

City of Verona
Minutes
Plan Commission
August 5, 2019

1. **Call to Order:** Luke Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Luke Diaz, Sarah Gaskell, Mike Bare and Beth Tucker Long were present. Also present: Adam Sayre, Interim City Administrator/Director of Planning and Development; Katherine Holt, Community Development Specialist; and AECOM Engineer, Carla Fischer. Steven Heinzen was late to the meeting. Pat Lytle and Scott Manley were absent and excused.
3. **Minutes:** Motion by Gaskell, seconded by Tucker Long, to approve the July 1, 2019 Plan Commission Minutes. Motion carried 4-0.
4. **Public Hearing – Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) amendment for façade changes to the building at 118 South Main Street.**
 - a. **Discussion and Possible Action – Precise implementation plan amendment for façade changes to the building at 118 South Main Street.**

The Applicant withdrew the request for a Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) amendment for façade changes to the building at 118 South Main Street. No action was taken by the Plan Commission.

5. **Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit for a proposed community information sign for the Verona Area School District to be located south of West Verona Avenue, east of West End Circle, north of Half Mile Road, and west of Nine Mound Road.**

6:32 p.m. – Steven Heinzen now present.

Motion by Diaz, seconded by Bare, to open the public hearing at 6:33 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Gaskell, seconded by Heinzen, to close the public hearing at 6:33 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.

- a. **Discussion and Possible Action – Conditional Use Permit for a proposed community information sign for the Verona Area School District to be located south of West Verona Avenue, east of West End Circle, north of Half Mile Road, and west of Nine Mound Road.**

Sayre presented the Staff report. The property where the sign would be located is in the southeast corner of West End Circle and West Verona Avenue. This property was acquired by the City from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in 2017 as excess right-of-way. There were two conditions attached to that acquisition:

1. There shall be no commercial, industrial, or residential activity undertaken or allowed and the land shall remain in public ownership in perpetuity
2. No advertising signs or billboards of any type shall be located, erected, or maintained on the land, except for on-premise or community oriented signs.

The sign is allowed by the zoning ordinance, as long as it meets the following conditions:

1. Community information signs shall be permitted only with Plan Commission approval within all zoning districts and upon any property within the jurisdiction of this Chapter.

2. The proposed size, configuration, and design of the sign shall be described as part of the conditional use requirements.
3. An officially designated sign which is limited to the display of information of interest to the general community regarding scheduled public events and public activities.
4. Such sign shall only display information regarding events and information of general interest to the residents of the City of Verona. Copy which may be considered as advertising a product, private or restricted participation event, or activity for private profit shall be prohibited.
5. Such sign may be located on private or public property (including right-of-way).
6. Such sign shall conform to the visibility requirements of the City Zoning Ordinance.

The sign will be set back approximately 55 feet to the east of West End Circle and 28 feet north of Half Mile Road. In order for the sign to be visible from West Verona Avenue, the sign would be approximately ten feet tall from the ground, with an additional seven feet of embedded columns. An 18-inch stormwater discharge point lies west of the sign location. The Applicant plans to realign and extend the stormwater pipe to the east of the sign to prevent undercutting of the base of the sign. The sign also straddles an 8-inch sanitary sewer line. A property use agreement between the City and the Verona Area School District (VASD) regarding future maintenance of the sanitary sewer pipe will be required.

Gaskell asked about the possibility of crash rates increasing by 29% with these types of signs along the road.

Sayre replied there have been a lot of studies regarding digital billboards. The data of these studies is conflicting. This sign will have to meet what is in the City's code.

Tucker Long asked why the proposed sign site is so far away from the school.

Sayre replied the location was chosen to provide the best visibility from West Verona Avenue.

Tucker Long asked if placing the sign at this site precludes the City from using the property for any other purpose.

Sayre replied the purpose of the City's purchasing this land was for right-of-way, and to protect the significant amount of utilities that lie in this area. For that reason, the City would probably preserve this land as open space.

Tucker Long asked if the sign's potential to distract drivers will affect pedestrian traffic crossing in this area.

Sayre replied the West End Circle and West Verona Avenue intersection will be signalized, and the sidewalk will be extended along the south side of West Verona Avenue, so it should not impact pedestrian movements.

Motion by Heinzen, seconded by Gaskell, to recommend to the Common Council to approve a Conditional Use Permit for a proposed community information sign for the Verona Area School District to be located south of West Verona Avenue, east of West End Circle, north of Half Mile Road, and west of Nine Mound Road, with the following conditions:

1. The Conditional Use Permit shall become effective upon the VASD and the City executing a Property Use Agreement.

2. The proposed Conditional Use Permit shall be in compliance with the Property Use Agreement.

Diaz asked if it has been made clear to the school district that the City reserves the right to maintain its utilities located under and near the sign, especially in emergencies.

Sayre replied that will be part of the required Property Use Agreement between the City and VASD. That has been the goal of the City all along regarding the placement of this sign,

Motion carried 4-0.

6. Discussion and Possible Action – Site plan amendment review that would allow for façade modifications to the gym area of the new high school located at 234 Wildcat Way.

