



**Land Use Commission**

**Wednesday, July 9, 2025 @ 7:00 PM**

Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

**COMMITTEE MEMBER  
PRESENT:**

Kiril Mirintchev,  
Myrna Arevalo,  
Jameika Mangum,  
Brian Johnson,  
Max Putchel,  
Darush Mabadi,  
Loren Berlin,  
Luke Harris-Ferree

**COMMITTEE MEMBER  
ABSENT:**

Jeanne Lindwall, Chair

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner  
Erin Baynes, Staff Liaison

**A. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM: MAX PUCHEL VICE CHAIR**

**B. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**A. Minutes of February 26, 2025**

March 12th 2025, March 19th 2025, and March 26th 2025

Motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2025, March 12, 2025 (with minor edit),  
March 19, 2025 and March 26, 2025.

**For Action**

**Motion:** Arevalo  
**Second:** Mabadi

**For Action**

**Motion Passed 7-0-1**

**Ayes:** Mirintchev, Arevalo, Mangum, Johnson, Putchel, Mabadi, and Berlin

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Lindwall

**Abstained:** Harris-Ferree

**B. Minutes of March 12, 2025**

Approved in vote above.

**C. Minutes of March 19, 2025**

Approved in vote above.

**D. Minutes of March 26, 2025**

Approved in vote above.

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Special Use Permit | 2900 Central Street | 25ZMJV-0026**

Kristina Rosinia, applicant, requests a Special Use for a kennel (section 6-9-5-3) in order to keep adoptable dogs on-site as part of the retail goods and services operations for Tails Together in the B1a Business District and oCSC Central Street Corridor Overlay District. No outside animals will board or stay overnight at the facility. The Land Use Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the determining body for this case, in accordance with Section 6-3-5 of the Evanston Zoning Ordinance. PIN: 10-11-202-028-0000.

Kristina Rosinia, along with co-founders Lauren Reidy and Chris Stegall, presented an application for special use approval at 2900 Central Street to operate Tales Together, a nonprofit animal welfare organization. Ms. Rosinia described her background as the former COO of PAWS Chicago and a certified animal behaviorist, emphasizing her decade of experience in animal welfare. The proposed facility would provide cage-free housing for cats, dogs, and small mammals, focusing on short-term overnight care for adoptable animals until placement in foster homes. Services would include adoptions, community programs (e.g., youth education, animal care classes, and “puppy yoga”), and a pet supply store in partnership with Noah’s Ark Pet Store.

The front building would be used for public-facing operations, including a pet store, adoption center, and community programming space, while the rear building would house staff offices, storage, veterinary care, and temporary animal wellness rooms. Hours of operation would be Wednesday–Sunday, 12–6 p.m., with staff on-site daily from 7 a.m.–7 p.m. No outdoor animal enclosures or public boarding services are planned. Ms. Rosinia noted soundproofing, overnight monitoring, and best-practice animal welfare protocols would be implemented. She reported outreach efforts with neighboring businesses and residents, including hosting a community event and canvassing the area, and submitted letters of support from adjacent property owners. The applicant stated the project meets all standards for special use approval.

Commissioner Berlin asked for clarification on the kennel listed on page 3 of the staff report under front building uses. Ms. Jones confirmed the kennel is a special use.

Commissioner Berlin asked why this address was selected and if there were concerns about noise. Ms. Rosinia explained that the building will have soundproofing and camera monitoring, and she lives five minutes away to respond quickly if needed. She noted she has managed shelters in busier, louder areas, described the site as accessible by car and walkable, and said the building's setup is ideal for operations, including partnerships with youth organizations.

Commissioner Puchtel asked for clarification on "amending" the special use and inquired how operations would be affected if the kennel is not approved. Staff confirmed that "amending" was included by mistake and this is a new special use. Ms. Rosinia added that she has worked with the owner(s) of the building has intention to seek to purchase the building in the future. If the special use is not approved that would prevent the organization from doing the lifesaving efforts for animals and veterinarian work. Would make the mission of the organization more sustainable ad scalable.

Commissioner Mangum asked how the organization decides to intake animals. Ms. Rosinia explained they intake animals by appointment with an assessment and deliberation on suitability.

Commissioner Mirintchev asked about fire protection requirements for kennels without 24/7 staff. Ms. Rosinia stated they will have a knox box and are working with the Fire Department on the specific sprinkler layout.

Commissioner Mabadi commented that the location is great and asked how many animals the organization will handle annually. Ms. Rosinia stated the number will vary depending on fosters and community need, noting that at PAWS Chicago she oversaw care for about 25,000 animals annually.

