

City of Decorah
Planning and Zoning Commission
Wednesday, July 18, 2018 – 6:00pm
Meeting Minutes

5:30pm

The sidewalk plans were available for viewing prior to the meeting.

Members present included: Llew Jenkins, Stan Moellers, Barbara Massman, Tony Clarke, Joel Zook, and Brian Cook.

Absent: Nathan Thompson

Others present: Zoning Administrator / City Manager Chad Bird, City Attorney John Anderson and City Engineer Lindsay Erdman.

Consider approval of minutes from the June 11, 2018 meeting

Motion by Moellers and seconded by Clarke to approve table the minutes from June 11, 2018 as they were not yet complete.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 128 West Water Street, *Amundson's Clothing – exterior painting and restoration*

Bird noted the colors proposed were mostly in the earth tone palette and the colors selected were more in response to maintenance than significant changes by the owner.

Motion by Zook and seconded by Jenkins to approve the C-3 Design Review application for 128 West Water Street, for Amundson's Clothing for exterior painting.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 418 West Water Street, *Northeast Iowa Montessori School – signs*

Bird noted the applicant proposes to use reclaimed signs from another downtown store front and that the sizes meet the applicable codes. Bird asked the commission to review the colors and design as proposed in the application. He stated the sign boards will be refaced with the logo of the new business, Northeast Iowa Montessori Schools. Colors are primary. One sign is 28 square feet and the other is 8 square feet.

Motion by Massman and seconded by Jenkins to approve the C-3 Design Review application for 418 West Water Street, Northeast Iowa Montessori School for signs.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 410 West Water Street, Sugar Bowl Ice Cream Company— install a walk-up window

Bird reviewed the application and noted the applicant is proposing to install a 67 inch by 57inch walk-up service window on the store front of the building / business. The total size is 26 square feet. Other than the commission's approval, there are no code provisions or restrictions prohibiting this alteration. Bird referred the commission to Section 15.04.050 which calls for more windows on facades and street level front facades call for at least 50% glazing.

**Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Clarke to approve the C-3 Design Review application for 410 West Water Street, The Sugar Bowl for a new window.
Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.**

Consider setting a public hearing on rezoning of property; Aase Haugen Properties, 4 Ohio Street property at West Highland Drive, a parcel from H-M Hospital Medical District to R-3 Multiple – Family Residential District, August 13, 2018 at 7:10pm

Bird noted the commission is to consider this rezoning application from Aase Haugen Properties, with the owner located at this address. He noted the property subject to the rezoning is on Highland Drive. Bird noted the application is for a proposed parcel purchase by Tom Massman to add to his proposed residential subdivision along the east end of Highland Drive.

Bird noted the zoning amendment application is to rezone from H-M Hospital Medical District to R-3 Multiple – Family Residential District.

Bird recommended the hearing be set for Monday, August 13, 2018 at 7:10pm.

Motion by Clarke and seconded by Moellers to approve setting the public hearing on rezoning for H-M Hospital Medical District to R-3 Multiple – Family Residential District for Monday, August 13, 2018 at 7:10pm.

Roll call vote:

Zook – yes

Jenkins – yes

Cook – yes

Moellers – yes

Clarke – yes

Massman – abstain disclosing that her husband's company has agreed to purchase the land.

Thompson - absent

Motion passed

5, ayes, 1 abstain, 1 absent

Presentation, discussion, and possible action on sidewalk development plan; presentation by McClure Engineering Co.

Bird introduced Jeff Schug from McClure Engineering Co. to walk through their review and recommended concepts for sidewalk installations in the Bruening Subdivision.

Schug reviewed the May 14, 2018 discussion with the commission and believed the take-away from that meeting was to look closely at sidewalks on one side of the street or the other in a way that was most economical.

He shared some of the conceptual designs and noted the landscape is making traditional sidewalk design difficult. He noted there may be the need for a fair amount of retaining walls and driveway changes.

He then presented an idea he called "California Sidewalks". Schug stated this would be a way to use the existing road / streetway bed and just move the sidewalks a little closer to the graded area.

Even with this design concept, Schug estimated the single sidewalk approach may be around \$425,000 and the double sidewalk concept could be as high as \$750,000 total cost.

Massman asked about the safety factor and wanted to know how safe the sidewalks could be with the sidewalk right next to the curb. Bird explained that there are some of the concept examples in other parts of Decorah.

