

Minutes - May 3, 2004 - Committee-of-the-Whole

Minutes of the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of the City Council of the CITY OF DARIEN MAY 3, 2004

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Darien was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Mayor Carmen D. Soldato. In attendance were: Aldermen Biehl, Hagen, Marchese, Poteraske, Tikalsky, and Weaver. Also in attendance were: Mayor Soldato, Clerk Coleman, Treasurer Monaghan, Administrator Vana, Community Development Director Dreyer, Public Works Asst. Director Mengarelli, Public Works Asst. Director Rodgers, and Business District Development and Redevelopment Commissioners Cozzolino and Jiskra.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL PRESENTATION – COMAR PROPERTIES

Mayor Soldato stated that this was the second informal working session of the Council for a presentation in regard to the Triangle property at 75th Street & Cass Avenue. He introduced Gus Danos, President of COMAR Properties.

Mr. Danos displayed a drawing of property located in Elgin, which was similar to their proposed development for the Triangle property. He provided background information about himself and COMAR. He indicated that the goal was to erect a retail building on the 'Shell' property and to purchase and enhance the property to the south; some interested businesses included Oberweis Dairy, Panda Express, and Potbellies.

Mayor Soldato articulated Mr. Danos' intentions, which were to comprehensively change the area; he stated that Mr. Danos owned the old 'Shell' property that he wanted to develop as retail and expand to the south; also, Mr. Danos' vision was limited to the corner of 75th Street & Cass Avenue and southerly on Cass Avenue with no other interest in the Triangle.

Alderman Weaver verified that the property under Mr. Danos' control was strictly the 'Shell' property; she inquired if he contacted the owner of the strip-mall property to the south. Mr. Danos stated that she was correct, he owned the 'Shell' property and that he had corresponded with the owner of the strip-mall property. Mr. Danos said that his intentions were to enhance the property and to keep the existing businesses as tenants.

Alderman Biehl inquired about the drawing; Mr. Danos stated that he wanted to improve the 'Shell' and strip-mall properties on Cass Avenue with a new façade and landscaping. Mr. Danos indicated that parking would be to the west of the buildings in order to have one main entrance into the businesses.

Treasurer Monaghan asked about the construction timeline, from start to finish, and how much down time the existing businesses would have due to construction. Mr. Danos stated that customers would be able to access the businesses during remodeling construction, which would be done in phases. He said that there would be no shut down time due to construction; he indicated that there was no intent to tear down and rebuild the existing strip-mall but would have a structural evaluation made of the property.

Alderman Tikalsky expressed concern with the development of only a portion of the Triangle property, which did not include the eastern portion. He indicated that he would prefer to see the entire area developed as a complete unit. Alderman Weaver agreed.

There were no questions or comments from the Business District Development and Redevelopment Commissioners.

Mayor Soldato commented that the Council and Business District Development and Redevelopment Commissioners would meet at 6:00 P.M. on May 17th for further discussion about the Triangle area.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee-of-the-Whole, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

Carmen D. Soldato, Mayor _____ Joanne F. Coleman, City Clerk

JFC:jr All supporting documentation and report originals of these minutes are on file in the Office of the City Clerk under File Number 05-03-04 Committee-of-the-Whole. Minutes of 05-03-04 Committee-of-the-Whole