

**Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
March 11, 2020  
City Hall Council Chambers  
220 Clay Street, Cedar Falls, Iowa**

**MINUTES**

The Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 220 Clay Street, Cedar Falls, Iowa. The following Commission members were present: Hartley, Holst, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux, and Wingert. Adkins, Larson and Saul were absent. Karen Howard, Community Services Manager, Stephanie Houk Sheetz, Director of Community Development, and Shane Graham, Economic Development Coordinator, were also present.

- 1.) Chair Holst noted the Minutes from the February 26, 2020 regular meeting are presented. Ms. Prideaux made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Mr. Leeper seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 6 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux and Wingert), and 0 nays.
- 2.) The first item of business was the downtown site plan review for Community Bank and Trust. Chair Holst introduced the item and Ms. Howard provided background information. She explained that a new Community Bank and Trust is proposed to be rebuilt on the site where the existing bank is located. The owner is proposing to build a smaller structure with a two lane drive-through with a covered patio along Clay Street. The site is currently zoned C-2, Commercial and is in the Central Business District Overlay zone. The proposed use is allowed. Ms. Howard discussed the planned setbacks noting that the maximum setback of 10 feet is exceeded. She discussed the allowance for exceptions to the rule. Staff is recommending an exception due to the difficulty created by the sloping nature of the site and constraints caused by the existing building. She noted that the outdoor plaza space proposed by the bank is intended to visually bring the building forward to address the street. She also noted that parking, landscaping, and streetscape requirements have been satisfied.

Ms. Howard also discussed design standards, such as proportion to adjacent buildings, noting that while greater utilization of the downtown site is desirable, the bank is reserving the remainder of the site for further development and creating a stronger presence at the corner. She noted that the roof shape, pitch and direction are acceptable, as is the building pattern. The building composition does not technically meet the standards, but staff feels that an exception to the standard may be warranted as the size, scale and rhythm created by the structure are acceptable as it still creates visual interest.

Ms. Howard spoke about the windows and transparency noting that the current plan proposes a large wall of glass of a light blue color. The CBD Overlay standards require clear and transparent windows to maximize the views into the building and allow a variety of uses of the building over time. Staff finds the request to vary from the code standard does not qualify for an exception as there is no practical difficulty in meeting the standard. An acceptable alternative would be to use clear and transparent glass on the lower glass panes at the storefront level while allowing the upper panes to be blue glass as desired by the bank.

Ms. Howard noted that the criterion have been met for materials and texture, color, and the architectural detailing. According to code, entryways are to be at grade with the fronting sidewalks. The site slopes from west to east and ground elevation is approximately three feet below the floor elevation of the building, so the entryway along Clay Street does not meet the

standard of being at the same grade as the sidewalk. To establish a pedestrian entrance along Clay Street a covered outdoor plaza is proposed with an accessible ramp and stairs. It will provide an accessible transition from the sidewalk to the building and will create a prominent entrance to the building. Staff recommends approval of the exception due to the sloping nature of the site. Trash dumpster and storm water management plans are acceptable, as are the plans for signage. Staff recommends gathering any comments from the public and Planning and Zoning Commission and continuing the discussion at the next meeting.

Bob Seymour, 2710 Country Meadow Lane, representing Community Bank and Trust, spoke about the project noting that it will be a significant investment. He discussed the window color issue, noting that they feel it is aesthetically pleasing, it's not a storefront and isn't on Main Street. He explains that the tint is minor and that it supports the bank's brand. They would like to be allowed to use the tinted glass.

Kim Bear (3815 Union Road), Events and Promotions Coordinator/Interim Director of Community Main Street, thanked Community Bank & Trust for their continued investment in downtown. She reported on the review from the Community Main Street Design Committee, which has also been submitted in writing. The committee had some concerns with the building design and feel the building needs to be designed to outlast the tenant and feels that the blue glass, in particular, might be something to be reconsidered.

Mr. Leeper stated that in general he likes contemporary buildings, but has some concerns about the proposed design of the bank. With regard to the blue glass, he feels that in years to come it will become dated. He also feels that the proposed design is not in keeping with the recently adopted community vision for downtown. It is more suburban in design and will not contribute to the density desired in the downtown. Ms. Prideaux stated she has the same concerns and asked about the idea of adding a wall along the 1<sup>st</sup> Street frontage to make it feel like the development is filling more of the site. Mr. Leeper stated that the main building entrance on the west side of the building will prevent any additional development to the west in the future that might fill in more of the site. Mr. Holst was also concerned but also noted that the usage isn't changing from what is there now.

Ms. Prideaux inquired if the applicant could provide a visualization of how the building would look on the site in comparison with adjacent development and also how it would look if the southern portion was developed in the future as indicated by the bank.

Mr. Seymour stated that the way the site plan has been designed, has been done to leave the south half of the site open for more potential development to allow for growth. He noted that they could provide that visualization at the next meeting.

Mr. Wingert asked if it would be possible to extend some feature of the building or a wall of similar design to the west to tie it closer to the alley to use more of the frontage. He stated that in general he doesn't have an issue with the project. Ms. Prideaux asked for a panoramic view to show the context of the project.

The item was continued to the next meeting.

- 3.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was an easement vacation request for the Community Bank and Trust. Chair Holst introduced the item and Ms. Howard provided background information. She explained that at the northeast corner of the property there is a 370 square foot easement that was dedicated in the late 1980s for the storm sewer that cuts across the site. It is proposed to vacate a portion of the easement in order to construct the new building closer to the corner of the site. A new smaller easement would be granted to the City to protect the space needed for the storm sewer. Staff recommends gathering any additional

comments from the Commission and continuing the discussion at the March 25, 2020 meeting.

Bob Seymour came forward to state that they appreciate the city working with them to vacate the easement and make the project possible.

The item was continued to the next meeting.

- 4.) The Commission then considered an amendment to a downtown site plan review for River Place Plaza. Ms. Sheetz provided background information. She explained that a review of Lot 3 of River Place Addition on the corner of Second and State Streets. Changes are being proposed that would require discussion with the Commission. She noted that a great deal of background was included in the packet for new Commission and Council members, but she will just touch on the essentials. Ms. Sheetz noted that the master plan has been amended a couple times and gave a summary of the changes. Some of the project is already completed, which will affect any changes going forward. She discussed proposed changes to: lighting, benches and trash receptacles, bike racks, brick pattern, landscaping beds, restrooms, drinking fountain, stairs, corner of State & 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, sponsorship and signage and a moveable stage. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:
- a) Change single-head Lumec Serenade light to a double head light
  - b) Move one decorative bench
  - c) Use U-shaped bike racks
  - d) Complete restroom facilities by July 1, 2021
  - e) All signage will require a permit
  - f) Revise Development Agreement to include the 2020 site plan
  - g) Public access easements will be provided as outlined in the Development Agreement and amendments thereto
  - h) All technical review comments must be met

Ms. Sheetz noted that the first three items have been met. Mr. Holst asked who maintains the restrooms and the plaza itself. Ms. Sheetz stated that those details are still being worked out. At this time they will be open privately. Mr. Holst asked about the use of synthetic grass.

Mark Kittrell, 200 State Street, thanked everyone for their help during this project. He stated that this is the last portion of the project. He discussed the history of the project and coordination with the City and others. The Commission asked about the public art locations and the proposed stage.

Mr. Wingert asked about the drainage with the proposed synthetic turf. Mark Kieper, Ritland Kieper Architects, stated that the turf system is built with a drainage gravel layer and a subdrainage system that will drain in the middle. The turf has a limited lifetime warranty and stays cooler than pavers.

Deanna Nelson, 3127 Alameda, stated that feedback that has been received has shown that people would like to have the turf for children's ability to play on it and it would be better with regard to heat. She also noted that snow removal is possible on the turf as well.

Kim Bear stated the support from Community Main Street.

Pete Murphy, 1904 Grand Boulevard, stated that he would like to see the drinking fountain put in per the original agreement. It will be a nice amenity for kids and families on hot days.

Mr. Wingert commended the developer for his time and investment into this project.

Mr. Leeper encouraged the developer to work with the public art committee to think of options

for the location of public art that would not be affected by the location of the stage.

Mr. Wingert made a motion to approve the item subject to recommendations by staff. Mr. Hartley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 6 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux and Wingert), and 0 nays.

- 5.) The next item of business was a land use map amendment to address the Industrial Park expansion. Mr. Graham provided background information. He explained that the City purchased approximately 200 acres of farm ground west of the City limits for the continued expansion of the Industrial Park. The City is annexing about 244 acres and wants to designate this on the future land use map. The City will also want to rezone the property as well. Mr. Graham explained the proposed designation and displayed where they are located. Staff recommends gathering comments from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the public relating to the request and bringing it back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Holst asked about the level of support from the neighborhood. Mr. Graham stated that the response has been good and that the neighbors signed the voluntary annexation. Staff is keeping them informed and involved.

Mr. Wingert asked about plans for improvements to the roads. Mr. Graham stated that Viking Road is in the CIP for improvement, but there are currently no plans for Union Road.

The matter will be continued at the next meeting.

- 6.) The next item for consideration was the Industrial Park Expansion rezoning from A-1 to R-1 and M-1, P. Chair Holst introduced the item and Mr. Graham provided background information. He explained that the City is annexing about 244 acres at the southeast corner of Viking Road and South Union Road. Once property is annexed it is automatically zoned A-1, Agriculture. From there rezoning occurs when needed. It is proposed to rezone the proposed Industrial Park ground and the CFU electrical substation to M-1, P and the six existing residential lots located along Viking Road to R-1. The property located at the corner of S. Union Road will not be rezoned as the existing use fits within the A-1 District. He discussed sanitary sewer and water main extensions, roadway access and the development concept plan. Staff recommends gathering comments from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the public relating to the request and bringing it back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Leeper commended the City on planning for the future. Mr. Wingert asked if the detention basins will be wet or dry. Mr. Graham stated that the one along Viking Road would be wet, as well as the one next to the substation.

The matter will be continued at the next meeting.

- 7.) As there were no further comments, Mr. Wingert made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hartley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 6 ayes (Hartley, Holst, Leeper, Lynch, Prideaux and Wingert), and 0 nays.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Howard  
Community Services Manager



Joanne Goodrich  
Administrative Clerk