Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
January 8, 2025
Cedar Falls, Iowa

MINUTES

The Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on January 8, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. The following Commission members were present: Alberhasky, Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen, Stalnaker and Watkins. Karen Howard, Planning and Community Services Manager, Thomas Weintraut, Planner III, Michelle Pezley, Planner III and Jaydevsinh Atodaria, Planner II were also present.

1.) Chair Hartley noted the Minutes from the December 18, 2024 regular meeting are presented. Sorensen made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Alberhasky seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 9 ayes (Alberhasky, Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen, Stalnaker and Watkins), and 0 nays.

2.) The first item of business was a rezoning request to amend the frontage designation on the Downtown Character District Regulating Plan from Neighborhood Small to Urban General 2 on Olive Street and Walnut Street in the first block south of W. 1st Street (RZ24-005). Chair Hartley introduced the item and Mr. Atodaria provided background information. He discussed the adoption of the *Imagine Downtown! Vision Plan* and the Downtown Character District Zoning Code and the Downtown Character District. He explained the current zoning classification, the uses allowed, and the setbacks. He noted that the challenge to developing the lots that front on W. 1st Street in this location is that they are very shallow and with the Neighborhood Small designation applied to the lots immediately to the south, a "neighborhood manners" setback of 20 feet is required, which makes the lots along 1st Street very difficult to develop. The rezoning change will remedy that situation. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Stalnaker asked if someone could build over the existing alley. Mr. Atodaria stated that they cannot.

Mark Ludwig, applicant, made himself available for questions.

Christine Fisher, 116 Olive Street, asked about an adjoining lot and what it might be used for. Howard stated that the City owns the lot as it was a remnant left over from the 1st Street project and stated that the City currently has no plans for development of the lot. Fisher also asked about the need for a zoning change along Olive Street. Ms. Howard stated that if the regulating plan is not also changed on Olive Street, it would leave a small area nearly undevelopable, so staff is recommending that change as well. Fisher suggested turning that small lot into a bus stop.

Stalnaker made a motion to approve the item. Sorensen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 9 ayes (Alberhasky, Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen, Stalnaker and Watkins), and 0 nays.

3.) The next items for consideration by the Commission were a request to rezone 2.68 acres located south of 1st Street and 350 ft. east of Winding Ridge Estates from A-1 Agriculture to R-P Planned Residence (RZ24-003) and an R-P District Master Plan Amendment for the Meadow Ridge Development (MP24-004x). Chair Hartley introduced the item and Mr. Weintraut provided background information. He showed the updated master plan for the

development, which includes the parcel requested for rezoning. The land being rezoned will allow northern access to the site. He explained that access will be from future extension of Lake Ridge Drive, so the rezoning is conditioned on submittal of an easement for that street right-of-way to ensure that the property will have street access. This easement is required prior to setting a public hearing for the rezoning at Council. A subdivision plat will need to be submitted as the next part of the process, which will include the public street and utilities.

With regard to the Master Plan Amendment, Mr. Weintraut noted that the applicant has reduced the residential density by eliminating one of the apartment buildings, which will also significantly reduce the impact to the wetlands. He also noted the reduction in impervious area, reduced wetland impacts, and the additional amenities that they are proposing, including a playground and dog park. He noted also the proposal for an enhance landscaped buffer along the western edge of the property to help screen the development from the neighborhood to the west. He displayed photos of other developments that have been completed by the applicant in other cities and the rendering of the proposed buildings for this site.

Mr. Weintraut provided comments on the Master Plan stating that the subdivision code allows reasonable adjustments to development standards to better preserve or protect sensitive features such as floodplains, stream corridors and wetlands through a designation of the site as a Special Development Area (SDA). Staff is recommending the site as an SDA. With this designation they would request a reduction in the parking requirements for the one-bedroom units from two parking spaces per unit to 1.25 per unit. They propose to keep the parking requirements the same for two- and three-unit apartments and for visitors, so there should be plenty of parking to meet the needs of the residents. These reduced parking requirements would allow for a reduction to the impervious surface area and provide additional open space near the stream corridor.

A revised Master Plan was submitted on January 7 showing a pedestrian connection between the three 33-unit buildings to the sidewalk along Lake Ridge Drive. A sidewalk connection is now shown on the plan from the three 33-unit buildings to the playground, dog park and open space area along the stream corridor, so residents will have good pedestrian circulation on the site to all the amenities.

Staff recommends approval of the requested rezoning subject to technical comments. A subdivision will be required to divide the R-P portion of the property from the A-1 portion to the north and to combine it with the R-P property to the west and to extend Lake Ridge Drive to provide access to the site. An easement plat and agreement will need to be prepared and agreed upon for the area where the extension of Lake Ridge Drive is to be extended before the rezoning can be set for a public hearing at City Council. A final draft of a developmental procedures agreement for the R-P District, including provisions for the construction of Lake Ridge Drive, will need to be prepared and agreed upon before the rezoning can be set for a public hearing at City Council.

Based on the changes made by the applicant to address the concerns expressed at previous meeting, staff now recommends approval of the amendment to the RP Master Plan for Meadow Ridge, subject to the approval of the rezoning request and approval of a Special Development Area that will allow a parking reduction to eliminate up to 68 parking spaces and unnecessary paved area, focusing on areas close to the stream corridors, wetlands, and areas that will improve pedestrian movement.

Stalnaker asked if garages count toward the parking requirement. Mr. Weintraut stated that they do. Henderson asked about any concerns with overflow parking if the parking spaces are reduced. Mr. Weintraut stated that staff had no concerns because even with the reduction, the high parking requirements of 1 space per bedroom for the larger units and a significant

number of visitor parking spaces there should be adequate parking. In other words, the numbers would balance out. Henderson also asked if there was a reason for reducing the density by 10%. Mr. Weintraut explained that there had been concerns voiced about the density and preservation of wetlands.

Johnson asked about the addition of the direct connection of the dog park and playground through the garage. He asked if the rear building accesses tie into that or would they be expected to walk around. Mr. Weintraut explained that when the site plan is reviewed, they will look at the details of pedestrian circulation to make sure sidewalks are located to allow easy access to all areas of the site.

Packer Morley, applicant, spoke about the project and made himself available for any questions.

Taner Tuken, 218 Winding Ridge Road, stated that the primary concern was with density, and that he doesn't feel that the 10% reduction is enough.

Cory Lorenzen, attorney for the Shaw's, spoke about the issues he addressed at a prior meeting and feels those things were not addressed in the new plan. He feels the density is still an issue and feels that neighbors weren't kept in the loop as the changes were made. He also feels there should be a better transition between single family homes and high density units.

Pat Galles, attorney representing the developer, stated that he understands the concerns of the neighbors and noted that they have made changes and reductions to address those concerns. He spoke about those changes and how they have been improved. He explained that a lot of thought and work have been put into the project and noted the need for housing within the city and how this project will help meet that need.

Kamyar Enshayan, 1703 Washington Street, spoke about his concern for natural areas within the city. He feels that the community is diminished when projects remove wetland. He asked how the project is allowed when it cuts into wetlands. Mr. Weintraut explained the adjustments made and that the Army Corps of Engineers has approved a mitigation plan.

Jason Mehmen, 1107 Eagle Ridge Road, thanked everyone for their hard work. He stated he is still concerned with the additional traffic.

Atul Patel, 307 Winding Ridge Road, feels that the development should be more of a low density project to fit in with the neighborhood. He thinks the developer should develop this kind of housing elsewhere in the City.

Fethiye Tuken, 218 Winding Ridge, feels the project is not appropriate for the area.

Pete Rhee, 3105 North Ridge, noted issues with the wetland information and asked for clarification about the screening between the development and the neighborhood and the business that was discussed at one time that would be located at the corner of the development.

Tom Nagle, 328 Winding Ridge Road, noted his concern with the density and feels that it has not been decreased enough. He encouraged the Commissioners to reject the proposal.

Cameron Lee, 220 Winding Ridge Road, spoke as a homeowner who will have the project adjacent to his back yard. He doesn't feel like there will be a good enough buffer possible and feels that it will remove a great deal of privacy and enjoyment of his property.

Packer Morley pointed out that the majority of the wetlands are man-made and the quality is lower. The Army Corps of Engineers is very strict with regard to wetlands and they have granted a permit allowing the project to proceed. He also discussed the screening briefly and noted that he understands concerns and feels that they are addressing them fairly.

Dan Arends, engineer, stated that a landscape architect has been hired to create an appropriate buffer. He pointed out that they have made adjustments where they could and worked closely with staff to make sure it is done within code.

There was further discussion regarding the density and traffic concerns.

Hartley made a motion to approve the rezoning. Stalnaker seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 8 ayes (Alberhasky, Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen and Stalnaker), and 1 nay (Watkins).

Hartley made a motion to approve amended Master Plan. Stalnaker seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 6 ayes (Alberhasky, Hartley, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen and Stalnaker), and 3 nays (Grybovych, Henderson and Watkins).

4.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was a request to rezone property located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Highway 20 and Hudson Road from A-1 Agriculture to PC-2 Planned Commercial District. Chair Hartley introduced the item and Ms. Pezley provided background information. She indicated the location of the property and noted that this item was discussed at the last meeting. The proposal meets the rezoning criteria for approval. She noted that the PC-2 zoning requires a Master Plan to be approved concurrently with the rezoning to PC-2. She also stated that the property is located in the Highway 20 Commercial Corridor Overlay District so standards of that zone would apply as well. Since the last meeting, it was decided that the development will be in one phase instead of two. She also noted that the large central outlot (25 acres) is now labeled as a developable lot. It then can be available for a large user or can be replatted into smaller lots in the future depending on the market. She summarized the information presented at the last meeting.

Grybovych made a motion to approve the item. Alberhasky seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 9 ayes (Alberhasky, Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen, Stalnaker and Watkins), and 0 nays.

5.) The Commission then considered a Preliminary Plat for Creekside Business Park. Chair Hartley introduced the item and Ms. Pezley provided background information. She explained that this is the next step once the rezoning is approved. The City is proposing a preliminary plat with ten commercial lots. They range in size but all have at least 2 acres. One outlot will be for stormwater and a park with a trail through it. She discussed street connections and stormwater management and stated that staff recommends that the Commission hear any public comments and indicate if any additional information is needed. Staff will schedule a second discussion of the plat for the January 22, 2025, meeting.

6.) Ms. Pezley had an update that the City is working on a Parks Master Plan and is gathering comments and looking for input through a survey that is now available on the City's website. She recommended that Commissioners go to the City's website and fill out the survey to add their input. They also can go to the Social Pinpoint and add comments or read other people's comments.

7.) As there were no further comments, Sorensen made a motion to adjourn. Alberhasky seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 9 ayes (Alberhasky,

Grybovych, Hartley, Henderson, Johnson, Moser, Sorensen, Stalnaker and Watkins), and 0 nays.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Howard
Community Services Manager

Joanne Goodrich
Administrative Assistant