

**Evanston City Council  
Closed Session Minutes  
Aldermanic Library  
April 12, 2005**

PRESENT: Aldermen Tisdahl, Rainey, Newman, Jean-Baptiste, Bernstein, Moran  
ABSENT: Aldermen Feldman, Kent and Wynne  
STAFF: Judith Aiello, Julia Carroll, Herb Hill, Vince Jones, Gavin Morgan  
PRESIDING: Mayor Lorraine H. Morton  
START: 10:37 p.m.

Alderman Bernstein moved that Council convene into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing matters related to litigation, personnel, real estate and executive session minutes pursuant to 5ILCS Section 120/2 (c) (1) (5) (6) (11) and (21). Seconded by Alderman Jean-Baptiste.

Roll call. Voting aye – Tisdahl, Rainey, Newman, Jean-Baptiste, Bernstein, Moran. Voting nay – none. Motion carried. (6-0)

**Minutes**

Closed session minutes of March 28, 2005 were accepted without change.

**Real Estate – 1880 Oak**

City Manager Julia Carroll stated they would look at the Carroll Towers proposal. Additional information on Mr. King's background was provided in the Monday packet. Two weeks ago they discussed whether Council would be interested in a different land use for the site. Mr. King proposed residential use with a little commercial and the other developer has approached her about an extended stay hotel. However the developer does not control the land because Mr. King has an option which is about to expire. The hotel developer told her if not this site, they would be interested in trying to find another site here. The question is what kind of land use do they want.

Alderman Newman was told that 1890 Maple will be torn down and the incubator building is in receivership. Ms. Carroll said it would not be torn down, but the existing building would be renovated and enlarged. He asked if a residence inn pays the hotel tax. Ms. Carroll thought if somebody stayed less than 30 days they would pay the hotel tax. Ms. Carroll explained this was brought to Council to determine if they wanted this use instead of office use. The 1890 Maple building would be purchased from Mr. Ross. Assistant City Manager Judith Aiello said that Mr. King's current contract for getting high rise residential is contingent upon getting a zoning change. Ms. Carroll was told the option expires in 30 days. She asked Council if they wanted to modify the use in the redevelopment agreement which currently requires an office use.

Alderman Newman said the original intent was that this site would be for office space. The other Scribcor building is half empty. He heard that 1890 Maple would be empty soon because Northwestern University is moving everything out so office use is not working. There is no market for office space. The City went from 1991-97 with no activity in the Research Park waiting for offices. Millions in taxes have been lost and they need to get something going. The last time Marriott was around, they asked for significant things. He preferred having condominium owners rather than transients. Evanston has the Homestead and the Margarita Inn, both extended stay hotels. He saw this as a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> rate hotel catering to visitors to the University.

Alderman Moran thought that King's proposal was too large. He was astounded at the quality of the other projects King has done in Hyde Park and other areas. He would love to see King build something like the projects he has built in Chicago. His accomplishment in developing affordable housing is also noteworthy. His curiosity was up and he suggested they go back to Mr. King and tell him that his CV is lovely and ask him to show them something

consistent with that and work in affordable housing. He could support a change of use if they can get a quality product.

Alderman Rainey noted that all would have to support a change of use. She thought much of King's work was rehabbing and not new construction. She too was impressed with the information he submitted but wanted to see commercial use there. She found nothing that was not reputable about extended stay hotels which are in demand for businesses that bring people here for a month at a time. She also had no problem with people from Northwestern University spending their money at such a hotel. They anticipate about \$640,000 in tax revenue. Ms. Carroll saw the best of two world's here. If there is support to change the use and make it residential, they could help the developer find another location for the extended stay hotel. Alderman Rainey suggested this location was more appropriate for a hotel. Ms. Carroll pointed out they are willing to look at other locations.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste supported the city manager's line of thinking. The scenario allows residential use there and an extended stay hotel somewhere else in the community. He suggested changing the use to residential.

Alderman Newman said that Mr. King has been interested in coming to Evanston and became aware of Mr. King when was looking at parking lots here. The fact that he came up with the option and has the land rights, he would not expect that he would want to give those up. Although this property has been tied up for a while he will have to build something there eventually.

Alderman Moran suggested that Mr. King was looking for an indication of willingness to move even if his option expires in 30 days. If he hears that there is a reasonable hope he can accomplish this, there will be adjustments in the contract and time to re-zone the property.

Alderman Rainey asked why 1840 Maple is in receivership. Alderman Moran said he defaulted on the mortgage. Alderman Newman reminded people that all these buildings have obligations to parking with implications regardless of what happens. The City won't build parking for King and 1890 Maple has to be held to their \$90,000 for their 81 parking spaces. He hoped 1840 Maple would not default because they are paying for parking spaces as well. Ms. Aiello has had conversations with Mr. Goodman and Mr. Ross who asked to be released from their parking obligations. The City told them "no." Alderman Newman asked if any were going for reductions in their real estate taxes. Ms. Aiello said they would get back on that.

Ms. Carroll confirmed they would get back to Mr. King, and let him know the Council is interested in changing the use to residential. He would have to come in for a PUD. She will continue dialogue with the extended stay hotel people as to where they might be able to help them. She asked for any specific feedback on the height. Alderman Newman said Evanston needs growth; they are downtown, and if they are going to have height, that is the place to have it. Mr. King will have to sell them on a quality building. Alderman Moran suggested they make the point that there are some reservations concerning height. Maybe that sends a message there is some give and take on this between height and quality of design.

Ms. Carroll asked for feedback because of the very things that have been brought up during the last few meetings. One is about the time table and another is that the staff whipsaws the developer from one design to another. She was trying to get a reading, so that when she and Ms. Aiello talk with Mr. King he doesn't start off on the wrong path.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste suggested they address it contextually and they see a proposal with a design. Alderman Rainey asked what a 17 story building would block. It would affect the Ebenezer A M E church, Primm Towers (10 stories) and Engelhardt Hall. It would not affect Elgin Road. Alderman Bernstein favored height downtown.

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Morton adjourned the meeting at 11:08 p.m.

Mary P. Morris,  
City Clerk