

DRAFT COPY

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

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

A motion was made by Effertz and seconded by Springer-Gasner to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 14, 2021. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Conditional Use Permit No. C- 1450, which is a request by Holiday Station Stores, holder of a purchase agreement from Steele County, to construct a gas station, convenience store, gas canopy, and car wash on the subject property at --- West North Street, and also to place more than 1,000 cubic yards of fill within the floodplain to allow for construction of the convenience store, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:44 pm. Joe Plemmel of Plemmel Insurance, located at 920 Hoffman Drive, said that listening to where they're putting the sign, the City had asked Plemmel Insurance to take their sign down because of the safety issue with the stop light there. A lot of accidents happened at the intersection. They only have one egress out of our lot and Holiday will have two. He hopes that the City will allow them to have another one as there is going to be more traffic than before. He said that he's also concerned about the floodplain. Right now that vacant lot holds water, which keeps his property from flooding, but if you add a couple thousand yards of fill there, that will affect them. Public hearing closed at 5:46 pm. Eickhoff asked how much water the underground tanks would hold compared to what the lot holds now. Glenn Harvey with Bergman said that with the analysis they do, they are not allowed to exceed what is existing. He said he doesn't know the exact volume, but they will not be exceeding what is there. Kruschke said that they will meet the Stormwater requirements, but are not designing for a flood-level event. Effertz asked about the grading concerns. Tiffany with Bergman said that FEMA really only cares about the 100-year flood event. There is 10,300 cfs coming through in a 100-year event. She said that Minnesota has more strict requirements than FEMA. FEMA allows for 12" of increase, but Minnesota only allows for 6". She said she's analyzed this a couple of ways by running different models. In one model they have 1" of increase, which is well within the 6" allowed and the other model shows a 0" increase in the flood level. From FEMA's point of view, that is well within compliance. Rooks asked if there was a 100-year event, would this be able to handle it. Tiffany said that everyone would be flooded in a 100-year event. The tanks are sufficient for the everyday run-off. Kruschke said that it's two different things—the stormwater on the site and a flood event. They have to ask if what they're doing will have a negative impact on everyone around them? They have to go through and design all of this. There is a full-blown flood study that shows all of the modeling. Tiffany said that the floodway has to have a no rise 0.0 impact. They're in the fringe area and technically they're not causing anything above and beyond and are permitted to have a 6" increase but they are only showing a 0 or a 1" increase depending on the model and well within what is allowed. Effertz said they've had three 100-year events recently. Eickhoff asked if there was any concern with the railroad. Kruschke said that the railroad owns their own property. The railroad has occupied this vacant property, but they do not own it. The railroad just cares about their crossings. The City looks more at the traffic intersections. The full-access is close to the tracks. Eickhoff said that this will be an improvement to the site, and he appreciated their explanations. Rooks asked about the sign on the southeast corner distracting from the traffic light. Kruschke said that as you're coming down the hill, their sign is about 10 feet in from the property line. Eickhoff asked about the sign that Plemmel Insurance was asked to remove. Mr. Plemmel showed them where it was located at the traffic intersection. He said that they said their project would only have an increase of 1", but if floodwater goes up past the electrical outlets, they have to rewire the

entire building. 1” could make a difference. Effertz asked about the Mid A sign and wondered if that could be swapped out for the Mid B sign. Jim Goepfner, Real Estate Manager for Holiday Station Stores, said that the height of the sign is 35’. He said that they don’t see the message boards interfering with the traffic lights at other locations. Kruschke said that there are a number of gas stations that have message boards and they like to locate them on intersections. The signs the City gets complaints on are the ones that don’t adjust their brightness levels based on the ambient light conditions. Holiday’s sign will have a sensor.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Peake to recommend City Council approval of this Conditional Use Permit with the following conditions:

- 1) All exterior signage shall meet all provisions of the sign ordinance and shall apply for and receive sign permits.
- 2) Prior to issuance of the building permit, the City and Owatonna Public Utilities shall approve all grading, drainage, and utility plans.
- 3) An elevation certificate shall be provided to the City showing compliance with the floodplain regulations.
- 4) A 20’ utility easement centered on the water main shall be provided.
- 5) The existing water main shall be disconnected and capped at the water main in North Street or utilized within the project.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Community Development Manager Greg presented a TIF Compliance Resolution for 224 North Cedar Avenue. This will be a wine lounge in the former Bubba’s Bar building. We are required to say that this meets with our land use plan. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Springer-Gasner to approve this TIF Compliance Resolution. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Kruschke gave an update on the downtown. He said that they have decided to wait on the 100 block, but they will have to be done by July 20, 2022.

Kruschke said that they are at 29 new houses to date. We are hopeful that we will break 40 this year. Lots are starting to dwindle down, so that will become a bigger issue as we go.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, a motion was made by Springer-Gasner and seconded by Peake to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager