

Staff Report

ROOSEVELT SCHOOL ADAPTIVE REUSE

5/14/13

On April 8, 2013, the City Council referred to staff a request from Dean Jensen of RESGI requesting a zoning text amendment to allow the adaptive reuse of the former Roosevelt Elementary School (copy attached). This redevelopment project has an ambitious timeline, and will require a number of unique steps and approvals by the City.

This report provides the following information:

- Background on RESGI's vision and concept for reuse of Roosevelt School
- Background on how the City's existing zoning laws relate to this project
- Public involvement and approval processes for the project.
- Proposed language and options for the requested zoning text amendment

RESGI's Vision and Concept for Reuse of Roosevelt School

Mr. Jensen has provided written information describing RESGI's vision for this project in **Attachment A**. Similar information was presented at a well attended neighborhood meeting on April 22, as well as to individual representatives of the "Citizens for Roosevelt Park" and Smart Growth Alliance and to historic preservation advocates. At the May 14 Council meeting, Mr. Jensen will review this concept, answer Council's questions, and share public input already received.

Background on How Existing Zoning Laws Relate to this Project

A number of City approvals will be needed prior to the issuance of building permits for this project. These include the following:

1. **Zoning text amendment(s)** in order to allow use of the former school building as a multiple-family structure.
2. **Rezoning** of the land from "S-GA" (Government/Airport) to "UCRM" (Urban Core Residential Medium Density), which is the zone surrounding the Roosevelt site that is shown as the underlying land use designation with a Government Lands
3. Overlay on the Land Use Policy Plan's Future Land Use map.
4. **Replatting** of the property into a single parcel through a Plat of Survey.

5. **Site plan approval.** Based upon Council's decision in the zoning text amendment, this approval could be given in any of three ways.
 - a. Through a **Major Site Development Plan** approved by Council. This option could follow either of two paths.
 - i. As part of the typical Major Site Development Plan approval process that requires a recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission followed by City Council approval, as described in Section 29.1502(4)9c) of the Zoning Code (attached).
 - ii. As part of an application for an "**Adaptive Reuse**" project under Section 29.306 of the Zoning Code (attached).
 - b. Through a **Minor Site Development Plan** approved by staff.
 - c. As part of a **Special Use Permit** granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.
6. In addition, the developer recently wrote to Council requesting **property tax abatement** for the project. Approval of that request would entail establishing criteria and designating the site as an Urban Revitalization Area.

Since RESGI has decided to apply for "Adaptive Reuse" approval, it would be helpful to reacquaint Council with this tool. The only previous project that utilized Adaptive Reuse is the North Grand Mall. The Roosevelt project would be the first time Council and the community have had the opportunity to use this Adaptive Reuse process to achieve mutual benefit in retaining a valuable historic asset.

The purpose of the **adaptive reuse provisions** is to foster the renovation and reuse of structures that have historic, architectural, or economic value to the City and are vacant or at risk of becoming under-utilized, vacant or demolished. Approval by the City Council must be based on the project meeting these **four conditions**:

1. "The proposed adaptive reuse must be residential, commercial, or a combination of such uses...."
2. "The structure or group of structures proposed for adaptive reuse must have historic, architectural, or economic value to the City justifying renovation and preservation, as determined by the City Council."
3. "The City Council must determine that the long-term benefits of the proposed adaptive reuse outweigh any negative impact on the neighborhood of the

proposed project and on the City, as compared with the alternative of having the structures demolished or remaining vacant or under utilized.”

4. “In all matters relative to the administration of the Adaptive Reuse requirements, the City Council shall obtain a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission on all structures that are determined to have architectural or historic value.”

If the City Council determines that a proposed project qualifies for consideration as an adaptive reuse, then the Council may waive some or all of the applicable Zone Development Standards and General Development Standards set for in Article 4 of the Zoning Code, as long as the project conforms to three Adaptive Reuse Performance Standards. (It is anticipated that only the first standard will be relevant to the Roosevelt project.)

1. "The renovation and remodeling of structures for adaptive reuse may not destroy or obscure essential architectural features. In addition, such architectural features must be enhanced to the extent that it is feasible and prudent to do so."
2. “Where landscaping and public space required by Section 29.403 cannot be provided on site, any area on site that is available for landscaping shall be so utilized. When the City grants permission, the owner or operator of the site must also use areas within the public right-of-way and adjacent to the site to satisfy landscaping requirements.”
3. “Where necessary parking cannot be provided on site, reasonable provision for parking shall be provided off site.”

In the event that the City Council would determine that the project does not qualify under the Adaptive Reuse provisions, the City Council could choose to include a zoning agreement as a condition of the rezoning. Should Council choose, such an agreement could also include provisions related to preservation of historic exterior features of the building.

Public Involvement and Approval Processes

RESGI has already done an exceptional job reaching out to interested stakeholders and soliciting their input into the “reimagination” of Roosevelt School. A number of those stakeholders will likely desire to convey their interests to the City Council as this project

moves forward. This includes those promoting the Roosevelt Park and those promoting preservation of the building, among others.

The Adaptive Reuse approval process, Major Site Development Plan approval process and rezoning approval process all provide opportunities for formal public input. In light of the building’s architectural and historic significance, the Adaptive Reuse process also calls for the City’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the first Adaptive Reuse Performance Standard cited above. Should the applicant not choose to apply for Adaptive Reuse, the Council could still seek input from the HPC before giving approval to the rezoning and/or site development plan.

In order to start the project this year and have occupancy next summer, the developer has asked that the City expedite and combine the various public input and Council approval processes as much as possible.

Proposed language & Options for the Requested Zoning Text Amendment

Staff has prepared the attached zoning text amendments to assist Council in supporting this project. This proposal includes the following changes:

Table 29.703(2) Urban Core Residential Medium Density (UCRM) Zone Uses

A text amendment is needed to this section of the Municipal Code to allow a new apartment dwelling in the “UCRM” zone. The proposal is to convert the existing Roosevelt School building to an “Apartment Dwelling” that includes 23 dwelling units for sale as condominiums. By adding the following bolded and underlined text to the “Residential Use” section of Table 29.703(2), the use of a former historic school building could be converted for use as an Apartment Dwelling:

Table 29.703(2)
Urban Core Residential Medium Density (UCRM) Zone Uses

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			
• Single Family Dwelling	Y	ZP	ZEO
• Two Family Dwelling	Y, if pre-existing	ZP	ZEO
• Single Family Attached Dwellings (2 units only)	Y, if pre-existing	SDP Minor	Staff
• Apartment Dwelling (12 units or less)	Y, if pre-existing	SDP Minor	Staff
• <u>Former School Building Converted for Use as an</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>AR</u>	<u>City Council</u>

Apartment Dwelling			
• Family Home	Y	ZP	ZEO

- Y = Yes: permitted as indicated by required approval
- N = No: prohibited
- SP = Special Use Permit required; See Section 29.1503
- ZP = Building/Zoning Permit required: See Section 29.1501
- AR = Adaptive Reuse approval required: See Section 29.306**
- SDP Minor = Site Development Plan Minor: See Section 29.1502(3)
- SDP Major = Site Development Plan Major: See Section 29.1502 (4)
- HO = Home Occupation
- ZBA = Zoning Board of Adjustment
- ZEO = Zoning Enforcement Officer

It should be noted that the standards contained in Zone Development Standards Table can be waived under the Adaptive Reuse process.

Section 29.700(3) Residential Density

A text amendment is needed to this section of the Municipal Code to allow greater densities in the residential zones through the approval of an Adaptive Reuse Plan approved by the City Council. Presently, the maximum density allowed in the “UCRM” zone is 7.26 dwelling units per net acre for land zoned as “UCRM.” The adaptive reuse of Roosevelt School as an Apartment Dwelling exceeds the maximum density allowed in the “UCRM” zone. The following text shown as bolded and underlined could be added to allow a density that exceeds 7.26 dwelling units per net acre:

*(3) Residential Density. In each Residential Base Zone, residential development must be in accordance with the Residential Density standard established for that zone. Residential Density is expressed in terms of the square feet of lot area required per dwelling unit. Residential Density varies by zone. The number of dwelling units that may be built on a given lot is a function of two factors: the lot size and the Residential Density of the Zone. The density of a development shall not exceed the density limits hereby established for Residential Zones as follows, **or as specified in an Adaptive Reuse Plan approved by the City Council.***

As was stated above, a key decision in this text amendment will be the process for site plan approval. **Four options** are possible.

1. The **Adaptive Reuse Plan** process would require City Council approval. Under this alternative, the City Council would obtain input from the Historic Preservation

Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission. The developer would then prepare and submit a site development plan for review by the City staff's Development Review Committee, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission, prior to consideration by City Council at a formal public hearing.

2. The **Major Site Development Plan** process would require City Council approval. Under this alternative, the Council would consider public input and express its priorities for the project to the developer. The developer would then prepare and submit a site development plan for review by the Development Review Committee and the Planning & Zoning Commission, prior to consideration by the City Council at a formal public hearing.
3. The **Minor Site Development Plan** process would only require staff approval. This would be the most expeditious method of granting site plan approval.
4. The **Special Use Permit** process would be based upon Residential Zone Standards, as well as the General Standards in Section 29.1503 of the Municipal Code. After a site plan is submitted, notice would be sent to all property owners within 200' of Roosevelt School and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) would hold a formal public hearing on the proposed plan. The ZBA would have authority to approve or deny the site plan, and anyone disagreeing with that decision would make an appeal to District Court.

One of these options for the "Approval Required" in the "Urban Core Residential Medium Density (UCRM) Zone Uses Table 29.703(2) needs to be included in the zoning text amendment. **If Council desires to utilize site plan approval as a tool to oversee the project, then Option 1 should be selected. If Council finds that RESGI's May 14 project description is acceptable, or if the Council is satisfied that the public interest can be addressed through approval of a zoning agreement or establishment of an urban revitalization plan, then Option 2 should be selected. If Council desires to delegate decision-making on this project to a third party, then Option 3 should be selected.**

City Council Direction Needed

City Council direction regarding the site plan approval process is requested. The complete zoning text amendment will then be drafted and presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission for its recommendation.

Land or structures situated within an Overlay Zone will be subject to Overlay Zone Use Regulations in addition to the Base Zone Use Regulations.

Sec. 29.305. APPLICATION OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.

No structure shall be constructed or altered except in conformance with all applicable Development Standards. This Ordinance provides for Development Standards as follows:

(1) **General Development Standards.** General Development Standards are applicable to development in all zones and are set forth in Article 4.

(2) **Zone Development Standards.** Zone Development Standards are applicable to development in each zone and are set forth in the Articles and Sections describing each zone or district.

Sec. 29.306. ADAPTIVE REUSE.

(1) **Purpose.** The purpose of these adaptive reuse provisions is to foster the renovation and reuse of structures that have historic, architectural, or economic value to the City and are vacant or at risk of becoming underutilized, vacant or demolished.

(2) **Qualifying Adaptive Reuses.** Any proposal for the adaptive reuse of a structure or group of contiguous structures, whether or not the proposal involves one or more Nonconforming Uses, Nonconforming Structures, and/or Nonconforming Lots, shall qualify for City Council review if the proposal meets all of the following conditions:

(a) The proposed adaptive reuse must be residential, commercial, or a combination of such uses except if it is located in an industrial zone. If the proposed adaptive reuse is located in an industrial zone, it may be devoted to any use or uses that the City Council finds compatible with the uses permitted in the industrial zone. All adaptive reuses proposed in industrial zones, except industrial uses, require a Special Use Permit.

(b) The structure or group of structures proposed for adaptive reuse must have historic, architectural, or economic value to the City justifying renovation and preservation, as determined by the City Council.

(c) The City Council must determine that the long-term benefits of the proposed adaptive reuse outweigh any negative impact on the neighborhood of the proposed project and on the City, as compared with the alternative of having the structures demolished or remaining vacant or underutilized.

(d) In all matters relative to the administration of the Adaptive Reuse requirements, the City Council shall obtain a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission on all structures that are determined to have architectural or historic value.

(3) **Adaptive Reuse Performance Standards.** If the City Council determines that a proposed project qualifies for consideration as an adaptive reuse, then the City Council may waive some or all of the applicable Zone Development Standards and General Development Standards set forth in Article 4, so long as the project conforms to the following:

(a) The renovation and remodeling of structures for adaptive reuse may not destroy or obscure essential architectural features. In addition, such architectural features must be enhanced to the extent that it is feasible and prudent to do so.

(b) Where landscaping and public space required by Section 29.403 cannot be provided on site, any area on site that is available for landscaping shall be so utilized. When the City grants permission, the owner or operator of the site must also use areas within the public right-of-way and adjacent to the site to satisfy landscaping requirements.

(c) Where necessary parking cannot be provided on site, reasonable provision for parking shall be provided off site.

(4) **Adaptive Reuse Procedures.** Any property in any zone is eligible for adaptive reuse status if it meets the requirements of this Section 29.306, unless otherwise limited by the Use Table for the zone. Submission and review of a project qualified for adaptive reuse shall be in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 29.1502(4)(c), Major Site Development Plan.

REAL ESTATE SERVICE GROUP,



April 5, 2013

Ames City Council
515 Clark Ave
Ames, IA 50010

RE: Request for Rezoning and Text Amendment

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

As many of you know we recently purchased the Roosevelt School located at 1000 9th St. from the Ames Community School District. This landmark structure has faithfully served our community for nearly ninety years. It is our hope that we can extend the usefulness and life of the building for future generations of Ames residents.

We are working on a plan to convert the structure into 23 condominium units, sized and priced compatible with the Roosevelt neighborhood. Through several workshops and listening and roundtable sessions this plan has strong support from local residents who value practical and thoughtful planning. Great sensitivity will be given to the historical significance of the building. We also recognize the importance of a thoughtful transition to the new city park located directly east of the building.

Since the land is presently zoned as "S-GA" (Government/Airport District) and will no longer be owned by a governmental entity, it will be necessary to rezone the property to another zoning classification. The zoning of surrounding properties is "UCRM" (Urban Core Residential Medium Density Zone), and that is the zoning classification requested for the property at 1000 9th Street. The "UCRM" zone allows apartment dwellings of 12 units, or less, only if those units existed at the time the zoning regulations for the "UCRM" zone were adopted by the City Council. To allow the 23 units that are now proposed for the former Roosevelt School building will require that the City Council adopt a text amendment to the uses allowed in the "UCRM" zone. Therefore, we respectfully request that the City Council direct City staff to prepare an amendment to the uses allowed in the "UCRM" zone to permit the conversion of the former Roosevelt School building to a building with 23 units.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dean W. Jensen
On behalf of Real Estate Service Group, Inc.

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