

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

Date: February 5, 2020	Matt Converse, Chairperson	2020
	*Carlton Basmajian, Vice Chairperson	2020
Call to Order: 7:00 PM	Ruth Hulstrom	2021
	Jon Emery	2021
Place: Ames City Hall Conference Rm 135	Carol Spencer	2021
	*Anuprit Minhas	2022
Adjournment: 8:36 PM	Doug Ragaller	2022
	[*Absent]	

MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

1. Ames Plan 2040 Discussion
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CALL TO ORDER: Matt Converse, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Ragaller/Spencer) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of February 5, 2020.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 15, 2020:

MOTION: (Spencer/Hulstrom) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of January 15, 2020.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

AMES PLAN 2040 DISCUSSION

Kelly Diekmann, Planning Director, summarized the Ames Plan 2040 discussions from the January 28, 2020 City Council meeting. He stated that Council did decide to proceed with the Tier 1 and Tier 2 growth areas. Mr. Diekmann stated that there is some confusion whether the area south of Highway 30 was included in the City Council's motion about the West Growth Area. He stated that it will be clarified at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

Mr. Diekmann stated that the main sections of the Ames Comprehensive Plan will have vision statements. He reviewed the Land Use and Growth Vision Statement and the Transportation Vision Statement with the Commission. Mr. Diekmann stated that he feels that City discussions have been focused on looking at growth, both infill and expansion, and both environmental and economic sustainability. He stated that another element that the City Council may consider is community character or urban design. Mr. Diekmann stated that the City Council has asked for the Plan to be flexible. He stated that staff feels that there also needs to be more predictability in

the growth areas in order to determine the location of roads, trails, and parks. Mr. Diekmann stated that flexibility may be in the housing types; but, the densities, to some degree, need to be established. Mr. Diekmann summarized discussions that have been held regarding transportation, street improvements and parking requirements.

Mr. Diekmann stated that he would like the Commission to discuss and either emphasize or prioritize items tonight as a recommendation to the City Council.

Mr. Diekmann stated that principles for housing are the next items for the City Council to consider for the Ames Plan 2040 update. At the City Council Workshop on February 18, 2020, Mr. Diekmann stated that in the Land Use section the City wants to continue to support a minimum density requirement. He stated that the current Land Use Policy Plan's goal for development in new green field expansion areas is an average of five units per acre. Mr. Diekmann stated that staff feels that has worked fairly well for the City with efficient and effective services.

Kim Christiansen, 2985 South Dakota Avenue, passed out a map showing an area south of Highway 30 that is included in the southwest portion of the future growth area. He stated that this property is included in the current Land Use Policy Plan and the Ames Urban Fringe Plan areas. Mr. Christiansen reviewed details of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan agreement with property owners in this high priority area in regards to prohibiting land splits. He stated that at that time the City was concerned about the creation of subdivisions. Mr. Christiansen stated that many of the parcels in this area are owned by Iowa State University (ISU) and are highly intensive research sites. He stated that early on in these discussions he brought up to RDG whether new City development should be located near any of the Iowa State University swine or dairy facilities. Mr. Christiansen stated that RDG told him at that time that they should absolutely not be located within the 2 mile fringe area. He stated that he and many of his neighbors would like to see new development in this area to be located in a rural subdivision within the natural buffer between the 3,500 acres of ISU property and Highway 30. Mr. Christiansen spoke about the environmental sensitivity of the Worle Creek area. He stated that he feels very strongly that this is an area that needs to be protected.

Mr. Diekmann stated that the City Council has not yet adopted any policies about areas around the City, not in a tier. He stated that it has been stated twice on the record that whatever is shown in a scenario and viewed as viable should be reserved for future growth. Mr. Diekmann stated that this was done in the Ames Urban Fringe Plan.

Jon Emery asked if it is the City's plan to no longer have rural acreages in the City. Mr. Diekmann stated that staff has said that is their recommendation.

Mr. Emery asked if further movement had taken place regarding development of the property located at the east end of East 13th Street. Mr. Diekmann stated that it is in the hands of the developer to respond back to the City.

Mr. Emery asked about the development of property located near the mine and the National Disease Lab. Mr. Diekmann stated that the City is not interested in creating public facilities to serve the area northeast of the City. Mr. Emery asked why the City is not interested in growth near the National Disease Lab. Mr. Diekmann stated that the area south of the preschool to BASF will be shown as an area that can be urbanized. He stated that the City is not looking to go north of the preschool on Dayton Avenue for development options. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the reasons why the City is not looking at development options north of this area.

Ruth Hulstrom asked if the City Council has ever discussed the possibility of an agrihood. Mr. Diekmann stated that concept would probably run counter to the ideas of effective use of the land and the tax base that supports the services.

Liesel Danielson, 2981 South Dakota Avenue, stated that she wished that the Commission could encourage development to the east. She spoke about the differences between Tier 2 on the west and Tier 3 on the east. She stated that she sees the east as a viable option for growth.