Clarke mentioned that snow removal could be an issue with the sidewalk so close to the street.

Schug noted the started SUDAS street width is 27' and the Bruening Subdivision is 30' or 31' so there appears to be plenty of room to move the sidewalk in a bit.

There was some general conversation about cul-de-sacs and Zook noted that the original preliminary plat did not show sidewalks in the cul-de-sacs.

After some additional discussions Bird suggested the commission vote on just the separate cul-de-sac issues as a standalone measure.

Motion by Zook and seconded by Jenkins to recommend no sidewalks in the Bruening Cul-de-sac.

Moellers commented that he believed there to be enough houses in the cul-de-sac to warrant sidewalks in the cul-de-sac. Zook commented that he believed the commission should adhere to the original preliminary plats.

Roll call vote:

Zook – yes	Jenkins – yes		
Cook – no	Moellers – no	Clarke – no	Massman – no
Thompson - absent			

Motion failed – 2 – 4 votes

There was additional discussion regarding sidewalks on just one side of the cul-de-sac called Bruening Drive and no sidewalks in Eileen Court.

Motion by Moellers and seconded by Clarke to recommend sidewalks on one side of Bruening Drive and none in Eileen Court.

Roll call vote:

Moellers – yes	Clarke – yes		
Jenkins – no	Zook – no	Cook – yes	Massman – no
Thompson - absent			

Motion failed – 3 – 3 votes

There was additional conversation about the cul-de-sacs.

Motion by Zook and seconded by Moellers to recommend sidewalks on one side of all streets except Eileen Court.

**Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.
Thompson - absent**

In final discussions and wrap-up, Schug suggest the commission look at the California Sidewalk options where feasible to try and trim overall costs.

Motion by Zook and seconded by Jenkins to recommend the council look at and consider the California Sidewalk concept on one side of the street as a practical matter to reduce costs.

Roll call vote:
Zook – yes Jenkins – yes
Clarke – yes Cook – no Massman – yes Moellers – yes
Thompson - absent

Motion passed 5 – 1 votes

Cook asked Schug if he knew the approximate linear foot cost of the project. Schug noted the project is approximately 6,400 linear feet and he had estimated the cost at around \$425,000 - \$450,000. That put the project at around \$66 per linear foot for the total cost.

6:45pm

There was a brief recess.

Presentation by the Iowa Flood Center regarding conditions on the Upper Iowa River in Decorah, re: Menards site plan application

Bird introduced Larry Weber from the Iowa Flood Center to speak about his modeling of the Upper Iowa River and his review of the Menards site plan application.

Mr. Weber introduced himself and reviewed his credentials; he is a professor of civil and environmental engineering and holds the Edwin B. Green Chair in Hydraulics. He also serves as the executive associate dean of the UI College of Engineering. With Director Witold Krajewski, Mr. Weber helped create the IFC and continues to be active in its development through work with the Iowa Legislature. Mr. Weber has been active in IFC programs for statewide floodplain mapping and watershed projects for flood damage reduction, including the \$97M Iowa Watershed Approach.0 As a service to the state of Iowa, he is a member of the Water Resources Coordinating Council and participates on numerous state and federal agency committees related to water resources planning.

Weber opened the presentation by sharing information related to trends in floods and heavy rainfall events. He shared that the Upper Iowa River (UIR) has seen an increase in stream flow over the past 70 years and the increase in percent of rainfall is contributing to that increased stream flow. He also noted an increase in flood event in the most recent decades.

Weber noted the 100-year and 500-year flood events are also increasing in frequency. He shared a slide with the historic crests on the UIR from major events and noted that two of the highest have been in the last ten years.

Weber reviewed the definitions of the flood areas including the 100-yr and 500-yr terms and definitions. He also explained the difference between the floodway and floodplain. Mr. Weber used several slides and images to explain this information. (editor's note: the slide presentation is available on the city's website at www.decorahia.org).

He also included a background discussion on the use of the available LiDAR data; a surveying method that measures distance to a target by illuminating the target with pulsed light and measuring the reflected pulses with a sensor.

Weber then reviewed the modeling of the specific site in the Menards site plan application and his first assessment was to review the modeling of the proposed storm pond area. He noted the fill removed from the pond and placed elsewhere is approximately 1.7 million cubic feet. He noted if the pond area is available at the stated size and volume, then the river in 2008 would have filled the pond in one minute.

