

**CITY OF WEST DES MOINES  
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING  
City Council Chambers**

Monday, May 29, 2018

**Attending:**

Council Member John Mickelson  
Council Member Renee Hardman  
City Manager Tom Hadden  
Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring  
City Attorney Dick Scieszinski  
Principal Engineer Ben McAlister

Development Services Director Lynne Twedt  
Development Services Coordinator Linda Schemmel  
Planner Karen Marren  
Intern Mackenzie Locey  
Planner Brad Munford  
Planner Kara Tragesser

Guests:

Item #1

Eric Cannon, Snyder & Associates  
Tim Hogan, Hogan Law Office  
Dave Harmeyer, Vista

Item #2

John Meyer, WDM Dental Center  
Carlos Jung, Artist

Development Services Director Lynne Twedt opened the meeting of the Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee at 8:00 am.

**1. Valley South/Watson Center – Dave Harmeyer**

Development Services Director, Lynne Twedt discussed the redevelopment of Valley South/Watson Center located south of Valley West Mall. It was noted that Dave Harmeyer of Vista Properties is looking at redeveloping the site. Mr. Harmeyer currently has a potential contract for Mercy Clinic to occupy the east end of the development. The other end of the property would be redeveloped with possible a complete tear down over time. Ms. Twedt stated the Valley South/Watson Center Planned Unit Development (PUD) was poorly written and Staff is working to rewrite to clarify regulations and take into consideration what Mr. Harmeyer wants to do. Staff would like to redevelop the area capitalizing on the infrastructure and bringing more value for the City, as well as the developer.

Staff, Mr. Harmeyer and the Subcommittee discussed various aspects of the development and provisions in the proposed PUD including, the width of the sanitary sewer easement, right-of-way dedication, monuments signs, landscaping, traffic, and open space.

Staff presented a couple of development concepts drawn up by Civil Engineering Consultants to illustrate possible development opportunities that this site could provide. Mr. Harmeyer indicated that they are open to looking at the potential for the site, but noted that due to current lease timing, redevelopment will likely need to be piecemeal.

Council Member Mickelson expressed his concern that the corridor will not have much traffic in five years because everything will be gone. He supported being more liberal on what can be allowed from a traffic standing knowing that Younkers is closing, JC Penney's Corp is financially questionable and that over time Von Maur may be leaving the area. Ms. Twedt responded that Staff must look at the big picture and what to do with the mall site as well as other areas in the corridor to create more activity. Council Member Mickelson agreed but also stated if the City is going to ease up on anybody it should be this project since they are attempting to lay everything out right now and everyone else is kind of waiting.

*Direction – Council Members were supportive of Staff working with the developers to adopt a PUD for the entire development and amending the PUD in the future as necessary.*

## 2. WDM Dental 2018 Sculptures

Director Twedt introduced guest John Meyer on behalf of WDM Dental. The City reviewed a tooth and toothbrush sculpture at the site previously. Initially they wanted the sculpture in the median and Staff ran into the question of whether it is signage or art. It was subsequently allowed, but the applicant was directed to locate it further back into the site and not be visible from the roadway like a typical monument sign.

Mr. Meyer was in attendance because he would like to install two bicycle sculptures and another tooth and toothbrush sculpture parallel to the sidewalk on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. Ms. Twedt stated Staff has no issue with bicycles, they are considered a sculpture, but was requesting Subcommittee direction on how to handle the tooth and toothbrush.

Council Member Renee Hardman asked if the new tooth and toothbrush sculpture would be identical to what exists there today.

Mr. Meyer stated it would be similar just a little bit smaller. He pointed out the bicycles are the main thing they would like to display right now: he did not plan on displaying the tooth. He stated he was advised to add the tooth and toothbrush sculpture so he didn't have to go through the process again.

