

**CITY OF WEST DES MOINES
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Electronic Microsoft Teams Meeting**

Monday, April 6, 2020

Attending:

Council Member Matt McKinney*
Council Member Renee Hardman*
City Manager Tom Hadden*
Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring*
City Attorney Richard Scieszinski*
Development Director Lynne Twedt
Development Coordinator Linda Schemmel
Building Official Rod Van Genderen

Fire Marshal Mike Whitsell*
Assistant City Attorney Jessica Spoden*
City Engineer Brian Hemesath*
Principal Engineer Ben McAlister*
Transportation Engineer Eric Petersen*
Planner Brian Portz*
Planner Bryce Johnson*

Guests:

All Items –

Kathy Bolten, Business Record*
Scott Hatfield, 1001 6th St*

Item #3 –

Brenda Clausman, 136 3rd St*
Don Stoudt, 111 4th St*
Nick Waage, 136 3rd St

Item #1 –

Elara Jondle, Pelds Design*
Wally Pelds, Pelds Design*
Cory Bloom, Casey's General Stores*

The meeting of the Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee was called to order at 8:00 AM. All those participating electronically are designated with an asterisk. This meeting was held electronically due to Covid-19 restrictions limiting assemblies to fewer than 10 attendees.

1. Casey's Convenience Store (no gas) (8th Street & Ashworth Rd) – Elara Jondle, Pelds Design Services

Director Twedt introduced this project, noting the location and explaining the context of the area in respect to office and residential uses.

Council Member Hardman asked the Casey's project representatives to summarize their request. Cory Bloom, Casey's General Stores, noted the location and stated that this is a flagship enterprise by Casey's to create a smaller convenience store for the neighborhood. He noted that this store will not have fuel. He indicated that the existing store at 63rd and Grand as being the busiest in the metro area for pizza sales and being over capacity for what they can handle. This smaller store would provide support and be geared towards food orders, including pizza, donuts and subs. A site plan and sketch were provided, noting buffering and fencing planned to separate this commercial site from the adjacent residential. Wally Pelds, Pelds Design noted that it is believed traffic levels will not increase as there are no fuel pumps, and this is meant to support the existing neighborhood. Mr. Pelds asked the committee for feedback regarding vacating the easement. He concluded that the architectural design will include gables and will be planned to fit well in a residential neighborhood.

Director Twedt informed that there was an easement created which stipulated it should not be vacated until all four corners were converted to office/commercial. Currently, two of the corners remain residential with no plans pending to change the use.

Council Member McKinney stated that he had several conversations with Scott Hatfield and asked for his feedback. Scott Hatfield, 1001 6th Street, commented that he lives near this location. His concerns were regarding the large volume of children in this neighborhood crossing the ingress/egress area in front of the proposed store, and store operating hours in a residential neighborhood. Mr. Bloom responded that the hours would be 5am – 11pm or 6am – 10pm. Council Member McKinney questioned whether Casey's had spoken with the neighbors regarding buffering to the north. Mr. Bloom replied that they had inquired regarding purchasing the property to the north, however the homeowners have no plans to sell. Mr. Pelds inserted that there will be buffering on the North; the plan includes a 3-foot hedgerow and fence on two sides. The nicer side of the fence will face the neighbors. It is a double box style fence constructed of cedar and will appear to be almost solid. Mr. Pelds felt the design provides good visibility and that children would be very attuned to the surroundings as this is a busy street at 8th and Ashworth. He commented that he didn't believe traffic levels would increase, however he could not answer to specific concerns without the traffic study being complete. Mr. Bloom inserted that they anticipate less traffic than the usual convenience store with fuel pumps, however it would increase neighborhood traffic somewhat.

Council Member Hardman questioned locating the store so close to an already busy school zone, and whether lighting would impact the neighbors negatively. Mr. Pelds responded that it would be best to respond to traffic questions after the analysis is complete. Lighting would be restricted to downlighting the store, as a fuel canopy would not be needed. He noted that lighting poles would be evaluated per safety concerns.

Council Member Hardman asked whether this would go before the Plan & Zoning Commission. Director Twedt affirmed that it would as the site would require rezoning, and approval of a Comp Plan Amendment. She requested feedback from the committee regarding vacating the easement. Council Member McKinney asked about the potential for all four corners to be rezoned. Director Twedt responded that although there are some parcels identified for office, there hasn't been much change-over from residential in this area and staff doesn't anticipate it changing away from residential any time soon. There is more redevelopment occurring to the north in the Midtown area. Council Member McKinney questioned how long its been designated for office use. Director Twedt responded that it's been office since at least 2010, likely before that as the Casey's site changed around 1991, but maps would need to be checked to confirm.