Holt explained that the Applicant is proposing façade modifications by removing nine masonry piers and replacing them with glass. White vinyl letters approximately 1-foot tall stating “Verona Area High School”, and orange vinyl letters approximately 6-feet tall stating “VAHS” will be placed on the glass on either side of the entrance door. The building and the site will remain the same as originally proposed.

Motion by Tucker Long, seconded by Heinzen, to approve a site plan amendment review that would allow for façade modifications to the gym area of the new high school located at 234 Wildcat Way. Motion carried 4-0.

7. Discussion and Possible Action – Site plan amendment review that would allow for transportation circulation modifications for Verona Area School District campuses located at 700 North Main Street.

Holt stated in the fall of 2020, the Verona Area School District (VASD) will be moving students from the current high school to the new high school, and students from the middle school and various elementary schools to different buildings. The current high school will become the middle school and Core Knowledge Charter School. The K-wing will house the Verona Area International School and the New Century Charter School. Sugar Creek Elementary School will be located where the current middle school is located.

The Applicant is proposing to modify the the existing drop-off, pick-up, and parking areas for the current high school and K-wing buildings. Access points to the 700 North Main Street site will not change. However, the Westlawn Avenue right-turn at the entrance to the school property will be prohibited by a concrete median. The proposed circulation in front of the former high school will change. Parents will drive a one-way loop in front of the building, with a stop sign north of Marietta Street. The Westlawn Avenue stop will be removed. VASD has agreed to monitor drop-off and pick-up traffic in the southeast parking lot area during the 2020-2021 school year, as this area is the point of concern for Staff.

There are currently 1,058 parking stalls for the site plan amendment area. The Applicant is proposing to reduce the number of spaces to 908, as there will no longer be a need for student parking. The loss of facility, parent and event parking spaces will allow for an increase in the number of spaces for buses from 20 to 41. The amount of bicycle parking will not change.

The Applicant will be planting trees by the two new playgrounds. Staff is recommending additional plantings throughout the campus.

Gaskell asked where parking is being lost.

Holt replied it is in front of the high school to the left. Those parking spaces will become diagonal parking spaces for bus parking.

Gaskell asked where buses will be coming into the property.

Jim Bricker, JSD Professional Services, replied buses serving the Badger Ridge/Core Knowledge School will come up Westlawn Avenue and turn left.

Gaskell asked if the drop-offs for each of the four different schools will be separate.

Bricker replied the Main Street access for the current K-wing will be only for the International School and New Century Charter School. The drop-off for the middle school and Core Knowledge Charter School comes off of Richard Street at the extension of Shuman Street and turns left. In addition, the start times for the two buildings will be different, with approximately 45 - 60 minutes from the start of one to the start of the other. The attendance for the four new schools on this property is approximately 25% lower, as well. The additional available parking spots should be helpful in alleviating the double stacking that is currently happening in the drop-off areas. He is anticipating that the school district will have some personnel monitoring traffic at the drop-off points.

Tucker Long asked if the Commission will get a report of the results of the traffic monitoring at the schools.

Sayre replied such a condition could be added to the site plan amendment approval.

Gaskell asked where crossing guards will be placed.

Sayre replied that is still being discussed with the school district.

Diaz asked for a reasonable timeline for asking for some conclusions on the traffic flow situation based on the monitoring that will be done.

Bricker replied because traffic patterns change throughout the seasons, it will take the entire school year to make any kind of determinations on traffic flow.

Diaz asked what type of traffic report the City should be requesting from the school district.

Holt replied the City would want a circulation report with traffic movements, as well as pedestrian and bicycle movements.

Motion by Diaz, seconded by Gaskell, to approve a site plan amendment review that would allow for transportation circulation modifications for Verona Area School District campuses located at 700 North Main Street, with the following condition:

1. The school district shall provide the City with a circulation report with traffic movement, including bike and ped, by the end of the first semester.

Motion carried 4-0.

8. Reports and comments from the Planning Department

- a. Sayre stated the Gust property at the southeast corner of CTH M and Range Trail will be going to the Regional Planning Commission on Thursday, August 8th for a public hearing on the Urban Service Area amendment. They have also submitted plans for a preliminary plat of the property.

Work on the Festival Foods building continues. They have targeted an October opening date in October.

The Lincoln Street apartments project is ongoing.

The zoning code rewrite consultant is planning to appear at the October Plan Commission meeting. Before that meeting, they'll have a series of workshops during the day to meet with commercial and industrial developers, as well as residential property owners.

Tucker Long asked what Whispering Coves will be taking to the Common Council in September.

Sayre replied the Applicant requested an extension of their approval, taking it to September 27th. As long as the extension is still valid, it can go back to the Common Council. The Applicant has had conversations with Staff about possibly withdrawing the application. It will come back in some form to the Plan Commission or Common Council in the next month or two.

9. Reports and comments from the Plan Commissioners

There were no comments from the Plan Commissioners.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Bare, seconded by Tucker Long, to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.