

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

Date: April 20, 2016	Debra Lee, Chairperson	2018
	Matt Converse, Vice Chairperson	2018
Call to Order: 7:00 PM	Carlton Basmajian	2017
	Rob Bowers	2018
Place: Ames City Hall Council Chambers	*Julie Gould	2019
	Doug Ragaller	2019
Adjournment: 10:11 PM	Yvonne Wannemuehler	2018
	[*Absent]	

CALL TO ORDER: Debra Lee, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Ragaller) to approve the agenda for the meeting of April 20, 2016

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF April 6, 2016:

MOTION: (Converse/Bowers) to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 6, 2016

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE REZONE WITH MASTER PLAN FOR 3535 SOUTH 530TH AVENUE (VILLAGE PARK)

This rezoning request is intended to allow medium- and high-density apartment development on the 20-acre subject site. Case Planner Ray Anderson reviewed the property on a location map and a Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) map, and explained how the rezoning would result in two zoning districts: Suburban Residential Medium Density (FS-RM) for roughly two-thirds of the site along its perimeters, and Residential High Density (RH) for the remaining one-third of the site on its interior. The proposed project will include 36-unit, three-story apartment buildings in the RH area, and 8- and 12-unit, two- and three-story buildings in the FS-RM areas, all within required density ranges. Several open spaces are included and would provide storm water management functionality. Land located south and west of the subject site is not presently within City limits but is expected to eventually annex and develop as low density residential housing. Street connections were reviewed along with a proposed shared use path that would connect to the ISU Research Park and extend through the eastern side of the site. This trail would eventually connect with the High Trestle Trail regional system to the south. Staff found the proposed rezoning to be consistent with the amended LUPP, adopted in January 2016, and recommended approval of the requested rezoning with Master Plan.

Kelly Diekmann, Planning and Housing Director, clarified that site details presented by staff were based on a review of a Preliminary Plat that would follow an approved rezoning. Additional details would become available as the project moved through future public review steps, minus the RH area, which would not be subject to further Commission or City Council review.

Justin Dodge, Hunziker Companies, 105 South 16th Street, displayed the Preliminary Plat that had been submitted to staff. He reviewed several project components that were modified to address concerns raised during the LUPP amendment process. All of the buildings along the western edge of the site will be two stories to help transition into the neighboring single-family dwellings. Buildings along the northern portion of the site will be three stories. Screening and buffering would be enhanced, and the shared use path would be moved further west to accommodate the neighboring property owners to the east, Dan and Carmen Fuchs. Mr. Dodge stressed this project would ease occupancy pressures in the workforce and young professional housing markets. The majority of these units would be one or two bedroom apartments.

Carlton Basmajian asked if any of the proposed units could be considered to be affordable. Mr. Dodge stated this would not be a low- to moderate income housing product.

Yvonne Wannemuehler asked how many buildings would be located in the RH area. Mr. Dodge replied there would be four buildings, along with parking and garages.

Debra Lee asked how a consistent theme would be achieved throughout the development with separate lots and the potential for multiple builders. Mr. Dodge expected a development similar to Somerset, perhaps more modern, with an evident theme as well as unique buildings. Ms. Lee asked what staff will review with the RH buildings. Mr. Diekmann stated there are no apartment design guidelines. Mr. Dodge said there would be coordination in the building design elements.

Chuck Winkleblack, Hunziker Companies, 105 South 16th Street, explained that his company would set design guidelines and standards and retain plan approval—even if ownership were not retained—through restrictive covenants. He noted efforts to make accommodations to ease concerns and expressed a desire to be a good neighbor and to serve the community.

Public comment opened at 7:21 PM.

Lora Larrance, 3549 530th Avenue, expressed appreciation to Chuck Winkleblack for meeting to address her questions about the project. She asked how agreements about the location of the shared use trail and conditions prohibiting undergraduate residents could be documented. Mr. Diekmann indicated zoning would limit unit number and type, the Preliminary Plat would establish configurations and easement locations, and site plan review would address other details. The City would not, however, condition a project on occupancy, i.e., who can live there.

Dan Fuchs, 3581 530th Avenue, asked for clarification on the proposed location for the shared use trail, the maximum number of units proposed for the RH portion of the proposed project, and if construction would occur in phases. He shared Ms. Larrance's concern about solidifying and documenting agreements and accommodations. Mr. Diekmann addressed Mr. Fuchs's questions regarding subsequent steps in the project approval process.

Public comment closed at 7:36 PM.