Council Member McKinney expressed appreciation for Mr. Hatfield's concern regarding buffering and traffic with children in the area; and stated he would like to see the analysis performed and review the results before proceeding. Council Member Hardman concurred. Council Member McKinney questioned whether the item would return to subcommittee for further discussion. Director Twedt stated that was up to the Subcommittee, it could go directly to P&Z for a comp plan amendment, unless Subcommittee wished to have further discussion. City Manager Hadden responded that it would likely just go on to Plan & Zoning Commission. Council Member McKinney stated that seemed logical, stating he would like to know whether if office use or residential would affect the traffic analysis. Council Member Hardman agreed that it was important they discuss the analysis, however knowing it will come to Council after P&Z review, she was comfortable following today's discussion with allowing it to move forward to the Plan & Zoning Commission. She affirmed that it is very helpful to have these discussions before an item comes before P&Z so they have a better conceptual understanding of what all exists. She supported P&Z review next, and then it would rest on City Council endorsement.

Mr. Bloom requested feedback regarding vacation of easement, and whether the drive aisle would work. Mr. Bloom stated they were seeking to keep everything off lot 39 as much as possible. Engineer Petersen stated that it looks like they have a drive aisle around the building, but since the dimensions on the plan are difficult to read, a closer look would be needed in the analysis.

Direction: Council Members were supportive of the traffic analysis being performed prior to further

discussion of this item by the Plan & Zoning Commission.

2. Building Code Adoption

Building Code Official Rod Van Genderen informed that every three years the building codes are reviewed and updated to apply the most recent International codes to allow for recent improvements in construction and building materials and to address new concerns such as tornado shelters for schools. Local codes amend some of the international codes to better meet specific local needs, such as allowing schools to construct tornado shelters within existing buildings for the purpose of sheltering students and staff for 1-2 hours rather than the national standards of 1-2 days. Mr. Van Genderen noted that the changes to the upcoming code have been reviewed by the Homebuilders Association with no noted concerns, and to the CICC. Any unexpected concerns that come up after implementation can be modified with amendments, as the goal is to avoid driving up development cost unnecessarily and to facilitate the end goal. Council Members Hardman and McKinney noted they had no specific areas of concern, and thanked Mr. Van Genderen for his work.

Fire Marshal Mike Whitsell input that the result of staying current with the building codes is that we see safer buildings and fewer fires. The Fire Codes are also being updated and that they tend to be more controversial, as the design elements to sustain existing structures the life of the building can have greater impact on the overall project cost. He noted that they work hard to review the lengthy documents and work with metro jurisdictions to provide as much uniformity as possible. City Manager Hadden inserted that it would be helpful if Fire Marshal Whitsell could create a summary of the pending changes. Mr. Whitsell agreed, noting that there would not be many, but that they were working with the CICC to address the issues across the metro area for uniformity.

Direction: Council Members approved staff moving forward with the Code updates.

3. Allowance of First Floor Accessible Dwellings in VJHB & VJC

Director Twedt summarized the proposal, stating that Staff were seeking feedback from the committee regarding allowing one ground floor residential unit at the rear of a mixed use building to meet accessibility requirements as an alternative to elevator installation which could be cost-prohibitive to providing affordable housing in the VJHB and VJC.

Residents Nick Waage and Brenda Clausman, 136 3rd Street, and Don Stoudt, 111 4th Street, presented comments in writing, and verbally noted their opposition to this proposed amendment, stating they wanted developers to be required to work with existing Code and not be granted waivers and amendments in order to develop in Valley Junction. They informed that neighborhood meetings were continuing to be held for their area and they requested continued input by these groups throughout the redevelopment process.

Council Member McKinney referenced a recent Council workshop regarding revisioning Valley Junction, noting that a parking study was to be done. Development Coordinator Linda Schemmel responded that the parking study would be used with current land uses to develop a matrix. Director Twedt added that the residents will be an integral part of the redevelopment discussion.

Council Member Hardman thanked the residents for their input, stating that trying to preserve the area is very important. She voiced two concerns, 1) the appearance that this code amendment is developer driven; and 2) agreed that it was a valid suggestion to put the changes on hold due to wanting more input and accommodating face to face meetings. Director Twedt agreed and stated that the proposal could be delayed as long as Council desired. Regarding the question of whether the amendment change was developer driven, Director Twedt stated that Mr. Cutler's previous proposal was making the project accessible using a ramp. She indicated that the proposal is a global effort to help address the need for more affordable housing in Valley Junction by reducing development costs and was not driven by anyone developer.

Development Coordinator Schemmel inserted that there is pending legislation in the State, trying to address elevator costs in mixed use buildings by allowing the use of limited use elevators. She noted that the floor height at City Hall was required to be modified as a result of the height limitations for the use of a lift in lieu of an elevator for accessibility.

Council Member McKinney questioned whether holding back these discussions and the revisioning for several months would delay any specific projects already in the works. Director Twedt stated it would not. The current projects in development have already been approved for the work to be performed, and this amendment being delayed would not affect that.