Ms. Twedt explained typically Staff will have them go through the process once to get everything that they want rather than having to come back to the City for multiple site plan modifications. The bikes could be separated from the tooth and toothbrush sculpture, but Staff didn't want to send the message that it would be allowed whenever they wanted. She restated the question they are asking is whether the tooth and toothbrush are signage for the dental practice.

Mr. Meyer stated the two additional bike sculptures will be going on the trail near Discount Tire located in Clive where it feeds into the Greenbelt. He introduced Mr. Carlos Jung the sculptor of the bikes and tooth and toothbrush sculptures.

Council Member Mickelson asked if the signage/art issues are always on a case by case basis.

Ms. Twedt responded that he was correct.

Council Member Mickelson stated art is always in the eye of the beholder but thought the tooth and toothbrush looked really nice.

Ms. Twedt explained the issue is it falls into a gray area of whether it is viewed as signage or art. If it represents the business activity, is it granting that business extra signage above what others are allowed.

Council Member Mickelson asked if they were using the full percentage of their allowed signage.

Ms. Twedt stated she believed they have a monument sign as well as wall signage for the building itself. She asked Mr. Meyer if there was an opportunity to move the tooth and toothbrush sculpture closer to the building.

Mr. Meyer responded he could move the tooth and expressed that he really wanted the bikes and could move forward without the tooth.

Council Member Hardman stated she would be okay with the bicycles being displayed.

Council Member Mickelson was in agreement.

Staff restated there is no issue with the bicycle sculptures.

Mr. Meyer proposed adding an additional bike to have 3 bicycle sculptures and no tooth and toothbrush sculpture.

Director Twedt stated they will add a condition to the minor modification approval that if the tooth sculpture comes in later, the City will require it be placed near the building and not out in the street as a signage.

*Direction – Council Members were supportive of allowing three bicycle sculptures to be installed and were supportive of allowing the tooth and toothbrush sculpture if it were to be installed in the future with the condition that it be placed near the building.*

### **3. Update: Single Family Paving Percentage in Valley Junction**

Staff looked at single family paving across the city due to complaints about front yard paving being excessive in Valley Junction (VJ). Council Members Kevin Trevillyan and John Mickelson were in attendance at the Sub Committee meeting when the topic was discussed and requested Staff take a look at valley Junction because of the smaller lots.

Mackenzie Locey, Intern summarized that the percentage of front yard paving in the Valley Junction area is comparable to the rest of the City. However, entire lot paving it is more of an issue in Valley Junction since many of the driveways extend to garages located behind the house.

For the City 25% are within the compliance range of 7% or less paving of their entire lot compared to 23% of Valley Junction. An increase to 20% would make approximately 83% in Valley Junction compliant and 96% of the City as a whole compliant.

Ms. Twedt commented that it was indicated at the previous subcommittee where this was discussed to bump it up to 20% which gives more overall compliance. She posed to Council Members how they wanted to proceed.

Council Member Mickelson felt that was reasonable to change it to 20%. Council Member Hardman concurred.

Ms. Twedt stated Staff will not change the front yard percentage allowed but will bring forward an ordinance to change the total lot percentage to 20%.

*Direction – Council Members were supportive of keeping the front yard percentage as is and changing the total allowable lot percentage to 20%.*

### **4. Buffer Vacation**

Brad Munford, Planner indicated that we have had discussions regarding vacation of the buffer on a corner lot at 4931 Fieldstone Drive, but the bigger issue for today is landscape buffers as a whole.

In the case of 4931 Fieldstone, there is a 60' landscape buffer on the east side of the property. The owner would like to place a 6' fence along his property line and along the back yard. Mr. Munford stated, the owner believes that he bought a large yard and he would like to use all of it, but also has expressed some safety concerns considering the commercial uses to the north. Mr. Munford noted, the 6' fence facing the commercial to the north is not an issue. The issue arises with the landscape buffer along the west. The landscape buffer was put in place with an easement in conjunction with the

1995 Final Plat. Language was also included within the PUD directing the installation of the buffer: it did not allow any types of fences.

