



MEETING: Site Review Committee
SUBJECT: St. Andrews Square
ADDRESS: 100 Erie Street

LOCATION: City Hall
DATE: 5/31/05
ZONING: R-1
PARKING: 2/Unit
**VARIANCES: Parking, Lot Coverage,
 More than one dwelling on lot; Sign,
 Rear & Side Setbacks, Usage**

**PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW
 IN ATTENDANCE:**

Craig Phillips, Planning Director	(219) 462-1161
Tyler Kent, Asst. Planner	(219) 462-1161
Dave Pilz, Engineering Director	(219) 462-1161
Daryl Brown,	
Matt Kras, Stormwater Engineer	(219) 462-1161
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner	(219) 462-1161

PRESENTERS:

Bill Ferngren
 Jake Wagner

Media

Email addresses for the above City of Valparaiso Departments can be found at:

<http://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/>

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting:

The Site Review Committee met to discuss the proposed condominium development of St. Andrews Square located at 100 Erie Street. Phillips stated that site review is not an approval. It is meant to be a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner and there may be some cases where it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

Wagner advised that this project came up as an opportunistic timeframe. The Mayor has expressed his desire in bringing residential properties to the City of Valparaiso. Jake feels that the businesses downtown improve and grow and then the residential will follow. The Mayor feels that there might be some value to jumpstart that residential thing in downtown Valparaiso. Jake has an interest in urban renewal and the City of Valparaiso in general. In conversations with Bill Ferngren as much as a year ago, he brought up the possibility of doing a renewal project in the St. Andrews Church. They dismissed that which brought another meeting with the Mayor and they decided to look at the church to see what they can do. Everything they do at this point is driven by what a cost benefit relation can be; risk versus reward. The Church itself is a little over 100 years old. The recapture value did disappoint them. They want to keep the architecture there and were disappointed in the amount they could save. They are also looking at phasing the project. As the discussions with the Mayor got more detailed he suggested that they meet with Craig, which they have done. There has been some input from Craig that they have been trying to work around. Early on they thought a vacation of the north/south alley for the number of units they need. They have since realized that there is a 48" combined main which would make the alley virtually impossible to build over. Their architect was okay with that as they were struggling with the large building they planned on anyway. They then tried to separate those buildings which allowed them

to have three-sided ventilation and egress in the units they are planning. They would still request a vacation of the alley as far as a paved alley and would like to use that for green space. They originally worked their economic benefit on a 26-unit building, which worked with what the recapture of the new construction cost would be on the church. They ran into some parking issues and have now lowered their expectation to 19 or 20 units. They have been able to get a dedicated parking spot on site of one per unit. The ordinance calls for 2 per unit but this is where we are all going to go into uncharted waters on how we are going to describe urban living with a suburban-type standard. We are going to all have to work our way through this. The group looking at this project is more than willing and able to do this but it is not on their front burner. The economic benefits are diminishing somewhat. The Mayor feels that if they can get through this project there may be projects down the road that may make more sense. He is looking at this project and feels that working with the City to try to get a standard that will work economically for the Mayor's vision of urban living in downtown. Craig has taken a deep look at what they are trying to do and has made a lengthy list of the standards written today and what issues are going to come up trying to make an urban living area in the downtown business district.

Ferngren stated that some of the variances that may be required are lot coverage, parking, more than one principal dwelling on a lot (3 lots), signage, use, rear and side setbacks. He agrees with Jake that the ordinance as written is for suburban uses and does not meet with anything that can be done downtown in an urban setting. They have worked hard to come up with something that would fit with what the Mayor has indicated he wants to have happen downtown and try to save as much of what they can of an architecturally old building. St. Andrews is moving out because they need more space and the new parishes coming in are not going to be able to afford to continue to maintain a 100-year-old building.

Phillips stated that there is a utility easement and agreement that will have to be worked out. The City would not vacate the alley but there could be an agreement drafted to handle this issue. The variances have been submitted and will go before the BZA on July 21st. They are looking at about 60% lot coverage at this point. They may be looking at porous pavers for the parking lot, which would give a continuation of green. Overall, given its proximity to the downtown, we wanted to touch a little bit on the options we have. They are seeking a use variance opposed to a rezoning on the property because of the unique nature of this project. There are a lot of variances needed for this project but if it would not happen then the multi-family district zoning would not apply. A use variance could be very specific and would be site-specific. It is one of our goals to introduce living in the downtown area so this will be an interesting opportunity for that. We are going to do what we can to be supportive of the project and are happy to see an adaptive reuse of an historic building. At some point we will need more detailed site plans and a landscape plan. If there is any buffering required it will be done through the BZA and they may ask for some screening primarily to the east. Signage will be determined when they decide what they really want. Jake advised that the signage would continue on the historical level. Phillips advised that they might want to seek historic credits on this building and National Register status. This does not have any stipulations but could give them federal dollars but be required to be reviewed by them. We want them to be cautious about placement of dumpsters.

Pilz advised that he has no problems with the access issues. Overall he feels that this project looks great and could really be uplift to the downtown area. John Hardwick sent an email with his comments stating that they need to get a machine in there to determine where the lines go before building. With that we need to figure out how to do the alley. At first we objected to the vacation but if we were to do that and retain a utility easement that will still provide the rights. It would give them an additional space that they would own and could then claim as green space. It would also allow the actual easement to be shifted slightly if it needs to be more centered over the sewer or whatever and would eliminate side yard requirements for those buildings. This could help them but

would be a longer process. If they progress we would need a more detailed site plan as developed so we can comment as they go along. Draining will be an issue.

Kras stated that drainage would be something that they will need to take a look at. They have talked about the pavers, which would help out, and also maybe they could depress an area and maybe turn it into a rain garden that would outlet across the pavers. It could be done in the alley area. Jake advised that he is more than happy to use any type of absorbing plantings available. He is in favor of any of this. Jake again stated that it would behoove all of us to get some standards worked out for the urban developments.

Phillips stated that he agreed, parking is going to be looked at, and residential near the downtown will be looked at also. Jake stated that they would be willing to experiment as much as they can financially to try to get to a set of standards that is going to make sense long term. They are pretty open and if we can come out with a standard for the vision of urban living downtown, that is part of their goal and this project may be a good pilot program for that. All the issues of urban living downtown are going to be included in this project.

Brown asked if each unit would have it's own water meter and Jake advised that each would. There will be a condominium association. Daryl then asked if the condo association would be responsible for any lawn irrigation. Ferngren stated that the association would be responsible for that if there were any lawn irrigation and they would have a separate meter for that. Brown advised that backflow protection would be required on that meter. Jake advised that they are now proposed as three stacked plans. Daryl advised that there is currently a 6" line along the frontage on Erie and another 6" line on the opposite side on Franklin, which are tied to a 14" line so the water supply is adequate. Backflow will not be required on the individual units.

Thrasher inquired about the partial demolition. Jake advised that they would save the old sanctuary and chapel. They will use the shell and ceiling. They will have two efficiencies in the basement and two loft units. The basement apartments will have fire egress in the windows and fire separation. We will need a permit for the demo work and a State Design Release.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

- Landscaping plan
- Erosion control plan
- Variances
- Detailed Site Plan
- Sanitary/Sewer/Alley vacation
- Backflow Prevention
- State Release
- Building Permit