Ms. Lee asked staff about allowed maximums in the interest of looking at potential unintended consequences, or what rezoning would allow another developer to build. Mr. Diekmann reported FS-RM allows four stories for apartments with a cap of 12 units in any one building. RH allows

100-foot building height—that is not done anywhere except Campustown—but practically caps at four stories and does not limit the number of units in a building. Mr. Diekmann also responded to Ms. Lee's questions about street connections in and around the subject area.

Mr. Basmajian asked if the developer considered designing the site as FS-RM, without RH. Mr. Winkleblack said that option was discarded to maintain both the unit count and an effective transition with smaller buildings going to the west. This project has a higher unit-bedroom ratio to attract working professionals rather than students. Mr. Basmajian stated that from a site design perspective, smaller buildings would create more flexibility and reduce concerns about the potential size of the RH buildings. Mr. Winkleblack noted that FS-RM standards cap at 12 units and the required setbacks for more (smaller) buildings would hinder the total unit count.

MOTION: (Bowers/Ragaller) to accept **Alternative #1**, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **approve** the request for rezoning from Agricultural (A) to Suburban Residential Medium Density (FS-RM), and Residential High Density (RH), as proposed by the rezoning request, including the Master Plan.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR 5752 GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER AVENUE (THE IRONS)

Ames Golf & Country Club (AGCC) requested preliminary plat approval for development of 34 homes on 20 acres of its 155-acre property. Case Planner Charlie Kuester reported the plan includes 18 lots for single-family detached homes, 16 lots for twin homes, and one large lot for AGCC. The site abuts City limits and is within the Allowable North Growth Area of the Land Use Policy Plan. The site is subject to Conservation Subdivision standards because it lies within the Ada Hayden Watershed. The development is expected to be annexed into the City, with full City services eventually brought to the site at the homeowners' expense. Mr. Kuester reviewed the proposed street connections and extensions. Xenia Water Service would service AGCC and the The Irons residences, with the developer buying water rights in the interim before the transfer to City water. Advantex septic systems would service homes onsite. After extension of sanitary sewer infrastructure to the development, the Advantex systems would be abandoned and homes would connect to the City system at the homeowners' cost. The proposed plan meets City subdivision standards and Conservation Subdivision standards for sidewalks and trails for 31 of the 34 residential lots. The area is served by Midland Power Cooperative, which would retain ownership and maintenance of street lights. An environmental inventory revealed no natural resources that would preclude development. The design and layout, as well as the storm water management plan, meet residential development standards in a conservation subdivision. A key issue with the proposed development is protection of Ada Hayden Lake water quality. Mr. Kuester summarized the background and components of a plan that would enable AGCC to reduce its phosphorous release by over 60 percent. Further reduction would be achieved once city sanitary sewer service replaced septic systems in the residential development. A number of proposed waivers and approval conditions were noted and explained. Staff recommended approval of the proposed Preliminary Plat, with conditions A-H as outlined in staff report.

Carlton Basmajian asked staff about proposed sidewalk connections and whether a connected street for the southern 31 residential lots was considered as opposed to a cul-de-sac and two dead end streets. Mr. Kuester indicated alternate street configurations were discarded in favor of the present layout due to concerns about unsafe cut-through traffic to and from George Washington Carver Avenue and the future Stange Road extension.

Doug Ragaller inquired about the cost for homeowners to establish connections to City water and sewer infrastructure. Mr. Diekmann indicated the cost is unknown to staff. Mr. Kuester stated the developer may bear the cost upfront and pass it along to home buyers. Mr. Ragaller expected significant expense for establishing (and abandoning) septic systems before eventually switching over to City connections.

Debra Lee asked staff to clarify the basis for the conservation ordinance related to separation of homes from roadways. Mr. Diekmann explained the requirement that lots take access from an internal street serves two purposes: providing a native vegetation buffer and managing traffic on higher speed arterial roadways with minimal cuts and access points.

Mr. Basmajian asked if something in particular would trigger annexation of the subject property or if there is a timeline. Mr. Kuester replied annexation would occur when the City concludes it is in its best interest to annex. Mr. Diekmann added that it is a policy issue of allowing rural development to occur because the site cannot currently be served by City utility infrastructure. Yvonne Wannemuehler recalled Commission discussion about sanitary sewer capacity related to the Scenic Valley development located south of the subject property. Mr. Diekmann outlined general plans for extending City sewer infrastructure in north Ames.

