

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT RELATED TO BUILDING HEIGHT AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS FOR ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IN THE (RI) RESEARCH PARK INNOVATION DISTRICT**

**BACKGROUND:**

The City Council referred a request for a zoning text amendment to the Department of Planning and Housing to allow an indoor tennis facility, constructed as an inflatable sports dome (bubble). The applicant, Ames Tennis Friends LLC represented by Chuck Winkleblack, has followed up the City Council referral with an application for a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. The text amendment would allow the proposed tennis facility in a structure, constructed as a sports dome (bubble) in the RI (Research Park Innovation District) at the Iowa State University Research Park, Phase III, on property located at 3600 University Boulevard. The proposed text amendment exempts the proposed accessory structure from certain building standards and guidelines.

The RI district “Development Standards” in Table 29.903(3) requires a minimum height of two stories in the Hub Activity Area, which includes the property at 3600 University Boulevard. “Architectural Design Guidelines” in Section 29.903(5)(d) have been adopted to promote a high level of architectural and site design features that signify the commitment to innovation and investment with visual interest and unique identity, site design incorporating stewardship of natural resources, district layout and development supporting the pedestrian environment, and green building techniques demonstrating the commitment to sustainability. The development standards and design guidelines apply to all principal and accessory buildings within the RI zoning district. Notably, there is a 2-story minimum height requirement in the Hub Commercial Area, which includes 3600 University Boulevard, and building design requirements for window glazing and façade materials.

Amendments to the RI zone development standards and architectural design guidelines are necessary to allow the construction of the indoor tennis sports dome as an accessory structure that does not meet the minimum height standard of two stories, and does not meet the architectural design guidelines for buildings in the RI zone. It is important to note these exemptions would only apply to accessory structures. A principal building would need to exist on a site prior to establishing an accessory structure. In this case the existing Ames Fitness building would be the principal structure.

### **Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation:**

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the requested amendment at its March 7, 2018 meeting. The Commission reviewed the need for the changes and consistency with the design requirements of the zoning district. The Commission then voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the text amendments for all accessory structures in the RI zoning district as proposed by staff.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve the proposed ordinance related to text amendments for all accessory structures in the RI (Research Innovation District) exempting accessory structures from a two-story height requirement and architectural design guidelines.
2. The City Council can propose alternative language for the proposed ordinance.
3. The City Council can deny the request for text amendments in the RI (Research Innovation District).
4. The City Council can request additional information and defer making a decision on the proposed ordinance.

### **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

This amendment, although proposed in response to one particular property interest, would apply to other properties within the RI district. The change in a two-story height requirement is necessary for the tennis structure to be built and the exemption from the architectural design requirements is necessary for approval of the sports dome bubble design. Staff drafted the amendment to apply to all types of accessory structures, not just recreational use related structures.

The proposed text amendments do not undermine the intended character of the area and will accommodate the interests of the applicant.

**Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council act in accordance with Alternative #1 to approve the zoning text amendment.**

**ORDINANCE NO.**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY REPEALING TABLE 29.903(3) AND ENACTING A NEW TABLE 29.903(3) AND ENACTING A NEW SECTION 29.903(5)(d)(iv) THEREOF, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ZONING DISTRICT ACCESSORY BUILDING STANDARDS; REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**BE IT ENACTED**, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by enacting a new Table 29.903(3) and Section 29.903(5)(d)(iv) as follows:

**“Sec. 29.903. Research Park Innovation District (RI)**

...

(3) **Zone Development Standards.** The zone development standards applicable in the RI Zone are set forth in Table 29.903(3) below:

**Table 29.903(3)  
Development Standards**

<b>DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS</b>	<b>RI ZONE</b>
Maximum FAR	.35 for areas outside of Hub Activity Area/ No limit within Hub Activity Area
Minimum Lot Area	One Acre
Minimum Lot Frontage	100 ft.
Minimum Building Setbacks:	
Street Lot Line University Ave	30 ft.
Street Lot Line	10 ft.
Side Lot Line	10 ft.
Rear Lot Line	10 ft.
Lot Line Abutting a Residential Zoned Lot	50 ft.
Maximum Building Setbacks in Hub Activity Area for Principal Facade, excepting central common area	20 ft.
Landscaping in Setbacks Abutting an R Zoned Lot	20 ft. with High Screen. See Section 29.403
Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage	70%
Minimum Landscaped Area	20%
Maximum Height	100 ft.
Minimum Height Hub Activity Area, except accessory structures	2-Stories
Parking Allowed Between Buildings and Streets	Yes

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	RI ZONE
Parking Location	Parking within the public right-of-way may count toward required on-site parking in the Hub Activity Area for an adjacent individual site as approved with a site development plan.  Parking must be setback a minimum of 20 feet from a street lot line.
Drive-Through Facilities Permitted	No
Outdoor Display Permitted	No
Outdoor Storage Permitted-not between building and the street	Yes, See Section 29.405; Screened per Section 29.403(1)(c)
Trucks and Equipment Permitted	Yes

*(Ord. No. 4223, 8-11-15; Ord. No. 4232, 10-13-15; Ord. No. 4312, 6-27-17)*

...

(5) **Design Guidelines.**

...

(d) **Architectural Design Guidelines.**

...

(iv) These architectural design guidelines are not mandatory for accessory structures.”

Section Two. All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, if any.

Section Three. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

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John A. Haila, Mayor