

**CITY OF WEST DES MOINES  
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING  
Training Room**

Monday, October 18, 2021

**Attending:**

Council Member Matt McKinney	Economic Development Director Clyde Evans
Council Member Renee Hardman	Fire Marshal Mike Whitsell
City Manager Tom Hadden	Assistant City Attorney Jessica Spoden
Development Director Lynne Twedt	Principal Engineer Ben McAlister
Development Coordinator Linda Schemmel	Planner Brian Portz
Building Official Rod Van Genderen	Planner Kara Tragesser

**Guests:**

Item #1 -

Justin Burnham, Substance Architecture  
Scott Cutler, Cutler Development  
Steve Frevert, Historic Valley Junction Fdn.

All Items:

Kathy Bolten, Business Record  
Brian Hemesath, City Engineer  
Eric Peterson, Traffic Engineer

Item #2 –

Katie McKain, Cedar Ridge Plat 2 resident  
Robert Bengtson, Cedar Ridge Plat 2 resident

Guests online –

Jim Miller  
Two unidentified phone numbers

Item #3 –

None

The meeting of the Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee was called to order at 7:30 AM.

**1. 111/113 5<sup>th</sup> Street – Recommendation to City Council on Moratorium Restriction –**

Economic Development Director Clyde Evans introduced the development proposal for a single-story brick restaurant with south-facing patio to be located in the Valley Junction Historic Business District. He informed that the developer met with the Historic Business District Review committee and was recommended by a vote of 12-1 to move forward with the proposal, with the one vote against the proposal attributed to the moratorium currently in place restricting demolition and construction.

Architect Justin Burnham with Substance Architecture then detailed the aesthetics of the project, demonstrating the contrast between the proposed brick with buildings located in the proposed vicinity. He provided elevations illustrating the wrought iron fencing and demonstrating how a low wall under the window area would not be visible when cars are parked in front of it.

Council Member Hardman informed that she had been present at the Master Plan Steering Committee review meeting and stating that those present supported the project moving forward, however there had been a great deal of discussion about the moratorium, which ends on November 1. Council Members Hardman and McKinney both commended Mr. Cutler for his thorough preparation for the review of this proposal.

Executive Director Steve Frevert of the Historic Valley Junction Foundation expressed the Board's full support for the proposal.

Director Evans noted that the moratorium did not strictly prohibit all development, just required a review by the Valley Junction committee and then approval by full City Council prior to presenting applications for development approval.

*Direction: Council Members were supportive of the project proceeding to Council for approval to apply for development.*

## **2. Lots 19-23, Cedar Ridge Plat 2 Buffer Reduction**

Director Twedt informed that an issue was brought to the City's attention whereby the single family lots along Cedar Ridge Plat 2 have been found to have no usable rear yard space due to overlapping the 35' rear yard setback and 30' wide buffer requirements.

Residents Katie McKain and Robert Bengtson were present, requesting that the buffer easement be reduced from 30 feet to 10 feet, which would allow 20 feet of rear yard useable space, rather than the current 5 feet and move vegetation away from the foundation of their homes.

Council Member McKinney disclosed that he and resident McKain both work for the same company. He also noted that he had encountered a similar buffer situation previously at a residence at Heritage Bend.

Director Twedt informed that without a reduction in the buffer easement, residents on lots 19-23 would not have sufficient setback to allow patios, decks, or garden sheds. She noted a recent code amendment allows for wrought iron fencing but that is the only type allowed in this area. She added that Staff is evaluating the necessary buffer width as part of the code overhaul to determine if less width would be sufficient to still meet desired vegetation implementation.

Mr. McKinney expressed his support of the reduction in buffer. Council Member Hardman agreed.

*Direction: Council Members were supportive of reducing the buffer easement from 30 feet to 10 feet for lots 19-23 in Cedar Ridge Plat 2.*

## **3. Increase limit on generating capacity for residential building mounted solar**

Development Coordinator Linda Schemmel informed the committee regarding recent applications for solar energy systems which exceed the current cap.

Council Member McKinney pointed out the increased interest in home solar which he believes will lead to higher demand over time. Ms. Schemmel pointed out the concern that homeowners might request more solar capacity than needed with the intent of selling the unused power.

City Manager Hadden noted that the City is under franchise agreement with MidAmerican Energy. Assistant City Attorney Spoden commented on the complexity of preventing the homeowner from selling unused power, and the City's obligation to honor the agreement with MidAmerican if it restricts production.

Council Member Hardman requested a workshop with the full Council to discuss the matter more fully. City Manager Hadden agreed that a full workshop would be beneficial, and that MidAmerican Energy should be invited to participate in the discussion.

Ms. Schemmel requested a recommendation to amend the current cap for roof mounted solar arrays only to allow those applications currently under review to be approved pending revision of the ordinance. She informed that Staff are not requesting raising the cap on the ground

mounted solar arrays due to concern over aesthetics, noting that the only complaints during the first five years of solar array permits all related to ground-mounted units.

Council Member McKinney concluded the discussion asserting that the interest in solar systems will increase and the ordinance should enable homeowners to plan for future energy needs as well as current.

*Direction: Council Members were supportive of amending the cap for roof mounted solar arrays and discussing the matter further in a full City Council workshop.*

**4. Upcoming Projects – A map was provided with a brief description of each.**

- a. **Grand Valley Townhomes** (NE Corner of S. 35<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue): Final Plat to create 133 townhome lots and one outlot for common ground (FP-005324-2021)
- b. **South Branch Business Park** (4210 SE Army Post Road): Preliminary Plat to create one lot for development and one outlot for transfer of ownership (PP-005326-2021)
- c. **1203 16<sup>th</sup> Street**: Zoning Exception to reduce the 8' side yard setback to 5' to allow expansion of the home into the existing covered porch area (Board of Adjustment Review - VAR-005335-2021)
- d. **4032 High Street**: Zoning Exception to reduce the 20' front yard setback to 15' for a two-story addition to an existing dwelling (Board of Adjustment - VAR-005339-2021)
- e. **Kings Grove Plat 1** (West of Stark Drive & S. 100th Street): Final Plat to create 25 lots for Single Family Residential development and one outlot for common area. Note: the approval of this plat will require the readdressing of existing townhomes within the development (FP-005333-2021)
- f. **Fairmeadows Elementary School** (807 23<sup>rd</sup> Street): Building addition to existing school building and landscaping improvements (MaM-005328-2021)
- g. **Hy-Vee Wall to Wall Wine & Spirits** (375 S. Jordan Creek Parkway): Request approval to convert the health market to a Liquor Store (Board of Adjustment consideration of the land use - PC-005319-2021)
- h. **Spare Time** (340 Jordan Creek Parkway): Request allowance to temporarily operate as a bar without food service until such time the kitchen equipment is delivered and installed (Board of Adjustment consideration of the land use - PC-005343-2021)
- i. **Manchester Village** (9076 Linda's Lane): Final plat to subdivide property into 68 footprint lots for attached townhome development (FP-005353-2021)
- j. **Timber Knoll at the Preserve Estates** (West side of S. Grand Prairie Parkway south of the Raccoon River): Final Plat to subdivide the property into 26 single family lots (FP-005316-2021)
- k. **Jordan Ridge** (NW corner of Booneville Road and S. Jordan Creek Parkway): Preliminary plat to subdivide the property into 28 single family lots and 5 outlots for future development (PP-005334-2021)
- l. **Village at Sugar Creek** (NE corner of Booneville Road and S. 88<sup>th</sup> Street): Final Plat to subdivide the property into 1 lot for commercial development, 1 lot for multi-family residential development, 2 outlots for future development and 1 outlot for a future park (FP-005298-2021)
- m. **Microsoft DSM 40 (Ginger West)** (11100 Booneville Road): Approval of a revised site logistics plan (MaM-005344-2021)

- n. **Grace Creek Apartments** (8710 Ashworth Road): Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning for affordable senior living apartments (CPAZC-005320-2021)
5. Minor Modifications & Grading Plans
- a. **St. Marks Church** (1115 Grand Avenue): Parking lot and drive rehabilitation and add storm water infrastructure (MML2-005325-2021)
  - b. **Robel Farm/88<sup>th</sup> Street Lofts** (SE corner of 88<sup>th</sup> Street and EP True Parkway): New driveway connection to EP True Parkway (MML2-005018-2021)
  - c. **Microsoft DSM 1-4 (Microsoft Mountain)** (8855 Grand Avenue): Add fiber connections to existing Microsoft DSM2 and DSM3 buildings (MML1-005342-2021)
  - d. **Microsoft DSM 1-4 (Microsoft Mountain)** (8855 Grand Avenue): Addition of new fence and prefabricated telecommunications equipment enclosure (MML1-005350-2021)

6. **Other Matters**

None

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 AM. The next regularly scheduled Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee is November 1, 2021.

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Jennifer Canaday, Recording Secretary