

(These minutes are not approved until the next Commission meeting.)

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

March 24, 2020

West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting was held via conference call. Those who attended via phone were: Chairperson John Fuller and commission members Emilie Walsh and Matt Van Scoyoc. In addition, on the phone were City Engineer Dave Schechinger, Fire Chief Kevin Stoolman, Ron Amelon (MMS), Chad Kuene, Nick Hatz (Shive-Hattery).

Chairperson John Fuller opened the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. welcoming the audience and following city staff; Deputy Clerk Leslie Brick, Zoning Administrator Terry Goerd, City Administrator Redmond Jones, Mayor Roger Laughlin and Public Works Director Matt Goodale. Commission members Ryan Bowers and Brad Bower were present. Sally Peck was absent.

APPROVE AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA/MOVE TO ACTION.

Approve the agenda for the March 24, 2020 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. /Move to action.

Motion by Bowers, second by Bower to approve the agenda. Absent. Peck. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Approve minutes from the January 28, 2020 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. /Move to action.

Motion by Walsh, second by Bower to approve the minutes. Absent: Peck. Motion carried on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING/NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Introduction and welcome Matt Van Scoyoc.

Van Scoyoc introduced himself and said he was looking forward to participating on the commission.

Parkside Hills Preliminary Plat – review and provide comments.

Ron Amelon introduced a revised concept site plan along with the Parkside Hills preliminary plat for the commission's review. City staff had met previously on the subject and sent comments to back MMS and the developer on March 12, 2020. MMS responded with their comments on March 24, 2020 and were the focus of the conversation this evening. MMS acknowledged that the major sticking point at this time is IDOT's requirement for a left turn lane on Parkside Drive into the development and gas station. The turn lane is to be located on National Park property which the city does not have jurisdiction. Amelon said additional conversations will need to happen in the near future to keep the project moving forward. Other discussions included the city's desire for a thirty-one foot street, rather than twenty-nine as indicated (Elm Street), clarification on what was needed for public green space, modifications to the wet bottom detention basin on Outlot B to provide a buffer around it for safety reasons, ensuring emergency vehicle turning radius' were adequate, adjusting the location of sidewalk's for adequate driveway parking (Sycamore Drive) and the suggestion for a vegetative buffer along the rear lots (1 through 8) that backs up to an existing commercial area. The commission agreed that changes to the preliminary plat were needed and would be considered for approval at a future meeting. Kuene requested a staff meeting to discuss the turn lane on Parkside Drive as soon as possible so as to not delay the project. Laughlin agreed and asked Amelon to set it up as soon as possible.

West Branch High School Expansion Site Plan – review and provide comments.

Nick Hatz, Shive-Hattery presented the West Branch High School Expansion site plan and noted that it includes constructing a secondary access that lines up with Dawson Drive, building addition, additional parking and trail relocation. Hatz also stated that a traffic study had been completed and that turn lanes will be required as part of the project. Hatz said a recent meeting with City staff indicated that the city was

comfortable with moving forward with the internal portion of the project as the need for turn lanes would be constructed later in the project. Hartz said that final construction documents would be complete by March 31st and the bid letting would be occurring in April 2020. Vice Chair Bower asked if an approval was needed at this meeting to keep them on their proposed timeline. Hartz indicated that it was desirable. The commission had no concerns with the proposed site plan. Bowers requested to make a motion to amend the agenda and approve the on-site improvements for the proposed site plan.

Motion by Bowers, second by Bower to approve the on-site improvements of the site plan. AYES: Bowers, Bower, Walsh, Fuller, Van Scoyoc. NAYS: None. Absent: Peck. Motion carried.

Approve draft Ordinance 776 – Corner Lots (amended)

Brick asked the commission to review and approve the proposed language for Ordinance 776 which further clarified corner lots and how rear yards would be determined. Brick said that passage of this ordinance would be held at the next Planning & Zoning meeting so that a public hearing could be published and held (as required by law). The commission approved the ordinance as written.

Discuss and determine I-2 area regulations.

Brick introduced this topic and reminded that the issue was raised to the commission in 2019. The issue at hand is that this particular zoning does not have area regulations either on purpose or as an oversight. The 2016 review of Chapter 165 did not identify this and it time to address the topic. Brick said that a property owner in the I-2 district has concerns with what restrictions they would have if their current structure was damaged or if they would be allowed to re-build. The commission reviewed the current zoning map and found that there are several businesses with an I-2 zoning and stated their concern that the zoning may not be appropriate. Goerdts felt that a CB-2 was more appropriate for the types of existing businesses with the I-2 zoning. The commission agreed that more research was needed to determine what properties would be affected, what the current uses are and if changing the zoning would make any of the properties non-conforming. Fuller asked this to be discussed at the next Planning & Zoning meeting.

STAFF REPORTS:

Schechinger reported that Johnson County would be starting road construction on Herbert Hoover Highway this spring beginning at I-80 exit 249 moving east to approximately two thirds of the way to West Branch. Schechinger said there would be some coordination needed with the I-80 expansion project before getting all the way to Cedar-Johnson Road. Schechinger also reported that he has been having conversations with Johnson County regarding the 28E agreement for Cedar/Johnson Road that was signed in 1977 giving the City of West Branch all future maintenance responsibilities.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Walsh asked staff to provide an update on the (former) Croell site next steps and said she had received some inquiries from residents. Laughlin said the concrete dug up from the site that is piled will be crushed and sold for future street bases (hopefully) in West Branch.

Bowers asked if there was any progress on a fringe area agreement with Johnson County that was discussed in early 2019. Brick said the sample agreements were forwarded to the City Attorney but no discussions had been held. Fuller asked for this topic to be added to the next regular meeting agenda. Brick said she would make a follow-up with the city attorney.

Adjourn

Fuller adjourned the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by:

Leslie Brick

Deputy City Clerk