He then proceeded to review the 100-year and 500-year flood simulations at peak discharge rates (slides 20 – 25). He also ran his modeling comparisons with and without the Wal-Mart development as part of the modeling scenarios.

His final analysis of the Menards impact is approximately .10 to .13 of a foot rise or impact from the development of the Menards site. He also added that the impact would be from approximately 2,700 feet upstream to approximately 300 feet downstream depending on the storm event and models. He presented the table below as reference.

Table 1 – Tabular data that shows the upstream and downstream impacts. The delineation is based on the extent to which the water surface change is less than 0.01 ft.

	Channel Distance of Menards Impacts (feet)		
	100-Year	2008 Flood	500-Year
Upstream from Menards	2700	5100	5300
Downstream from Menards	<300	<300	<300

He concluded his remarks and presentation by noting that humans have made many changes to the way rivers behavior and in addition to weather patterns, there are other challenges to stream flows including agriculture practices.

In general question and answers to the presentation, the following was noted:

Tyler Edwards asked about the watershed drainage from the College Drive area upstream and down to Freeport, an area of about 57 square miles.

Weber responded saying it is hard to speculate on unknown quantities or to know how much of that area is developed.

The Menards engineer, Tim Verheyen engaged in the discussion and clarified some of the questioning regarding the area Edwards discussed.

Weber stated, if he understood the question, that the next 50 years Q100 and Q500 year events might look like and stated that a response would be speculative.

Edwards asked if the Army Corp of Engineers considered Wal-Mart a control because the floor elevation is one-foot above the 100-year flood level.

Weber stated Wal-Mart has very little if any shadow effect downstream.

Edwards asked how the .13 foot dissipate downstream.

Weber replied his modeling shows very little change downstream from the proposed site. He added there is very little volume overall.

Edwards asked about the proposed development's impact upstream.

Weber replied it is not measurable above or upstream of the Winneshiek County Fairgrounds.

Lindsay Erdman, city engineer stated that the information presented this evening is very valuable information and he inquired as to whether it could be supplied to the Army Corp of Engineers for their review of the proposed project and its potential impact.

Weber stated he would be happy to work with the Corp and stated the information may be used by the City.

Edwards asked about the potential impact of the .10 to .13-foot rise to the city's waste water treatment plant and to the main trunk line coming in to the treatment facility.

Weber stated there would be no real impact as there is no energy in the water or the river at that point. He added there may be some change in the water's "roughness" but not energy, force, or velocity.

Edwards reiterated there would be less resistance towards the waste water treatment plant.

Zook asked Weber to clarify the floodway and flood way fringe areas.

Weber referred back to his presentation and slide 14 for the explanation.

Weber discussed the concept that there have been 1,000 disasters in Iowa in the past 30 years and wondered what the cause for is so much impact on property.

Kevin Lee, 2512 River Road (Freeport), asked why even have a floodplain. He asked if anyone had looked at the changing river channel over time and from GIS data and aerial photography.

Weber said he uses general modeling and river cross sections in the model and has not used UIR modeling of channeling over the last ten or 20 or 100 years. He stated the floodplain is a regulatory term and defined area.

He stated that we have pinned the river down by various means including levees and so we see much less river channel movement. He indicated this may lead to channel degradation over time because of this pinning down.

Weber stated that this project has a minimal impact and the council will need to decide the level of impact and decide the future and cumulative impact.

Massman asked if the city has shared all of the Menards information to the Iowa Flood Center. Bird stated the latest information has been shared with Mr. Weber.

Ross Hadley, 402 Winneshiek Avenue, what would the impact of planting additional stands of prairie grasses be on the flooding?

Weber stated the grasses would be laid flat fairly quickly and that also if the area were wooded it would slow water down but would back it up also.

He further stated grasses would help with water infiltration, especially upstream.

Phil Iverson, 303 West Broadway, asked about modeling for future or increased events moving forward.

Weber stated he and his team looked at the current Q100 and Q500 year events and did not predict future implications.

George Hagen, 402 East Main Street, asked again about the impact up stream. Weber stated it is a small impact.

Paul Scott, 405 East Broadway, inquired as to whether the slides would be posted on the city's website. The commission agreed they would be.

Cook thanked Mr. Weber for his time.

Other business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird
City Manager
Zoning Administrator