The property owner would like to amend the PUD and have City Council authorize a change to the easement language to allow a 6' fence be placed along the property line.

Mr. Munford discussed one of the things that makes West Des Moines unique is the open areas along street corridors and showed illustrations of 100<sup>th</sup> Street just north of University Avenue in Clive to major and minor arterials such as S 50<sup>th</sup> Street in West Des Moines.

Mr. Munford pointed out that within the City's Comprehensive Plan landscape buffers are put in place to not only soften the impact of adjacent uses, but to also create an inviting streetscape that citizens and visitor notice. This is what you see when you drive along S. 50<sup>th</sup> Street. He noted that is one of the selling points for our community and asked for direction on how the Council would like to handle buffers in this case, as well as moving forward.

Current regulations when there is a buffer is that no fences or other structures (play, gazebos, sheds, etc.) are allowed, but if no buffer, 4' fences are allowed at the property line and 6' fences 15' off of the property line. Options moving forward include maintaining the current minimum 30' buffer with vegetation and no fences or reducing the buffer width to 15' with landscaping thus allowing the fence at the 15' mark. Mr. Munford indicated that he has tried to work with the property owner to see if he would be willing to locate a fence at 15' off the property line or shorten the fence to 4'. The applicant is still indicating he wants a 6' fence on the property line.

Council Member Mickelson asked if the road was designed to be widened.

Ben McAlister, Principal Engineer responded that the street is setup to be widened in the future.

Council Member Mickelson was supportive of working with the applicant to have some flexibility regarding vegetation and providing some privacy, but was not supportive of a fence up against the lot line especially if the road will be widened in the future.

City Attorney, Dick Scieszinski commented on the issue of pairing fences and creating a hodge-podge look due to different styles of fences.

Development Services Director, Lynne Twedt explained that typically the double frontage lot is where Staff hears people saying they can't use the back 30' of their lot, so Staff has been exploring taking it down to a 15' buffer to allow landscaping in between. Side yards of corner lots could be treated the same.

Mr. Scieszinski asked Lynne for her recommendation.

Ms. Twedt responded Staff is looking at 15' because it still provides some separation of the fences from the road and allows for vegetation. It is not as onerous on the single family.

*Direction – Council Members were supportive of changing the minimum buffer width on double frontage and corner lots from 30' to 15', but to not allow fences closer than 15' to a roadway.*

## 5. Upcoming Projects

- a. Plat of Survey (1103 Tulip Tree Lane): Adjust property line between 1103 and 1077 Tulip Tree Lane (POS-003906-2018)
- b. Amendment to Ordinance: modify building separation and bulk regulations (AO-003907-2018)
- c. Plat of Survey (3330 Westown Parkway): Create one parcel for ownership transfer and construction of medical clinic (POS-003909-2018)
- d. Zone Change PUD Amendment (9150 University Avenue): amend Greenway Crossing Planned Unit Development ordinance to allow eight fuel pumps for Hy-Vee Fast and Fresh (ZC-003915-2018)
- e. Sign Code Variance (4100 University Avenue): Ross Dress for Less sign variance to allow for an additional 130 sq. ft. of signage (VAR-003913-2018) Retailer wants more signage than what code allows. Council Member Renee Hardman asked if staff was in support of the applicant's request. Director Twedt stated Staff is not supporting the request. City Attorney, Dick Scieszinski commented that for Board of Adjustment to issue a variance the applicant must prove a hardship.

## 6. Minor Modifications & Grading Plans

- a. Jordon Glen Fence (3305 EP True Pkwy): addition of 176 feet of steel fence (MML1-003911-2018)
- b. WDM Dental 2018 Sculptures (1701 22<sup>nd</sup> Street): site modification to allow placement of two stainless steel bicycle sculptures and one tooth with brushed stainless steel sculptures (MML1-003916-2018)

## 7. Other Matters

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 am

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Lynne Twedt, Development Services Director

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Juanita Greer, Recording Secretary