



City of Ashland – Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Ashland Plan Commission was held on **Tuesday, June 20th, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers and via GoToMeeting.

Committee Members Present: Mayor Matt MacKenzie, Ana Tochtermann, JoAnn Erickson, and David Eades

Committee Members Absent: John Beirl, Jeff Beirl, and Laurie Gregor

Staff Present: Steven Wiley and Mandelyn Lyons

Mayor MacKenzie opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda

1) Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.
Passed unanimously.

2) Consent Agenda

a) Approval of minutes from the April 25, 2023 Plan Commission meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from the April 25, 2023 Plan Commission meetings by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by Mayor MacKenzie. Passed unanimously.

3) Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

4) Action Items

- a. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a transitional housing use at 2300 Lake Shore Dr. W, parcel #201-04746-0000, zoned Regional Commercial (RC) with Waterfront Overlay, Gateway Overlay, and Wetland Overlay. Applicant: Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency**

Mandelyn Lyons presented background and the staff report for the NWCSA CUP request.

Motion to go into public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochtermann.

Steven Wiley read into the record a comment provided to him prior to the meeting by phone, Larry Cicero, a neighboring business owner, said that he has concerns about vehicles being parked on the emergency shelter property that are non-operational and unregistered, overflowing dumpsters, residents of the existing emergency shelter walking on other private properties, and concerns of increased police presence in the area. With these items he is asking that the Planning Commission not approve this CUP.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.
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Millie Roundsville, from Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency (NWCSA) addressed the concerns regarding parking and said that she is willing to post signage or find another solution for vehicles. Millie said that the dumpster will require internal resolutions, as residents are not utilizing the back-empty spaces of the dumpster. Millie also clarified that the transitional housing proposed is not an expansion of the emergency shelter, but a separate program.

Mayor MacKenzie asked about the June 6th Information Session that was held at the library regarding the proposed facility and how it went. Millie answered that the one concern that was raised was about the vehicles on the property.

JoAnn Erickson asked how the June 6th Information Session was advertised for and noted that the Planning Commission was unaware of the meeting. Mandelyn Lyons explained that everyone who received a public hearing notice neighbor letter received an invitation to the informational session and that there were posters at the library, Courthouse, and at City Hall. A Facebook post was also made.

JoAnn Erickson asked if conditions for NWCSA's emergency shelter Conditional Use Permit were being upheld, including the need for a landscaping plan, cameras being put in at the shelter, having two staff members present 24/7, and required reporting. Mandelyn Lyons mentioned that a landscaping plan was proposed last year, but due to staffing changes and volunteer changes at the shelter those plans were not moved forward. Millie Roundsville explained how the quarterly reports are mandated and done through CedarCorp, and that cameras were installed prior to the emergency shelter opening. She also explained that the emergency shelter is staffed 24/7 by staff or trained volunteers.

Mayor MacKenzie stated that during a Council meeting regarding the shelter updates that Police Chief Hagstrom said there have been the same or less calls to the shelter than when it was a motel. JoAnn Erickson stated that the same amount of call is not assuring of the success of the facility or a confidence booster.

JoAnn Erickson noted that at the emergency shelter CUP hearing the two-story building was not included in the plans. Mandelyn Lyons stated that there were no plans for the two-story building to be part of the emergency shelter. Mayor MacKenzie stated that funding for the two-story building came through recently due to CDBG-CV funding that was offered for the project, so the transitional housing option was considered for the building. There is no obligation to use the funds on the City.

Mayor MacKenzie encouraged JoAnn to invite people to Council if they have any concerns.

Ana Tochtermann commented that she appreciates the clarification between the emergency shelter and the transitional program proposed. She also commented that there was a lot of public engagement on the previous CUP request. Ana Tochtermann also expressed appreciation towards

the Planning Department in their efforts for public participation and addressing community needs in our strategic plans and other goals.

JoAnn Erickson commented that the shelter provided services to two people who were not from the area and would like NWCSA to investigate how that happened. Millie said that she will look into these two people.

Motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochterman. Motion passed 3 to 1.

b. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to build an accessory building over 20 feet in height at 709 2nd Ave E, parcel #201-02343-0000, zoned Single & Two-Family Residential (R-2). Applicant: Michelle Kainz

Mandelyn Lyons presented background and the staff report for the Kainz CUP request.

Motion to go into public hearing by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.

Kaas Baichtal of Walleye Property Management commented that she initially had concerns about the applicant's request and parking, but upon hearing that there is no intention of it becoming an Accessory Dwelling Unit she is in support of the building. She also mentioned that having a garage door that does not face the alley is not recommended by her personally.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochterman.

Motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request with conditions by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson. Passed unanimously.

c. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for an increased sign height and graphic area at 1716 Lake Shore Dr. W, parcel #201-00099-0000, zoned City Center (CC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O). Applicant: Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce

Mandelyn Lyons presented background and the staff report for the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce CUP request.

Motion to go into public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochterman.

Kaas Baichtal of Walleye Property Management and President of the Ashland Business Alliance, commented that better signage is difficult to get for some businesses that desperately need it. She also mentioned that we need beautification of the gateway, and asked that this sign be approved.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochterman.

David Eades asked for clarification on whether the non-conforming height would be allowed to continue. Mandelyn Lyons answered that the height would be allowed if they have a 75 sqft graphic area. Steven Wiley answered that it is a solution that meets the Chamber in the middle. He continued to say that they are exceeding the 75 sqft with a proposed 84 sqft.

David Eades commented that he has seen this before in Bayfield County and appreciates that staff added a condition that the applicant should check with the state for permitting purposes.

