

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS TO ALLOW CONVERSION OF A FORMER SCHOOL BUILDING FOR USE AS AN APARTMENT DWELLING IN THE “UCRM” (URBAN CORE RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY) ZONE AS A PERMITTED USE AND TO ALLOW RESIDENTIAL DENSITY AS SPECIFIED IN AN ADAPTIVE REUSE PLAN APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL

BACKGROUND:

City Council Directive. On May 14, 2013, the City Council directed City staff to modify the *Municipal Code* to include a former school building as an adaptive reuse with the approval of the City Council.

Zoning Text Amendments Needed to Allow Reuse of Roosevelt School. Dean Jensen of Real Estate Service Group Incorporated (RESGI) has purchased the former Roosevelt School building from the Ames Community School District. Mr. Jensen proposes to reuse the school building as an apartment dwelling with 23 residential units. The “UCRM” zoning district does not presently allow any new apartment dwellings in the zone. Apartment dwellings that existed at the time the Zoning Ordinance was adopted are allowed as a permitted use if there are 12, or fewer, units in the building. To allow a new apartment dwelling in the “UCRM” zone would require approval of a zoning text amendment, as described in this report. “Apartment Dwelling” is the terminology used in the Zoning code to describe buildings with three or more residential units. It is the intention of the developer to sell each unit separately as a condominium.

In addition, the maximum allowed density of dwelling units in the “UCRM” zone is 7.26 dwelling units per net acre. The density proposed by Mr. Jensen for the Roosevelt School site exceeds the maximum allowed density. Therefore, a second zoning text amendment is proposed to allow a higher residential density as specified in an Adaptive Reuse Plan approved by the City Council.

Adaptive Reuse. Section 29.306 provides the City Council with the authority to approve a Major Site Development Plan for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for a new use. As defined by Section 29.201(7), “*Adaptive Reuse means rehabilitation or renovation of existing building(s) or structures for any uses(s) other than the present use(s).*”

The purpose of the adaptive reuse provisions in the Code 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.

To qualify for consideration as an “Adaptive Reuse”, as stated in Section 29.306(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), the proposal must meet 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 or the proposed project and on the City, as compared with the alternative of having the structures demolished or remaining vacant or underutilized.”

If it is determined by the City Council that the proposed project meets the criteria to qualify 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 of Chapter 29 of the *Municipal Code*, so long as the project conforms to the following “Performance Standards”:

- (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 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.

Roosevelt School Adaptive Reuse Project Overview. Due to the tight development time frame for successful implementation of this project, the developer will give the Commission a preview of RESGI’s conceptual design at the meeting. It is staff’s intent, that the project information provided at this meeting, will be useful to the Commission in determining whether the Adaptive Reuse Plan meets the required conditions and performance standards, as the formal Adaptive Reuse application comes to the Commission for review and recommendation to the City Council.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

Based upon Council's direction, staff has prepared the following zoning text amendments. The Commission's recommendation on these amendments will be forwarded to the City Council prior to its action.

A text amendment is needed to Table 29.703(2) 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. Adding the following bolded and underlined text to the "Residential Use" section of the table enables conversion of a former school building for use as an Apartment Dwelling, provided the City Council approves an Adaptive Reuse Plan for the redevelopment of the building and the site. See the proposed text bolded and underlined in the following table:

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 Apartment Dwelling</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>AR</u>	<u>City Council</u>
• 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

A text amendment is also needed to Section 29.700(3) 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." (Only for uses existing prior to 2000, when the new Zoning ordinance was adopted.) 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.**”*

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council:
 - A. **Approve** the zoning text amendment to Section 29.703(2) to allow conversion of a former school building for use as an apartment dwelling in the “UCRM” zone, by including the **“bolded underlined text”** included in this report; and,
 - B. **Approve** the zoning text amendment to Section 29.700(3) to allow density in residential zones to be determined by the City Council through the approval of an Adaptive Reuse Plan, by including the **“bolded underlined text”** included in this report.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **approve** the zoning text amendments to Section 29.703(2) and to Section 29.700(3) to allow conversion of a former school building for use as an apartment dwelling in the “UCRM” zone, and to allow density in residential zones to be determined by the City Council through approval of an Adaptive Reuse Plan, **with modifications.**
3. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **approve one** of the text amendments and **not the other.**
4. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **not approve** either of the proposed text amendments.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission can refer these proposed zoning text amendments back to staff for further information.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed zoning text amendment to the “UCRM” list of permitted uses, and amendment of the density requirements for residential adaptive reuse projects is necessary to enable the developer of the former Roosevelt School building to reuse this vacant structure in an established residential neighborhood of the city. This change could also enable the future reuse of other elementary school buildings that may no longer be needed as schools.

Therefore, the Planning and Housing Department recommends that the Commission act in accordance with Alternative #1, which is a recommendation to the City Council for approval of the both zoning text amendments, as drafted by staff.

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