

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

Date: January 17, 2018	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: 7:46 PM	*Yvonne Wannemuehler	2018
	[*Absent]	

**MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:**

1. Zoning Text Amendment for Garage Door Widths
2. Zoning Text Amendment for Wireless Communications

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

MOTION: (Bowers/Ragaller) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of January 17, 2018.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 0)

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 20, 2017:**

MOTION: (Ragaller/Bowers) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of December 20, 2017.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 0)

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

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**PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT FOR GARAGE DOOR WIDTHS**

Eloise Sahlstrom, Planner, reviewed the current allowed garage door widths outlined in the City of Ames Municipal Code. She stated that there have been several variance requests that have previously gone to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the ZBA did not approve either of those requests as they determined that they did not pose a hardship to the applicants. She reviewed the details of each of those cases. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that because of those cases the Chairperson of the ZBA sent a letter to the City Council. She stated that the City Council has directed staff to prepare a text amendment request. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the City Council has asked staff to increase the cumulative standards to 30 feet and also to allow, under certain circumstances, additional garage door width to exceed the maximum cumulative dimension when they are not generally parallel to and viewable from the street. She presented a photo showing an example of the current standard for garage doors.

Ms. Sahlstrom reviewed details of the proposed new garage door standards and additional text changes. She presented photos showing examples of garage doors that would be allowed and those that would not be allowed if the Zoning Text Amendment is approved.

Ms. Minhas asked if there is anything in the Code that requires accessory buildings to be placed in the rear yard away from the street. Ms. Sahlstrom stated they have to meet the setback requirements and the percentage of the rear yard that can be covered. Mr. Diekmann stated that accessory buildings cannot be placed in front of the house; but, they can be parallel to the house and viewable from the street. Discussion was held on the intent of the proposed changes to the Code.

Doug Ragaller asked if those were the only two requests from property owners that staff has received. Mr. Diekmann stated that those were the only two requests that asked for a variance.

Ms. Minhas asked if this request came from the City Council. Mr. Diekmann stated that any text amendment request needs to be initiated by the City Council. He stated that staff tried to address both concerns that came up in the previous variance requests in the proposed text amendment request.

Danny Wilson, 3200 Tupelo Circle, stated that he is one of the individuals that had asked for a variance. He stated that because he has a full size pickup truck with large mirrors it is hard to maneuver with a nine foot garage door.

Debra Lee asked if 30 feet will accommodate any future requests. He stated that a standard sized vehicle fits within a nine foot stall. Mr. Diekmann stated that you do not see most commercial parking lots trying to accommodate larger vehicles for ease of access.

MOTION: (Bowers/Ragaller) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt the proposed amendments regarding garage and accessory building standards as described in Attachment 'A'.

Mr. Diekmann stated that staff has drafted a proposed ordinance. He stated that it will also be reviewed by the City Attorney's office, at which time, they will prepare a final ordinance. Mr. Diekmann stated that the exact wording may be adjusted before it goes to the City Council.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 0)

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## **PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT FOR WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS**

Justin Moore, Planner, stated that this text amendment includes new proposed standards for the Wireless Communications Facilities Ordinance. He stated that staff presented a report to the Planning & Zoning Commission on wireless communications in 2015. Mr. Moore stated that the 2015 Iowa Cell Siting Act was passed by the Iowa Legislature. He stated that it focused on facilitating co-location and modifications to existing facilities and limited criteria for approval related to technology, necessity or business needs. Mr. Moore stated that in 2017 the Iowa

Small Wireless Facility law was passed. He stated that small wireless facilities can be located anywhere; however, they are often located in public right-of-ways. Mr. Moore reviewed various details of this legislation. He stated that cities in Iowa are restricted from requiring a Special Use Permit for small wireless facilities that are proposed in public right-of-ways in non-single family residential zones. Mr. Moore stated that cities can still require a Special Use Permit for placement of a small wireless facility in an exclusive single family residential zone. He reviewed various details of the authority that Iowa cities still have along with details of the application and approval process and review.

Ms. Minhas asked how a substantial change to an existing tower is determined. Mr. Moore stated that it is defined by more than 10 percent in height or more than 20 feet. Mr. Diekmann stated that it is term defined by state law. He stated that that term hasn't changed since 2015.

Rob Bowers asked about the prohibition of temporary towers in a residential zone. He stated that in an extreme circumstance a tornado could destroy some existing cell towers and it could become necessary to place temporary towers in residential areas. Mr. Diekmann stated that if that were to happen the City Council would have the authority to determine an exception for a determined time period to allow temporary towers in a residential zone.

Debra Lee asked if staff had some examples of how these proposed changes might be applied. Mr. Diekmann stated that staff has not seen placement of small wireless facilities in the right-of-way in Ames as yet. He stated that under the current state law a company could place another pole similar in size in the right-of-way, within 500 feet of an existing pole, solely for the purpose of wireless communication. Mr. Diekmann stated that this would not be allowed under the current zoning ordinance. He reviewed the financial reasons why companies would find this advantageous.

Ms. Lee asked about the temporary cell tower that had been located on the north side of South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Diekmann stated that this property is zoned agricultural. He stated that this was not covered in the Municipal Code previously. Mr. Diekmann stated that the Special Use request for placement of a temporary cell tower on South 4<sup>th</sup> Street was approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment with conditions.

Mr. Diekmann stated that this Zoning Text Amendment is a draft. He stated that changes in the language may be made by the City Attorney's office before this request goes to the City Council.

MOTION: (Ragaller/Bowers) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommends to City Council that the standards for wireless facilities in the right-of-way be addressed in a separate ordinance modifying Chapter 22A and to approve the proposed changes to Chapter 29 zoning standards for wireless communications facilities.

Ms. Lee stated, for the record, that she did not ask if anyone from the public wished to speak to this agenda item as no one from the public was present.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 0)

COMMISSION COMMENTS: Ms. Lee stated that she would not be able to attend the February 7, 2018 Commission meeting.

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STAFF COMMENTS: Mr. Diekmann reviewed details of the 321 State Avenue Affordable Housing Project, changes to the Rental Code relating to maximum occupancy, and the Lincoln Way Corridor project. He stated that rental concentration and Airbnbs will be discussed at a City Council Workshop being held on February 20, 2018. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the tentative Planning & Zoning Commission agenda for the meeting being held on February 7, 2018.

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MOTION TO ADJOURN:

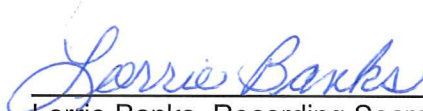
MOTION: (Ragaller/none) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.



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Debra Lee, Chairperson  
Planning & Zoning Commission



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Lorrie Banks, Recording Secretary  
Department of Planning & Housing