

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF AMES PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

AMES, IA

MARCH 6, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Mike Sullivan at 7:00 p.m. on March 6, 2024 in the Council Chambers at 515 Clark Avenue. Commission Members present were Mike Clayton, Mike Sullivan, Jon Emery, Mike LaPietra, Matthew Voss, and Jim Blickensdorf.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Emery, seconded by LaPietra, to approve the Agenda for the meeting of March 6, 2024. Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2024 MEETING

Moved by Voss, seconded by Clayton, to approve the Minutes of the January 17, 2024 meeting. Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion passed.

Julie Winter arrived at 7:03 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

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

PUBLIC HEARING ON A MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF AMES AT 210 SOUTH 5TH STREET

Planner Justin Moore presented the staff report. He stated the request is for a proposed expansion at the Boys & Girls Club for additional programming space and additional parking. The Major Site Development Plan is a requirement with the Environmentally Sensitive Overlay as the proposed parking lot expansion would extend into the regulatory floodway within the floodplain.

Mr. Moore said a key requirement in the floodway is that any development does not create a rise or obstruction in the floodway. The owner's engineer submitted a Certification of No Rise that staff reviewed and concurs with. An Environmental Assessment Report has also been reviewed by staff and there are no impacts to the Environmentally Sensitive Overlay area. The design proposes a total of 46 parking stalls, bringing it up to current standards. Landscaping is being provided which includes existing front yard evergreen trees along with lower growth plantings, a bio cell, and other plantings around the property.

Jon Emery asked if the playground would remain in the same place as he was concerned about the floodplain and keeping water out of the area. Mr. Moore said there will still be a playground to the south of the building, and one of the requirements to meeting floodplain development standards is that the applicant has to bring the entire building up to flood protection standards. There are two options to accomplish the requirement, and the applicant is going with the option of a floodproofed reinforced wall, which means the walls would be essentially waterproof.

Eric Cowles of Bolton & Menk addressed the Commission representing the Boys & Girls Club. The Commission had no questions for him.

Moved by LaPietra, seconded by Clayton, to recommend that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan for 210 South 5th Street with the following conditions that:

- A. Final Review of Floodproofed wall design is found to be complete and compliant prior to City Council approval.
- B. Allow credit of 3 Evergreen trees west of the parking lot as part of an Alternative Landscape Plan for parking lot trees.

Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion Passed.

PUBLIC HEARING ON A MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR CREEKSIDE TOWNHOMES AT 3216 TRIPP STREET

Planner Justin Moore presented the staff report and said the Major Site Development Plan is for the City's affordable housing project as part of the Baker Subdivision. The proposal is for a 38-unit multi-family housing development. The design is arranged with six groups of separate, two-story apartment units and two groups with two separate units upstairs and downstairs. Landscaping will be provided throughout the site, and the building elevations have a generous amount of modular brick with porches that come out over the doorways. The units range from 2 to 4 bedrooms with many being 3 or 4 to accommodate families. The site has a PUD Master Plan, which the design complies with it. Parking is being provided on site through surface level parking and all of the buildings are two stories that will blend very well into the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Emery asked if there was a way to ensure that students would not occupy the majority of the units. Mr. Diekmann explained with the LIHTC program financing, there are limitations on the statuses of students that relate to whether or not one could qualify for a unit, and it will be the federal tax requirements that will determine how the units are rented out.

Michael Kiernan of Hatch Kiernan Galloway Development addressed the Commission and stated his company specializes in Section 42 of LIHTC, affordable housing development. Mr. Kiernan provided background on how his company came to be the developer of the site and said the 38 units will be income restricted and will come with 30-year covenants for affordable housing. He said the rental rates would be \$895 per month for a four bedroom, \$815 for a three bedroom and \$675 for a two bedroom. Mr. Kiernan explained that the development is governed by the IRS, Section 42, which in most cases prohibits full-time students from living in affordable housing due to cases of abuse in the past. The development is also serving as a pilot program, and a first for the State of Iowa, in using a public utility for geothermal under a private development which would serve the 38 units. The goal is to begin construction on April 15, 2024 and have leases begin in June of 2025.

Mike Clayton asked what kind of input staff received from public outreach efforts on the design of the development. Mr. Diekmann said the design has remained basically the same as was proposed a year ago, and the neighbors set the parameters with the two-story townhouse look. Mr.

Moore added that those in attendance at the neighborhood meeting seemed very pleased with the design as it was crafted from the neighborhood input.

Director Diekmann pointed out the fact that there were no neighbors in attendance at the meeting, which could be taken as an endorsement of the project.

Julie Winter asked if geothermal was part of the consideration of the proposed site plan. Mr. Kiernan said the geothermal was still being worked out, and he has been very impressed with City staff in working through it. Mr. Diekmann said the geothermal works with the site plan, and if it is modified for some reason, there should not be any meaningful change to the site plan as the wells are planned to be underneath the parking lot. Ames Electric is installing the geothermal wells and the developer is connecting to the system. Jon Emery asked if there would be any solar installation at the site. Mr. Kiernan said solar was not included in the design.

Move by Clayton, seconded by Winter, to recommend that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan for 3216 Tripp Street for a 38-unit Multi-Family Affordable Housing Development and that the proposal meets the RM zoning, PUD Masterplan and Major Site Development Plan criteria. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion passed.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

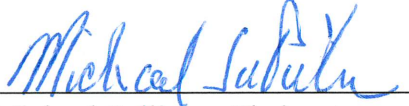
Jon Emery stated it would be his last meeting if there was not another meeting in March. He said he enjoyed serving on the Commission, that it has been very interesting, and he has learned a lot. He implored the Commission to do no harm and to remember that Ames is full of neighborhoods and people, not just businesses.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Diekmann said City Council took up part of the short-term housing task force recommendations from the Ames Economic Development Commission who had asked Council to consider some incentives for housing construction, as well as changes to development requirements, and to look at the policies for cost sharing on infrastructure. Staff brought tax abatement back to Council last week and they are in the process of initiating a citywide Urban Revitalization Area that should allow for partial property tax abatement on construction of new housing. The public hearing will be in April, but it will not come to the Commission. The other issues of development requirements and policies related to infrastructure will be coming back quickly, which would eventually turn into code amendments and text amendments that the Commission will be making recommendations on.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Emery to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.



Michael Sullivan, Chairperson
LaPietra



Eileen Carter, Recording Secretary

