

City of Decorah
Planning and Zoning Commission
April 9, 2018 – 7:00pm
Meeting Minutes

Members present included: Nathan Thompson, Barbara Massman, Tony Clarke, Joel Zook, and Brian Cook.

Absent: Llew Jenkins, and Stan Moellers

Others present: Zoning Administrator / City Manager Chad Bird

Consider approval of minutes from the March 12, 2018 meeting

Motion by Zook and seconded by Thompson to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2018 commission meeting.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider site plan approval for Barthell Eastern Star Bluffs Town Homes and Nursing Home

Bird reviewed the site plan checklist with the commission and also reviewed the comments prepared by independent engineering, WHKS, who reviewed the plans on behalf of the city.

He noted a review of city code 17.124, the city conservation of space requirements and noted that Bird and Lindsay Erdman have reviewed the code and both agree the storm water plan and the forthcoming landscaping plan will address any concerns with tree and vegetation removal.

Massman inquired about any public notice and notice to surrounding property owners. Bird noted that regular meeting notices were posted. Erdman noted a notice had gone to surrounding property owners regarding tree removal.

Zook asked about the grading and fill and how much material may be brought on site. Erdman noted that actually, fill will be taken away as the site is leveled.

There was a general review of sidewalks, the driveway connections and the storage and handling of solid waste.

Erdman, Bird, and Zook all expressed a need for the landscaping plan and Erdman and architect Gary Anderson noted that once the final grading is completed a plan will be submitted. There was a rendition of a retaining wall and landscaping for the main entrance in the packet.

Motion by Zook and seconded by Cook to approve the site plan pending submission of the final landscaping and COS plan.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider annexation applications and review of Annexation Smart Planning Checklist

Bird reviewed the current annexation plan he is proposing. He noted this plan includes several properties along the 172nd Street area and is part of the larger east expansion of water and sewer utilities the city provided to the area in 2013 and 2014.

Bird reported that annexation along the corridor of the utility improvements (Hwy 9Eastr) has included several completely voluntary annexations. He explained the process of other types of annexation in Iowa, including an 80/20 annexation. Bird noted this this proposed annexation is an 80/20 annexation meaning not all of the property owners consent to the annexation but that at least 80% of the land area is agreeing to voluntarily annex to the city. Bird noted there is one property owner not willing to annex of the seven property owners in the proposed area.

Bird noted that in exchange for annexation the city has provided water and sewer utilities, paved roads with curb and gutter, all public safety services, and a five-year phase-in of property taxes on a five-year sliding scale.

Cook reviewed the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach document title "Annexation Smart Planning Checklist" and led the commission through a review of the items on the checklist.

It was noted that because of the relatively small size, in land area, of the annexation, several of the items on the checklist did not correspond to the proposed annexation. The proposed annexation area already has considerable commercial development and future growth is stunted due to available land.

The commission completed a review and discussion of the list of smart growth principles.

Motion by Thompson and seconded by Zook to affirm the annexation plan as presented and to acknowledge review of the annexation smart planning checklist materials.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Other business

In other business, Bird noted the April 10 ISU Extension planning and zoning workshop and the April 17 city council meeting to discuss the school site plan.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird
City Manager
Zoning Administrator