



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final Access Corridor Development Review

Chairman Rick Heller, Director of City Development Brian O'Connell, Alderman James T. Spangenberg, Alderman Jim Kaplan, Alderman David L. Maack, Alderman Michael Shields, Linea Anthony, Randy Aukland, Steve Joosten, David Namowicz, Frank Smith, Kelly Jensen, Mitch Wemmert, Mark Madsen

Thursday, January 21, 2010

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 209

Call To Order

PRESENT: 13 - Michael Shields, David L. Maack, James T. Spangenberg, Rick Heller, Brian O'Connell, Jim Kaplan, David Namowicz, Linea Anthony, Steve Joosten, Frank Smith, Kelly Jensen, Mitch Wemmert and Mark Madsen

ABSENT: 1 - Randy Aukland

Approval of Minutes for the December 17, 2009 Meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Maack, seconded by Alderman Kaplan, to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2009 meeting. The motion **PASSED** by a voice vote.

[09-4567](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Request from Felix Servantez, representing Norma Carter of New Life Christian Fellowship, Inc., for a conditional use permit to establish a church at 1701 Douglas Avenue. (Res.10-1867)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 1-27-10: That the request be denied.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [PH Notice - 1701 Douglas Avenue](#)
[Storefront Churches memo \(Atty. Weber\)](#)
[Storefront churches memo \(2\) \(Atty. Weber\)](#)

Principal Planner Sadowski summarized the City Attorney's opinions in reference to the regulation of the location of churches. He restated staff's concerns that such uses are contrary to the goals of the Douglas Avenue plan which seeks to promote a vibrant commercial corridor for business development.

Norma Carter presented information addressing an additional use proposed to be located at this property. She stated Grassroots of Southeastern Wisconsin, an HIV awareness and education organization, will also be operating out of the church space.

Pastor Roy Carter questioned the logic of allowing this building to remain vacant in light of the many vacancies in this area. He stated that before or after attending

services, his members patronize area businesses thus assisting in the goals of the Douglas Avenue plan.

Alderman Shields asked Committee members to decided the acceptability of such uses in the access corridors.

Alderman Kaplan expressed support for the proposal. He cited recent closings, current vacancies and use.

Committee member Namowicz stated that membership of the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Association reviewed this request and recommended denial. He also expressed concern with unapproved signage on the property.

Atty. Felix Servantez stated that he understands the City's attempts at fostering business development in the Douglas Avenue corridor, but asks for consideration that the area is distressed as witnessed by recent business closing and continued vacancies.

Hearing no objections, Chairman Heller opened the floor for public comments.

The following people spoke in favor of the proposal: Tonya Stuckey and Marty Jones (both stated they were members of New Life Christian Fellowship Church).

In response to Alderman Maack, Director O'Connell stated that staff had not seen details of the proposal for Grassroots until this evening's meeting and therefore had no recommendation as to its impact on the proposed church. He stated that he would be voting against the church proposal as such a use is inconsistent with the goal of the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Plan.

In response to Alderman Shields and Alderman Kaplan, Pastor Carter confirmed that Grassroots is a tool of the church.

A motion was made by Alderman Kaplan, seconded by Alderman, to approve the request subject to removal of all signage not associated with uses currently occupying the property and submittal of a sign plan to the Director of City Development for review and approval. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote with Director O'Connell and Committee member Namowicz voting "no".

Administrative Business

In response to Kristin Niemiec, Commercial Corridor Coordinator, Committee members discussed policy in regards to allowing the general public to speak on non-public hearing items. The consensus of Committee members was that, on these occasions, the Chairman will poll members to see if they would allow suspension of the rules to allow public comment.

Adjournment

It was moved by Alderman Kaplan to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections, Chairman Heller adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.