

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

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
March 23, 2021
West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

An Electronic Meeting (pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.8) of the Planning & Zoning Commission of the City of West Branch, Cedar County, IA was held on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commission Members, Staff and the Public presented by COVID-19.

Until further notice, all of our Planning & Zoning Meetings will be held electronically. Persons may still attend, observe and participate in the meeting at the Council Chambers, City Office, 110 N. Poplar St, West Branch, Iowa. Social distancing practices shall be observed for any persons attending the meeting in person at City Hall.

Chairperson John Fuller called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Commission members present: John Fuller and Ryan Bowers. Via Zoom: Jim Hoffman, Matt Van Scoyoc and Brad Bower. Emilie Walsh and Sally Peck were absent. City Staff present: City Administrator Redmond Jones II, Deputy Clerk Leslie Brick, Terry Goerd, Mayor Roger Laughlin and Councilperson Jerry Sexton.

APPROVE AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA/MOVE TO ACTION.

Approve the agenda for the March 23, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. /Move to action.

Motion by Bowers, second by Fuller to approve the agenda. Absent: Walsh and Peck. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Approve minutes from the January 26, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. /Move to action.

Motion by Bowers, second by Van Scoyoc to approve the minutes. Absent: Walsh and Peck. Motion carried on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING/NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Review rezoning request for West Branch Roofing, 322 E. College St.

Phil Rushton, owner of West Branch Roofing presented his proposed building plans for his business on a parcel on the south side of East College Street. Rushton said the building he is wanting to construct will not meet the newly established setbacks for the I-2 district in which the property lies. Rushton said the building will provide more indoor storage for his equipment and roofing materials along with office space. He added that he is currently renting the property directly to the south of this property and there may be a possibility of him purchasing it in the future which would help fit the building on the proposed location. The Commission discussed the idea of rezoning the property to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) since that zoning classification is more flexible than the current zoning and with its close proximity to the former Croell property which is also intended to be rezoned to a PUD. Fuller added that a PUD classification allows the City the right to give input on the proposed structure and how it would fit into the future plan of this area.

Laughlin and Sexton felt that several adjacent properties in the area would all benefit from the PUD rather than an I-2 designation since that is one of the unique features of a PUD and suggested that they could reach out to the property owners to present their ideas. Laughlin stated he would bring the subject up with the City Council as well to get their initial thoughts on the matter.

Review Comprehensive Plan and how the City can implement

Fuller opened the discussion of the Comprehensive Plan and asked the other members how they thought they could help the City help implement some of the ideas in the plan. Fuller listed some goals of the plan such as offering trees to homeowners to help build a tree canopy where trees are lacking, informing residents of the Federal Flood Insurance program, and building a community garden. Fuller suggested that maybe the City could form committees to help with some of the initiatives. Laughlin said he was in favor of the ideas, but forming committees and finding volunteers is never as easy as it would seem but didn't dissuade Fuller for pushing on with his ideas. Fuller added that he would like to continue this discussion in future meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

Review approved Ordinance 780

Brick informed the Commission that the City Council performed the third and final reading of Ordinance 780 – Swimming Pools at their March 15th City Council meeting. The Council ultimately approved the ordinance as written, but did request to make temporary pools with a depth of less than twenty four inches be exempt from the ordinance citing it would be difficult to enforce and limiting for kiddie pools often used by residents. The Commission agreed with the Council's decision.

STAFF REPORTS:

Laughlin reported that the Parkside Hills developer was running into storm water run-off issues which they were in the process of addressing with the City Engineer. Laughlin was hopeful the issues would be resolved quickly and that the project would move forward.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBERS: NONE

Adjourn

Motion by Bowers, second by Hoffman to adjourn the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Submitted by:

Leslie Brick

Deputy City Clerk