Bob Gibson, Civil Design Advantage, 3405 SE Crossroads Drive, Grimes, described The Irons development as a very unique project driven by market interest in golf course living as well as a need to raise funds for golf course improvements. Mr. Gibson asked the Commission to move Alternative #1 along with the removal of condition D because of the impact removing the three lots planned along 190th Street would have on the funds needed for AGCC improvements. Mr. Gibson argued for the following concessions for lot development along 190th Street: (1) waiver of the sidewalk requirement due to low cost-benefit ratio and likely removal of trees; (2) waiver of lot access from interior roads requirement because driveways allow nose-first vehicle access to and from 190th Street; (3) waiver of native plantings buffer requirement in favor of tree screening; and (4) waiver of sidewalk or shared use path connection because residents would have access to the golf course via golf cart paths.

The project developer, Chris Gardner, Bella Homes, 204 Ridgewood Drive, Huxley, spoke about compromises and agreements reached with staff during several years of project development (e.g., shared use path, Xenia Water buyout, Stange Road extension, phosphorous reduction, annexation agreement) that would create a win-win-win outcome for AGCC, Bella Homes, and the City. Mr. Gardner emphasized the importance of the three lots along 190th Street and said it would likely be a deal killer to lose them. Mr. Gardner reiterated Mr. Gibson's points about driveways allowing access functionally equivalent to a cul-de-sac to and from 190th Street. He thought the environmental impact of removing 700 trees and the grading required for sidewalk installation along 190th Street seems to contradict the intent of the conservation code.

Public comment opened at 8:51 PM.

Brad Jensen, 2724 Cleveland Drive, expressed support for Alternative #1 with conditions A-H. In his view, waivers for three lots along 190th Street would be inappropriate—the lots should meet all standards or be removed from the development plan. The future growth of Ames and the annexation of the subject area is clear, he stated. Granting waivers for the three lots along 190th Street would defer necessary improvements, pushing the subdivision standards into the future while creating inequalities with other developments, some underway to the east. The requested waivers would also create inconsistencies within The Irons, he added.

AGCC General Manager Cory Strait, 2811 Talon Drive, stated that without the three lots on 190th Street the project would be hard or impossible to pull off, thus eliminating the benefits to Ames, Story County, and Ada Hayden. He expressed certainty that AGCC will remain as a golf course for the long-term and did not see how building the three lots would affect anything unless someone had a plan to redevelop the entire 155-acre property.

Public comment closed at 8:56 PM.

Ms. Wannemuehler and Mr. Diekmann discussed sidewalk installations along 190th Street and Grant Avenue. Mr. Diekmann indicated city subdivisions like Quarry Estates and Rose Prairie will have five-foot sidewalks upon project completion. Ms. Wannemuehler said it would seem appropriate to continue sidewalk installation along 190th Street with The Irons.

The waiver for internal street access for the three lots along 190th Street was discussed by Ms. Lee and Ms. Wannemuehler. They agreed that an exemption for three lots may seem incidental today but could also have long-term implications for development of the surrounding area.

Mr. Basmajian asked if a phosphorous reduction program is mandatory for AGCC regardless of the outcome of the proposed development. Mr. Diekmann clarified it would only be triggered by approval of the Preliminary Plat for The Irons project.

For Mr. Bowers, the proposed project includes many elements of give and take, especially with the three houses along 190th Street. He asked how much value should be placed on phosphorous reduction for the long-term health of Ada Hayden.

Ms. Lee asked if money could be set aside for future construction of a sidewalk on 190th Street. Mr. Diekmann replied a conditional waiver could be granted, although this would typically have a known timeline for a defined improvement. Mr. Kuester added that if a conclusion was reached that a sidewalk is needed, it will not become less expensive to install it in the future.

Public comment reopened at 9:05 PM.

Mr. Gardner thought it would be unsafe to have a sidewalk so close to the golf course. Mr. Strait agreed and said the safety issue is his biggest concern about installing sidewalk. He believed it would be an extreme hazard to have sidewalk in that location.

The bigger issue to Mr. Basmajian would be the precedent set by approving multiple variances for a conservation subdivision in an area that will eventually be part of the City. He observed how north Ames seems to be the center of single-family residential growth. In his view, rules are established to be applied equally across space. Changing the rules for one case sets a precedent for other cases. If The Irons will eventually be part of the City, it should be built to City standards, including the three outlots.

