

**Item 24-0997 and 24-0928: Public Hearing and Vote for Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Amendment #1-24 Thrivent Property from Agricultural and Private Open Space and Commercial Future Land Use to Mixed Use and One and Two Family Residential Future Land Use**

**Item 24-0998 and 24-0930: Public Hearing and Vote for Planned Development Major Amendment to PD #4-00 to Amend Existing Boundary Lines from R-1A Single Family District and R-2 Two Family District to PD/C-2 Planned Development Overlay #4-00/General Commercial District & Amend Development Regulations**

**Item 24-0999 and 24-0932: Public Hearing and Vote for Rezoning #6-24 Thrivent Property from AG Agricultural District and PD/C-2 Planned Development Overlay #4-00/General Commercial District to R-2 Two-Family District**

**Common Council**

Wed, Sep 04, 2024 7:00PM

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 11:50

So, we'll move along to public participation, and we have one member of the public signed up to speak. We'll ask that you limit your comments to five minutes or less and only on items that appear on the agenda. So, with that, Jason, welcome. Your name and address for the record, please.

**Jason S. (Resident)** 12:06

Hi. [Jason S. at XXXXX], Appleton, Wisconsin. Just a few comments related to the Thrivent property. That I know is going under, I think, rezoning today. I have more questions than I have comments, but some of the questions or comments, I guess I could place them as—I know the rezoning is very high density. I'm interested in the traffic studies related to the to the egress outside of the existing Thrivent property. I'd also encourage the reuse of existing buildings that are there, from a sustainability perspective, to use the existing build out of those assets. Also interested in the timing of implementation. I'm not sure what starts when, or what the project plan looks like. And also, the curious about the total population that will be added to Appleton. That's all I got. Thanks.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 13:03

Thank you. All right, any other members of the public who didn't get to sign up? We do have public hearing scheduled related to the Thrivent property rezoning, and then a couple of other actions here—Drew Street R-2 to R1C so if you didn't sign up, that's okay, because we're about to have public hearings on these.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 13:29

All right, with that, we'll close public participation and move along to our public hearings. We do have four public hearings this evening, and what, we'll do is related to Thrivent, we'll open the first public hearing, and if you have any comments related to Thrivent, regardless of the action, please feel free to give your comments during the first public hearing. We will still hold all of the public hearings, but just for the sake of simplicity, if you're here to talk about Thrivent, you can share your comments right away on this on this first one, whether it's related to that specific action or not, and we will still open the other hearings.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 14:11

So, with that and there—with public hearings, it's open and there is not a time limit for speakers. But during the public hearing we will not be having a dialog between the council or us and members of the public. So, if you do

have questions, please raise those questions in your remarks, and we'll do our best to get you answers for those questions. But as I said, the public hearing will not be in a dialog format. So, we'll hear your comments and then move on to the next speaker.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 14:44

So, with that, will open the first public hearing. This is item 24-0997 public hearing for comprehensive plan future land use map amendment number 1-24, Thrivent property from agricultural and private open space and commercial future land use to mixed use and one- and two-family residential future land use. This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak?

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 15:14

Welcome. Your name and address for the record, please?

**John V. (Resident)** 15:16

Yes. It's [John V. at XXXXX]. Now I live out there right now on Ballard Street. And if you think about Ballard at eight to three this morning, just today as it is when North High School goes in and lets out, it's a basically a parking lot. All it takes is one accident and you're stuck.

**John V. (Resident)** 15:38

What I don't like about the whole Thrivent thing is there's been no traffic study before it's getting pushed through all the zoning. We haven't looked at the impact. Because right now, you're like, "Oh, let's just look at Thrivent," but you're not considering that there's also building out on Evergreen—the new plastic surgery center. You know, you've got the new annex from the Wisconsin's Children's Hospital. You're putting out more looks like apartments, another building out that way on Evergreen that's not you. There's nothing—to my knowledge, there's no other overpass on Mead across 441. So, what you're going to do is already take a bad traffic situation and make it worse.