Mary McPhetridge stated that she is not in favor of the conditions outlined by staff. She stated that their sign graphic area will be 84 sqft. She commented that the sign will be tasteful, will abide by EMC standards, and will be large enough for traffic to see. She noted that there is no signage for the downtown on the highway and that this would help with event advertising. Mary McPhetridge also stated that the sign was already ordered. Mary asks that the condition regarding a 75 sqft max graphic area be increased to a 84 sqft max graphic area.

David Eades said that he would not be favor of allowing more than 75sqft as the sign height is non-conforming and is being allowed to continue. He said that this sign will not enhance the gateway, but clutter it. He commented that the EMC is valuable for the chamber and said it will be important for the Chamber.

Mary McPhetridge commented that the actual size of the sign can not be reduced as it will not fit in the existing cabinet, the graphic area on the sign can be decreased but it would not look aesthetically pleasing. Steven Wiley said that if they reduced the copy area that would be acceptable.

Ana Tochtermann said that staff is open to different options to make the sign an appropriate size. Mary McPhetridge agreed and asked if it would be possible for the Chamber, sign contractor, and staff to sit down and figure out a solution outside of the current meeting?

Mayor MacKenzie offered to postpone the item until the next meeting to give time for exploration of other solutions.

Motion to postpone discussion of the CUP by Mayor MacKenzie, seconded by David Eades. Passed unanimously.
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d. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a duplex use at parcel #201-00592-0000, zoned Single Family Residential (R-1). Applicant: Debra Eichman

Mandelyn Lyons presented background and the staff report for Debra Eichman's CUP request.

Motion to go into public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochtermann.

There were no public comments during the hearing.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.
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Debra Eichmann thanked everyone for their time and stated she has no concerns with the conditions provided by staff.

JoAnn Erickson commented that she is in support due to the need for additional housing in the area.

Motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request with conditions by Ana Tochtermann, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.
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e. Public Hearing and vote on a request to purchase a piece of City-owned land, a portion of parcel #201-01078-0000. Applicant: Florence Campbell

Steven Wiley presented background and the staff report for the Campbell land transfer.

Motion to go into public hearing by David Eades, seconded by Ana Tochtermann.

There were no public comments during the hearing.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson.

Mayor MacKenzie noted that Florence Campbell has been working on this process for years, and that a lot of legal work had to be done to ensure the sale would be permitted. He stated that the goal of the railroad right-of-way sales will be to restore parcels to their original state. The Mayor then explained how a new alley would be installed to provide access to the applicant's property.

David Eades voiced support for not charging applicants for the land. He added that he hopes there will be no assessment for the new driveway/alley area.

Ana Tochtermann also supports a fair way to restore parcels to their original form.

Motion to recommend approval of the land transfer by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades.

- f. **Public Hearing and vote on a request to rezone parcels #201-04774-0000, #201-04771-0000, #201-04779-2000, #201-04775-0000, & #201-04779-0000 from Future Development (FD) to Residential Estate (R-E). Applicants: BNG Properties LLC & Paschal and Sharon Hammond.**

Steven Wiley presented background and the staff report for the proposed rezone.

Motion to go into public hearing by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades.

Marie Keena, a neighboring land owner, commented on her concerns about the potential rezone and future developments. She said that she is concerned that if a development is proposed in the future there will be problems with drainage. She said that the Comprehensive Plan indicates that the area to be rezoned should be a conservation area and is not to be touched. Marie also indicated that there are no City utilities in the area and it would be costly to put them in. She also had concerns about potentially endangered species in the area.

Motion to go out of public hearing by David Eades, seconded by JoAnn Erickson

Ana Tochtermann asked why the applicant would like to rezone if there are no intentions for development of the property now. Steven Wiley explained that Future Development is considered a holding a zone that is meant to be changed when something is planned for the area. Mandelyn Lyons mentioned that the applicants have non-conforming parcels that would be brought into conformance through the rezone, as Future Development has a minimum parcel area of 5 acres and Residential Estate has a minimum parcel area of a half-acre.

Brett Beeksma, one of the applicants, explained the situation regarding their non-conforming parcels. He mentioned maybe building in the future in the field, but wanting to keep the property in the family.

David Eades asked for the current parcel sizes of the Beeksma properties. Brett responded that he has roughly 18 acres altogether and that the current configuration of the properties makes it difficult to divide them into buildable lots. There are existing structures on both properties as well.

Mandelyn Lyons stated that if they were to try to combine the two existing parcels they would still be non-conforming as there are homes on both and there can only be one home per parcel in Future Development. Rezoning to Residential Estate would allow the two homes to be on separate conforming parcels.

JoAnn Erickson wanted clarification on if all the lots would be buildable. Steven Wiley said that it is possible that not all the lots would be buildable.

JoAnn Erickson asked if the applicant would have to come back to Planning Commission if they wanted to build. Steven Wiley answered that if the development was large enough it could come back for Site Plan Review, otherwise smaller projects would be reviewed in office.

David Eades asked if there is any zoning district between Future Development and Residential Estate that would provide minimum parcels sizes of less than five acres. Mandelyn Lyons clarified that there could be other zoning districts that would provide relief from the minimum parcel sizes but due to the location of the applicant's properties any other zoning other than Residential Estate could be considered a spot zone.

David Eades noted that he would want to avoid spot zoning, but does share the concerns of Marie Keena.

Mayor MacKenzie stated that whatever development would go in would need to have a plan for stormwater and drainage.

David Eades asked if City water and sewer would be required if there were a development on the property. Mayor MacKenzie explained current City policy regarding whether they would be required to hook up to City water and sewer.

Motion to recommend approval of the proposed rezone by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades.

5) Announcements/Reports/Comments/Questions

None.

6) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by David Eades. Seconded by JoAnn Erickson. Passed unanimously.
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Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm. Minutes done by Mandelyn Lyons.