

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMES ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

AMES, IOWA

JUNE 12, 2024

The Ames Zoning Board of Adjustment met, pursuant to law, in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m. on March 20, 2024, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. The following members were present: Chad Schneider, Caleb Whitehouse, Leah Patton, Julie Kruse and Marshall McDaniel. Also, present were Assistant City Attorney Vikki Feilmeyer, and City Planner Eloise Sahlstrom

Election of Officers:

Moved by Whitehouse, seconded by Patton, to nominate Schneider for the office of Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Schneider, seconded by Kruse, to nominate Patton for the office of Vice Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes; March 20, 2024:

Moved by Whitehouse seconded by Schneider to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2024, Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

Vote on Motion: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously. Kruse & McDaniel no vote as this is their first meeting.

CASE NO. 24-06

Public Hearing on a request for a Special Use Permit for a Rock-Climbing Facility within the General Industrial (GI) Zoning District at 525 E 2nd St. (Parcel number 09-02-476-040)

Planner Eloise Sahlstrom stated the applicant is looking to lease one of the warehouse buildings on this site. There is a total of 46,635 sq feet in seven different buildings that are all connected. They are looking to use the building on the SE end of the property with access from E. 2nd Street. This area is identified in the Ames Plan 2040 as General Commercial with a goal for the city to establish a hybrid between commercial and general industrial uses. The current zoning on this site is General Industrial. Recently there was a Zoning Text Amendment to allow for a Rock-Climbing facility with a Special Use Permit within this zone. Most of the General Industrial area is east of the river. This site is evidence for this transition for the General Commercial area. This is a good

site for the applicant. Most rock-climbing facilities around the world are in industrial areas as the buildings are constructed more in line for their purposes. The walls are high enough and open enough for this type of use within the General Industrial area. The area to the east of the building is all gravel with a gravel drive. The applicant is purposing to pave this area with 17 parking spaces, which is the requirement for the square footage of the building with one handicap accessible space. They are leaning towards a ramp at the front of the building with an accessible parking space near that entrance. If they chose to go that direction that would be an amendment to their earlier design on the west side. Staff would be able to approve that amendment. The parking requirement is 17 spaces for 8200 sq ft building. The applicant went into detail in the report about their operating hours and their business plans. Their peak hours of operation would not conflict with the other business hours in the area. There would be minimum impact due to the operational hours being so different.

Staff concluded that all the standards have been met in the proposal. The rock-climbing facility would not hamper any other businesses in the area. All the improvements are on the interior of the building and could be put back to industrial use at a later time. Staff believes that this is at the edge of the General Industrial district and the Ames Plan 2040 does contemplate this area to be a General Commercial District in the future. Industrial buildings are well suited to a rock-climbing facility due to the open floor plans, high ceilings and these buildings are uncommon in the city's commercial zone. Special equipment will need to be installed but won't alter the physical structure of the building and wouldn't prevent it from being reverted back to a general industrial function. The applicant's goal can be accomplished with no negative impact to the property or significant effect on adjacent businesses. Staff recommends Alternative 1.

Questions for Staff:

Mr. Scheider asked if the space was being currently used. Ms. Sahlstrom said she believe it is vacant.

Applicant: Brian Doscher 2815 49th Street Des Moines, IA, was sworn in. Business partner Keith Rosenliao watching. Mr. Doscher participated in climbing at ISU and at the Walnut Creek Climbing Gym in Des Moines. Got into the business in up-state New York and met partner Keith Rosenliao there. Mr. Rosenliao wanted to hire Mr. Doscher to be the general manager at a climbing facility there but he and his spouse were ready to relocate back to Iowa. After being back in Iowa, he noticed a need for a climbing facility in Ames. He contacted Mr. Rosenliao and started the process.

Questions for the applicant.

Marshall McDaniel, said this is a bouldering gym, asked if there were any thoughts to other climbing options. Mr. Doscher stated that this facility doesn't lend itself to other climbing options due to the ceiling height.

Discussion: None

Moved by Whitehouse to accept Alternative 1, seconded by McDaniel.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment can approve the Special Use Permit to allow an 8,200 square feet of Rock-Climbing Facility use at 525 E. 2nd Street, based upon the findings and conclusions of staff.

Roll Call: Schneider, aye; Whitehouse, aye; Kruse, aye; Patton, aye; McDaniel aye

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mr. Schneider stated that this decision can be appealed through the District Court within 30 days after the filing of the Decision and Order.

CASE NO. 24-07

Public Hearing on a request for a Special Use Permit for Social Service Provider Uses at 214 S Sherman Avenue. (Parcel number 09-11-130-115)

Ms. Sahlstrom stated that Shelter Housing Holdings, LLC is proposing a 34,000 sq ft 3-story building at 214 S Sherman Ave. that would include offices, home shelter rooms and a community space. The east side of Sherman Ave. is Highway Oriented Commercial (HOC) zoning. The building is within the South Lincoln Fringe Overlay (O-SLF), which requires any property in that area to face Sherman Ave. The west side of Sherman Ave. is zoned South Lincoln Mixed-Use District. It is a special zoning district that includes rentals, single family homes and other uses. The use at 207 s Sherman Ave. is for low-income apartments, but it is not a homeless shelter. To the south is the YSS building, and to the northwest is the Story County Community Services building. This area is identified in the Ames Plan 2040 as a redirection area. The extent of the redirection area is large and is considered an area of transition. The HOC zoning district allows for Social Services with a Special Use Permit.

Within the zoning ordinance parking requirements are evaluated based upon the parking ratio for each use. There are three separate uses for the site. The total parking was analyzed based on these uses. The office space will be 17,256 sq ft, offices, meeting rooms, partner office suites and a break room. The shelter area includes 15,620 sq ft and with 40 individual shelter rooms and five family shelter room suites. The individual rooms will be on the 2nd and 3rd floors on the south side of the building and the family suites will be on the first floor in a different area of the building. The length of stay will be 30-90 days. Shelter users must leave during the day by 8 AM and arrive after 5 PM. Because the shelter users come and go at different times from the office use, the parking is able to be shared or joint use. Eighteen spaces are required for the shelter area and will be joint use spaces. Additionally, the shelter is within easy walking distance to the bus stop and will include 31 bicycle parking spaces.

The parking has been reduced from the initial requirement of 85 spaces based upon the uses and square footage. There will be a reduction of 13 spaces for parking lot landscape enhancement and for providing bicycle parking. Eighteen spaces have been approved by the City Council for joint

use parking. This results in 54 parking spaces provided on site. As part of the approval process a parking analysis was completed based on the uses and the demand. Based on this analysis Staff believes there is adequate parking.

If there is a change of use or a significant impact on the street parking City Council can revisit the allowance for joint parking in the future. There is also significant space for future parking along S 2nd (that is currently used as enhanced landscaping). Some of the landscaping could be decreased if additional parking is needed due to a change in use. The parking would take precedent in this case over the landscaping.

There is an elevation change due to the lay of the land on the east side of the building as it drops down to S 2nd. The design fits with the general area and the HOC zoning district. They are purposing 31 bicycle parking spaces at the front of the building.

Staff believes all the Standards are met. The site is 1.2 acres. There are two conditions included in Alternative 1. The DNR letter for construction activity must be received by staff and the lighting plan finalized for staff approval for the front of the building. Staff asks for approval of the three uses of the non-profit organizational offices, homeless shelter and community facility. With the complimentary social services in the area with YSS and Story County Community Services, Staff feels that compatibility has been met and the city and will have no effect on commercial opportunities. Staff recommends approval of this project.

Questions for Staff:

Mr. Schneider asked what is currently on the site. Ms. Sahlstrom said all homes have been demolished and trees were removed.

Applicant: Mindi Bryngelson, CGA 1523 S Bell Ave, was sworn in. The Bridge Home has been working on this project for several years. The Staff has been helpful to overcoming the hurdles of getting the square footage that is needed to accommodate the community needs and the landscaping and parking requirements. Three homes have been removed and the parcels combined into one. They welcome any questions.

Discussion: None

Moved by Kruse to accept Alternative 1 with the 2 conditions, seconded by Patton.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment can approve the Special Use Permit to allow Shelter Housing LLC, a Social Services Provider, to develop the property located at 214 S. Sherman Avenue into a new 34,580 sq. ft. building that would include offices, homeless shelter rooms, and a community space subject to the limitations of the capacity and uses of spaces described in this report with the following conditions:

- a. The DNR General Permit #2 must be received before any construction activity commences including grading.
- b. Final approval of the lighting plan by staff.

Roll Call: Schneider, aye; Whitehouse, aye; Kruse, aye; Patton, aye; McDaniel aye

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried.

Mr. Schneider stated that this decision can be appealed through the District Court within 30 days after the filing of the Decision and Order.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by McDaniel seconded by Whitehouse to adjourn the meeting at 6:39 PM.

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.


Natalie Rekemeyer, Recording Secretary


Chad Schneider, Chair