

**Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
August 26, 2020
Via Videoconference
Cedar Falls, Iowa**

MINUTES

The Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on August 26, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via videoconference due to precautions necessary to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The following Commission members were present: Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, Saul and Schrad. Adkins was absent. Stephanie Houk Sheetz, Director of Community Development and Chris Sevy, Planner I, were also present.

- 1.) Chair Holst noted the Minutes from the August 12, 2020 regular meeting are presented. Mr. Hartley made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Ms. Lynch seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 8 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, Saul and Schrad), and 0 nays.

- 2.) The first item of business was a text amendment to the Subdivision Code Division 3 Final Plats. Chair Holst introduced the item and Ms. Houk Sheetz provided background information. She explained that the item was considered at the last meeting and gave a brief refresher on the previous discussion, reiterating the purpose of the code and the platting process for preliminary and final plats. She also discussed the issues with the current language and process and provided an example situation. Ms. Houk Sheetz brought forward potential solutions for discussion with the Commission, and displayed the section for consideration at this time (Section 20-100).

Mr. Larson stated that he recalled that samples from other similar communities were requested for the Commission to look over. He moved to table the item until those samples are provided. Ms. Sheetz stated that she can speak to the subject or the motion could go forward. Ms. Saul seconded the motion to table the discussion.

Ms. Sheetz explained that a planner did reach out to several Iowa communities (Ames, Urbandale, Ankeny, Sioux City, Bettendorf and Council Bluffs) and provided the information that was received. While none of the communities have specific language regarding the phasing of a final plat, Ames does have language requiring commercial, industrial and multi-family subdivision to do an integrate site plan with a development agreement. Urbandale requires phasing plans for preliminary plans, Sioux City is updating its subdivision regulations to require phasing plans, but there is no specific language regarding timing in either city. The majority of the cities do use development agreements when critical infrastructure is involved to insure completion, but it is done on a case-by-case basis. Council Bluffs has no requirement and tries to follow the practices of Omaha to make development easier for the developers who serve the Omaha area. Bettendorf and Iowa City were the most stringent regarding phasing and development of critical infrastructure. There appears to be a variety of ways that communities handle such development.

Ms. Saul stated that she was concerned that the Commission asked for the

information to be supplied so that they can read it before the meeting and didn't receive it. She also asked what caused the problems in the examples that were presented (i.e. Prairie West). Ms. Sheetz stated that the projects were some time ago and gave information based on records she has. Mr. Larson noted his concern that a blanket approach could lead to major obstacles where developments wouldn't be viable to pursue. He also pointed out that in the private sector you would never be able to build and presume that someone else would make road connections. He feels that having a phasing proposal submitted with the preliminary plat would be helpful.

Mr. Leeper asked if the City has the discretion to tell the developer which phase should go first. Ms. Houk Sheetz stated that the City has done that in the past, although dates weren't necessarily established. Each case will be different so timing will depend on the specific development. There was further discussion regarding proposed language and definitions to be considered, as well as consequences and enforcement for timelines that are not met. Mr. Schrad stated that he would second that the item should be tabled and that he would like to see some examples from other communities.

Mr. Larson's motion to table the item until the next meeting was again brought forward. Mr. Schrad seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 8 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, Saul and Schrad), and 0 nays.

- 3.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was an amendment to the zoning code text regarding adaptive re-use of vacant institutional buildings. Chair Holst introduced the item and Mr. Sevy provided background information. He discussed a case where a church has sat vacant with few options for allowed land uses, including continuing to sit vacant, sell to another church, convert to a public or parochial school or tear it down and subdivide it into residential lots. The owner was hoping to use the property to host wedding receptions, however without a religious institution it would not be allowed. He discussed research that has been done to review codes in other cities to consider different approaches. It is proposed to craft an amendment that provides alternatives that would be subject to review and approval by staff, the Commission and City Council. Mr. Sevy discussed the critical issues for consideration, including compatibility with residential neighborhoods, nuisance issues such as noise and traffic, allowing neighborhood input and any additional conditions that may need to be imposed. He identified appropriate alternative uses for consideration, including: hospitality-oriented uses, conversion to a multi-unit dwelling, community services, specialized educational facilities and professional offices. Mr. Sevy also discussed factors to consider in the neighborhood context. Staff recommends adding a conditional use process to the zoning ordinance, review and discussion of the proposal and setting a date for public hearing at the September 9 meeting.

Ms. Saul felt that a lot of thought was put into the item and that it would be beneficial. Mr. Holst also feels it is a good idea and clarified that it will be considered for all districts. Mr. Schrad asked if the tax base would change. Ms. Houk Sheetz clarified that it could, depending on the proposed use. Ms. Prideaux also feels it would be a good idea and would like to see the wording in other communities. Ms. Prideaux asked about the historical aspects of the building and whether that would be considered. Mr. Leeper likes the flexibility that this would give the commission.

Ms. Saul made a motion to approve the recommendation to set a date for public hearing. Mr. Leeper seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 8 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, Saul and Schrad), and 0 nays.

- 4.) As there were no further comments, Ms. Lynch made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hartley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 8 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, Saul and Schrad), and 0 nays.

The meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephanie Houk Sheetz
Director of Community Development



Joanne Goodrich
Administrative Assistant