

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

(excerpts concerning St. Andrew proposed redevelopment)

December 9, 2008

Attorney Ballard updated the council on a potential development on the St. Andrew Church property; he feels the developers are getting closer to a formal application before the city no later than March 1st. The developers plan to schedule 3 meetings with the community to receive input, make changes and receive additional input.

The developers are curious if the council is open to a realignment of the intersection of Melrose and Sunset, and if yes, would they consider a TIF district for the realignment. The developers are planning on attending the January 2009 council meeting.

January 13, 2009

Jeffrey Maxwell and Al Wells addressed the council concerning a potential development on the current site for St. Andrew Church. The developers are in the concept stage of development for the property; they envision part commercial with one level of parking underneath the building and the other part as condominiums with 2 levels of parking beneath the condos. To address the traffic issues with the new development, they suggested that changes should be made to the corner of Sunset and Melrose to align the streets, as well as adding a turn lane on Melrose into the entrance driveway.

The developers hope to have 3 neighborhood meetings, at St. Andrew Church, to receive input from residents; after each meeting they will take the input and make changes and/or additions. They hope to be able to present a final draft to the Zoning Committee on March 15th.

It was suggested that regardless of what happens to the property, improvements may need to be made to the lane changes/modifications at the corner of Sunset and Melrose.

February 10, 2009

Jeffrey Maxwell, Kevin Monson and Al Wells addressed the council concerning a potential development on the current site for St. Andrew Church. Monson presented preliminary drawings of the site; there will be a retail/commercial component as well as residential component. The developers envision there will be one level of parking underneath the commercial building and two levels of parking underneath the condominiums. To address the traffic issues with the new development, they suggested that changes should be made to the corner of Sunset and Melrose to align the streets, as well as adding a turn lane on Melrose into the entrance driveway. Additional improvements would be made to the sanitary and storm sewer systems.

Monson commented that the developers are "trying to create a sense of place in the community" and would like input from everyone. The developers will be meeting with church representatives and then hope to hold open meetings during the next several weeks with the public.

Several residents during public input questioned the density of the proposal and comments were made that the University Heights citizens want single-family residences as opposed to high-density residential areas. Another commented that the plans were very nice and seemed like a well thought out project.

March 10, 2009

Attorney Ballard addressed the council regarding Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). TIF is a tool to use future gains in taxes to finance the current improvements that will create those gains. TIF creates funding for public projects that may otherwise be unaffordable to municipalities. The city could use TIF financing to realign the corner of Sunset and Melrose Avenue if the proposed development on the St. Andrew Church property is approved by the city. Jeff Maxwell, developer for the proposed development, stated that he was interested in negotiating a TIF agreement under which he would fund all of the improvements up front and be reimbursed over time. These improvements could occur 1-2 years prior to the development on the property.

Maxwell also shared the schedule for the public meetings the developers will have at St. Andrew Church to present their proposal and to receive input. There will be 3 meetings, all held at St. Andrew Church, at 7:00 pm, on March 12th, March 26th and April 2nd.

Al Leff asked the developers if they had decided how many condominiums would be in the residential unit; Al Wells commented the number would be presented at the first city-wide meeting. Leff also commented that the city was giving the appearance this development “was a done deal” given there was discussion of TIF financing, there had been meetings with JCCOG and that the developers wanted to file their application with the city before all public meetings were held. Mayor From responded that the city brought in people to hear what the developers were proposing and that JCCOG was brought into the process as they assist members who do not have the professional staff to review these types of proposals.

It was recommended by some member of the public that the developers file their application on April 15, 2009 so that all input could be addressed. Jeff Maxwell stated that the file date had been driven by St. Andrew Church’s timeline; the developers have a purchase agreement which states March 15th but he will see if that can be changed to April 15th.