

MEETING: Site Review Committee
SUBJECT: New Creations
ADDRESS: 254 Morgan Blvd.
PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW

LOCATION: City Hall
DATE: May 12, 2020

IN ATTENDANCE:

Beth Shrader, Planning Director
(219) 462-1161 / bshrader@valpo.us
Carley Lemmon, Asst. Planner
(2319) 462-1161 / clemmon@valpo.us
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner
(219) 462-1161 / vthrasher@valpo.us
Mike Jabo, Engineering Director
(219) 462-1161 / mjabo@valpo.us
Will Rose, Engineering Dept.
(219) 462-1161 / wrose@valpo.us
Tim Stites, Fire Department
(219) 462-8325 / tstites@valpo.us
Mark Geskey, Water Dept.
(219) 462-6174 / mgeskey@valpo.us
Tony Fahel, Water Reclamation Dept.
(219) 464-4973 / tfahel@valpo.us
Mike Jessen, City Administrator
(219) 462-1161 / mjessen@valpo.us
Matt Murphy, Mayor
(219) 462-1161 / mayormurphy@valpo.us

PRESENTERS:

James Drader, New Creations
(219) 286-7061 / james.drader@ncbai.org
Tom Krueger, K2 Construction
(219) 406-1574 / tomkrueger@k2valparaiso.com

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting.

OPENING: The Site Review Committee met to discuss the proposed New Creations day center, offices and transition housing to be located at 254 Morgan Blvd. Shrader stated that site review is not an approval. Rather, it is a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner. It is possible it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

EXPLANATION OF PROJECT: Krueger mentioned that there no transitional or emergency housing for men. This property proposes some possibilities for the future. The overall idea is to help the men get back on their feet. The transitional housing is not free. The men must be employed and able to pay for the rooms. Drader mentioned that the New Creations Men's Center has existed for over 12 years. Men utilize the day center at Calumet as a home base but then they go to different churches for overnight stays. Drader said the men who work through

the New Creations program are more successful than those just moving into an apartment. Sometimes these individuals come back to New Creations. The transitional/emergency housing allows men to have a place to rent for a period of 12 to 24 months. This creates a stable environment and helps them get back into the community and normal, specific income housing. Drader mentioned that they looked at the Morgan property several years ago, but it required more improvements than New Creations could afford at the time. PACT made a change in their business plan and utilized the property. They made a lot of improvements. Drader said nothing needs to be done structurally to the home for their use. The basement level needs to be updated; however, initially New Creations will not use this level. All the transitional housing will be on the second level. There will be a house manager on site 24/7. The house manager will be using the 9' x 12' room on the first floor. The 14' x 14' room will be used as office space. The 12' x 9' and the 24' x 15' areas will be used as common areas. The 14' x 12' room on the second floor will house two (2) men. There is a full bathroom on the second floor. The 8' x 11' room may be used as a spare room to house one (1) man or it could possibly be used for storage. The 11' x 13' room will house two (2) men. The 11' x 15' room will house three (3) men and they may put four (4) bunk beds in the 12' x 14' room for emergency housing. Right now, there is no emergency housing available for men. During a discussion with Beth Shrader, she mentioned that a fence will be required for this property. Drader said installing a fence will not be a problem.

STAFF COMMENTS:

SHRADER: Shrader asked for clarification concerning the number of bathrooms. Drader said there is a half-bath on the first floor and full bathroom on the second floor. Shrader asked what the total count will be for men using this facility. Drader said there will probably be 11 men, but no more than 12 and there will be a house manager on the first floor. Shrader asked for the number of staff available. Drader said that from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or possibly 8:00 a. m. to 5:00 p.m. there will be five (5) staff members available. There will be a paid staff member on site 24/7. Shrader conveyed that excerpts from the Unified Development Ordinance that will apply to this project have been forwarded to Tom Krueger. The property is in the Residential Transition Zoning District which transitions from the University through a residential neighborhood and into the downtown commercial district. The residential lots are smaller. Some duplexes, tri-plexes, quad-plexes, small offices and restaurants are permitted. Due to the number of individuals expected to stay at New Creations, the use will be Institutional Residential. Institutional Residential is any facility other than a group home. A group home is generally less than eight (8) occupants. This facility will not be categorized as a group home. In the Institutional Residential category,

residents live in an institutional environment and are generally under the care or control of staff. In the Residential Transition Zoning District, Institutional Residential is a limited use. There is a short list of items that need to be checked off in order to get an approval of the limited use. It is necessary to have access to a street of collector or greater capacity. The property meets this requirement. The building must be residential in character. The property also meets this requirement. A 6 ft. tall opaque fence constructed between the Institutional Residential use and any adjacent lot that is either occupied by or zoned for single-family dwellings is required. This requirement will affect the northern and western edges. Because of the change of use and the higher density of the project, the parking requirements need to be met. As discussed in previous conversations, Shrader is aware that the residents are not expected to have vehicles. Drader said this is correct. Out of the eight men currently residing at the property, only one (1) has a vehicle. Parking for the residents will probably not be needed; however, parking for staff is a different situation. Shrader stated that code sets up parking for a sheltered care facility under the Institutional Residential use as the greater of one (1) space per three (3) rooms or one (1) space per bedroom. These are off-street requirements and it appears this will be a challenge for this site. The total parking spaces required per code is four (4). There is the ability to have off-site parking within 600 ft., but it would be necessary to develop a lot and dedicated spaces. Drader said there is no room for parking on the lot. Shrader said a variance will be required to get through the parking issue. Shrader mentioned that we are going through a request for a variance for an adjacent lot that includes a reduction for the required parking. There has been a lot of concern from the neighborhood about parking in general and more intense uses placing a demand on street parking when off-street parking is not provided. This should be taken into consideration. Parking is a hot topic with the neighborhood and something that will be very important. A Zoning Clearance may be required based on the information provided.

JESSEN: Jessen asked about any conversations New Creations or Drader may have had with the College Neighborhood Association. Drader said he has not spoken to the College Neighborhood Association. He wanted to get through the first step of Site Review. As discussed during the first phone call, if this is not a project the Site Review Committee can get behind administratively, he did not want to stir the waters if the project could not gain approval to move forward. Jessen asked for clarification concerning the role the churches will be playing. Drader said the churches involvement in the overnight stays will go away; however, the churches are engaged in providing food. Drader said the churches are also helping with supervision. Jessen asked in the time the churches were doing the overnight stays was there ever a time where the number exceeded 12

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men or did the number stay below 12. Drader said the max number was 25 and a few years ago they reached the 25, especially in the colder months. However, over the last couple of years this has dropped significantly. In the summer they run between 8 and 12. The reduction could be COVID related. Drader thinks the numbers could be lower. Housing Opportunities has opened some additional apartments. They have three (3) apartments they use specifically for single men. They house four (4) men to an apartment. This has reduced New Creations numbers. Drader said they have become more emergency housing and at some point, they were a stop point for the jail. Drader said that no matter what, when New Creations is full, they are full. Jessen asked what the average number the churches saw during the past winter. Drader said they hit 25 for two (2) nights out of the six (6) month period. The average was about 17 or 18. Jessen asked if the new facility limits the number to 11 or 12 will fewer men be served because the churches won't be doing overnights. Drader said there are a lot of men working, but they do not have the income to qualify for an apartment and because they do not meet the income requirements, they would qualify to move into the Housing Opportunities development on Locust and Union. Drader said between this project and his continued work with Housing Opportunities they will try to absorb as many men as they can. Jessen asked if New Creations has been involved with managers who have operated some of the transitional overnight facilities. Drader stated they are currently working with L & L. There is a property on Roosevelt where New Creations acts as the landlord and subleases to two (2) men. They are still under New Creations case management and meet with staff on a weekly basis. Jessen mentioned that he appreciates the work being done by New Creations. Jessen said Housing Opportunities is creating an isolation shelter at the Comfort Inn and Suites. This seems to be a more appropriate option than what is currently being done. Jessen suggested Drader follow up to see if this will be a viable solution for the current situation. Drader said he has been sending any calls he receives to Housing Opportunities.

JABO: The only concern Engineering has is the parking issue. Shrader interjected that if there was off-site parking developed within 600 ft., depending on the zone, size and layout, there may be site impacts that would require review by Engineering for storm water, circulation, etc.

STITES: Stites asked where the men are staying if the churches are no longer doing overnights. Drader stated the men have been sheltering at this facility overnight. Stites said another discussion concerning overnight stays will be required. The Fire Department follows all adopted codes, standards and rules of the Indiana Fire Prevention and Building Commission along with local ordinances. All initial inspections required need to be coordinated through the Valparaiso Building Department. After an occupancy permit has been granted,

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Class 1 structures are subject to annual fire and life safety inspections. All contractors installing sprinkler systems, fire alarms, hood systems, etc. must contact Tim Stites' office prior to beginning work. Any questions arising during construction should be directed to tstites@valpo.us or the Fire Prevention Office at 219-548-4849. Stites mentioned that this is currently a B occupancy for business. Stites asked if they have contacted the State concerning a change of occupancy. This facility will probably require a sprinkler system. Because there is a lot involved with this project, Stites reiterated that another meeting will be necessary.

THRASHER: Thrasher stated that zoning and building codes should have been addressed before housing people. The change of occupancy will be from B to R1, based on the occupant load and the transient nature of the people being housed. The change of occupancy must be rectified with the State of Indiana. The project must be submitted to the State of Indiana for review. A set of plans will have to be prepared for their review. The plans will also have to be submitted to the Building Department for the Building Permit. Thrasher said that no permits were pulled for the work that was previously done at the site. Therefore, Thrasher does not know the type of work that was done. Drader said the work consisted of mechanical work and windows. Thrasher conveyed that all contractors working on the site must be registered with the City. Any signage will require a permit. The required fence will also need a permit.

GESKEY: If a fire service is required for the building, it will be necessary to contact Geskey. No other comments were provided.

FAHEL: Since there will not be any major renovation for this project, the Water Reclamation Department has no comments.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

- Detailed Site Plan
- Change of Occupancy
- State Design Release
- Building Permit
- Contractors Registered with the City
- Signage/Fencing Permit
- Schedule Meeting with Fire Department
- Install a 6' Fence
- Variances (as required)
- May Need a Zoning Clearance