Commissioner Mabadi suggested placing a banner similar to PAWS at the Central Street site. Ms. Rosinia said they plan to update the awning and aim to honor Apelian signage.

Commissioner Mabadi asked how the organization will manage refuse when animals are turned over. Ms. Rosinia replied that they will schedule walks, provide walking supplies, and use planned trash cans between the buildings, emptied nightly, as was done at PAWS. She urged neighbors to alert her if staff places waste within their garbage cans so that she can address it.

Commissioner Harris-Ferree asked if they already have a slate of foster homes. Ms. Rosinia confirmed they do, with fosters located throughout the North Shore.

Commissioner Puchtel inquired if any comments had been received from the Central Street Neighbors Association. Ms. Jones confirmed that she had not. Ms. Rosinia confirmed the same but that she has been in contact with the organization.

Commissioner Mangum asked about the distance to the nearby daycare and ensuring behavior screening to keep animals safe around children. Ms. Rosinia confirmed they are close to the daycare and will conduct behavior screenings to ensure safety and will have an open line of communication if there are any issues.

#### Public Testimony

Jancy Jerome (2903 Harrison) – Lives directly behind the property. Expressed support for the mission of Tales Together but raised concerns about overnight housing of up to 20 dogs, citing potential noise issues due to proximity (24 feet) to rear yards and triggers in the alley. She requested

denial of the special use for overnight kenneling.

Elizabeth Mages (2828 Harrison) – Asked whether the special use applies to the building or business. Ms. Jones clarified that it applies to the business.

Michael Hevn (2831 Harrison) – Supported the mission but noted the building’s proximity to the fire department and referenced prior noise-related injunctive relief for a nearby restaurant related to noise. Requested input from the fire department and daycare regarding the proposal’s appropriateness.

Kristina Rosinia, in closing, emphasized that noisy animals are unhappy animals and the organization’s goal is to keep animals content. She explained that soundproofing serves to minimize both outgoing and incoming noise and that the organization helps owners address behavior issues with their pets. She noted that she has consulted with the fire chief, who provided recommendations, and emphasized that community conversations will continue beyond approval.

Testimony was then closed.

#### Commissioner Deliberations

Commissioner Mabadi asked about soundproofing. Ms. Jones confirmed it is a condition of approval, and Ms. Williams added that detailed plans must be submitted and inspected for compliance. Commissioner Mabadi noted that sound barriers work both ways; Ms. Williams stated that the noise ordinance would apply, and the applicant may be required to retrofit or could face revocation of the special use if conditions are not met.

Commissioner Mangum praised the concept but expressed concern about the location given the nearby outdoor dining and music at Fat Shallot, as well as potential noise, odors, and lack of overnight supervision.

Commissioner Mirintchev expressed concern over the lack of overnight staffing but noted the rear building has a solid brick wall and single door, which should reduce sound transmission. He suggested founders could benefit from monitoring cameras and indicated overall support for approving the special use.

Commissioner Berlin noted that testimony included expert perspectives. She felt the proposal aligns with common practices in the field, deferred to animal welfare and soundproofing experts, and expressed inclination to approve while balancing resident and business needs.

Commissioner Harris-Ferree stated he did not expect dogs to be louder than existing noise from fire trucks and found the applicant thoughtful in considering the neighborhood context.

Commissioner Puchtel supported the addition to Central Street, acknowledged the legitimacy of noise concerns, but was reassured by the applicant’s presentation that mitigation efforts would address them. He then reviewed and recommended the proposed conditions for approval.

The Chair reviewed the Standards for a Special Use (Section 6-3-5-10).

1. Is one of the listed special uses for the zoning district in which the property lies: *Is listed as an eligible special use in the B1a Business District. Met.*

2. Complies with the purposes and the policies of the Comprehensive General Plan and the Zoning ordinance as amended from time to time: *Proposed use is in keeping with the goal of having a thriving district and filling a vacant storefront, adding to vibrancy of the district. Met.*
3. Will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when its effect is considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood and the effect of the proposed type of special use upon the City as a whole: *Have received assurances that the sound concerns will be mitigated appropriately and will lessen the impact on the neighborhood. Met.*
4. Does not interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood: *Will provide continuity of commercial space and no opposition has been received from the business community and no opposition was expressed for the proposed conditions. Met.*
5. Is adequately served by public facilities and services: *The use is going into an existing space where the infrastructure provided is adequately served by public facilities and services. Met.*
6. Does not cause undue traffic congestion: *The proposed business is located in a district where there is some traffic; the building has six employee parking spaces and is in an area with on-street parking. Met.*
7. Preserves significant historical and architectural resources: *Storefront will largely be preserved and have not heard evidence to the contrary that it would be damaged. Met.*
8. Preserves significant natural and environmental resources: *No evidence to the contrary has been provided. Met.*
9. Complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation: *The Commission has heard from staff that it is otherwise compliant. Met.*

