

MEETING: Site Review Committee
SUBJECT: The Women's Center of
Northwest Indiana
ADDRESS: 105 Lafayette Street
PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW

LOCATION: Zoom

DATE: August 17, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

Carley Lemmon, Asst. Planner
(219) 462-1161 / clemmon@valpo.us
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner
(219) 462-1161 / vthrasher@valpo.us
Bill Laird, Engineering Dept.
(219) 462-1161 / blaird@valpo.us
Matt Zurbruggen, Engineering Dept.,
(219) 462-1161 / mzurbruggen@valapo.us
Nate McGinley, Water Dept.
(219) 462-6174 / nmcginley@valpo.us
Tony Fahel, Water Reclamation Dept.
(219) 464-4973 / tfahel@valpo.us

PRESENTERS:

Jackie Moffitt, The Women's Center
jackiem@thewc.org
Joyce West, The Women's Center

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting.

OPENING: The Site Review Committee met to discuss the proposed Women's Center of Northwest Indiana to be located at 105 Lafayette Street. Lemmon 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: Moffitt explained they are moving their facility from Boilermaker Ct. to 105 Lafayette. The facility will be a medical pregnancy care center. They will provide ultrasounds, pregnancy test, std testing, and treatment. Moffitt stated the std testing and treatment is through the State of Indiana, everything else is through The Women's Center. Moffitt said all the work that was done inside the space was done by the landlord prior to them moving into the space. The only thing they will be doing is painting and moving their furniture and equipment into the space. Moffitt said they have a counseling room, an ultrasound room, an office space for volunteers, but there are no volunteers at the front reception office, a file room, waiting room, and a bathroom.

STAFF COMMENTS:

LAIRD/ZURBRIGGEN: Laird asked if any work is being proposed on the site or exterior of the building (parking lot, sidewalks). Moffitt stated no external work is being done. Laird provide not further comments on the project.

MCGINLEY: There appears no changes are being made to the existing water service or sanitary sewer service. Moffitt confirmed there will be no changes to either of these services. McGinley provided no comments on this project.

FAHEL: Fahel asked if any changes are being made to the internal plumbing. Moffitt confirmed no changes are being made. Fahel requested they have a plan for disposing of any unused pharmaceuticals. Moffitt stated they drop off unused pharmaceuticals at the CVS expired drug drop-off box. Unused drugs will not be disposed through the water service or in the trash.

THRASHER: It was stated earlier that the landlord did work to make the space useable. The Building Department has no record of the work that was done and asked Moffitt if she could provide this information. Moffitt stated she did not know what the interior of the building looked like before they took occupancy and did not know what work the landlord did. Thrasher requested that Moffitt reach out to the landlord concerning the interior work and that this information be provided to the Building Department. Thrasher asked if there are sinks in the exam rooms. Moffitt said there is a sink in the bathroom and a sink in the kitchenette. They do not do exams they only do ultrasounds. Thrasher said the rooms on sketch provided were not labeled. Moffitt said there is the kitchenette, then the bathroom, the 12' x 9' room is the ultrasound room, next to the ultrasound room is the counseling room, next to the counseling room is the Client Services Manager office, the use of the 14' x 6 room has not been decided, the 8' x 7' room is the file room, the 9' x 10' room is the reception area, and the 11' x 19' room is the waiting room. Thrasher asked if any special electrical is needed for the ultrasound equipment. Moffitt said no special electrical is required. Thrasher mentioned a Sign Permit application has been submitted. Thrasher asked if there is emergency lighting and exit signs in the building. Moffitt said they are supposed to be installed before The Women's Center moves in. Thrasher requested they contact the Building Department before they move into the space so the Fire Marshal can walk through to ensure that all the fire safety requirements are met.

ON BEHALF OF TIM STITES, FIRE DEPARTMENT: Any initial inspections required need to be scheduled and coordinated through the Building Department. After occupancy, the facility will be subject to annual fire inspections. Any questions should be directed to Stites at tstites@valpo.us or 219-462-8325.

LEMMON: This property is zoned Central Business District (CBD). Office is considered a limited use in the Central Business District. A Limited Use

Application will be required. Lemmon conveyed that there is no cost involved with this application and she will email a copy of the application for completion. A letter from the Planning Department will be provided stating the office is permitted in the Central Business District and that they meet the requirements of the limited use. Offices are permitted in CBD and can be located if they do not front Lincolnway and are located one block in any direction of City Hall as well as being an adaptive reuse of a single-family residential home. This meets the limited use requirement. Lemmon conveyed that ground signs are not normally permitted in CBD but since this sign exists as it is, it is currently legal non-conforming. The panel can be changed out as proposed by the sign company in the Sign Permit application submitted. Signs cannot be internally illuminated, but external illumination is permitted on the sign. Lemmon cautioned that if external illumination is used, the direct light shall not beam onto other lots or onto the street. It is necessary to be mindful of the neighbors behind and to the side. The external lights may not be red, green, or amber in color if they are close to a light or stop. The allowance for signage is 3 sq. ft. of signage per one linear foot of building frontage. Lemmon is aware they had questions about additional signage on the front and recommended the use of a hanging or projecting sign on the Lafayette Street side, so the proposed signage does not cover the entire building. As an example, the dentist's office had a sign hanging above the railing. Lemmon advised that she would talk to Mike at the sign company and provide some options. If any exterior work is planned in the future, contacting the Planning Department is recommended, so that Planning can walk them through the Central Business District exterior requirements. The requirements for CBD are somewhat heavier than some of the other zoning districts because of the district's proximity to downtown. Moffitt asked if exterior improvements would be to the building. Lemmon confirmed. Lemmon stated there are no parking requirements for the Central Business District, so they do not have to meet any parking standards. Moffitt asked if this will exclude them from getting parking permits from the City. Lemmon said this will not exclude them from purchasing parking permits; however, Lemmon believes that there are no parking permits available for this year. They will need to contact the Clerk Treasurer's Office concerning parking permits. Moffitt asked if a parking permit is required for the parking lot or the parking spaces. Lemmon confirmed the parking lot does require a permit but is not sure about the spaces on Lafayette. It would be necessary to check the parking sign.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

Signage Permit (submitted)

Contact Landlord Concerning Interior Work Done. Provide Information to Thrasher
Contact Thrasher Before Occupancy for Fire Marshal Walk-through
Complete and Submit Limited Use Application