

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

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
September 28, 2021
West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Until further notice, all of our Planning & Zoning Meetings will be held in-person and electronically. Persons may still attend, observe and participate in the meeting at the Council Chambers, City Office, 110 N. Poplar St, West Branch, Iowa.

Chairperson John Fuller called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Commission members present: Ryan Bowers, Jim Hoffman, Matt Van Scoyoc, Brad Bower, and Emilie Walsh (Zoom). Absent: Sally Peck. City Staff present: City Clerk Leslie Brick, Terry Goerd, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, and Mayor Roger Laughlin. Absent: City Engineer Dave Schechinger.

APPROVE AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA/MOVE TO ACTION.

Approve the agenda for the September 28, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. /Move to action. Motion by Hoffman, second by Bowers to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Approve the minutes from the May 25, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. / Move to action. Motion by Bowers, second by Hoffman to approve the minutes. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Approve the minutes from the July 6, 2021 Special Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, / Move to action. Motion by Bower, second by Hoffman to approve the minutes. Motion carried on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING/NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing regarding rezoning certain properties to a Planned Unit Development.

Fuller opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. No written comments were received by the Clerk's office. Fuller explained what a Planned Unit Development is and why the properties were selected for the rezoning classification. Hillary Maurer, 127 N. 4th St. gave her thoughts on the rezoning and Croell site redevelopment. Maurer, who lives across from the proposed site, said she was in favor of the mixed-use zoning, but asked the commission to encourage that the character of the housing match the existing neighborhood. She said that several of the homes are over one hundred years old and felt they should be honored. Maurer went on to suggest other ideas of adding a pedestrian bridge to Wapsi Park and also the idea of incorporating a railroad depot similar to the one that used to stand on the property. Dave Clark, owner of property located at 222 N. 4th St. asked why his property was not included in the zoning change. Laughlin, who spoke with some of the adjacent property owners said he wasn't opposed to including Clark's property but it would need to be done at a later date. Goerd mentioned that after reviewing the PUD ordinance passed in 2018, Section 3 (Permitted Uses), may prevent West Branch Roofing from building their proposed building on their property. Goerd referred to Section B (b)(k) and noted that "no shops or equipment and material storage" are a permitted use. The commission discussed briefly and said further discussion is needed on the subject. There were no other public comments. Fuller closed the public hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Approve a rezoning request by the City of West Branch for certain properties to a Planned Unit Development. / Move to action.

Motion by Bowers, second by Bower to approve the rezoning request. AYES: Bowers, Bower, Fuller, Van Scoyoc, Walsh, Hoffman. NAYS: None. Absent: Peck. Motion carried.

Approve the Parkside Hills Final Plat. / Move to action.

Ron Amelon, MMS Consultants said the developer was in the process of installing public improvements and wanted to get the final plat in front of the commission and seek approval. Schechinger, who was not able to attend this meeting submitted his comments and requested a few minor changes. Due to the lateness of the changes, Amelon was not able to address those changes. Amelon did say he would address the changes so the final plat could move on to the City Council for their approval. Fuller asked if there were any significant changes since the preliminary plat. Amelon replied that a couple of minor changes were made to the storm water retention ponds due to capacity and addition right of way needed for the I-80 widening project, but that pretty much everything else was the same. The commission had no comments or changes for the plat but said they would approve with the City Engineer's comments.

Motion by Fuller, second by Bower to approve. AYES: Fuller, Bower, Bowers, Hoffman, Walsh, Van Scoyoc. NAYS: None. Absent: Peck. Motion carried.

Comprehensive Plan discussion

Fuller questioned if the tree survey was available. Goodale said he would not probably get it until the end of 2021. Fuller also suggested that Chapter 4 of the plan should be updated now that new census numbers were out. Van Scoyoc suggested that the commission review where R-2 housing is used within subdivisions and Fuller suggested the Housing chapter might be a good place to start with that. Bowers mentioned again that the city needs a Capital Improvements Plan and suggested that the commission comment on what goes into the plan. Fuller also suggested that design standards could be addressed in new subdivisions. Bowers also suggested that the developer and/or city hold neighborhood meetings to inform residents of new subdivisions to allow for public input. Chad Kuene, developer of Parkside Hills cautioned the commission that requiring design standards drives up the cost of the housing. Kuene said it will also scare off developers for wanting to build in West Branch.

OLD BUSINESS:

HCI District signs – Goerdts said he would work on preparing some sign requirements for the HCI District since the current code doesn't provide any guidance on the matter if the DOT approves the signage request. Goerdts suggested that a permit be required so a review could take place.

STAFF REPORTS:

Goodale said the Greenview connection has been completed and just some minor finish work is needed but that the street is now open for traffic.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Bowers asked what the final outcome was for the vacating of Birdie Lane was. Laughlin said he Chief was on the fence but thought he could provide an update at the next meeting.

Adjourn

Motion by Bower, second by Bowers to adjourn the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Leslie Brick

Deputy City Clerk