**John V. (Resident)** 16:16

You're talking about speeding enforcement. Just wait out there when all the high schoolers get out from North. Some days it's like a pile up smash up derby trying to get across Ballard. Then you look at that, then you've got, you know, your only other way across is going to be French Road, which, you know, thank God they put a light out there, but that's still going to make it difficult for anybody on the north side to get across. And you start thinking about when you add in all this high-density housing, it's just going to get worse.

**John V. (Resident)** 16:43

Not to mention thinking about getting rid of all that green space when we start getting the rains. We heard about how the sewer system wasn't designed to handle it, and that's why we had floods the last time. Well, what's going to happen when you get rid of all that nice ground that's soaking up rain out there, and you put even more water in the sewer system that's rated for x? So that's why I have a concern that we're, you know, we're already going down the road of rezoning and all this stuff, and there's some really quality of life issues for the people that live out there and the ones that are going to live out there that we haven't done yet.

**John V. (Resident)** 17:15

Yeah, traffic study's coming. All this stuff is coming. My fear is it's all going to come after the first house gets built, and everybody that lives there kinda's out of luck. So, I am not in favor of this rezoning without a lot more study and work and questions for the folks that live there that are going to be most impacted, basically district 13 and some other ones out there. So, thank you very much.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 17:38**

Thank you. Others? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? Oh, it got—it got you on the third bell. All right, come on up. Welcome. Your name and address for the record, please.

**Steve V. (Resident) 18:09**

[Steve V.] and I live at [XXXXXX]. We've had the luxury of living in that location for 20—20 plus years now. And it is a wonderful space, and I can understand why they're wanting to utilize it to grow Appleton in a functional way. But, again, I think the previous speaker, I guess, brought up questions and concerns that I haven't really thought through as much as more of it's a personal impact on my location, right? So it's my backyard, and as the development has already been proposed, I think there are things in it that—one of the things that I think may be addressed, and whether there is any opportunity for changes to the plan or changes going on in the future, I think that's—you know, a lot of us that live on that south side of the directly reluctant related properties, I think, you know, have those questions. But again, it's something that you know, as I see it, partly, I'm just curious about the timeline, seeing if there's opportunities for adjustments to the planning as it relates to the green spaces and the aesthetics and whether there's any sort of pushback or reduction in, you know, maybe number of properties that they're proposing to use that would maybe increase the amount of green space which would then release maybe some of the pressures on the perimeters and some of the things like that, and maybe even some of the traffic pressure.

**Steve V. (Resident) 18:09**

So again, it's, it seems to be moving along in a fashion that, you know, it's almost like, you know, a snowball rolling downhill that doesn't seem like it's reasonable to say it's not going to happen, but I think just in terms of doing it in a phased process that can address, I think, some concerns that again, I didn't have any understanding, maybe, of the traffic that others do that come from different spaces. But, you know, I'm actually anxious to see if there is any flexibility in the plan. I think that's really more or less what a lot of our questions have to do with, you know, residents that live directly adjacent to the property.

**Steve V. (Resident) 19:41**

And, I mean, there's other things. There's little pockets of—there's a little island of Grand Chute hunting space that's, you know, gun hunting, bow hunting, right in our backyards, which will now be right next to a walking trail, and things like that. And there's probably going to be a little bit of, you know, interaction between Grand Chute that maybe, you know, some of those things come up. I know some people have expressed some concerns about it, you know, and things like that.

**Steve V. (Resident) 20:50**

So again, it's not anything—obviously, there's going to be changes happening. It's a large piece of area that the city would be able to utilize in a, probably, a good way, but hopefully they can, I mean, maybe relax the density somewhat. Again, that's a little bit concerning, I think, to a lot of us, you know. So, I guess that's just maybe a objective or subjective view from the outside looking in. But there is some concern of those of us that are directly adjacent and a lot of curiosity. So, all right.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 21:22**

Thank you. Thank you. This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? All right, welcome. Your name and address, please.

**Kari S. (Resident)** 21:41

[Kari S. at XXXXX] Appleton. I concur with the previous two speakers as well, and I have a couple additional thoughts to add into that. One is my concern. I back up to Mead Street, and Mead's already at a faster rate of speed—right?—35 miles per hour, high noise, high traffic, and I second the gentleman's comment about school traffic. In the mornings and in the afternoon is very hard for Thrivent people even to get out of Thrivent crossing on to Meade to go southbound. If you're in this neighborhoods, trying to go northbound is very hard and very dangerous as well, already today. So, I do have a concern about the additional number of houses and the number of vehicles, because an average family generally has two vehicles, since that's an impact to traffic.

**Kari S. (Resident)** 22:29

Additionally, the number of access points to Thrivent property is going to increase and impact a bunch of the neighborhoods like Apple Creek Road, for example. They're adding—it looks like they're proposing another two on to Meade and then another two or three on to Ballard. So, I do have concerns about that from the noise perspective and traffic flow.

**Kari S. (Resident)** 22:49

Additionally, kids like to walk or bike to school, and so lot of the kids in our neighborhood like to take the overpass that goes down Meade on 441 but if you're familiar with that, you'll notice that one side the sidewalk is larger because it's the Apple Creek bike trail. The other side is not, and that's not a protective way. So, my question is, or one of my concerns, is, will the 41 bridges that are being done be enlarged to accommodate pedestrians and walkers going over the state? Because when you have more people, they're going to want to walk to want to walk to the different resources in the community, and that's where everything is, is inside the loop currently, and not outside the loop. So that's one of my concerns, as well as having increased safety for children and pedestrians and cyclists. So that's all I have. Thank you.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 23:43

This is a public hearing. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak? I think I've more than met the statutory requirement for saying that, so I won't say it three more times. But anybody else? Okay, all right. Hearing none I declare this hearing closed.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 24:03

We'll move on to the next public hearing. This is item 24-0998 public hearing for Planned development Major amendment to PD4-00 to amend existing boundary lines from R1A single family district and R2 two family district to PDC to plan development overlay. This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? Hearing none I declare this public hearing closed.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 24:43

Moving on to public hearing, item number 24-0999, public hearing for rezoning number 6-24, Thrivent property from agricultural district and PDC to Planned development overlay number 4-00 general commercial district to R2 two family district. This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? Hearing none, I declare that public hearing closed.

[Cut]

**Mayor Jake Woodford 30:29**

All right, let's move to Plan Commission. All right, this is item 24-0928, request to approve comprehensive plan 2010 to 2030 future land use map amendment number 1-24 for the subject parcels located at 4321 North Ballard Road and 3920 North Meade Street. We have a motion, and we have a second. All right, with that, we'll open the floor for discussion. Alder Hayden.

**Alderman Patrick Hayden (District 7) 31:07**

Thank you, Chair. After talking with Attorney Behrens and Thrivent's council, I thought it would be appropriate on both their advisement that I add, that I discussed that my employment at Thrivent was determined not to have a conflict of interest, since I work in the IT field and maintain their website and don't have any work to do with the development of the site.

**Alderman Patrick Hayden (District 7) 31:33**

That said, I appreciate the work that Thrivent has done and coming forward and meeting with people. It's my understanding (and Director Homan could probably correct me if I'm in—if I'm wrong) that this is going to be a multi-decade project, so that there's plenty of time to take on the items that have kind of been brought up about traffic flow, drainage studies, and items like that. Along with that, there's state statutes that require studies on drainage before this development can begin. So, I feel confident that these fears will be kind of taken care of.

**Alderman Patrick Hayden (District 7) 32:07**

But if I could get an idea of—I know there's going to be more hearings in the future as we develop plots of land to be developed as Thrivent's plans sort of materialize, because at this point is very abstract. What—when will we be looking at a traffic study typically being done on a development of this scale?

**Mayor Jake Woodford 32:28**

Director Homan. Mic? Okay, go ahead.

**Director Kara Homan (Community And Economic Development) 32:33**

It's my understanding that there's already a traffic impact analysis underway. That ultimately gets submitted to the engineering division and Eric Lom in the traffic section. Did you have anything to add? No? That's correct, though, right?