Mr. Bowers said the issue amounts to whether the Commission believed the project could be done with or without including the three homes along 190th Street and how much value is placed on phosphorous reduction for the overall protection of Ada Hayden. Ms. Lee replied that the project was not proposed as a benefit to the Ada Hayden Watershed. Mr. Bowers spoke of positive and negative aspects of compromise. Ms. Wannemuehler said it is the developer's problem to find a way to make the project work with City standards.

Ms. Lee wished to reconcile statements about AGCC's long-term presence and needing The Irons project for financial reasons. She cited her need to consider ramifications of decisions if

there is a possibility of AGCC being gone and another property owner potentially redeveloping the entire property. Mr. Strait stated AGCC is not going anywhere. Funds from land sales for The Irons would enable AGCC to invest in a new irrigation system. Without those funds, AGCC would continue with its current irrigation system and make incremental improvements, as able.

Mr. Gardner repeated his opinion that driveways for the three homes on 190th Street would be equivalent to other designs that would not require a waiver. Mr. Basmajian said the concern is the potential for a road with driveway after driveway. Mr. Gardner questioned if that was truly possible, given the defined future that has already been determined by development to the east and by the boundaries to the north and west set by the Ames Urban Fringe plan. The main issue, Ms. Lee said, is if it is acceptable to make exceptions to the code.

Mr. Ragaller asked Mr. Gardner for cost estimates. Installation of a half mile of sidewalk along 190th Street would cost \$100,000. The three lots would likely sell for \$125,000 to 150,000 each.

Public comment closed at 9:15 PM.

Mr. Kuester noted that sidewalks for the three homes is just one issue. The separation from the other lots in the development would make it problematic, and very expensive, to bring City water and sewer utilities to those homes; therefore it is likely those homes would never be integrated with City infrastructure, even if annexed. Mr. Diekmann explained that utility extensions are not automatic with annexation.

MOTION: (Basmajian/Wannemuehler) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **approve** the Preliminary Plat for The Irons at 5752 George Washington Carver Avenue with conditions A-H, as outlined in the staff report.

MOTION PASSED: (4-2) Opposed: Bowers, Converse

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT FOR BOUNDARY LINE SETBACKS IN A RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY PARK (RLP)

Flummerfelt's Shady Grove M.H.C., LLC requested an amendment to the required rear setback between manufactured homes and the exterior boundary line for all of the City's manufactured home parks, including the subject park located at 1002 South Dayton Avenue. Case Planner Justin Moore reported the applicant indicated the most marketable/desirable mobile homes for park customers (76-foot depth, single width) could not be placed in the park's buildable areas without altering exterior boundary setback regulations from 30 feet to 10 feet. Staff examined surrounding uses at this and other properties with Residential Low Density Park (RLP) zoning and found the requested change could potentially expose future park residents to an intrusive presence due to potential industrial and/or commercial development in adjoining properties. Given this concern, and because staff did not view the request as essential to using the subject park's perimeter lots for all sizes and types of manufactured homes, staff recommended against amending RLP standards for minimum building setback at an exterior boundary line.

Kelly Diekmann, Planning and Housing Director, added that staff and the applicant determined an alternative approach involving modifications to both front and perimeter setbacks would not be feasible, at least at the subject park, due to an easement and existing utility infrastructure.

Applicant, Mike Flummerfelt, 6717 George Washington Carver Avenue, spoke about his desire to support affordable housing and home ownership. He displayed pictures of homes in the

subject development and outlined various design features and park amenities available to the residents. The park, located within the Ames Community School District, is occupied by a mix of working families, students, and retirees. In Mr. Flummerfelt's view, the current 30-foot setback guideline is not affordable housing friendly because the most popular manufactured homes would not fit in the park's buildable lots. A setback reduction would not affect the rear of these homes, he argued, because most do not have rear-facing windows or doors. He believes correcting the setback guideline will allow for a broader range and supply of affordable housing.

Carlton Basmajian asked if Mr. Flummerfelt had experience with similar lot line regulations in other communities. Mr. Flummerfelt indicated the setbacks vary and that some are closer than 10 feet. He noted an addition to his property located on South 16th Street that was completed in the 1980s, without a variance, that does not have the 30-foot setback, as well as a project from the 1970s with a 10-foot setback from the curb. He pointed out that no other new manufactured home parks were developed in Ames during the last 10-20 years.

The most marketable house with the most affordable square footage for customers will not fit in the available lots because of excessive rear lot restrictions, Mr. Flummerfelt reported. Homes that would fit in the lots would resemble what was marketed in the 1960s, he claimed. Yvonne Wannemuehler asked what homes were marketed when the park was established. Mr. Flummerfelt was not involved with the park at its inception in 2009. Ms. Wannemuehler thought the problem is the way the park was originally laid out.

Debra Lee stated that if the lots were established in 2009, someone presumably thought they were marketable lots. Mr. Flummerfelt indicated the project designers were not manufactured housing experts. He acknowledged it may be possible to fill the park's open lots, although the homes would have alternate designs that cost more. Since taking possession of the property, Mr. Flummerfelt sold only one home other than 76-foot, single-wide designs. He believes this is a clear statement about what his customers want.

Ms. Wannemuehler asked if the park could be redesigned to accommodate the desired style of manufactured homes. Mr. Flummerfelt said it would be a tremendous undertaking to reconfigure the established water and sewer main infrastructure. Additionally, enlarging some lots would require a reduction in the size of others, which would defeat Mr. Flummerfelt's objective of maximizing the park's inventory of the most popular and affordable style of manufactured home.

There were no public comments.

Mr. Basmajian asked about the history of the current setback standard. Mr. Diekmann stated the perimeter setback is a carryover from zoning codes that have existed since at least the 1980s.

Rob Bowers found it odd that RLP requires a 30-foot setback, while commercial has a 20-foot. Mr. Diekmann explained the standards were not written to relate to one another. RLP property can be located anywhere, he said. The subject property is unique because it is the only RLP site in the City located next to General Industrial (GI) zoning. Mr. Diekmann reviewed setback and landscaping compatibility standards for GI, and noted several examples of allowable uses.

Ms. Lee asked if there is potential for more RLP sites, since the requested amendment would apply to any RLP property. Mr. Diekmann said the City does not designate specific areas for RLP development—they have to be requested to be created.

Ms. Wannemuehler wondered if the applicant could pursue a variance. Mr. Diekmann said that option would require the Zoning Board of Adjustment to reach a conclusion of financial hardship, i.e., the land is unusable with the 30-foot setback standard.

Amending setback requirements for all RLP properties concerned Ms. Wannemuehler. Mr. Flummerfelt cited national studies reporting less than two percent of manufactured homes are ever moved from their original installation location. Mr. Diekmann noted that the subject park is located in the most sensitive area of any RLP site in Ames. If the Commission accepted the reduced setback there, he felt confident it would find it acceptable elsewhere.

Mr. Flummerfelt argued that prospective buyers can choose if they want to buy a lot based on the surrounding conditions, just like choosing to live next to railroad tracks. Ms. Wannemuehler pointed out that if they can only afford one location, it is really not a matter of informed choice.

Matt Converse expressed support for reduced setbacks to allow the manufactured home park to develop and to provide more housing options for an underserved demographic.

Doug Ragaller thought a 10- versus a 30-foot setback would not make a meaningful difference to him if something unsightly existed in an adjacent property.

Discussion about affordable housing altered Mr. Bowers perspective on changing the setback requirements. He saw the applicant's request as an opportunity to support affordable housing. Mr. Basmajian said he agreed but asked rhetorically if the Commission would be so willing to change rules if it were considering setbacks for expensive single family detached homes.

Ms. Lee and Ms. Wannemuehler expressed concern about how affordable housing is often relegated to less desirable areas nationally. Ms. Lee did not want her support of a setback change to be perceived as enabling exposure to noise, odors, or a lesser aesthetic.

MOTION: (Converse/Ragaller) to accept **Alternative #1**, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council **adopt** the proposed amendment changing the Residential Low Density Park zone minimum building setback at an exterior boundary line, as proposed by the applicant.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

COMMISSION COMMENTS: There were no Commission comments.

STAFF COMMENTS: Mr. Diekmann reviewed the April 19, 2016 joint meeting of the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission, where the Lincoln Way Corridor project consultants, Houseal Lavigne Associates, presented a draft plan and focus areas for the project were identified. The next step in the project will likely involve guided workshops in the defined focus areas. Ideas for public review will be generated during the summer months.


Mr. Basmajian and Kelly Diekmann also discussed the Lincoln Way safety study, conducted by SRF Consulting, focusing on Lincoln Way between University Boulevard and Sheldon Avenue.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

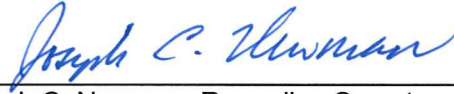
MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Ragaller) to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

The meeting adjourned at 10:11 PM.



Debra Lee, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission



Joseph C. Newman, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing