

## MINUTES OF THE CITY OF AMES PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

AMES, IA

JANUARY 17, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Mike Sullivan at 7:00 p.m. on January 17, 2024 in the Council Chambers at 515 Clark Avenue. Commission Members present were Mike Clayton, Mike Sullivan, Jon Emery, Mike LaPietra, Matthew Voss, and Julie Winter.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Emery, seconded by Clayton, to approve the Agenda for the meeting of January 17, 2024. Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion passed.

### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2023 MEETING

Moved by Voss, seconded by LaPietra, to approve the Minutes of the December 6, 2023 meeting. Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion passed.

Julie Winter arrived at 7:04 p.m.

### PUBLIC FORUM

Chairperson Sullivan opened the public forum and closed it when no one came forward to speak.

### REZONE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF AMES AT 210 SOUTH 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET FROM AGRICULTURE TO HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL WITH AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE OVERLAY

Planner Justin Moore presented the staff report. He stated the property is approximately 3 acres, is currently zoned Agricultural and is part of the Open Space Designation in Ames Plan 2040. The property has been owned by the Boys and Girls Club since 1997 and the request is to rezone it to Highway Oriented Commercial, which would better fit their future needs and plans for expansion. Mr. Moore stated the property has an O-E Overlay (Environmentally Sensitive Overlay) and must adhere to all floodplain development standards for any development on the site.

Julie Winter asked about the floodway fringe standard. Mr. Moore said the options are either elevation on compacted fill, with a requirement that the elevation for the lowest floor of any new building is base flood elevation plus three feet above that; or floodproofing with designed reinforced floodproof walls.

Chairperson Sullivan opened and closed public comments when no one came forward to speak.

Greg Broussard with Bolton and Menk addressed the Commission. He stated the applicant was requesting the rezone to be able to do a building expansion, and changing to Highway Oriented Commercial would help with the setback requirements on the site.

Moved by Clayton, seconded by Voss, to recommend that the City Council approve the request to rezone 3.22 acres of the property at 210 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street from "A" (Agricultural) with the O-E (Environmentally Sensitive Overlay) to "HOC" (Highway Oriented Commercial) District with the O-E (Environmentally Sensitive Overlay). Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion passed.

**REZONE WITH A MASTER PLAN FOR CAMPUS GARAGE AT 102 AND 116 HYLAND AVENUE FROM RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY TO NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL**

Planner Justin Moore presented the staff report. He stated the property owner, M&C Properties, aka Campus Garage, is requesting to rezone the property from Residential High Density “RH” to Neighborhood Commercial “NC” with a Master Plan. The owner plans to expand the parking lot area to the north of the building. The current use is non-conforming and it will remain as such, but the land use designation of Urban Corridor more closely aligns with Neighborhood Commercial zoning. The Master Plan is included because of the non-conforming status and illustrates the general conceptual design for the landscaping and parking lot, as well as the proposed changes to the site including circulation configuration and the elimination of some existing curb cuts to improve the spacing at the intersection of Lincoln Way and Hyland Avenue. Mr. Moore added the University West Impact Overlay is also in place and will continue to apply.

Matthew Voss asked what greater flexibility the rezone would allow since the property will remain non-conforming. Mr. Moore stated Neighborhood Commercial has a broader range of commercial uses that can be applied with a broad retail and office component, whereas Residential High Density allows for only select uses with residential. Planning Director Kelly Diekmann said the greatest advantage to the property owner is that a commercial zone would allow for the parking lot addition to the north. If it remained residential, the non-conforming use and non-conforming site improvements would not allow for any change on the site. He added the change would be a win-win for the property owner and the City with the improvements to the site now and with future consistency of Plan 2040 objectives for the Urban Corridor.

Chairperson Sullivan opened and closed public comments when no one came forward to speak.

Greg Broussard addressed the Commission on behalf of the property owner and said the applicant is excited for the option to move forward and the continued opportunity to serve Ames with the reconfiguration of the site.

Moved by Emery, seconded by LaPietra, to recommend that the City Council approve the request to rezone .39 acres at 102 and 116 Hyland Avenue from “RH” (Residential High Density) with the O-UIW (University West Impact Overlay) to “NC” (Neighborhood Commercial) District with the O-UIW (University West Impact Overlay) and with a Master Plan. Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion passed.

**ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO ALLOW FOR TWO-FAMILY (DUPLEX) HOMES WITHIN ALL RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS**

Planner Eloise Sahlstrom presented the staff report summarizing the public input process, City Council direction, and proposed standards. Council had expressed concern in October about the effect on the Near Campus Neighborhood area, which resulted in an increase to the minimum lot size in that area for two-family dwellings and implementation of the occupancy standards incorporated into the draft.

