

**MINUTES  
CITY OF AMES  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|------|
| Date: January 21, 2015   | Debra Lee, Chairperson       | 2015 |
|                          | Rob Bowers, Vice Chairperson | 2015 |
| Call to Order: 7:00 p.m. | Yvonne Wannemuehler          | 2015 |
|                          | Julie Gould                  | 2016 |
| Place: Ames City Hall    | John Tillo                   | 2016 |
| Council Chambers         | Carlton Basmajian            | 2017 |
|                          | *Matthew Converse            | 2017 |
| Adjournment: 8:37 p.m.   | *Absent                      |      |

**MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:**

1. Public Hearing for the Rezone of 710 South Duff Avenue
  2. Staff Report for Residential High-Density Assessment Matrix
  3. Discussion on Wireless Siting Requirements
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**CALL TO ORDER:** Debra Lee, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**MOTION:** (Wannemuehler/Gould) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of January 21, 2015.

**MOTION PASSED:** (6 - 0)

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2014:**

**MOTION:** (Bowers/Wannemuehler) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2014.

**MOTION PASSED:** (6 - 0)

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**PUBLIC FORUM:** There were no public comments.

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**PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE REZONE OF 710 SOUTH DUFF AVENUE**

Charlie Kuester, Planner, stated that the applicant, AMERCO Real Estate, owns the property from which U-Haul operates and has requested to rezone property located at 710 South Duff Avenue. He stated that this property is two separate parcels that have the same address. Mr. Kuester stated that the County Assessor differentiates the two parcels by referring to one as 710 South Duff Avenue Rear and the other parcel as 710 South Duff Avenue. He stated that the applicant wants to rezone the property from Agricultural "A" to Highway-Oriented Commercial "HOC". Mr. Kuester outlined the zoning classification of the surrounding parcels. He stated that the property is approximately one acre in size and has no frontage on a public street. Mr.

Kuester stated that there is an existing non-conforming structure on the property. He stated that an access easement has been granted from the previous owner of a larger parcel in the area in favor of Boston Commons, the Cummings property and the former Ames Rental property. Mr. Kuester outlined the location of the access easement. He explained that the Land Use Policy Plan map designates much of this area outside of the floodway as Highway-Oriented Commercial. Mr. Kuester outlined the location of the Floodway Fringe area. He stated that Council previously heard a proposal to include development in the Floodway. Mr. Kuester stated that as part of that process the applicant requested Council to change the Land Use Policy Plan to extend the HOC designation or change the designation to Light Industrial and the Council was not interested in allowing further development in the Floodway. He outlined various details of the Land Use Policy Plan, several of which include commercial growth and the need to protect the City's conservation and natural resources, such as the flood plain. Mr. Kuester reviewed the types and location of public infrastructure that is located on or immediately adjacent to this site. He stated that it would be up to the developer to secure the necessary easements to bring service lines to this building site. Mr. Kuester stated that if the developer plans to build a one or two-story self-storage facility on the property it would still need to meet the City's development standards. He stated that the proposed use is consistent with the zoning classification. Mr. Kuester stated that this property was annexed by the City in 1962. He reviewed the zoning classifications for property in this area dating back to 1963. Mr. Kuester stated that staff would require a documented access prior to approval of a site plan. He reviewed staff's findings for the request and stated that staff recommends approval of the applicant's request.

John Tillo asked for clarification of the zoning classifications for Boston Commons and the Cummings and U-Haul properties. Mr. Kuester stated that they are zoned HOC. He stated that approximately four years ago the property further south, the former Carney Salvage site, was rezoned to HOC.

Randy Dickson, President of U-Haul Iowa, stated that they hope to increase their level of service to the Ames Community and the moving public. He stated that they hope that their request will be approved.

Mark Howard stated that AMERCO has identified a level of need for storage service in this community. He stated that they feel that this lot will serve the purpose for this type of service. Mr. Howard reviewed the details of their proposed site plan of the property. He stated that they estimate that customers visit their storage unit three times per year. Mr. Howard stated that he feels that this request will not generate a lot of traffic.

Carlton Basmajian asked if they plan to demolish the existing building. Mr. Howard stated that they have not reached the design stage of the process yet. He stated that this will be determined when they submit their site plan.

John Tillo asked for clarification as to how many stories the building will be. Mr. Howard stated that the height figure of 22 feet listed in the Applicant's Statement refers to the existing building.

Mr. Basmajian asked if this property was flooded during 2010. Mr. Dickson stated that it was flooded by approximately 3 ½ feet. Mr. Kuester stated that if they use the existing building they would need to flood proof the building or elevate the lowest floor to three feet above the 100 year flood stage.

Deb Lee asked for clarification on the access to the property from South Duff Avenue. Mr. Howard stated that the access would be via the narrow lot between Boston Commons and the

Cummings property. He stated that this is where the easement is located although the legal description does not reflect this access.

Mr. Kuester stated that the Commission received a letter from Tim Hogan from the Hogan Law Office regarding the applicant's rezone request. He stated that the City Council directed staff to work on a project that would include a median on Duff Avenue and would prohibit left hand turns from approximately South 5<sup>th</sup> Street to the bridge over Squaw Creek. Mr. Kuester stated that this proposed project would include a traffic signal that would allow access, including left turns. He stated that the property owners in this area would still have right turn access in and out of their property; however, left turn access would be restricted. Mr. Kuester stated that property owners have been involved in informational meetings over the last eighteen months explaining this proposal and the proposed access to their properties.

Ms. Lee asked for clarification of the proposed grading for this parcel and its relationship to the surrounding properties. Mr. Kuester stated that the Walmart store would be the same height as the applicant's proposed building. Yvonne Wannemuehler stated that Walmart has been flooded twice. Mr. Kuester stated that the current floodplain regulations allow development in the floodplain as long as the standards are met.

Mr. Basmajian asked for clarification of the location of the easement. Mr. Kuester stated that it is located in a parcel owned by B & D Land Company.

Ms. Lee stated that she has serious questions about the use; however, it is consistent with the Land Use Policy Plan. She stated that there will be several stages of the approval process. Kelly Diekmann reviewed the process if the request is approved by the City Council.

Discussion was held on the reasoning and implications of rezoning these parcels in the year 2000.

Mr. Basmajian asked if it is a certainty that the existing building will be demolished. Mr. Kuester stated that if the building is renovated it would need to meet the current flood plain standards.

Rob Bowers stated that he does not like to see pieces of property that become islands. He stated that he is in favor of this request.

Mr. Tillo stated that the Agricultural zoning designation serves a purpose for water mitigation and flood protection; however, there are properties in this area that currently have the HOC zoning designation. He stated that currently there are many elevated properties in this area. Mr. Tillo expressed his concerns of environmental impacts due to the rezone and how it would affect water mitigation. Mr. Diekmann stated that the City does not have a modeling requirement for the addition of fill. He stated that development can occur on this property. Mr. Diekmann stated that with the current regulations it is about protecting the building on the property and not how the addition of that building affects the surrounding properties.

Julie Gould asked when the modeling was completed. Mr. Kuester stated that it was completed in 1999. Ms. Gould asked if the modeling will be updated in the future. Mr. Kuester stated that College Creek and Worle Creek have been updated. He outlined additional modeling that has been completed. Mr. Kuester stated that he has not been notified that new flood maps will be forthcoming. Mr. Diekmann stated that the City Council held a workshop in February regarding flooding. He stated that a flood mitigation study has been completed.

Mr. Bowers asked if this one acre parcel is developed. Mr. Kuester stated that there is a considerable amount of grass on the property. Mr. Diekmann stated that it does not contain row crops, nor is it paved.

Ms. Lee asked if this property were to be developed would the necessary elevation match the elevation of the Walmart parking lot. Mr. Kuester stated the elevation of any building on this site would need to match the floor level of Walmart and the floor level of the Boston Commons site.

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Bowers) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends to the City Council that they approve the request for rezoning from A-Agricultural to HOC-Highway-Oriented Commercial, based upon staff's analysis as found in the addendum.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 1) (nay, Basmajian)

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#### **STAFF REPORT FOR RESIDENTIAL HIGH-DENSITY ASSESSMENT MATRIX**

Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning & Housing, explained that the City Council conducted a workshop during November, 2014, due to various requests that Council and staff had received, on the trends of residential development with a focus on high-density development. He stated that staff came back to the Council with a staff report and the Residential High-Density (RH) Evaluation Tool on January 13, 2015. Mr. Diekmann stated that Council requested staff to obtain feedback from the Commission on the evaluation tool, process, and RH development in general. He explained that staff feels that the argument about demand, based solely on Iowa State University enrollment, is not justified based on the trend of what is approved and what is built. Mr. Diekmann stated that other needs for housing still remain in the City. He reviewed the contents of the Power Point presentation with the Commission, that was shown earlier to the City Council. Mr. Diekmann reviewed various Land Use Policy Plan Amendments and rezone requests that will be coming before the Commission and the Council. He reviewed how the evaluation tool checklists will be used. Mr. Diekmann stated that current projects will result in a 10 percent increase in the supply of residential multi-family housing units in the City. He stated that he feels that when the Land Use Policy Plan was written it was possibly assumed that there would not be a high demand for multi-family units. Mr. Diekmann stated that the housing trend is a great deal different now. He explained that the input received from the Council Workshop revealed an interest for multi-family residential housing. Mr. Diekmann stated that based on the interest expressed at the Workshop, Council requested staff to develop a tool that would help with determination of site suitability. He reviewed the items that staff feels should be taken into consideration in the determination. Mr. Diekmann stated that staff feels that the tool is not meant to be a scoring system. He stated that it will be challenging to use this matrix when comparing green field versus infill development. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the input staff received from the Council on the draft matrix. He stated that a staff report will be presented to Council next week. Mr. Diekmann stated that Council wants staff to use this tool when reviewing upcoming proposals. He explained the types of feedback that Council wants to receive from the Commission.

Yvonne Wannemuehler stated that she is surprised that there wasn't a section listed on the checklist evaluating need. Mr. Diekmann stated that the Council had received background

information on demand and wanted to look at site suitability not market demand. Staff designed the tool based on this direction from the Council.

John Tillo stated that he also feels that it would be helpful to have more discussion on need when the Commission hears rezone requests.

Carlton Basmajian stated that he feels that it is extremely difficult to forecast demand and incorporate it in the analysis. Mr. Diekmann reviewed how the checklist will be used. Mr. Basmajian asked if staff plans to use the checklist during initial negotiations with developers or will it be used during the post application part of the process. Mr. Diekmann stated that he feels that it might be used about half-way through the period that Mr. Basmajian identified. He stated that negotiations with developers do not always begin with City staff. Mr. Basmajian asked if the checklist will be used to identify how potential sites could be used. Mr. Diekmann stated that it will be used initially as a screening level on a few example sites.

Mr. Basmajian asked for clarification on the metrics that was taken into account in the evaluation tool. Mr. Diekmann explained what was taken into account for several of the categories. He stated that if the Commission had any specific parameters that they feel might be helpful to add to the tool staff is open to suggestions. Mr. Basmajian stated that he feels that this could be a powerful tool once it is refined.

Mr. Tillo made a suggestion to add moderately high and moderately low to the evaluation tool. Mr. Diekmann stated he feels that most sites will fall in the middle category and that it would be difficult to determine slight differences. Discussion was held on the criteria and the evaluation process.

Rob Bowers stated that he feels that developers would need to be educated about the tool. He stated that it might be interesting to have the developers fill out the evaluation tool for their site in addition to the City filling out the checklist. Mr. Diekmann stated that this is currently a draft informational tool. He stated that Council will be deciding if the tool will be used and how it will be used in the future.

Deb Lee stated that it would be good to have a checklist that the Commission could use to help them evaluate the cases that are presented consistently.

Mr. Basmajian asked if staff plans to add weighting into the matrix. Mr. Diekmann stated that Council did not consider adding weighting as a priority. He stated that if the Commission feels that weighting should be added they will need to make that recommendation to the Council. Mr. Diekmann stated that with any green field or infill property it is difficult to add weighting. He stated that it is the intent that the matrix does not evaluate the merits of the current use of the property.

Ms. Lee stated that she is encouraged to see that the tool takes into consideration the quality of a project's design. She stated that she feels that it will be helpful with infill requests. Ms. Lee spoke about the continuing need for affordable housing.

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## **DISCUSSION ON WIRELESS SITING REQUIREMENTS**

Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning & Housing, stated that the FCC has new requirements for collocation of wireless facilities. He reviewed several details of legislation that was passed by Congress. Mr. Diekmann reviewed several requests that the City has received, one of which

was to install wireless equipment within the City's right-of-way on City street light poles. He stated that there will be more details coming out in the future.

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COMMISSION COMMENTS: None.

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STAFF COMMENTS: Kelly Diekmann stated that ISU Extension Office is holding a conference for Planning & Zoning Officials. He stated that there is money budgeted for training for Commission members. Mr. Diekmann asked the Commission to let him know if they are interested in attending.

Mr. Diekmann stated that the City Council outlined their goals for the Planning Department recently.

Staff reviewed the tentative agenda for the meeting of February 4, 2015.

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MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Tillo) to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED: (6 - 0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

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Debra Lee, Chairperson  
Planning & Zoning Commission

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Lorrie Banks, Recording Secretary  
Department of Planning & Housing

