

City of Decorah  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
September 9, 2013 – 5:30pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present included: Donna Rae Ibanez, Brian Cook, Lynne Sootheran, Benji Nichols and Stan Moellers. Absent: Barbara Massman, Ross Hadley. Others present included City Manager Chad Bird.

Approval of the August 12, 2013 meeting minutes

Motion by Sootheran and seconded by Cook to approve the minutes from the August 12, 2013 with one correction noted that Hadley should be listed as absent. Unanimous, motion passed.

Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 300 West Water Street

Bird presented information relative to this review noting that the owner is proposing a balcony to the rear of the commercial building for personal use as an observation balcony. The proposed construction is of a metal frame and composite decking. Cook asked for more dimensional specifics. Nichols called the contractor on conference call and specific details were discussed.

**Motion by Ibanez and seconded by Sootheran to approve the C-3 Design Review for 300 West Water Street.**

**Roll call: Unanimous, motion carried.**

Discussion and possible action on request for street vacation for Oakwood Place (at Upper Broadway)

Bird presented the request to vacate this public right-of-way on the west end of Upper Broadway. The requested is presented by the two property owners on either side of the ROW.

There was general discussion on the public's interest in the ROW including access to the water main to the west and the ROW running to the south toward the park entrance. The commission agreed that if an agreement could be reached with the property owners for temporary and construction easements they could agree to recommend vacation of the ROW.

**Motion by Cook and seconded by Moellers to recommend vacation of the ROW as presented and named Oakwood Place.**

**Roll call: Ayes; Cook, Moellers, Nichols, Sootheran. Nays; none. Abstain; Ibanez. Unanimous, motion carried.**

Other Business

In other business, the Planning & Zoning Commission held a joint session with the Board of Adjustment on matters of mutual concern

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There was general discussion on several issues for each board to consider. Bird facilitated a discussion on electronic and digital signs and noted that there has been some inquiry lately on electronic bill boards. The boards expressed some interest in reviewing information from other communities but were not overly enthusiastic about allowing these large type digital signs in the community.

There was discussion on educating various user groups on the "request for variance" process and zoning regulations in general.

The boards discussed some processes and general policies in regard to applications and requests for variances. A few specific properties and signs were discussed as examples of what is and what is not working in the community.

#### Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird  
City Manager  
Zoning Administrator