

MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
April 18, 2022

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a meeting on April 18, 2022, at the DeKalb Public Library in the Yusunas Meeting Room located at 309 Oak Street, DeKalb, Illinois. Vice-Chair McMahon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

A. ROLL CALL

Recording Secretary Stephanie Turner called the roll. Planning and Zoning Commission members present were: Steve Becker, Trixy O’Flaherty, Maria Pena-Graham, Shannon Stoker, Jerry Wright, and Vice Chair Bill McMahon. Chair Max Maxwell was absent. Planning Director Dan Olson was present representing the City of DeKalb.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Additions/Deletions)

Vice Chair McMahon requested a motion to approve the April 18, 2022, agenda as presented. Mr. Wright motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Stoker seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 4, 2022 –Vice Chair McMahon requested a motion to approve the April 4, 2022, minutes as presented. Ms. O’Flaherty motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Open Floor to Anyone Wishing to Speak on Record)

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Public Hearing** – A request by Elion Business Center, LLC, represented by Kendra Elion, for approval of the rezoning of a portion of the site at 315 N. 6th St., from “LI” Light Industrial District to the “LC” Light Commercial District in order to accommodate a day care center and associated uses.

Kendra Elion, representing Elion Business Center, LLC, stated the location of Mother’s Little Helper 2 LLC and Elion Professional Suites will be at 315 N. 6th Street. Ms. Elion explained Mother’s Little Helper 2 LLC is a licensed childcare facility that will provide care for children ages six weeks to thirteen years old and include before and after school care, summer camps, and other programs. She added this would be one of the largest day care facilities in DeKalb serving approximately 197 children.

Ms. Elion stated half of the 24,000 sq. ft. building would be for the daycare center and the other half would be rented out for office space and small businesses. She

continued by stating two portions of the parking lot north part the building will serve as playgrounds while still containing 32 parking spaces. She mentioned there is a parking lot to the south of the building (across Oak St.), with an additional 44 parking spaces, designated for staff and vendors. Ms. Elion explained children attending the day care center will be dropped off at the northern parking lot and at the 6th Street entrance and children attending the before and after school program will arrive and depart at the rear of the building.

Ms. Elion stated the proposed rezoning is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and it will not negatively impact surrounding properties or existing land uses. She added the rezoning will not affect property values or impact public health, safety, and welfare.

Dan Olson, Planning Director, went through the staff report dated April 14, 2022, and stated the proposed rezoning from "LI" Light Industrial District to "LC" Light Commercial District is strictly for the building at 315 N. 6th Street. He added the adjacent parking lot is already zoned as Light Commercial District. He explained with a rezoning request there is no site plan approval or conditions, just a recommendation for or against the rezoning. Mr. Olson commented the Commission needs to look at the proposed use and determine if it fits in with Light Commercial zoning.

Mr. Olson told the Commission daycare centers are currently a special use permit in the Light Industrial District and they are a permitted use in Light Commercial District. He explained by looking at the trend of development in the area, rezoning the subject site to Light Commercial seemed to be the best option. Mr. Olson said the proposed uses for the other half of the building consisting of office space and other service uses are permitted in the LC District.

Mr. Olson reported on the parking for the site, with 22 diagonal parking spaces along the west side of N. 6th St. with about 10-11 open spaces daily, and an additional 6 parking spaces on the east side of N. 6th St. He advised the north lot, after construction, will have 32 parking spaces and the lot across Oak Street has 50 spaces. Mr. Olson stated the parking requirements for a daycare center are 1 space for every 10 children and 1 space for every employee on the maximum shift. He explained with the proposal of 200 children and 22 employees would result in 42 parking spaces required, which is currently available and well under the 82 spaces provided.

Planning Director Olson noted the seller's attorney requested a provision in the ordinance that if the sale does not go through the site would revert back to the Light Industrial District zoning. He mentioned the language would be presented to City Council as part of the ordinance approving the rezoning.

Mr. Olson described the criteria in the UDO that are investigated for rezoning requests: conformity to the comprehensive plan, surrounding zoning, no detrimental effect on surrounding area, and adequate public services and facilities. He added this proposal will be a benefit to the neighborhood and fill a vacant commercial building and meets the criteria for a rezoning as stated in the UDO.

Planning Director Olson stated the City received correspondence from the Housing Authority of the County of DeKalb (Vivian Bright), which is located across the street (310 N. 6th St.) from the subject site. The Housing Authority indicated their support for

the request and mentioned concerns with traffic flow and staff parking on N. 6th St. Mr. Olson and Kendra Elion advised the Commission they talked to Ms. Bright and addressed the concerns.

Planning Director Olson stated a sample motion to approve is prepared for the rezoning of this site and reiterated there is no approval of a plan or conditions with the motion.

Vice Chair McMahon gave the public an opportunity to speak.

Rukisha Crawford (no address provided), advocate for the community, noted her support for the business due to the need for childcare facilities in our area.

Vice Chair McMahon asked if there were any comments or questions from the Commission.

Jerry Wright asked how the parking lot was able to be zoned Light Commercial and the adjoining building zoned Light Industrial. Planning Director Olson replied he was not aware of the history of the zoning of the property as it has been zoned that way for quite some time.

Vice Chair McMahon questioned the availability of parking in the future as other businesses and services are incorporated with the Elion Professional Suites portion of the building. Mr. Olson responded the parking requirements will be checked as each additional use goes into the building. He added as of right now there seems to be an abundance of parking available, but it will depend on how much space is used in the additional 12,000 square feet of the building. Mr. Olson noted there are currently 82 parking spaces available with 42 spaces required with the day care operation.

Kendra Elion added most of the traffic that will be associated with day care will be short term with the drop-offs and pickups and do not utilize parking spaces long term.

Jerry Wright inquired if there was a Mother's Little Helper 1 LLC since this is going to be Mother's Little Helper 2 LLC. Kendra Elion stated Mother's Little Helper LLC is currently in Sycamore and is being converted into a before and after school program facility along with summer care/camps. She stressed there is a drastic need for childcare in the area, so she is trying to fulfill those needs in DeKalb now.

Mr. Wright wanted to know if anyone has requested use of the Elion Professional Suites portion of the building. Kendra Elion said she has been approached by hair stylists, a chiropractor, and other businesses to rent space in this building but she is still in the preliminary stages and has not committed to anything at this time.

Ms. O'Flaherty moved that based on the submitted petition and testimony presented, the Planning and Zoning Commission forward its findings of fact and recommend to the City Council approval of the rezoning of subject site at 315 N. 6th St. from the "LI" Light Industrial District to the "LC" Light Commercial District. Mr. Wright seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Becker – Yes, Ms. O’Flaherty – Yes, Ms. Pena-Graham – Yes, Ms. Stoker – Yes, Mr. Wright – Yes, Vice Chair McMahon – Yes, Chair Maxwell was absent. Motion passed 6-0-1.

F. REPORTS

Planning Director Olson announced the next Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 2 with one public hearing scheduled for 175 W. Lincoln Highway (Shell Gas Station). He added the Comprehensive Plan update will be discussed at the May 2 meeting as well.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wright motioned to adjourn, Mr. Becker seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Stephanie Turner Approved: 5/2/2022