

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2012, 3:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 E. OLIVE ST., BLOOMINGTON, IL**

Members present: Mr. Dick Briggs, Mr. Mike Ireland, Mr. Robert Kearney, Mrs. Barbara Meek, Mr. Steve Parker, Mr. Bill Zimmerman.
Members absent: None.
Also Present: Mr. Mark Woolard, Acting Secretary

Mr. Woolard called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and called the roll. A quorum was present.

The Board reviewed the March 21, 2012, minutes. The minutes were accepted as printed.

Chairman Ireland explained the procedures of the meeting and that the special use case must be reviewed by the City council. Mr. Woolard stated that the cases had been published.

Mr. Kearney stated that he is employed by Illinois Wesleyan University and that a recusal is appropriate and that there is a conflict for these two cases. He left the room.

The Board reviewed the following petitions for the variance and the special use simultaneously in that they both pertain to the same project.

Z-8-12 Public Hearing and Review on the petition submitted by Illinois Wesleyan University to allow construction of two new student apartment buildings and a variance to increase the building heights to 39 feet where the maximum allowable height is 35 feet. All for the property located at 1102, 1104, and 1106 N. Evans Street; 1101, 1103, and 1105 N. McLean Street; 508 E. Empire. Street. Zoned S-1, University District.

SP-02-12 Public Hearing and Review on the petition submitted by Illinois Wesleyan University, requesting approval of a special use permit for noncommercial parking lot for the property located at 502 E. Graham Street and 1205 N. McLean Street. Zoned R-2, Mixed Residence District.

Chairman Ireland opened the public hearing for the petitions. He asked for anyone who would like to speak in favor of the petitions to come forward. Karla Carney-Hall, Dean of Students for Illinois Wesleyan University, Don Adams of Farnsworth Group at 2709 McGraw Drive in Bloomington, Steve Whitehead of Partners Development at 502 Union Avenue in Knoxville, Tennessee all were sworn in. Mr. Whitehead stated the project includes two three story buildings with twelve apartments in each building. They are adjacent to residential scale buildings in the neighborhood and are within walking distance to the campus. The architectural style is similar to the other university buildings. He stated the building overhangs and openings allow them to fit well into the neighborhood context. The height will be less than originally planned and they have taken two feet out of the building height and the variance requested is

now only for two feet. He said there will be 48 students in each building. The scale is similar to the scale and height of other buildings in the neighborhood.

Mr. Adams stated the buildings will not stick out in the neighborhood. The special use for the parking lot is for these two buildings. He said they are providing 36 off-street parking spaces and by code they are required to have a total of 48 spaces and there is an additional 26 spaces on site and they are well over what the code requires. They also have a parking lot to the west of the site that can be designated for the site. The parking lot access is off Graham Street. The storm water, lighting, screening, setbacks all will meet code. The parking is specifically for the apartment students.

Mr. Briggs asked how do they manage the parking. Mr. Adams explained there is a parking numbered, sticker system and for nonstickered vehicles the University has the right to remove them from the lot.

Mathew Dahmm, who lives at 1016 N. Evans and has rental property at 1010 N. McLean, was sworn in and stated he moved there to enjoy Wesleyan's arts and social opportunities and they have done everything to minimize the impacts. He would not support it without the university control. He explained how Mr. Teichman addressed his concerns and they are lowering the height and are move the building back. He supports the project.

Robert Sims, of 1105 N. Evans was sworn in, stated they are concerned about the on-street parking. He said the area is becoming like downtown Normal and on one block of Graham you cannot get through it. The issue will be who comes to visit the students. The students will not use the off street parking. If they have to walk a half a block they will not do it.

There was no one else that spoke in favor of the special use or variances. No one else spoke in opposition to the petitions.

Mr. Huber stated they are also requesting a rezoning. Staff has worked through this project and got this down to one variance. The parking requirement can be met with a site within 500 feet. No variances are sought for that parking lot. Staff is recommending approval of the height variation and the special use request. The variance would have to be granted subject to the zoning being approved.

Ms. Carney-Hall stated their intention is to be good neighbors and they will be proactive from the start by instructing the students to be good neighbors. They have parking that is close and easy for them to access. Mr. Adams informed that there was a concern from at least one Planning Commissioner who was not sure if he was comfortable with the rezoning and might prefer they go through the special use process verses the rezoning. It possible that they will be coming back with a special use request but it is the university's preference to have the property rezoned. He said the rest of the campus is S-1 except in outlining parking lots like this one.

Mr. Parker stated he lives just a few blocks from there and that everything Wesleyan has done has been top of the line and always has been up front. He does think having the apartments will have a neighborhood impact but will have an impact the business owners that actually own

property. He explained it will limit the amount of students that will fill his and other business owner places but they have always been good to our family and have always been fair. They will follow through in a best way and will limit the impact on the neighborhood. Ms. Carney-Hall said they are a residential college and students will still be eligible in their junior and senior years to rent elsewhere and Wesleyan will not be able to compete on price and will be much more expensive than those other places in the area.

Mr. Woolard explained written comments from the neighbors were provided and some were for and some were against the petitions.

The vote on the variance was approved with five (5) voting in favor and none (0) against.

Chairman Ireland explained the vote on the special use is an advisory vote for the City Council as to whether the special use should be approved. The vote on the special use was approved with five (5) voting in favor and none (0) against.

Other Business: None.

New Business: None.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment was at 3:45.

Respectfully;

Mark Woolard
Acting Secretary