



Chozen-ji Betsuin / International Zen Dojo of Wisconsin
6714 Colony Drive, Madison, WI 53717 U.S.A.
www.wisconsinzen.org

29 May 2019

Letter of Intent for 2540 East Mifflin Street, Madison

Dear Members of the City of Madison Planning Commission,

I am the secretary of Chozen-ji Betsuin/International Zen Dojo, a Buddhist church that recently purchased the former Wisconsin Rescue Mission located at 2540 East Mifflin Street in the Emerson East Neighborhood.

The property is currently zoned as TR-C4. The official legal description is: Lots 2, 3, and 4, Block 2, Swensen's Replat of Curtis' Replat of Blocks 296 & 297 of Farwell's Addition to the City of Madison, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin.

With this letter, we are applying to rezone to Limited Mixed Use ("LMX") to enable us to adapt some of our existing square footage to business and professional offices.

- The total square footage of the building ("Main Level" and "Basement Level") is 4,896.
- The square footage we would like to convert to offices ranges from 777 square feet in Phase 1 to 1,252 square feet in Phase 2, the latter of which depends on demand. This equates to between 16-26% of our total square footage. Rental income from these offices will help us cover the costs of owning and maintaining the building.

In this letter, we offer the following narrative description:

The existing site is in acceptable condition but we anticipate re-grading the northwest corner due to water leaking through the foundation into the basement. We also anticipate some re-landscaping to accommodate a community garden requested by the Emerson East Neighborhood Association and/or more drought-resistant plants to decrease impact and maintenance.

Our project schedule is outlined on the next page.

Phase 1 (current): The following activities are happening primarily on the Main Floor to make it conducive for our style of religious training. All Phase 1 activities are allowed by our current zoning classification. We are cleaning; stripping all carpeting; restoring hardwood floors; removing rotten or moldy furnishings, left-behind items, and interior elements that have no structural value; removing the church pews, piano, organ, and altar; scraping and repainting.

On the basement level we are cleaning or replacing toilets, bathroom sinks, the oven, and kitchen sink; removing rotten or moldy furnishings, left-behind items, and interior elements that have no structural value.

On the exterior, we are pruning trees, repairing windows, and doing routine yard work, e.g. mowing, raking, removing dead and overgrown areas to make the grounds look cared for and well-maintained.

Phase 2: Refurbish the Main Floor offices and common space. If we are granted LMX zoning, we will immediately begin to refurbish the areas on the Main Floor noted as “Office Common Space,” “1st Private Office,” and “2nd Private Office” with the intent to have tenants in place in September 2019.

Phase 3: Add two additional offices, gazebo, and additional rooms for Zen training. If we have additional tenant interest, our next phase of work would be to refurbish these areas on the Basement Level: “1st Office” and “2nd Office” while also investing in additional outdoor features like a gazebo and indoor rooms for Zen training.

Our proposed use of the building includes our current Zen schedule:

- Monday – Friday, 6:00-7:00 am: Sitting meditation. The current group includes five people but we hope to increase attendance through neighborhood outreach.
- Mondays, 7-8:30 pm: Women’s sitting meditation. The current group includes 5-7 people.
- Wednesdays, 7-9:30 pm: Sitting mediation and martial arts. The current group includes six members.
- Saturdays, 7:00-9:00 am: Sitting meditation and calligraphy.
- Sundays, 7:00-9:30 am: Sitting mediation and martial arts. The current group includes 6 members.

We also plan to host occasional events on weekends or long weekends (Thursday-Sunday) like SomaticZen, yoga intensives, and other workshops that support our style of Zen training. If the building is used for overnight retreats, we expect retreatants to sleep in the building, which is a part of our Zen tradition and is allowed by our current zoning and potential LMX zoning.

If we are granted LMX zoning, additional uses include:

- Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm: Office use. We anticipate having one or two full time tenants and two or more part-time or flex-time tenants during normal business hours. Some of these tenants will have clients visiting during office hours. (see “Tenant Candidates” below.) Our current parking lot holds five cars comfortably, which seems adequate for this use. One of our possible full-time tenants lives two blocks away in the new Union Corners development and another part time tenant bike commutes during fair weather.

Tenant Candidates. If possible, we prefer tenants who are affiliated with our style of Zen training. The following candidates meet that criteria and have expressed interest in becoming tenants:

- The nonprofit Institute for Zen Leadership (IZL) is our sister organization, <http://zenleader.global/>. IZL has one part time Madison based employee who coordinates Zen Leader trainings in the UK, Europe, the U.S. and at our rural training facility in Spring Green, WI. Currently, IZL shares office space with my firm at 1882 E. Main Street, Madison WI 53704.
- Red Beard Bodywork and Structural Integration offers many modalities of therapeutic services by certified and licensed practitioners. Therapies include structural integration, myofascial release, somatic experiencing, somatics/yoga therapy, TRE/tension and trauma releasing exercises, and functional movement screening/corrective exercise. Red Beard was started by one of our senior students, Zen Priest Alex Greene. Red Beard currently leases two offices in the Tai Chi Center on Bedford Street, <http://redbeardbodywork.com/>.

Our intention is that the building is open and active most days of the week for a wide range of offerings and services that help meet the needs of our members and those interested in Zen training. We believe that having an active building on the corner of North and East Mifflin will add a sense of vibrancy and security to the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration of this rezoning request.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Ryan, APF
Secretary

Chozen-ji Betsuin/ International Zen Dojo of Wisconsin