

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

City Hall – Council Chambers

May 17, 2021

The Committee of the Whole met at City Hall at 5:20 p.m. on May 17, 2021, with the following Committee persons in attendance: Mayor Robert M. Green, Frank Darrah, Sudan deBuhr, Kelly Dunn, Simon Harding, Daryl Kruse, Mark Miller, and Dave Sires. Staff members from all City Departments and members of the community attended in person and teleconferenced in.

Mayor Green called the meeting to order and introduced the first item on the agenda, the Planning & Zoning Commission's Recommended Draft of the Downtown Zoning Ordinance. Karen Howard, Planning and Community Services Manager introduced Ms. Mary Madden and Mr. Geoff Ferrell from Ferrell Madden and Ms. Elizabeth Garvin with Community ReCode.

Ms. Howard gave an overview of the zoning code review, adoption and public review process to date.

Ms. Madden gave an overview of the basis of the recommended draft of the Downtown Zoning Ordinance that included the project introduction, project study area, Charrette week, Downtown Vision Plan adopted by City Council in 2019, Vision Plan recommendations, and translating the vision into development regulations.

Mr. Ferrell gave a walk-through of the proposed code that included form-based code components, character district sections, definitions, regulating plans, building form standards, architectural standards, public realm standards, parking and loading, and building functions.

Ms. Garvin gave an overview of the administrative updates, which included the site plan review process, proportionate compliance, minor adjustments and land use classification updates.

Ms. Madden explained the amendments that the Planning and Zoning Commission made to the initial draft of the code.

Ms. Howard stated the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommended draft is available at ourcedarfalls.com; the public can submit questions and comments to planning@cedarfalls.com and a decision matrix will be drafted for any requests for amendments. Ms. Howard gave an overview of the tentative timeline for the next steps: June 7-Council Work Session, June 21-Council Work Session, July 19-Committee of the Whole, August 2-Public Hearing/First Reading, August 16-Second Reading, and September 7-Third Reading/Adoption.

Mayor Green opened it for public comment. Councilmember Harding asked if a self-employed resident can work in their home. Ms. Madden confirmed this would be permitted. There is no change to the home occupation regulations in the code. Councilmember Kruse expressed concerns about the allocated parking; required building line; and asked if the City Council would get to review building plans if the zoning review committee doesn't agree with the building. Ms. Madden verified the building line has room for articulation and a variance can be requested, but any request for a variance would be reviewed by the Board of Adjustment per Iowa law. Mr. Ferrell verified the standards are flexible and only a percentage of the building from building wall must be on the required building line. Ms. Howard stated that all of the current

zoning districts included in the downtown study area are older zones and currently don't require Planning and Zoning or City Council approval, except those in the Central Business District Overlay. Ms. Howard stated that the proposed code aims to streamline the process for the developer and adds certainty to the community of what the results will be. Mayor Green asked about feedback from developers. Ms. Howard stated the developers have indicated interest in the streamlined process; they just want to know what they can build and what the standards are, even though there are more regulations on the books. Councilmember Kruse expressed concern about the appeal process and asked if someone can appeal to Council. Ms. Garvin stated that under Iowa Law an appeal is reviewed by the Board of Adjustment. Mayor confirmed the code is meant to set standards that developers can follow and someone can appeal to Council because they were not following the set standards that are in place. Ms. Howard confirmed the goal is to be more clear and objective in our standards of our zoning ordinance, so there is less gray area for interpretation. Councilmember Sires disagrees with removing Planning and Zoning from the process and wants to speak to the downtown. Councilmember deBuhr asked if there was any feedback from homeowners and has concern about banning vinyl siding. Ms. Howard indicated that the Commission discussed and made changes to the draft code to allow vinyl siding under certain circumstances and the matrix lays out the pros and cons. Ms. Howard stated many calls were received from neighborhood residents regarding the new code and most viewed it positively, some of these residents are zoned commercial at this time and the new code will recognize these areas as residential. Councilmember Darrah encouraged the Council to address the concerns at the Work Sessions and encourages developers to give input.

Mayor Green introduced the second item on the agenda, Recreation Update by J.J. Lillibridge, Recreation and Community Programs Manager.

Mr. Lillibridge gave an overview of the recreation team, background on the recreation center, The Falls Aquatic Center, athletics, and fitness provided by the Recreation Center. Mr. Lillibridge explained the response during COVID-19 and how they have accommodated since re-opening in June. Mr. Lillibridge reflected back on the 2019 feasibility study and where are we going (current trends in Parks and Recreation, market study in Cedar Valley, pricing and understanding our costs, collaborative partnerships, and what is our role in the community). Mr. Lillibridge stated that we are more than facilities (parks, trails, Hearst Center for the Arts, Falls Aquatics Center, Community Center, and the Recreation and Fitness Center) and they want to provide unique experiences and provide the best services. Mr. Lillibridge explained you can't do any of these things without the people or the participants and we want to allow the participants to tell their story. Councilmember Darrah asked since the Place to Play Park has had such great success are there future plans for additional parks or implementation of that equipment in other parks. Mr. Lillibridge stated it's important that our parks and trails are inclusive and have easy accessibility; we are looking at those inclusive items, but want to make sure it's not oversaturated. Mayor Green asked about summer hiring challenges this year. Mr. Lillibridge stated we are trying to be creative and appeal to the younger generation with hiring and will be conducting walk-in interviews for the front desk, councilors, youth sports and lifeguards.

There being no further business, Mayor Green adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Minutes by Kim Kerr, Administrative Supervisor