Council Member McKinney clarified that someone could seek a variance for this type of amendment as part of an affordable housing project and the delay in revisioning discussions would not prohibit that. Director Twedt affirmed that to be true.

Director Twedt also noted that when the upper story housing program was put into place, it was anticipated that it would be renovation of existing structures, but buyers are looking to replace existing buildings with new structures which seems to be an unintended consequence.

Council Member McKinney voiced support of delaying amendment changes until a broader revisioning study was complete. He noted that this effort was begun months ago, and stakeholder input is very important. Council Member Hardman agreed that she is a great proponent of input and giving people a voice. She concluded that unless there is a pending project, it would be best to hold off until later when broader input is gained, and that providing options is good and healthy.

Direction: Council Members requested that staff continue to develop a comprehensive revisioning plan for the Valley Junction area, with emphasis on stakeholder participation and feedback. It was also recommended that discussions on this topic be delayed until residents can meet with staff in face-to-face, post Covid-19 assembly limitations.

4. Animals Wild by Nature Ordinance Update

Direction: Council Members requested that this item be deferred for two weeks due to the current meeting exceeding the time allotted and overlapping other commitments for Council Members.

5. Upcoming Projects – illustration of each project was provided via PowerPoint prior to the meeting with indication that due to the virtual meeting format, only those items that the Subcommittee specifically had questions on would be discussed. No items were discussed.

- a. Office at the Galleria (645 S 60th St): One-year entitlement extension of site plan approval to allow construction of a 3-story 37,240sf office building including a 6,173sf bank (OSP-2006-Apple008/OSP-004295-2019)
- b. Hy Vee Fast and Fresh (210 Grand):
 - Plat of Survey: Create an 0.387-acre parcel from the UTC-Delavan property for transfer of ownership and lot-tying to property immediately to the north (POS-004661-2020)
 - Comp Plan Amendment & Rezoning: Change land use on plat-of-survey parcel from Light Industrial to Community Commercial and establish a Planned Unit Development to allow development of a convenience store with gas and carwash (CPA-004663-2020 / ZC-004664-2020)
 - Preliminary Plat: Create one lot for future commercial development including incorporating plat-of-survey parcel and create one street lot for dedication to the city (PP-004661-2020)
- c. Dave and Busters (170 S Jordan Creek Pkwy): Creation of a 0.858-acre parcel for the construction of a 22,600sf entertainment venue (PP-004654-2020 / SP-004660-2020)
- d. Grand Ave & Booneville Road: Plat-of-Survey to split property into two lots for transfer of ownership of western parcel (POS-004680-2020)
- e. Pavilion Park (9770 Wendover Rd): Subdivision to create 146 single-family residential lots (PP-

004681-2020)

- f. Allied Construction (2825 SE 1st Street): Construction of 32,500sf office/warehouse building (SP-004658-2020)
- g. Majestic Limo (1816 Fuller Rd): Permitted Conditional Use request to allow operation of an auto-dealership (SIC 559) for the purpose of buying and selling mini-buses and motor-coaches typical of the limousine trade. This request is under the approval authority of the Board of Adjustment (PC-004653-2020)
- h. Little Voyagers Childcare (2700 Westown Pkwy): Permitted Conditional Use request to operate a 5,249sf childcare for infants to early school age children. This request is under the approval authority of the Board of Adjustment (PC-004683-2020)
- i. Banks Landing (NW corner of S 88th St and Booneville Rd): Comprehensive Plan amendment to change the land use from Neighborhood Commercial to Single-family and Medium-density Residential and a PUD Amendment to establish appropriate development standards for 7.5-acres of single-family detached lots and 5.0-acres for medium-density residential dwellings (CPA-004674-2020/ZC-004675-2020)

6. Minor Modifications & Grading Plans

- a. Nelson Storage (175 S 9th St): Renovate existing building for contractor storage (MML1-004671-2020)
- b. Skate West (2019 Grand Ave): Convert existing building to warehouse (MML1-004679-2020)
- c. St. Timothy Episcopal Church (1020 24th St): Construction of additional columbarium wall (MML1-004687-2020)
- d. Steak 'n Shake (815 S. 51st St): Reduction from 3,465sf establishment to 2,450sf store concept (MML2-004673-2020)
- e. The Preserve (East side of SW Grand Prairie Pkwy): Preliminary grading in anticipation of single-family residential estate development (GP-004659-2020)
- f. Grand Living (540 S 51st St): Implementation of additional grease interceptor and associated plumbing (MML2-004651-2020)
- g. US Cellular (6075 Mills Civic Pkwy): Co-locate of additional antenna on existing structure (MM-004642-2020)

7. Other

There were no other items.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:42 a.m.


Lynne Twedt, Development Services Director


Jennifer Canaday, Recording Secretary