Ms. Sahlstrom summarized the changes to the Zoning Ordinance. She stated a new section in the Code, 29.410(2), will relate to the requirements for two-family dwellings. It expands the residential zoning districts where two-family dwellings are allowed; Existing single-family homes will not be allowed to convert to two-family use; Each dwelling unit will require two parking spaces with a garage space for one of the spaces for each unit; Driveway standards include spacing between driveways and an allowance for two driveway cuts; Design and orientation requirements specify the units must be two identifiable separate units in appearance when both front doors face the street, or

when they do not face the street then they can have the appearance of one larger building, and dwellings located on a corner lot can have a front door and driveway facing the different streets; Recessed façades for entrances cannot be set back more than 12 feet from the primary façade; Primary façades have a minimum solid to void ratio of 15% for windows and transparency; Infill must be compatible with existing neighborhood character. A Zoning Permit from the Planning Department would be required prior to issuance of a Building Permit to allow for review for compliance with the two-family standards of the zoning ordinance.

Director Diekmann stated staff is proposing to modify the driveway separation requirements to allow for the Planning & Housing Director to allow a lot with a two-family dwelling to split the driveway and have two driveways.

Mike Clayton asked if a development with restrictive covenants for single-family homes would supersede the proposed changes. Ms. Sahlstrom said yes, restrictive covenants would override. Mr. Diekmann added it would be the same situation as the recently approved allowance for ADUs.

Jon Emery said mixing duplexes and single-family homes in the same neighborhood does not work for him and he is not in favor of it. He said he is concerned about the look and compatibility of duplexes in established neighborhoods and does not think they are typically maintained to the same level as single-family homes.

Julie Winter stated she respectfully, wholeheartedly, disagreed with Mr. Emery, but said she did not think she could vote in favor of the proposal for a different reason: Council's decision of not allowing existing single-family homes to become duplexes. She said it would be a great way to increase density and provide a variety of rental options. She added she lived in duplexes in Ames during her time in college and appreciated not having to live in a large apartment complex. Ms. Winter said she read through the public outreach comments and understood why the decision was made, but she believes it is a missed opportunity and did not know if she could support voting for it the way it was written. She stated she would like to see a revisit on how to include existing structures.

Mike LaPietra stated there are duplexes in his neighborhood that have not had a negative impact on the neighborhood or affected sales in the area. Mr. Diekmann clarified the homes in Greensboro Circle area are not duplexes, rather, they are single-family attached homes with individual lots, except for one property that is an actual duplex.

Discussion was held about zones that allow for single-family attached homes.

Matthew Voss stated he was leaning toward Ms. Winter's viewpoint, although he would vote for Alternative 1. He said he understood the hesitations, but believes it is worth exploring options to convert existing structures and it should be considered.

Mike Sullivan stated he agreed with Ms. Winter and Mr. Voss and would prefer to allow duplexes in existing neighborhoods, but said something is better than nothing, and he would prefer to allow the proposed changes so that duplexes could be built in Ames.

Ms. Winter clarified her earlier statement of not supporting the recommendation, but said she felt very strongly that existing homes should be able to be converted, and the lack of affordable housing in Ames makes it especially important.

Director Diekmann explained the reason behind not allowing existing structures to be converted. He said in the housing element of the Comprehensive Plan there is a goal to have diversified housing opportunities at different price points, and the City cannot create ownership housing with new

construction under \$250,000. The only housing supply that is available for ownership housing at this price level, are the ones that exists. Staff is very sensitive to eroding that ownership housing opportunity and turning it over to investor properties to expand rental options. Two-family homes in new neighborhoods would not be eroding any existing housing stock. Another goal in the Comprehensive Plan is to have housing production produce more ownership units than rental units over the next 20 years; currently the split is 60% rental units and 40% ownership and the City would like to see that flipped.

Chairperson Sullivan opened and closed public comment when no one came forward to speak.

Moved by Emery to approve Alternative 3. The motion was not seconded. Motion failed.

Moved by Voss, seconded by LaPietra, to recommend that the City Council approve the draft text amendments to Chapter 29, included as Attachment 'B', allowing two-family dwellings in all residential districts described herein. Vote on Motion: 5-1. Motion passed.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS**


Mr. Emery asked if there were any agenda items for the next meeting. Mr. Diekmann said there will most likely not be a meeting on February 7, 2024.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

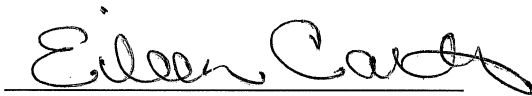
Mr. Diekmann gave a brief overview of the short-term housing task force and an update on the Planning and Housing work plan.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Emery to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.



Michael Sullivan, Chairperson



Eileen Carter, Recording Secretary