Dr. Carol Spencer asked about the status of the proposed I-35 interchange south of Highway 30. Mr. Diekmann stated that nothing had been mentioned about it until three months ago. He stated that the basic analysis from the civil engineering consultant and the transportation engineer is that until the south area is built out there is no justification to construct the interchange. Mr. Emery asked if this situation also pertains to Riverside Drive. Mr. Diekmann stated that was correct.

Discussion was held on the location of the boundaries of the Ames Community School District.

Mr. Emery asked if the City Council wanted the Commission to provide input on the desired types of housing for this area. Mr. Diekmann stated that the next step is to decide what is green field development and infill options and how we apply the items that were mentioned. Mr. Emery stated he would like to see more single-family affordable housing. He stated that he feels that a \$250,000 home is not affordable to a lot of people.

Ms. Hulstrom stated that if housing development is transitioned appropriately, smaller houses and smaller lots would fit in many areas.

Discussion was held on the need for the construction of new homes with a price point of \$250,000 or less in all areas of the City. Discussion continued regarding changes that might need to happen in order to encourage developers to construct affordable housing. Mr. Diekmann stated that if the level of commitment is high the City Council may be looking at addressing this issue in the Ames Comprehensive Plan update.

Ms. Hulstrom asked if staff has researched the number of entry level homes that have been purchased for investment purposes as rental properties. Mr. Diekmann stated he doesn't know what can be done about this from a regulatory perspective due to State law.

Dr. Spencer asked if the City Council was looking at housing diversity in all of the growth areas. Mr. Diekmann stated that he thinks that is correct. He stated that from the equity perspective of having access to community amenities and schools there needs to be a diverse set of housing choices across the community. Dr. Spencer stated that she would strongly support the City Council having diverse housing in all projected growth areas and that diversity be equally applied in all areas and all tiers. She stated that transition areas should be attractive and practical. Mr. Diekmann stated that the City Council should be looking at this at the next City Council Workshop. He stated that a Council member has asked for information about accessory dwelling units on existing lots.

Ms. Hulstrom asked if the City Council has had discussions about the missing middle type of housing. Mr. Diekmann stated that those discussions have not taken place. He defined the term missing middle housing for the Commission. She stated that she feels that it might provide more affordable housing. Ms. Hulstrom stated that Ankeny has seen an interest in this type of housing. Mr. Diekmann stated he has not experienced this in Ames. Ms. Hulstrom stated that

possibly staff could check with other communities similar to Ames to see the methods that they have utilized to try to encourage a missing middle type of housing. She stated that she feels that this type of housing might be an option in infill areas and in the growth areas and would provide a transition between higher density apartments and single-family attached or detached homes. Mr. Diekmann reviewed some of the zoning issues that could occur.

Matt Converse stated that he would like to make sure that any future housing options that are created are diverse. He stated that 6,000-11,000 people drive to work in Ames but live in other communities. Mr. Converse stated that employment opportunities need to also be created so that those individuals can live and work in Ames. He stated that there needs to be enough housing choices available for all demographics.

Mr. Emery stated that he feels that an increase in transportation access would also help diversity. He stated that there are areas in Ames that are not served by CyRide. Mr. Diekmann stated that this is not directly a Comprehensive Plan issue because of the funding stream to support CyRide. He stated that the City needs to plan for corridors in areas where logical extensions of CyRide would work. Mr. Diekmann stated that development will have to occur first before a decision is made to make CyRide available to those areas. He stated that parts of the City are not located next to work places and providing transportation to those areas would not be a competitive transit trip due to the distance/time to the workplace. Mr. Diekmann stated that consideration needs to be given to those areas that are job accessible and also transit accessible.

Discussion was held about CyRide routes and coverage areas.

Discussion was held on whether the price tag of widening streets/highways and adding interchanges are included in the scenarios and who would be responsible for the cost.

The following items are a summary of general statements supported by the Commission:

- Diversity of housing hitting the full spectrum of housing needs based on all job types and all income levels in all areas of the City, specifically:
 - Diverse housing targeted to diverse economic sectors.
 - Diversity also means that in each growth area that a range of housing types would be available (e.g. not just focus apartments in one area of the City and single-family in another area).
 - Take into consideration that there is transitioning in both the planning of the uses and implementation at the development stage that feels intentional and cohesive.
 - Find a way to address the missing middle housing situation (e.g. individuals downsizing looking for a smaller home as well as individuals looking for entry level housing).
 - Take into consideration that infill mirrors the character of the surrounding properties so that there is not a glaring demarcation between infill and existing properties.
 - Take into consideration that infill holds the integrity of the neighborhood but shows flexibility in how it is applied.
 - Take into consideration placing higher density developments near larger street/road systems.

Discussion was held on whether they wanted to review a list of the recommended items prior to them being presented to the City Council. The Commission agreed to have Mr. Diekmann forward their input directly to the City Council without their review.

Mr. Diekmann stated that he would put together a short memo to the City Council to be included in their next agenda packet outlining the items the Commission would like the Council to take into consideration when drafting the Ames Plan 2040 Update.

COMMISSION COMMENTS: NONE

STAFF COMMENTS: NONE

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

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

MOTION PASSED: (5 – 0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.



Matt Converse, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission



Lorrie Banks, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing