back of the house as a “barn.”

It was pointed out that the zoning is R3, and the house would lose its rooming house status after the renovation.

Curtis Goodson made a motion to support the project, seconded by Bob Schwartz.

Several friendly amendments were accepted by Curtis & Bob, and Pam found them agreeable:

- 1) Plant arbor vitae in the back
- 2) Less intrusive security lighting
- 3) Attempt to plant trees or bushes in front

4) Accommodate sheltered bike parking

Discussion: Carlyn Conway was worried about the density issue in the neighborhood plan. Bob Schwartz pointed out that there are more restrictions on the property if this were approved than there are now. Rick Kayser said the block needs help. Stan Carpenter said it is lucky that the committee got a chance to comment on this proposal. He said Pam got caught in the middle of the city and the neighborhood because the city didn't notify them of the density provision in the neighborhood plan. Stan said he got a number of emails citing density as a concern of neighborhood residents. "We have a real problem here," Stan said, referring to the city staff interpretation.

The vote:

Among steering committee:

5 Yes

4 No

(Rick Kayser abstained because of his membership on the city Plan Commission)

The non-steering committee members voted No.

Stan said he would notify the city of the neighborhood's vote and recommendations.

2. The minutes of the January 10, 2008 meeting were approved after a sentence about the Buffington home was removed.
3. The treasurer's report: We now have a balance of \$767.40.
4. Winter activities: Bob Schwartz reported that the first skating party since the spring of 2006 was a success and an email has gone out regarding the remaining skating parties of the season.
5. Newsletter Committee: Candidates for city council, county board, and school board have been contacted with the opportunity to contribute to the next newsletter.
6. Historical Preservation Event: We have joined with The Randall Park Neighborhood Association to invite Pat Ivory of the city Planning Dept. to be the speaker at an event on April 17 at the Chippewa Valley Museum. We will invite members of The Historic Preservation Society, Landmarks Commission, and Museum members. We are expecting 40-60 people. Jeremy expressed concern that it was the same night as the UWEC forum series, where environmentalist James Howard Kunstler would speak.
7. Thrift sale: Bob Schwartz brought up interest in the neighborhood to have a collective thrift sale, but said he is not a "thrift saler" and just wanted to pass the idea along to the committee. Bob suggested forming a committee if there is interest in a sale. Neighborhood resident Jennifer Lee, who had suggested the idea, was offered as a

possible committee member. Catherine Sinkewicz and Harriet Allen volunteered for the committee. Preliminary plans would set the date for the thrift sale sometime in the fall, to be advertised in the fall newsletter.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm. Minutes by: Jeremy Gragert