From: Nicholas Davies
To: All Alders
Subject: Yes to 64610 - rezoning Milwaukee St consistent with current/future uses
Date: Monday, April 19, 2021 5:30:03 PM

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Dear alders,

In November, the Council considered an appeal of the rezoning necessary for the Milwaukee St neighborhood plan--rezoning that should've been implemented with acceptance of the plan itself. A landowner in the affected area brought the appeal because the new zoning for their property was inconsistent with current use, which would prevent future improvements.

I was disappointed that the previous Council sided with the wealthy, well-connected landowner, over a neighborhood plan made by city staff with extensive input from residents and passage by the Council itself.

Item 64610 fixes that problem, by moving these parcels to a zone that allows how they're currently used, while also allowing the commercial uses envisioned in the neighborhood plan. There is no good reason not to accept this rezoning.

The formation of these neighborhood plans is often an opportunity to bring forth and address concerns like equity, affordability, walkability, safe transportation, and environmental conservation.

Even if parcels are rezoned based on a neighborhood plan, rezoning does not close any businesses or demolish any buildings. It's only when the land is repurposed anyway that the neighborhood plan can guide its future use towards what the community needs.

We should not let one (wealthy, well-connected) landowner unilaterally, perpetually stand in the way of even this incremental reshaping of our community. Item 64610 is a compromise, and it's the rare kind of compromise that fully meets the needs of all parties involved.

The Council is also considering how to balance the need for residential density with the preservation of commercial corridors in parts of the city where commercial zoning is scarce.

One way to address that problem would be to move more parcels along these corridors to commercial zoning--exactly as this item does. If more of our commercial corridors like Milwaukee St were zoned for commercial use, we wouldn't need to worry as much about mixed use zones being taken up by purely residential buildings.

This item seems completely uncontroversial, so I hope my words in favor of it are unnecessary, though recent history has unfortunately suggested otherwise.

Thank you,
Nick Davies
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