

City of Decorah
Planning and Zoning Commission
May 11, 2015 – 7:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present included: Brian Cook, Lynne Sootheran, Benji Nichols Jarrad Walter, Barbara Massman, Llew Jenkins and Stan Moellers.

Absent: Llew Jenkins.

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

Approval of minutes from the April 13, 2015 regular meeting

Motion by Walter and seconded by Nichols to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2015 regular meeting.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Public hearing on zoning code amendments

Nichols opened the public hearing. Bird provided an overview of the Commission's work on the code review and noted that the Commission spent the majority of its time on the signs and added a section to the code under fences.

Philip Younger, representing the Historic Preservation Commission expressed disappointment that the P&Z Commission had not consulted with the HPC on the code amendments. Sootheran asked Younger to explain specifically which signs or types of signs did not fit code.

There were no other comments from the public.

Consider action on zoning code amendments

Motion by Cook and seconded by Sootheran to recommend approval of the revised zoning code to the city council for adoption.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Motion by Nichols and seconded by Massman to recommend approval of the inclusion of conditional use permits and an application fee of \$50.00 be added to the zoning code.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Public hearing on zoning of annexed property; Hwy 9 East Decorah 2015 Annexation

Nichols opened the public hearing regarding rezoning, or zoning property once it is annexed into the City with the 2015 annexation project.

Mike Kelly spoke and noted the he desired his annexed area to become R-2 Residential zoning. He thanked the commission for their work and looked forward to the area becoming annexed and rezoned.

Steve Downing was presented and noted he wanted to see his area become an R-3 zoning district and said that he would further restrict activities in the area through restrictive covenants he has or will have for the area.

Bird noted that he recommends the commercial areas be rezoning / zoned into the C-1 Highway Commercial area to be consistent with the adjoining areas and conditions that exist.

Consider action on zoning of annexed property; Hwy 9 East Decorah 2015 Annexation
Motion by Cook and seconded by Moellers to recommend approval to rezoning the commercial areas to C-1 Highway Commercial, Mike Kelly's area to R-2 Residential and Steve Downing's area to R-3 Residential zoning classifications.
Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 400 West Water Street, Java John's – sign
Bird noted that this application was complete but that the sign did not meet the requirements of the code. He noted that the maximum banner size should be 23.4 square feet and the application called for a banner of 37 sq ft.

Cook moved to table the application until the correct measurements were assured. The motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Walter and seconded by Massman to recommend approval of a C-3 sign application for 400 West water Street for Java John's contingent upon the sign being re-dimensioned to meet the code requirements.
Roll call vote: Ayes, Walter, Massman, Nichols, Moellers, Sootheran. Nays, Cook. Motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 215 East Water Street, Mane Event - sign
Bird advised that the application for this item was not timely filed and he therefore recommended tabling the item until the application is filed.

Motion by Cook and seconded by Moellers to recommend tabling the item until the full application is received.
Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Discussion and possible action on site plan re: Pole Line Road, Luther College Solar Arrays

Bird outlined the application noting that Luther College is amending their existing solar arrays and adding an additional array further west on the Pole Line Road Properties.

The east array is an expansion of the existing site and the west array is a new construction. Bird noted that the east property is a C-5 zone and the west is an

A-1 zone. The agricultural district allows for solar the C-5 district is there because of a special use permit granted originally issued in January of 2012 by the Board of Adjustment and amended in April 2015.

Bird stated the action item today is for a site plan approval for the west array only, in the Agricultural zone. He noted the site plans are fairly simple in design and do designate driveways etc. They also designate a 6' high chain link fence surrounding the property.

The commission requested that appropriate and aesthetically appealing landscaping be required for this new site and for the existing location. Cook expressed concern the new array was too large and that there would be issues with storm water control and he also expressed concern about these solar arrays being so close to the highway as to be unsightly.

Motion by Sootheran and seconded by Massman to recommend approval of a site plan for Luther College to place solar arrays on their property at 810 Pole Line Road in an Agricultural District contingent upon proper and aesthetically appealing landscaping.

Roll call vote: Ayes, Sootheran, Massman, Walter and Nichols. Nays, Cook and Moellers. Motion passed.

Discussion and possible action on final plat – Decorah Business Park Subdivision and Decorah Business Park Second Subdivision

Bird noted this is the final plat for the main subdivision in the Decorah Business Park. Erdman commented that this is primarily for Lots 10 and 11 and Parcel B. He stated the change from the preliminary plat is due to a prospect having interest in the parcels as identified in the final plat. Bird and Erdman noted that all improvements are completed with the exception of sidewalks. The Commission reiterated their interest in requesting a sidewalk or walking trail around the business park once it is more fully developed.

Motion by Cook and seconded by Walter to recommend approval of the final plat for the Decorah Business Park Subdivision.

Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider conveyance of public property re; airport operator's residential parcel

Bird introduced this item and stated that the airport commission is recommending the conveyance of a parcel of real estate from the commission / city to the Fixed Base Operator, Mike Connell. He noted that this parcel would allow the FBO to move his residence from the current location to a new site in the extreme NW corner of the airport property.

Bird explained that the move is necessitated by redevelopment of the airport site including relocation of the fuel tanks. The FBO's existing residence will be too close to the new fuel tank locations once construction is complete.

Bird stated he is recommending a conveyance of .76 acres for the purpose of relocating the FBO's residence to the NW corner of the airport property. This will deed the property to him under specific terms and a repurchase agreement that will allow the City to continue to control the property in the event of a separation with the FBO. The airport commission has stated it is important to have the FBO reside onsite.

Bird stated the City will have the right to purchase the property and improvements (residence) back should Mr. Connell no longer be the FBO.

**Motion by Moellers and seconded by Cook to recommend approval of conveyance of a .76 acre parcel to the City's Airport FBO.
Roll call vote: Unanimous, motion passed.**

Other business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird
City Manager
Zoning Administrator