**Alderman Patrick Hayden (District 7) 32:49**

Thank you. And the comment about Meade bridge hit home for me with the start of school this week and dealing with traffic on Evergreen and Meade and Capitol. So, I was wondering—I don't know if it's in bounds for this discussion. Do we know if Meade is being expanded as part of the 41 construction to accommodate additional traffic that will be part of this Thrivent development and also make it easier for people who are walking on the west side of the sidewalk to cross over the highway, especially since a lot of the school kids use the west side over the east side.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 33:28**

So, we're in active discussions with DOT about a couple aspects of this project, and Council actually recently approved a state municipal agreement, but there's still some details to be worked out with respect to community sensitive solutions as a part of the project. So, what we'll do is make a note to bring an update to the Council on project elements at a future meeting, so that the Council and community are aware of overall scope and what we're anticipating for impacts. We'll also be able to share an update with the Council about design elements that will be included in the project that weren't previously. And that discussion will likely come when

the amendment to the state municipal agreement comes through. Council will have to take that up again to incorporate the CSS elements when that funding mechanism gets sorted out at the state. So, we will certainly make a note to bring this back to Council with a with a more full picture for all of you on as far as what's being planned around 41 through Appleton.

**Alderman Patrick Hayden (District 7) 34:31**

Thank you, Chair.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 34:34**

Alder Fenton.

**Alderman Denise Fenton (District 6) 34:37**

Thank you, Your Honor. I share Alder Hayden's sentiments, and not even—not being an employee at Thrivent with gratitude for how transparent the company has been with the community in terms of having events where people could see the proposals, having a website where people could reach out and ask questions, and I would assume and encourage them to maintain that level of openness as plans move forward.

**Alderman Denise Fenton (District 6) 35:14**

If we're straying a little bit from the scope of the actions we're taking here, I think we all agree that one of the most difficult problems we have in Appleton is the shortage of housing. We have recently concluded a task—you know, a task force project to address our housing shortages. And so, when I look at any—however theoretical it may be, right now—any plan that calls for the creation of 22 to 2300 new units, I'm pretty excited by it. And given the way that the project has proceeded in its very early stages, I feel confident that it will continue in a way that is good for our community, and I'm happy to support the administrative changes at the beginning of that project. Thank you.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 36:17**

Alder Hartzheim.

**Alderman Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 36:20**

Thank you, Chair. As Alder Fenton often reminds us, as a city plan Commissioner herself, there's often not a way for a city to stop what a development is going to be. In this case, is there—is there legally any way that the city could preclude this from occurring? Obviously, no votes tonight would preclude that from occurring, but wouldn't that be legally challenged?

**Mayor Jake Woodford 36:55**

I'll defer to Attorney Behrens on that.

**Attorney Christopher Behrens 36:59**

We—yeah, you'd have to articulate some basis for your opinion that the proposal isn't acceptable and it's not appropriate planning for that area. Given the amount of information that's been presented in studies, that would be a challenge.

**Alderman Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 37:18**

Thank you.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 37:22**

Further discussion. Alder Wolff.

**Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 37:27**

Thank you, Chair. I just want to echo my colleague, Alderson Fenton's comments. I'm very excited for this. I like the way that it has multiple different housing units as well. It's not just, you know, one specific thing, and I think that it's going to be really good for our community and what we need in our community. It's one of the biggest demands from our communities to get more housing built. So very excited for it—and more parks, because that's cool, too. Thank you.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 38:11**

Further discussion. We have a motion and a second to approve. Please cast your votes. The motion passes 13 to zero. That item has been approved.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 38:33**

Moving on to the next item from plan commission. This is 24-0930, request to approve amendment to plan development overlay district for the subject parcels located at 4321 North Ballard Road, amending the existing zoning boundary line from R2 two-family district and R1A single-family district to plan development overlay, general commercial district. We have a motion and a second to approve. Any discussion? Hearing, none. Please cast your votes. The motion passes 13 to zero. That item has been approved.

**Mayor Jake Woodford 39:26**

Moving on to item 24-0932, request to approve rezoning number 6-24 for the subject parcels located at 4321 North Ballard Road, amending the current R2 two-family district zoning boundary line from agricultural district and planned development overlay, general commercial district to R2 two-family district. We have a motion. Is there a second? We have a motion and a second to approve. Any discussion? Hearing none. Please cast your votes. That motion passes 13 to zero. The item has been approved.