

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

Date: August 16, 2017	Debra Lee, Chairperson	2018
	*Matt Converse, Vice Chairperson	2020
Call to Order: 7:00 PM	Carlton Basmajian	2020
	*Rob Bowers	2018
Place: Ames City Hall Council Chambers	Anuprit Minhas	2019
	Doug Ragaller	2019
Adjournment: 7:43 PM	Yvonne Wannemuehler	2018
	[*Absent]	

MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

1. Public Hearing for the Amendment to the Major Site Development Plan for 3306 Lincoln Way (Aspen Heights Commercial Sign Program)
2. Public Hearing for the Major Site Development Plan for 5498 Mortensen Road (Mortensen Heights, Phase 2)

CALL TO ORDER: Debra Lee, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Ragaller/Wannemuehler) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of August 16, 2017.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JULY 5, 2017:

MOTION: (Ragaller/Minhas) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of July 5, 2017.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE AMENDMENT TO THE MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 3306 LINCOLN WAY (ASPEN HEIGHTS COMMERCIAL SIGN PROGRAM)

Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning & Housing, stated that this request is a follow-up to a Major Site Development Plan for an apartment and mixed-use development that was approved over a year ago. Mr. Diekmann stated that the residential sign program has since been approved; however, the commercial sign program was not ready at that time. He stated that due to the sensitivity of the project one of the conditions for approval was to review a sign program. Mr. Diekmann stated that a month ago the City adopted a commercial sign code; however, review of the sign program is still required. He reviewed the design and types of signage that will be used and where they will be placed within this development.

Carlton Basmajian asked for clarification as to the statement in the staff report stating that this proposal meets the sign code requirements. Mr. Diekmann stated that the sign code addresses the size allowance of the sign.

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Minhas) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan Amendment for the site to include the attached sign program for commercial signage.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 5498 MORTENSEN ROAD (MORTENSEN HEIGHTS, PHASE 2)

Justin Moore, Case Planner, stated that this Major Site Development Plan request is from GW Land Holdings, LLC. He stated that this property is a new development located in southwest Ames. Mr. Moore reviewed the current zoning of this property. He stated that the applicant wants to construct 10, 12-unit apartment buildings for a total of 120 units, which contain 287 bedrooms. Mr. Moore stated that this is part of a zoning master plan that was approved in 2016. He reviewed the details of several amenities that will be located on the property. Mr. Moore stated that there is a landscaped outlot east of this site that is a requirement of Phase 1 of the Mortensen Heights development. He outlined the location of two detention ponds on the property. Mr. Moore reviewed details of the landscaping that will be placed on the property. He stated that garage parking is proposed for the southern edge of the property. Mr. Moore reviewed various construction details of the apartment buildings that will be built. He stated that the buildings will look similar to the buildings that were built during Phase 1 of the development. Mr. Moore stated that there will be a retaining wall built on the east side of this property. He stated that the height of the retaining wall will vary between five feet to even with the grade. Mr. Moore stated that Mortensen Road is located on the north edge of this property. He stated that infrastructure is in place and available to connect to this site.

Mr. Basmajian asked if staff could review the stipulations that have been listed in the staff report. Mr. Moore stated that staff hopes to have these stipulations addressed by the applicant prior to City Council consideration. He reviewed the details of those stipulations with the Commission. Mr. Moore stated that the stipulation about finalizing the storm water management plan by Iowa DOT was resolved yesterday; and, they no longer have any issues. He reviewed details of the proposed landscape screening that will be used. Mr. Diekmann provided additional information on the proposed placement of the landscape plantings within this development and the condition to add some screening material along the parking by the detention area.

Discussion was held as to the location of this portion of the Mortensen Heights development in relationship to the location of the prior approved Phase 1 of the project.

Yvonne Wannemuehler asked for clarification of the various amenities that are planned for this property. Mr. Moore stated that the applicant has proposed to construct volleyball courts, a walking trail and several dog park areas.

Ms. Wannemuehler asked why a retaining wall is being placed on the east side of this property. Mr. Diekmann stated that there is a significant change in the grade from the middle

of this site to the east. He stated that a set of stairs will be installed in the retaining wall for access to the amenities.

Mr. Basmajian asked if there is a seven foot elevation change on the property. Mr. Moore stated that the difference in the grade will be approximately four feet once the property is completely filled.

Mr. Diekmann stated that retaining walls are not allowed in front yards. He stated that the retaining wall will need to be revised to four feet in the front yard of this property.

Alex Galyon, GW Land Holdings, 2928 Ross Road, stated that this site is part of the master plan for the development of the whole property. He stated that this proposal is for Phase 2. Mr. Galyon stated that the number of proposed buildings has changed from the original site plan. He stated that they are providing 25 more parking spaces than the minimum that is required. Mr. Galyon stated that this property will have a park, that includes a dog park, several sand volleyball courts, and an existing pond with a walking path around the pond that is located between the two projects. He stated that there is an error on the site plan that states that steel siding on will be used on the buildings when it should say that vinyl siding will be used. Mr. Galyon stated that this will need to be corrected.

Anuprit Minhas asked for clarification as to how many buildings and units were constructed in Phase 1. Mr. Galyon stated that there are 15 buildings, with a total of 180 units and 345 beds in Phase 1. He stated that Phase 2 will have an additional 120 units. Ms. Minhas asked about the property located to the west of this property. Mr. Galyon stated that they own that property and it will be Phase 3 of the project. He reviewed the proposed size of the buildings and the number of units that will be constructed in Phase 3. Ms. Minhas asked if Phase 1 construction is almost complete. Mr. Galyon stated that ten of those buildings have a certificate of occupancy and an additional five buildings are under construction. He stated that they have had very good response with the leasing of the completed buildings as well as favorable feedback of the design and look of the buildings.

Mr. Basmajian stated that it is good that they are looking at marketing to groups in addition to students. Mr. Galyon stated that their goal is to plan for a long term mix of tenants.

Keith Arneson, 4114 Cochrane Parkway, stated that he is the builder and his family manages the rental company. He stated that the number of larger units has been reduced. Mr. Arneson stated that there is a greater likelihood of diversification or mix of the tenant type when you go to smaller buildings. He stated that the first 10 buildings in Phase 1 have a 100 percent occupancy rate. Mr. Arneson outlined the amenities included in all phases of the development. He stated that the development agreement includes a CyRide bus turnaround located at the end of Mortensen Road.

MOTION: (Ragaller/Wannemuehler) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council approves the Major Site Development Plan for the proposed 10 building apartment project with the following conditions, striking out Item C:

- A. Finalize the site plan details for the pool house and swimming pool area prior to the public hearing with City Council.

- B. Update plans to include compliant mechanical screening of electric and gas meters prior to the public hearing with City Council.
- C. Move mechanical units located in the front setback near buildings E and J out of the front setback along Mortensen prior to the public hearing with the City Council.
- D. Include shrub screening materials along the head in parking spaces at the southwest and southeast portions of the parking lot where no shrub screening has been proposed.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

COMMISSION COMMENTS: Carlton Basmajian asked Kelly Diekmann to share details of the Comprehensive Plan discussion that was held at the City Council Workshop on August 15, 2017 with the Commission. Mr. Diekmann outlined various details of the discussion that was held at this workshop. Discussion was held about the possibility of engaging Iowa State University in the discussions.

STAFF COMMENTS: Staff reviewed the tentative agenda for the meeting of September 6, 2017

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/none) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.



Debra Lee, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission



Lorrie Banks, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing