

MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Council Chambers
515 Clark Avenue
August 19, 2026

Call to Order

Chairperson Mike Sullivan called the meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Julie Winter, Scott Huffman, Cheryl Moss, Mike Sullivan, Matthew Voss, Kyle Hauswirth, and Jim Blickensdorf. Staff in attendance were Kelly Diekmann and Justin Moore.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Hauswirth, seconded by Winter, to approve the August 19, 2026 agenda. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Hauswirth, seconded by Voss, to approve the minutes of July 1, 2026. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Forum

Chairperson Sullivan opened and closed Public Forum when no one came forward to speak.

Rezone to Floating Suburban Residential Low (FS-RL) Density with a Master Plan for the Greenbriar Development located generally at 4600 George Washington Carver Avenue and the end of Valley View Road and Stange Road

Planner Justin Moore presented an application to rezone 84 acres of agricultural land. The request includes rezoning approximately 55 acres of the designated 84-acre area from agricultural to Floating Suburban Residential Low (FS-RL).

Mr. Moore explained that the broad plan for the 150-acre area would be RN4 or walkable urban land use, with the FS-RL area providing an appropriate transition to the future mixed-use area later. He also mentioned that the City of Ames has discussed a potential “firehouse” that would be in this area.

Cheryl Moss requested clarification on the walkable urban description. Director Kelly Diekmann explained the distinction between RN3 and RN4. He noted that RN4 is preplanned for the mix of uses and typically includes a defined core. RN3 applies to most expansion areas and does not preplan the mix of uses. For this project the commercial area was originally designated on the east side of the site; however, the applicant requested relocation to the northwest corner at Stange and Cameron. Mr. Diekmann

explained that future overall development would have to occur to make the first phase with only single family homes consistent with RN4.

Mr. Diekmann encouraged the commission to consider the rezoning within the context of the larger 150-acre plan rather than first phase area of this rezoning. Ms. Moss asked about future CyRide service in the area and Mr. Diekmann explained that transit service is outside the Planning's control because CyRide operates independently with its own financial resources.

Jim Blickensdorf questioned why RN3, which is similar to the surrounding land designation, would not be more appropriate and requested clarification regarding the density goal applied to RN4 of 6 dwelling units per acre. Mr. Diekmann explained that a larger area is necessary to effectively implement an RN4 designation. He noted that the initial phase would have a density of approximately 3.75 units per net acre, while the overall planned development is intended to achieve a density of at least 6 with the later phases.

Mr. Blickensdorf asked if a main street environment would be included in the current rezoning or addressed with future rezoning of the larger site. Mr. Diekmann clarified that a main street environment is not proposed for the first phase.

Kyle Hauswirth asked about sewer service capacity for the designated area. Mr. Diekmann confirmed there is sufficient capacity to serve the area for the first 100 homes. Additional development may have to wait for the sewer trunk extension to serve it from the east.

The applicant, Justin Dodge with Hunziker, explained they initially did not anticipate sewer service being available but Public Works identified a solution to serve approximately 100 homes without waiting for a new trunkline. This would allow Phase One to move forward while providing additional time to coordinate with the Planning Department on the future commercial areas, street connections, density goals, and extension of the sewer and water trunkline for the larger 150-acre site. Mr. Dodge stated that the goal is to begin grading in the fall, with lots available in June 2027.

Chairperson Sullivan opened and closed Public Comment when no one came forward to speak.

Mr. Diekmann presented a map and discussed the planned trunkline, anticipated for installation next year, which will serve the second phase of the site and the Hayden's Preserve development planned to the east along Hyde.

Chairperson Sullivan opened Commission discussion. There was no further discussion.

Moved by Hauswirth, seconded by Winter, to recommend that the City Council approve the request for rezoning from A-Agriculture to FS-RL Suburban Low Density with a Master Plan, based upon findings and conclusions as found in the report, with a Zoning Agreement to be signed prior to City Council approval, including the designation of a site to be dedicated to the City for the construction of a Fire House along Stange Road. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment to Master Plan with Rezoning to Floating Suburban Residential Low (FS-RL) Density for the Hayden's Preserve Development at 5571 Hyde Avenue

Mr. Diekmann presented an application to rezone the Hayden's Preserve development to FS-RL and provided background on the property from the prior 2016 and 2021 master plan approvals. He discussed previous infrastructure challenges, including the need for an east-west road connection and a sewer trunkline extension.

Mr. Diekmann explained that the City Council has indicated support to provide incentives at this time to reduce developer infrastructure responsibilities. The east-west road connection is now incentivized as part of the project, while the sewer trunkline has become a City project. Staff consider the east-west connection critical to site connectivity and logical development phasing.

The applicant has revised the master plan and is requesting that the existing FSRM and commercial areas be rezoned to FS-RL, but to include approximately 50 more dwellings in total. The FS-RL designation would limit housing to single-family detached and attached units, eliminating apartment-style development. The applicant proposes a mix of housing types on smaller lots to increase overall density.

Mr. Diekmann reviewed previous master plans and changes to the City's conservation subdivision ordinance. The revised ordinance removed the requirement that 80% of lots front greenspace while retaining stormwater treatment and open-space requirements. The proposed master plan continues conservation measures along the primary creek areas while allowing more concentrated development in flatter areas. The east-west road would improve connectivity and distribute traffic throughout the site.

Mr. Diekmann noted that detailed stormwater management will be addressed during the preliminary plat process, with required treatment areas taking priority over the desired unit count while maintaining minimum density requirements. He also addressed prior traffic studies completed for this area. Staff expressed confidence that the proposed increase in units can be accommodated while meeting conservation requirements and that existing and planned public facilities are adequate to serve the development.

Julie Winter asked about creek buffer requirements related to the Ada Hayden watershed. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the master plan and identified the required development buffer under Chapter 5B of the Municipal Code. Ms. Winter also asked about water quality treatment. Mr. Diekmann explained the stormwater management process and noted that properly managed urban development should reduce the existing pollutant load of row crop field. Stormwater management requirements were further discussed.

Kyle Hauswirth asked about the floodplain mapping and the proposed creek crossing. Mr. Diekmann explained that the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the crossing will not cause a rise or other change to the floodplain.

Matthew Voss asked about the FSRM designation shown as a potential secondary classification. Mr. Diekmann explained that FSRM would need additional definition and noted that the applicant agreed to use FS-RL as the sole designation, with the master plan to be updated before presentation to City Council.

Mr. Blickensdorf requested a map showing surrounding uses. Mr. Diekmann presented the map and noted the site is surrounded by farmland, a senior living facility, a townhome development, and multiple single-family subdivisions.

Chairperson Sullivan opened Public Comment.

Nick Halfhill, ATI, explained that the infrastructure incentives have allowed the project to move forward with a more efficient development plan and increased land value. He reviewed the master plan, including open space, detention basins, and commercial areas, and highlighted the proposed park location adjacent to the greenway and trail system. Mr. Halfhill confirmed the FSRM designation was included in error and agreed to its removal. He stated that work could begin this fall, with Phase One anticipated as a 2027 project.

Jeff Lisabeth, 2217 Leopold Drive, expressed concerns regarding the proposed Master Plan amendment and rezoning, including the plan's consistency with the Ames Plan 2040, the proximity of proposed development to his property and the Ames Country Club, density increases, traffic impacts, future entrances and turn lanes, speed suppression, topsoil removal, potential bridge construction, and tax impacts. Staff clarified that the proposal was limited to the Master Plan amendment and FS-RL zoning designation, allowing for up to 670 future homes. Detailed subdivision plans, including lot layouts, street widths, and traffic improvements, would be addressed during the future preliminary plat process. Staff confirmed the Master Plan conforms to the Ames Plan 2040 and noted that the previous 2022 plat approval had expired.

Scott Saienga, 2218 Audubon Drive, asked whether additional opportunities for public comment would be available before the plat is finalized. Chairperson Sullivan confirmed that additional public meetings would occur with preliminary plat review.

Mr. Halfhill explained that the proposed density increase resulted from changing a previously planned commercial area to residential use. He also addressed concerns regarding topsoil removal and the planned grading and replacement process.

Mr. Diekmann further explained that topsoil is typically redistributed on-site as part of stormwater and grading requirements.

In response to question about next steps, he noted that another public hearing before the City Council is anticipated in September regarding the Master Plan and rezoning, with mailed notice to be provided. If approved, the applicant may proceed with subdivision plans later in the year. Mr. Diekmann confirmed that the site cannot be disturbed without preliminary plat approval.

Mr. Hauswirth discussed the proposed development's potential to provide additional housing for Ames. Additional discussion about traffic in the area was discussed.

Chairperson Sullivan opened Commission discussion. No further discussion was held.

Moved by Hauswirth, seconded by Voss, to recommend that the City Council can approve the request for the amendment to the Master Plan and Rezoning to FS-RL for the site as shown with the attached Master Plan exhibit. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Commission Comments

None

Staff Comments

Mr. Diekmann provided an update on upcoming agenda items, including an additional rezoning and plats as well as text amendments related to the CityLight downtown housing project. He also mentioned additional activities that will be coming up for September and October tied to housing development, subdivisions and rezoning.

Mr. Diekmann also noted the City Council's decision to implement a nine-month pause on data centers and discussed future regulation of such facilities. The Commission's recommendation from June would no longer apply and the issue will return to the Commission in the future.

Adjournment

Moved by Voss to adjourn at 8:18 p.m.

Mike Sullivan
Chairperson

Brittany Clayton
Recording Secretary