

In attendance:

Mayor S. Bierce, D. Linsmeier, S. Sullivan, and C. Wunder.

Also in attendance:

City Planner & Community Development Director N. Fuchs, Administrator S. Klein and Deputy Clerk A. Hurd.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Bierce called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and requested everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Discussion and Action Regarding Approval of Meeting Minutes Dated September 19, 2019

A motion was made and seconded (C. Wunder, D. Linsmeier) to approve the September 19th, 2019 Plan Commission minutes. Motion Passed: 4-For, 0-Against.

3. Discussion and Action Regarding a Revised Site Plan Amendment for R & R Insurance for a Detached Accessory Building Located in the Northeast Corner of their Property at N14 W23900 Stone Ridge Drive (PWC 0954998027)

Mr. Fuchs stated the Plan Commission took no action on this at the previous meeting. The shed is proposed to be in the same location but is now brick to better match the building, and they have added some windows as well. It was previously planned as cedar siding.

A motion was made and seconded (D. Linsmeier, S. Sullivan) to approve the accessory building for R & R Insurance. Motion Passed: 4-For, 0-Against.

4. Discussion and Action Regarding a Recommendation to the Common Council for a Conditional Use Permit for Mental Health America of Wisconsin to Operate a Peer Run Respite for Veterans Within a Single-Family Home Located at W252 N4304 Sussex Street (PWC 0880997)

Mr. Fuchs stated there would be no exterior modifications to the home. Staff recommends approval with a condition that requires the applicant to return to the Plan Commission in six months to review the use operations and any issues. The condition also has language that it could potentially come back on an annual basis.

Mr. Fuchs pointed out that there is a Protest Petition in the packet, but that will not trigger a 3/4 vote by the Common Council because it is filed against a conditional use permit as opposed to a rezoning or text amendment.

Brian Michel, Director of Prevention Services for Mental Health America of Wisconsin, stated they are proposing a peer-run respite facility, which is a state-funded home for individuals experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues. The home will help them to better engage their social connections, connect them with services, and provide them with peer support. There are bedrooms for three to four people for week-long stays with staff from MHA of Wisconsin in the house 24/7. Staff are subject to caregiver background checks and are trained through a state certified curriculum. Mr. Michel stated there are three similar respites in the

state, but none that serve Veterans only. He added that there are no drops-ins, and services are only for people staying in the house.

Chairman Bierce questioned what the specialists are trained in. Mr. Michel stated there is a recognized curriculum through the Department of Health Services that teaches individuals that have had those experiences and are in recovery how to use their experiences to support others with the same challenges. It is a 40 hour certification training with a state certified exam. The goal is to give coping skills and the tools people need so that they don't need to come back. The outcome is to divert people from more restrictive and intensive modes of service.

Mr. Michel clarified that it is a self-referral process and no one is required to go. The address of the location would not be made public. People call a phone number first and engage in a phone conversation with staff to determine their level of need and if the respite would be a good fit for them at that time. It is not a detox facility or a halfway house.

Ellen Kothel, Chair of No Veteran Left Behind USA, stated she has 10 years of experience working with veterans. She supports this program because there are not enough resources to help everyone. It gives an opportunity to the person to be in a good place where they can talk openly and freely to other Veterans.

Serita Salomon stated she was torn because her Dad was a veteran with mental health and drug addiction issues, but she has a two year old daughter and she does not want to be concerned while in her yard. She is a resident on Lindsay Road and she knows what mental health issues and drug addiction are like. She does not want this in her backyard and was opposed as a mother.

Mark Flower, Veteran Community Engagement Specialist with MHA, stated he has worked with Veterans for over 18 years. He stated this respite is for Veterans who are in mid-crisis, but for a lot of the services, people must be in extreme crisis in order to use the services. Mr. Flower stated the other peer respites in the state have not had issues.

Chairman Bierce questioned how big of a pool of employees would be needed to staff two people at a time. Mr. Michel stated they would have a total staff of nine people split between full and part time. They are looking to have 100 percent of their staff be Veterans.

Jane Holland, Community Outreach Coordinator for the R&R House, stated she has seen that people get so much more out of sitting and talking with someone that has similar and shared life experiences as the military. The R&R house would not be a detox facility or a halfway house, or somewhere to go for a high-level mental health crisis, but instead would be for a low-level crisis. This is to help people take a pause, or a break, from their stressors before it gets to a high level of crisis.

Tom and Sue Nienow (W252 N4350 Sussex Street) stated they live next door and their property is not secure. Ms. Nienow stated they circulated a petition not targeting anyone with mental health or drug abuse issues, but for safety measures. She questioned who would be there to protect them if someone went into high-crisis if there are only two employees on staff and four guests. Mr. Nienow showed pictures of their property. Ms. Nienow was concerned about the amount of people staying in the house throughout the course of a year, without having any background information on any of them. Mr. Nienow was concerned about the amount of vehicles with two staff and four people staying there. Ms. Nienow requested fencing the property with a secure gate and a key card.

Angie and David Edge (W252 N4468 Sussex Street) stated everyone that is a counselor at this home has to have a drug habit or a mental health problem that they've conquered. She felt this was a hotel and she did not

see how anything could get fixed in one to five days. Ms. Edge stated these people are trained military soldiers in crisis, and she does not feel protected. She was concerned about the lack of security and discussed the security at the VA. Mr. Edge stated there would only be one person on site and one person on call. He mentioned that the home is close to the Waukesha Gun Club and they can hear gun shots. They are also close to quarries that do blasting, which could set off a flashback with Veterans. Ms. Edge questioned if there would be a curfew and drug tests.

Mr. Michel noted there would be two staff members on site at all times. The curfew would be 10:00pm or 11:00pm unless people have pre-existing work or family obligations. The people staying at the home will not be drug tested.

Michael and Kristen Shay discussed his wife's work with individuals with mental and physical disabilities. Mr. Shay was frightened thinking about this home with only two individuals with 40 hours of training to handle people in the military if they go into crisis. Ms. Shay did not know the guidelines and wanted to see the proposal for security levels and the training. Mr. Shay did not believe a facility where people can come and go as they please could provide structure to these people. He did not want someone with a crisis coming on to come into a community and instead felt they should get the professional help they need. Mr. Shay requested to see some data on the success and failure rates and the management of the people working there. Ms. Shay questioned what would happen if there are violations from the facility. Mr. Fuchs noted the conditional use permit could be revoked if they are in violation of their conditions.

Mr. Michel noted he has contacted other respite to ask about adverse incidents, and there have been no incidents since they have been in operation from the people that stay there.

Brad Brandt (648 Ole Dairy Drive) stated his main concern was safety and felt there was no consequence for violating the curfew. He was concerned about trespassing on his private property. Mr. Brandt felt the people working there were not medically trained to deal with a crisis. He was concerned about the action plan when something goes wrong.

Peter Burocky stated he has been hired to be a peer run specialist at the home. He described his injuries from the military, and stated when he got out of the army, there was no one telling him what he was supposed to do or where to get help. He saw many different counselors and psychiatrists, none of whom were ever in the military or in combat and it was not helpful. He felt he could use his experience to talk to others and connect with them. He stated his training was about 52 hours and there is continued training every year.

Wanda B. stated she would be one of the peer support specialists and she is a Veteran of the United States Marine Corp. She stated the reason the VA had to increase their security was because Veterans have been attacked on VA grounds, and due to 9/11 and other terrorist attacks.

Todd Vande Zande (739 Stepping Stone Way) felt the place was very concerning. He felt home values in the area would drop 25 percent. He also mentioned that the Simmons Woods walking path was right down the street.

Mark Flower again spoke and stated people will not be told to come to their facility, they will be asking and will come to get help to improve their welfare. If people are in that bad of a crisis, they will be going somewhere else. He asked people to look at this in a more reasonable aspect.

Martina Gollen Graves, President/CEO of Mental Health America of Wisconsin, stated MHA will be celebrating their 90th anniversary next year and they are not new to supporting communities. They are one of over 200 affiliates across the nation. She asked for people to think differently about mental illness and

she noted that less than five percent of the global population are violent as a result of mental illness. This will not be a halfway house. She felt they have experience supporting people who live with mental illness and they are able to support staff and a facility. Ms. Gollen Graves stated she has the utmost trust in the staff they have chosen to support the program at this location.

Mr. Linsmeier suggested placing conditions on the conditional use. He felt some of the neighbor's concerns needed to be looked at. He felt this service could really give Veterans support and he wanted to give that support, but he didn't know how to address the security. Mr. Linsmeier stated he supported getting mental health services.

Commissioner Wunder felt services were needed. She stated she was torn and she wasn't sure this location was the right place for it. She was not opposed to the organization but she was not sure this was the correct location.

Chairman Bierce felt we should word this in a way that would take into account the concerns of the neighbors.

A motion was made (S. Bierce) to recommend approval of the conditional use permit for Mental Health America to move to the Common Council. The motion died for lack of a second.

A motion was made (C. Wunder) to recommend denial of the conditional use permit for Mental Health America. The motion died for lack of a second.

Chairman Bierce stated the conditional use will go to the Common Council on Monday, October 21st with neither a recommendation for approval or denial.

5. Discussion and Action Regarding Conceptual Review of a Proposed Landscape Contracting and Service Business and Single-Family Home for Arce Handyman, LLC Located on the East Side of Bluemound Road, North of Highway 16, South of Wamser Drive (PWC 0951995001)

Mr. Fuchs stated the applicant was proposing a landscape business and a single-family home. They would subdivide the existing property and construct a structure for the landscape business. The other half would contain the single-family home. Mr. Fuchs was concerned about the outdoor storage and the architecture of the building. There was concern about the long term development of the area, as it is planned for manufacturing/warehousing. Mr. Fuchs suggested either elimination of the residential component, or flipping the commercial and residential locations. North of this site is Wamser Drive and additional residential development, and south is more industrial in nature on both sides of Bluemound Road.

Mark Augustine with Landmark Engineering noted that the residential would most likely be Rs-3, and the business would be B-3, B-5 or M-1. The residential on both sides of the property is currently Rs-3. It was suggested that the commercial go on lot 2 and the residential go on lot 1.

Commissioner Sullivan was worried about the home to the south and building a parking lot with trucks starting up next to the house. Mr. Augustine stated if the commercial building was put on the southern portion, the building would run along the property line on the north side.

Mr. Pedro Arce noted that the building would have stone about three to four feet high, and the rest would be smart siding wood. It would look like normal residential home siding. The Commissioners felt windows would be needed, and suggested that Mr. Arce speak to the neighbors about a fence.

Commissioner Linsmeier suggested shielding the concrete blocks from the road.

Discussion took place regarding whether to use the B-5 or M-1 zoning classification. The Commission preferred the rezoning to M-1.

6. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded (C. Wunder, D. Linsmeier) to adjourn the meeting at 9:18pm.

Motion Passed: 4-For, 0-Against.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ami Hurd
Deputy Clerk