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Panel approves plan for Lincoln Park Hospital site

By: Andrew Schroeder

(Crain's) — The Chicago Plan Commission approved a controversial proposal Thursday to redevelop the shuttered Lincoln Park Hospital, despite objections from the local alderman.

The Plan Commission unanimously voted in favor of the mixed-use redevelopment of the site at the intersection of Geneva Terrace and Lincoln and Webster avenues, said a spokesman for the city's Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning.

The approval is a key step for the project proposed by Sandz Development Corp.

"We were hoping for a good result but this exceeded our expectations," says David Goldman, a vice-president at Sandz, a Chicago-based real estate firm founded by North Side developers Michael Supera and Richard Zisook.

The plans still must be approved by the Chicago City Council, where Alderman Vi Daley (43rd), whose ward includes the site and who doesn't support the plan, is vice-chairman of the Zoning Committee.

The development would include 160 residential units and 95,000 square feet of medical and professional office space. As approved, the development also would include a 20,000-square-foot grocery store leased to North Carolina-based supermarket chain Fresh Market Inc.

Residents opposed to the development are concerned about traffic congestion the store would cause.

The Plan Commission hearing pitted Alderman Daley against the city's planning department, which supports the project.

At the hearing, the alderman repeated her previous position, saying she could not support a proposal that so many residents were against. She did not immediately return a message requesting comment. Alderman Daley is not running for re-election next year.

"The neighborhood group that opposed the project was very well organized and vocal," noted David Stone, president of Chicago-based Stone Real Estate Corp., who represents Fresh Market and attended the hearing. "I think the neighbors will become very attached to the store, once the adrenaline wears off a bit."

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