

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR JULY 14, 2020

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers of the City Administration Building with President Josh Meillier conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Dan Boeke, John Eickhoff, Mark Meier, Josh Meillier, Kelly Rooks, Rachel Springer-Gasner, and Mark Wilson. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke and Planning Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Eickhoff to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 23, 2020. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application No. 276, which is a request for a lot split by Steele County for the property located at 620 Florence Avenue NW, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) The proposed split will allow for the parcel to be split and constructed upon. Public hearing opened at 5:31 pm. Gary Hird, Executive Director of South Central Human Relations Center, said he was just at the County Board meeting where they accepted the proposal to purchase the lot. He said he would answer any questions the Commissioners may have. Public hearing closed at 5:32 pm. Meillier questioned the Single Family zoning. Kruschke said that the entire campus is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential District. Kid's Corner is zoned B-1, Neighborhood Business District. If South Central were to add on, they would probably rezone at that time. This zoning probably goes back into the 1970s. A motion was made by Boeke and seconded by Springer-Gasner to recommend City Council approval of this formal lot split. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application No. V-1435, which is a request by Northland Farm Systems to allow a freestanding sign that is 233 square feet in size where only a 100 square foot freestanding sign is permitted in a B-2 Community Business District, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:37 pm. Kelly Katzung, owner of Northland Farm Systems, was present, as well as the sign installer, to answer any questions the Commissioners may have. Public hearing closed at 5:38 pm. Eickhoff asked if there had been any feedback from neighbors. Kruschke said that he hasn't heard anything on this request. Boeke clarified that they could put up three separate signs. Kruschke said yes, because of the property's frontage on three streets. A motion was made by Boeke and seconded by Wilson to recommend City Council approval of this variance to allow a freestanding sign that is 233 square feet in size where only a 100 square foot freestanding sign is permitted with the following provisions:

- 1) A building permit shall be approved prior to construction of the sign.
- 2) The applicant will verify the property line during the footing inspection by exposing all property pins showing the entire property line.
- 3) All portions of the freestanding sign will meet the 5' setback from the property line and be at least 400' from a residential property.
- 4) The digital sign shall only advertise products sold on the property or through the dealership. No offsite advertising shall be permitted.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Conditional Use No. C-1434, which is a request by Coburn's, Inc. to construct a gas station and canopy at 495 North Street West, zoned B-2 Community Business District and currently occupied by Cash Wise grocery store, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:42 pm. Kyle Higdem with Swan Companies was present to answer any

questions the Commissioners might have. Public hearing closed at 5:43 pm. Wilson asked if there were any plans to change the 24' wide driveway. Mr. Higdem said no. Kruschke said that 24' is the minimum for two way traffic. There are no issues with the access and it meets the standards. Eickhoff asked if it was one-way. Mr. Higdem said he believed it's in and out. Boeke asked if it would be open 24 hours. Mr. Higdem said it will be open 24 hours with pay-at-the-pump. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Rooks to recommend City Council approval of this conditional use request with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall replat the property prior to a Certificate of Occupancy being issued on the gas canopy and allowing usage of this facility.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application No. Z-343, which is a request by Sam and Melissa Davidson for a zone change from B-2 Community Business District to R-6 High Density Residential District for the property addressed 405 Oak Avenue South, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:47 pm. Mary Louks, 403 Walnut Avenue South, asked if the property would remain the same and clarified that they're not rebuilding, just rezoning. Kruschke said yes. Mary Louks said she's good with that. Public hearing closed at 5:48 pm. Meillier questioned the single family use of the property when it used to be a duplex. Kruschke said that it was used as a duplex for many years, but when they had a renter leave their unit vacant, that unit was used by the owner. This property was sold to the applicants and they want to do everything right to make this a legal duplex with minor adjustments. In order to do that, they have to get to a residential zoning. R-6, High Density Residential District connects with neighboring property to the east. The house was always a nonconforming use within a B-2, Community Business District. Eickhoff asked if there was any way to make it legal without a rezoning such as a variance. Kruschke said that State Statute doesn't allow for use variances. Meier asked about the issue with changing it from two to three units. A motion was made by Rooks and seconded by Meier to recommend City Council approval of this zone change request from B-2 Community Business District to R-6 High Density Residential District. All ayes, motion carried.

Conditional Use No. C-1436, which is a request by LWO Properties, LLC, holder of a purchase agreement with the City of Owatonna, for a conditional use permit to allow for a four-story apartment building to be constructed at 407 Cherry Street, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:55 pm. No one was present regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 5:56 pm. Rooks asked if there is still underground parking. Kruschke said that there is. Rooks asked if the garage entry moved to the east. Kruschke said yes, the location of the entry shifted a bit. Meillier said that it's a great looking building. Eickhoff asked how far from the railroad it will be Kruschke said that will be addressed with the next request. A motion was made by Meier and seconded by Springer-Gasner to recommend City Council approval of this conditional use request with the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to issuance of the building permit, the City and Owatonna Public Utilities shall approval all grading, drainage, and utility plans.
- 2) The CUP is contingent on the variance requests being approved.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application No. V-1437, which is a request by LWO Properties, LLC, holder of a purchase agreement with the City of Owatonna, for a variance to allow a 12' rear setback where a 20' rear setback is required,

and also a variance to allow a driveway slope of 7% where a maximum of a 5% slope is permitted for a parking lot or driveway at 407 Cherry Street, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 6:01 pm. No one was present regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 6:02 pm. Meillier said that he was curious about where water will go. Kruschke said that there is a large underground tank system in addition to rain gardens on the site. Rooks asked how often the train tracks are used. Kruschke said there are six to eight trains a day. In comparison, there are 12 to 15 trains a day on the north / south tracks. Springer-Gasner asked if removing a driveway is a concern for emergency purposes. Kruschke said no, not for the size of the site. The developer plans to build a second building, and at that time a driveway will connect to Pine Avenue. Each unit will have a stall underground and there is a visitor lot. He said that our Fire Department has worked with them and are happy with the plans. Boeke asked who owns the vacant property. Kruschke said that the City owns it and there would be a condition on the lot to connect to Pine Avenue. Meillier asked when construction will start. Kruschke said they're proposed to start in August. A motion was made by Rooks and seconded by Eickhoff to recommend City Council approval of this variance to allow a 12' rear setback where a 20' rear setback is required and a variance to allow a driveway slope of 7% where a maximum of a 5% slope is permitted for a parking lot or driveway with the following condition:

- 1) The variances shall be contingent on the approval of the conditional use permit.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Troy Schrom, Schrom Construction, is requesting that all three requests that pertain to Eden Valley development be tabled until a future meeting. The applicant is looking into options for this development and will come back in the future. Staff will renotify anyone that shows interest in this request when the hearing will be held in the future. Kruschke said that if anyone is present regarding these requests, they will have an opportunity to speak. Public hearing opened at 6:06 pm. Susan Eschenbach, 717 Escalade Lane SE, said that the open field next to their lot is higher than her house and she's concerned about drainage. Kruschke said that drainage is one of the top three issues that the developer is working through while these items have been tabled. Susan Eschenbach asked if they will only be building when people buy homes. Kruschke said that is another point the developer is examining. Their application prompted entities to start asking questions. Public hearing closed at 6:09 pm.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Meier to table Z-344, a request by Troy Schrom, Schrom Construction, on behalf of Eden Valley Owatonna, LLC to allow for a combination of twin homes and patio homes to be constructed within the Eden Valley Development on lots that were planned for single family houses and duplexes. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Springer-Gasner and seconded by Rooks to table the petition by Troy Schrom, Schrom Construction, on behalf of Eden Valley Owatonna, LLC to vacate a portion of drainage and utility easement. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Boeke to table Homes at Eden Valley Preliminary Plat. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Kruschke said that the Planning Commission has 60 days to act on these requests and neighbors will be renotified when it comes before the Planning Commission again.

Final Plat of Country Creek Addition No. 8, which is a 1.61± acre tract of land zoned R-3 Single & Two Family Residential District, owned by Hall Construction Inc. and located at 1600-2000 Evergreen Place

NE, was presented by Community Development Manager Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Rooks to recommend City Council approval of this final plat of Country Creek Addition No. 8 with the following conditions:

- 1) The final plat shall be recorded within 60 days of the approval of this request.
- 2) The title opinion shall be approved by the City Attorney prior to recording of the final plat.
- 3) The applicant shall amend the declarations and covenants for the lots to adjust for the new legal descriptions and design of the patio homes.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

The Commissioners discussed the June Building Reports. Kruschke said that 11 single family homes have been issued as of the end of June, which is the same pace as last year. Valuation is significantly more due to Costco and Minimizer. Bosch permits will be issued soon, as well as Eastgate and the apartment on Mound Street.

Kruschke gave an update on previous items. He said that City Council began talking about disbanding the Downtown Parking Committee. Kruschke said that since 2012, they have had nine meetings. He said that they do need a body to take downtown parking requests and said that it fits well with the Planning Commission. Nothing is official yet and may not be until the first of next year, but he wanted to give the Commissioners a heads up and welcomed any input.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, a motion was made by Meier and seconded by Rooks to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager