

**Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
March 23, 2022  
Cedar Falls, Iowa**

**MINUTES**

The Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on March 23, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Center. The following Commission members were present: Crisman, Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Moser and Saul. Grybovyeh was absent. Karen Howard, Community Services Manager, Thomas Weintraut, Planner III, Chris Sevy, Planner I, and Matthew Tolan, EI, Civil Engineer II, were also present.

- 1.) Chair Leeper noted the Minutes from the March 9, 2022 regular meeting are presented. Ms. Lynch made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Ms. Saul seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 8 ayes (Crisman, Hartley, Holst, Larson, Leeper, Lynch, Moser and Saul), and 0 nays.
  
- 2.) The first item of business was a presentation regarding the Cedar Falls Bicycle Plan Update. Andrew Shroll, 930 Newman Avenue, Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, spoke on behalf of the committee regarding the updated Bicycle Network Plan. The plan is the result of substantial work by the City, the committee and public input. As a committee, the mission is to improve the quality of life through safe biking and walking. The more connected biking and walking are physically, the more connected the community becomes. Continuity of the network and intersection improvements are two of the biggest ways to improve safety and remove barriers to entry for riders of various skill levels. The goal is also to further increase community participation in utilizing this resource. The committee hopes that this network is viewed as fitting well with city planning for bikeability and walkability as well as broader plans, such as the Black Hawk County MPO Pedestrian Master Plan.

Ms. Howard stated that this is actually the next item on the agenda and Mr. Sevy will provide background information. He thanked the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee for all the work that was put into this Plan Update. He explained why the plan is being updated, explaining the pride for the bike network, the relevance of the plan, regular review of the bike network and Council referral in 2019. Matthew Tolan, EI, Civil Engineer II discussed previous iterations of the plan and the 2045 MPO Bikeway Plan. He discussed what will be discussed for the proposed 2022 plan update.

Mr. Sevy discussed the parameters of the project, including:

- BPAC prioritizing commuting utility of bike network
- no widening of streets or rights-of-way would be considered
- design options for the most common street width
- putting in bike lanes instead of currently existing on-street parking
- sidewalks were not considered bike infrastructure for the purposes of this plan
- multi-use trails are generally only placed along street frontages with limited driveways and/or cross-streets
- and, on-street facilities can be safer for bicyclists where motorists are more likely to see them.

Matthew Tolan, EI, Civil Engineer II, discussed the design considerations and concerns, some of which included curb and gutter, parking lane considerations, right-of-way acquisitions and costs, and the costs of widening the road.

Mr. Sevy spoke to the methodology and timeline of the planning process for the update. Staff developed a plan map for the basis of discussion and the committee helped staff refine the plan map. Public feedback was sought for the developed plan map, and staff analyzed the data from the questionnaire responses and the refined map is being brought to the Commission for consideration and referral to Council.

Mr. Tolan discussed the engineering timeline and approval process. Mr. Sevy further explained the public outreach process, the questionnaire for public feedback that was submitted and responses provided. He also listed the areas of public interest from the questionnaire responses. Mr. Tolan explained how to read the map, discussed the different areas of public interest and the projects that are currently in construction for 2022. Mr. Sevy explained the schedule for the plan update process, and noted that this will be for discussion at this time and will be brought to the next Planning and Zoning meeting.

Daryl Kruse, 2725 Minnetonka Drive, commented on the east/west connection between Hudson and Main Street on 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets. Those appear to be share the road and he could see an opportunity to alternate to 17<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets. He feels that a big vehicle many times will not see bicycles and he feels this will potentially be a safer route as it will take the bicycles off the main thoroughfare.

Kathy Green, 1911 Timber Drive thanked the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee for their work on the plan. She did ask if something can be done to trigger the lights to turn green when bicycles are present. She also noted concerns with distracted drivers.

Ms. Lynch thanked everyone involved for the robustness of the plan. She noted that we have an amazing trail system and she is looking forward to see what will come in the future.

Ms. Saul seconded that and asked about the five year plan and the new things that have been added. She asked why that is not on the list in the next three to four years. Mr. Tolan explained that the plan is developed as a whole from looking at where there may be some infills that are needed to incorporate some of the projects that need to be integrated in. They would also like to have some long term goals for when funds become available.

Ms. Moser commended the plan and commented that she appreciates the public comments about safety and noted her concern with the commuter travelers are going to be going faster than recreational users and some of the trails are out of the way from where many of them would need to go. Mr. Sevy explained that this was certainly part of staff's concern as well and that it was something that was discussed. The limitations of street widths and type of streets have made this more difficult.

Ms. Crisman asked if there were concerns with current streets located in the center of town and whether there was any suggestion to move from 12<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> Street to other routes. Mr. Sevy explained that there has been some feedback on those routes and a desire to have more dedicated infrastructure. However, there would be a public process that would be involved to add more dedicated bike infrastructure along those routes and at this time it doesn't seem that there was the will to go through that process. Ms. Howard also explained that the gridded area on the map is called out as a bicycle friendly area due to the general low volume of traffic which can make it easier and safer to ride.

- 3.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was an amendment of the RP Master Plan for Autumn Ridge Development. This item has been deferred.
- 4.) The next item on the agenda was a preliminary plat for Autumn Ridge 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Additions.

This item has been deferred.

- 5.) The next item of business was an RP Site Plan Review for the Cove at Spruce Hills. This item has been deferred.
- 6.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was an MU Master Plan amendment for Pinnacle Prairie Development. Chair Leeper introduced the item and Mr. Weintraut provided background information. He explained that this item was discussed at the previous Planning and Zoning meeting. It is requested to change the land use from multi-family and mixed use to Western Home. They are proposing to build 19 two-family units on two lots on the north and south side of Wild Rye Way. He provided a rendering of the proposed master plan that showed how the homes will be laid out on the lot. He discussed the proposed elevations and made himself available for any questions. Staff recommends approval of the change.

Mr. Holst and Ms. Lynch abstained from the item.

Ms. Saul made a motion to approve the item. Mr. Hartley seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 6 ayes (Crisman, Hartley, Larson, Leeper, Moser and Saul), 2 abstentions (Holst and Lynch) and 0 nays.

- 7.) The Commission then considered a zoning text amendment to add a requirement for Planning and Zoning review of site plans in the CD-DT. Chair Leeper introduced the item and Ms. Howard provided background information. She explained that some commission members were not on the commission when the new code was discussed, so she will be providing some background information again. She explained that there was concern and frustration with the fact that it seemed as though a great deal of projects had to come through the commission for approval. The idea behind the new code was to create more clear and objective standards in the code, making less reason to have an extra review by the Commission. She discussed the role of the Commission, which includes planning for the future growth of the city, making recommendations on legislative matters related to planning and zoning (amendments to the zoning code, changes to zoning map, etc.) and making recommendations on subdivision of land, including street extensions and proposals for parks. Review of site plans was not one of the official listed duties and was added to the code later for certain newer zoning and overlay districts.

Ms. Howard discussed potential options which include:

1. Maintain the code as currently adopted
2. Maintain as currently adopted, but staff provides monthly report to the Commission on site plans under review.
3. Require new buildings in the UG, UG2 and Storefront frontages to be reviewed and approved by Planning and Zoning.
4. Require all new buildings in the Downtown Character District to be reviewed and approved by Planning and Zoning
5. Require all site plans to be reviewed by Planning and Zoning and approved by City Council as was previously done in the CBD Overlay.

Mr. Larson feels that one of the primary objectives of the new zoning ordinance was to provide a clear set of rules and make it easier for developers and to potentially remove an often unnecessary step for the process. He suggested trying out option two to make sure there is some kind of a review.

Ms. Crisman also likes the second option and stated that she feels a bit discouraged by how many things have been coming back from council that the commission has put so much work into. She's not sure that adding another thing for approval is a great idea if things that have

been worked so hard on are going to come back again. She likes the idea of staying in the loop and checking in on the work already done.

Mr. Holst feels that the new zoning process is a lot more efficient and less subjective so it is easier to check things through. The only thing that will be unfortunate to lose is the chance for public input. He also said that Planning and Zoning is a check for staff.

Mr. Leeper agreed with the comments from the Commission and stated that it is a tough place to be. He likes the second option and asked if there is a mechanism that would allow the planning and zoning commission to pull an item in for approval.

Mr. Hartley feels that it would be nice to have an overview for projects, maybe in the form of a monthly report so that the Commission can decide if they should take a closer look. His concern isn't just with the Commission not being able to see what is going to happen, but to give the public a chance to comment as well.

Ms. Howard stated that there needs to be a clear path created to deciding on whether a project needs to be considered by the Commission. After further conversation, the general direction from the Commission to go with a mixture of options two and three.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas A. Weintraut, AICP  
Acting Community Services Manager



Joanne Goodrich  
Administrative Assistant