**Motion:** Arevalo

**Second:** Mabadi

**For Action**

**Motion Passed 8-0-1**

**Ayes:** Mirintchev, Arevalo, Mangum, Johnson, Putchel, Mabadi, Berlin, and Harris-Ferree

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Lindwall

B. Text Amendment | Planned Development Threshold | #25PLND-0029

The City of Evanston requests a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Sections 6-8-1-10(D), 6-9-1-9(D), 6-10-1-9(D), 6-11-1-10(D), 6-12-1-7(D), 6-13-1-10(D), and 6-15-1-9(D), Mandatory Planned Development Minimum Thresholds, to clarify the required inclusionary housing dwelling units and associated bonus dwelling units are not counted towards the twenty four (24) dwelling unit threshold when determining whether a planned development is required. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case and the City

Council is the determining body in accordance with Section 6-3-4-6 of the Evanston Zoning Code.

Elizabeth Williams introduced the proposed amendment, explaining that it is a City Council referral and provided background on current regulations and the proposed changes. She clarified how the new interpretation will impact the development review process, noting that the amendment codifies that bonus units will not count toward minimum thresholds for unit counts.

Commissioner Berlin sought clarification on what specifically was being requested; Ms. Williams provided further explanation on the thresholds and how the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance comes into consideration.

Commissioner Puchtel asked how staff approaches these situations when meeting with an applicant. Ms. Williams stated that staff does not advise applicants on how to proceed but provides information on the implications of different options. He then asked what additional requirements of a planned development are versus a major variation. Ms. Williams provided the differences, including mailing radius requirements, application submittal requirements, and standards of approval.

Commissioner Johnson asked if Corporation Counsel had reviewed the language. Ms. Williams confirmed they had.

Commissioner Mabadi asked if the intent was to exclude bonus units at the 25-unit threshold. Ms. Williams confirmed this was correct and provided examples of developments that did not trigger a planned development but required variations.

Commissioner Mirintchev commented on the proposed language and ensuring that thresholds for development allowances do not create excessive allowances and overly intensive land use. He urged for a closer look at requirements during the zoning code rewrite.

Commissioner Berlin inquired about how public benefits may be affected and how we can ensure that those are not negatively impacted. Ms. Williams responded it is up to the Commission on their recommendation and whether or not to exempt bonus units from the proposed amendment. She added that there is a standard of approval for variations related to extracting income which could create the need for a public benefit, though she has not seen that be required in her time with the City. Commissioner Mabadi suggested possibly adding a public benefit requirement during the zoning code rewrite as a piece of the bonus to mitigate concern of possibly losing a public benefit aspect of a planned development.

Commissioner Puchtel asked if the current planned development thresholds are in-line with planning best practices. Ms. Williams responded that in her professional opinion they are low. Commissioner Puchtel then pointed out that the proposed text amendment is codifying current practices within a Code that is going to be rewritten over the couple of years.

Testimony was then closed.

#### Commissioner Deliberation

Commissioner Johnson expressed no issue with codifying current staff practice and indicated willingness to entertain a motion for approval.

#### Standards

1. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive General Plan, as adopted and amended from time to time by the City Council. *The amendment supports the Comprehensive General Plan's housing objectives. It also supports the City Council's goal of increasing access to affordable housing and removing barriers to compliance with the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. This ensures alignment with policies that encourage a diverse housing stock and equitable development. Met.*
2. Whether the proposed amendment is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property. *The proposed amendment is consistent with current practice. Met.*
3. Whether the proposed amendment will have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent properties. *No testimony has been provided to that fact. Met.*
4. The adequacy of public facilities and services. *Developments subject to the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance are already evaluated for adequacy of infrastructure and services during the permit review process. Met.*

**Motion:** Berlin

**Second:** Harris-Ferree

**For Action**

**Motion Passed 8-0-1**

**Ayes:** Mirintchev, Arevalo, Mangum, Johnson, Putchel, Mabadi, Berlin, and Harris-Ferree

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Lindwall

## **D. PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **E. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:17pm