

City of Decorah
Planning and Zoning Commission
December 9, 2013 – 7:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present included: Lynne Sootheran, Brian Cook, Donna Rae Ibanez, Benji Nichols and Barbara Massman. Absent: Stan Moellers. Others present included City Manager Chad Bird. The commission currently has a vacancy due to the resignation of Ross Hadley.

Approval of the November 11, 2013 meeting minutes

Motion by Massman and seconded by Ibanez to approve the minutes from the November 11, 2013 meeting.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 115 Washington Street, Decorah Covenant Church

Bird introduced this item and said that the Decorah Covenant Church, at this location, was remodeling their warehouse facility and is proposing changes to the exterior. Such changes include removal of the existing garage door and adding three smaller windows. They intend to use the facility for a youth and study room for overflow from their main building.

There was some discussion on the exterior material planned to cover the garage door area. Bird noted that the contractor would like to use steel but would be alright with a wooden material that is paintable. General consensus on the commission was that either would be alright.

Massman asked about use in this building / area. Bird noted that the use is allowed per the zoning code and that off-street parking is not a consideration for the C-3 district either.

Nichols moved and Cook seconded a motion to recommend approval for the renovations to 115 Washington Street for Decorah Covenant Church.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 511 Water Street, Oneota Professional Building

Bird reviewed this application with the commission and noted that the owner is applying for C-3 review for the proposed new signs on the front elevation of this building. Bird noted that it is unlikely the signs will all be installed at the same time.

Bird also noted the signs are to be lit internally with one by LED and the others by fluorescent lighting.

Ibanez moved and Sootheran seconded a motion to recommend approval for the addition of new signs to the front elevation of 511 Water Street.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Discussion and Discussion and possible action on a site plan – 915 Mechanic Street;
Psimos Building

Bird reviewed staff comments on this site plan and also introduced Dr. Nicholas Psimos. There was discussion on storm water and Cook noted that it appeared storm water can be an issue in this location, he also noted it appeared storm water was being tied to intakes where possible.

Bird also noted that the owner / applicant is proposing a monument sign and acknowledge an understanding of the zoning requirements for such a sign.

Cook moved and Ibanez seconded a motion to recommend approval of the site plan for 915 Mechanic Street.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Discussion and possible action on zoning petition referred from City Council

Nichols noted that the council has referred the petition for a new zoning district to the commission for their review and comment. The commission wished to engage in a discussion with local attorney and author of the petition Mr. Karl Knudson, Mr. Knudson was not able to attend the meeting. Nichols also noted that he believed the commission would like to engage in a larger community planning discussion with the council and invited them to the January 13 regular meeting of the commission for such a discussion.

Bird also asked the commission if they would be interested in reviewing existing districts to see if there may be room for amendments that may still meet the desired outcome rather than creating an entirely new district.

Discussion and possible action on subdivision fees

The commission supported work being done by staff to update fees and charges for service under the city's fee resolution.

Other Business

The commission noted they would like to meet with the council commission when possible.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird
City Manager
Zoning Administrator