

City of Decorah  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
April 13, 2020 – 7:00pm  
Meeting Minutes

Electronic meeting pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of commission members and the public.

In support of Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds' proclamation declaring a State of Public Health Disaster Emergency in Iowa, the current COVID-19 situation makes it "impossible and impractical" to meet in one location. Due to this the Decorah City Hall was closed to the public for the April 13, 2020 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. The public was invited to participate via electronic means.

Members present included: Nathan Thompson, Tony Clarke, Barbara Massman, Llew Jenkins, and Joel Zook.

Absent: Ryan Delaney and Jared Essa.

Others present: Zoning Administrator / City Manager Chad Bird.

Consider approval of minutes from the March 9, 2020 regular meeting

**Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Thompson to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2020 regular meeting.**

**Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.**

**Motion passed.**

Consider Site Plan Review re: 105 St. Lawrence Street, *Quandahl Investment Properties, LLC, multi-family residential unit*

*Bird reviewed the application and site plan checklist for this development. Bird noted that except for the proposed parking and few details on utilities the site plan appeared to meet the code section requirements.*

*Kole Quandahl and Dexter Quandahl were present to answer questions.*

*Massman asked about the orientation on the lot, which way is North and if that was the best orientation. She also addressed the storm water connections.*

*There was discussion on the parking options. Bird noted the R-3 and parking zoning codes do not allow for parking in the front- or side-yards. Quandahl noted parking would fit in the rear-yard but would essentially take up all the available green space.*

*Thompson stated opposition to front-yard parking and sees the rear-yard parking as the best option, even if there had to be some easing of the regulations. He suggested maybe 14 parking spaces instead of the required 16.*

*Zook shared in the assessment and stated front-yard parking is not ideal.*

**Jenkins moved and Massman seconded a motion to approve the site plan contingent on a Board of Adjustment determination to allow for an easing of parking regulations but to not include parking in the front-yard.**

*In discussion Thompson asked about the construction timeline, Quandahl noted they would like to see a June 2020 construction.*

*Zook asked Quandahls if they had questions or comments. Dexter read a statement that noted they believe this type of project is needed in Decorah. They would like to preserve the rear-yard for resident use thus propose parking for the front or side.*

**Jenkins asked to recall her original motion and Massman agreed. Original motion to approve the site plan contingent on a Board of Adjustment determination to allow for an easing of parking regulations was recalled.**

**Jenkins moved and Massman seconded a motion to approve the site plan contingent on a Board of Adjustment determination to allow for an easing of parking regulations, a recommendation to not include parking in the front-yard and to consider allowing for fewer parking spaces, 12 – 14.**

**In discussion Clarke noted agreed with parking in the side-yard and rear-yard but noted parking in the front was not consistent with the rest of the neighborhood.**

**Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.**

**Motion passed.**

Consider vacating **Resolution No. 2020-03**, a request for rezoning of property; *Downing Commercial subdivision, 172<sup>nd</sup> Avenue parcel(s) from A-1 Agricultural District to C-1 Highway Commercial District and Scenic View Estates Subdivision from A-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Multiple Family Residential District, and setting a date for a public hearing April 13, 2020 at 7:00pm*

*Bird shared that he and his team had missed the publication deadline for this action item. He is asking the commission to recall the action to set the hearing in favor of additional action to reset the hearing.*

**Clarke moved and Thompson seconded a motion to approve vacating Resolution 2020-03, a request for rezoning of property; Downing Commercial subdivision, 172<sup>nd</sup> Avenue parcel(s) from A-1 Agricultural District to C-1 Highway Commercial District and Scenic View Estates Subdivision from A-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Multiple Family Residential District, and setting a date for a public hearing April 13, 2020 at 7:00pm**

**Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.**

**Motion passed.**

Consider **Resolution No. 2020-04**, a request for rezoning of property; *Downing Commercial subdivision, 172<sup>nd</sup> Avenue parcel(s) from A-1 Agricultural District to C-1 Highway Commercial District and Scenic View Estates Subdivision from A-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Multiple Family Residential District, three areas, and setting a date for a public hearing May 11, 2020 at 7:00pm*

**Jenkins moved and Thompson seconded a motion to approve a request for rezoning of property; Downing Commercial subdivision, 172<sup>nd</sup> Avenue parcel(s) from A-1 Agricultural District to C-1 Highway Commercial District and Scenic View Estates Subdivision from A-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Multiple Family Residential District, three areas, and setting a date for a public hearing May 11, 2020 at 7:00pm**

**Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.**

**Motion passed.**

Review of proposed amendments to the Chapter 15.04 – Design Criteria

- a. public hearing on zoning code amendments, Chapter 15.04 – Design Criteria;  
May 11, 2020 at 7:00pm

*Bird asked for general comment and discussion about this item.*

*Thompson noted he was ok with the current schedule of proceedings and willing to move forward.*

*There was general discussion about whether now was the time to continue this code revision.*

*Bird noted he would reach out to Decorah Downtown Betterment about their possible concerns with proceeding with proposed changes during this pandemic.*

Other business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird  
City Manager  
Zoning Administrator