

## OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 9, 2021

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers of the City Administration Building with President Josh Meillier conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Dan Boeke, John Eickhoff, Josh Meillier, Kelly Rooks, and Mark Wilson. Commissioners Mark Meier and Rachel Springer-Gasner were absent. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke and Planning Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Rooks and seconded by Wilson to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 8, 2020. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Preliminary Plat of Owatonna Public Schools Addition, which is a 41.86± acre tract of land zoned R-1, Single Family Residential, owned by Independent School District No. 761 and located at 1455 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE, was presented by Community Development Manager Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.)

Application No. V-1441, which is a request by Independent School District No. 761 for two sign variances and a fence height variance in coordination with construction of the new high school for the property to be addressed 1455 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE, was presented by Community Development Manager Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.)

Application No. C-1442, which is a conditional use request by Independent School District No. 761 to allow for construction of a public educational institution that will be the new Owatonna High School to be addressed 1455 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE, was presented by Community Development Manager Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.)

Public hearing for these requests opened at 6:02 pm. Bob Olson, Director of Facilities for the School District, said there's a lot happening now and he thanked the Commission for letting them come with their requests. He said they are just very excited to get to this level. They met with the neighborhood and it was a positive meeting. He said there was one concern about flooding and they were able to address it. He said he hasn't had any negative comments. Dan Kenow was present representing Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church. He had a question about the roundabout on 18<sup>th</sup> Street and wondered how much of their property it would affect. He asked what they would be able to do with off-street parking. Gary Mohr was also present representing Cornerstone and asked how it would affect the entrances to their parking lot and he also expressed concern about off-street parking. Someone else from the church and he said he was concerned about their parking lot being used for large events at the high school. Peter McFarland, also from the church, said that the ditch on the east side of their property needs to be regraded because it does not drain, it sits. He wanted to know what property would be taken for the roundabout. There is a large stone on the corner of their lot and he wondered if it would have to be moved, and if so, who would move it. Kruschke said at this point, there has been zero design done on the roundabout. There are a number of ways to do it, and they will be working with the neighbors on the formal design. He said they're looking out to September 2023 when the school opens. They know something has to be done at that intersection, and a stop sign or traffic light is not a safe option. They'll need to go through a formal design process, including how much land, if any, will be needed. That process will involve the neighbors. As far as parking on the site, he said they never look at on-street parking as an available solution. There are opportunities for both the church and school to work with each other. If someone is parking on the site illegally, that is trespassing, and would need to be enforced. He said Superintendent Elstad is amenable to conversations on how the two may be able to work together. The ditch and grading, including the stone, will come into play on the final design of the roundabout. He said he doesn't know how or if it would be affected as the final construction has yet to be determined. The highway engineers will have to look at it

and it will be an ongoing conversation. He said he will pass the comments along to the engineers. It will be at least six to twelve months before there is a design most likely. Someone from the church asked if crosswalks would be part of the plans. He said that they are dangerous as they restrict the traffic flow. Kruschke said that the City does have a plan for a trail on the north side of 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE. The only sidewalk we're discussing with these requests is the one that connects to Hayes Avenue SE however the City always considers pedestrian and bicycle access when constructing round a bouts. Public hearing closed at 6:14 pm.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Boeke to recommend City Council approval of this preliminary plat of Owatonna Public Schools Addition with the following conditions:

- 1) The final plat shall be approved within one year of the date of this report.
- 2) The title opinion shall be approved by the City Attorney prior to recording of the final plat.
- 3) The final plat approval is subject to no issues being identified by Steele County or MNDOT in their review of the plat.
- 4) The applicant shall willingly participate in any future right of way plat that may be needed in conjunction with the roundabout construction.
- 5) The applicant shall enter into a development agreement prior to recording of the final plat.
- 6) A utility disconnection agreement shall be approved and recorded regarding the existing services located in 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Rooks and seconded by Boeke to recommend City Council approval of this request for two sign variances and a fence height variance in coordination with construction of the new high school property to be addressed 1455 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE with the following conditions:

- 1) Any additional signs on the property will be required to be granted a sign variance.
- 2) The electronic message board sign shall contain a functional ambient light sensor.
- 3) The 8' tall fence shall be setback a minimum of 50 feet from the front property line.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Eickhoff said that he appreciates that this has been laid out well and he appreciates the work the school and city has done. Meillier said he agreed.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Boeke to recommend City Council approval of this conditional use request with the following conditions:

- 1) A No Rise Certificate shall be obtained for the grading within the Zone A flood plain area as FEMA and the DNR require.
- 2) If any structures are to be placed within the flood zone a detailed flood study will need to be completed determining the base flood elevations.
- 3) The CUP shall be contingent on approval of the final plat of Owatonna Public Schools Addition and the execution of the development agreement.
- 4) Any impacts to any wetlands on site shall meet all provisions of the Wetland Conservation Act.
- 5) No fencing shall be constructed over the drainageway.
- 6) Prior to construction commencing the applicant shall have final approval and issuance of the grading permit meeting all City of Owatonna and MPCA stormwater regulations.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Community Development Manager Kruschke presented the Conceptual Streetscape Plans following up on the open house last week. The Commission discussed their plans.

The Commissioners discussed the year end building reports and January building reports. We had a record year by \$30 Million. He highlighted the 2020 totals of other cities in the area. There were three large projects started in January: Graif, Schrom Apartments, and an Aldi remodel.

Meillier asked about 117 West Bridge Street. Kruschke said that the plan was to not lose the building. It needed a new roof, which is taking longer to get done. The plan is to sell that building and get someone in there that brings traffic to downtown.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, a motion was made by Boeke and seconded by Rooks to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Greg Kruschke  
Community Development Manager