

CAN Notes on 9/5/2023 Planning Commission Meeting, Submitted by Judd Vickers

New Business: Planning Commission accepted a recommendation from staff to approve an LED sign to be installed at the Wesleyan Church on Race Street.

Talbot (YMCA) Overlay related: By a vote of 4 to 3, the Planning Commission passed an amendment to the table of permitted uses that would clearly allow the YMCA to operate all its existing programs at the Talbot Avenue facility. This amendment, together with the zoning overlay, will be considered holistically by the City Council, likely on October 23rd as a second reading. Together, the overlay and amendments will clearly allow the YMCA to continue to operate at Talbot Avenue, should it choose to stay, and if the YMCA chooses to relocate, the number of institutional uses would be more limited and in line with what is found in a residential neighborhood (like a church, school or other facility similar to the YMCA). The YMCA now supports the amendment and overlay while continuing to ultimately advocate a residential use for the property should it vacate.

Rezoning & Map Amendment: A cluster of parcels at the corner of Washington and High Streets are zoned NC4 and General Commercial, making development difficult. The Planning Commission approved rezoning all parcels to Downtown Waterfront Development District (DWDD) as the misc zoning was likely an error in the 2014 rezoning.

Discussion Items:

Grain Silos: Substantial discussion ensued over the installation of grain silos behind RAR on Poplar Street. The Planning Commission believed they should have the ability to review this issue, while the Zoning Officer, Steve Kaii-Ziegler believed it to be an administrative decision. This was followed by additional discussion related to procedures for matters presented to the Planning Commission. There also appears to be some question of the ownership of the parking areas behind Poplar Street where the silos might be located.

Intermediate Care & Group Homes: City Attorney has conducted extensive research regarding these uses for mental health and addiction and has provided a memo to the Planning Commission. After review by the members, these issues will be discussed at a future meeting. The City Attorney believes there can be reasonable regulations created to provide oversight and allow the City to determine these homes are properly licensed by the appropriate authorities.

Discussion deferred on recreational marijuana and solar field on Egypt Road.