

Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
January 25, 2016

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) Roll Call.
Present: Craig Agan, Jim Danks, Cathy Haustein, David Landon, Bob Smith, Mike Vander Molen, Gary Van Vark, Ann Visser, Teri Vos.
Absent: Ervin Van Wyk.

Others Present: Greg Ebeling, Robert Vos, George Wesselhoft.

- 3) Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the January 11, 2016 special meeting were approved as submitted.
- 4) Public Hearing on Ordinance Amending Zoning Regulations, 165.33 Sign Regulations by Amending the Provisions Pertaining to Highway 163 Bypass Signage.

No written or oral comments were received.

- 5) Ordinance Amending Zoning Regulations, 165.33 Sign Regulations by Amending the Provisions Pertaining to Highway 163 Bypass Signage. The City Council in 2004 after extensive review by ad hoc sign committee amended the City Code to permit taller pole signs for food, fuel and lodging uses for the Highway 163 interchanges at Washington Street, Clark Street and the County line. Specifically, the following options were provided:

- 1) A sign area of up to 180 square feet for signs 60 feet in height
- 2) A sign area of up to 150 square feet for signs 50 feet in height.
- 3) A sign area of up to 120 square feet for signs 40 feet in height.
- 4) A sign area of up to 90 square feet for signs 30 feet in height.
- 5) Signs less than 30 feet in height shall be limited to a maximum sign area of 50 square feet.

Casey's convenience stores at Westpoort and South Clark Street previously were the only uses that have utilized this option and they opted to only go up to 30 feet for maximum height. Recently Dairy Queen was approved for a 40 foot pole sign at their new business location. In light of businesses only opting or considering 30 or 40 foot tall signs, staff sought Council direction as to whether this ordinance provision should be amended to limit the maximum height to 40 feet. City Council at the November 17 Policy & Planning meeting directed staff to prepare the ordinance amendment.

The Community Development Committee at their December 9, 2015 meeting recommended approval of the ordinance amendment.

Gary Van Vark stated that they went through a lot of turmoil getting it done the first time to put up the 60 foot sign and just because nobody has used that up to this point he does not think it is necessary that we really change this; someone could very well come down the road, do something and their corporate structure might be to have a sign that is 60 feet. Why then will we have to go back to change the ordinance again to make it possible because we obviously will change our mind again. He stated he cannot support it. He realizes that Council has directed but that does not mean we have to approve it or be in favor of it. Mr. Van Vark thinks there is a good chance someone will come down the road such as the east side at the county line and they will want a tall sign over the hill. He stated he is not going to vote for it.

David Landon questioned whether it was staff that brought it to Council and made the suggestion to consider the ordinance.

George Wesselhoft explained that it was brought before the Council at Policy & Planning and conveyed that no one has done the taller signs and asked whether they would want to keep the ordinance the same or amend the Code.

Cathy Haustein asked if there was an aesthetic concern that the big signs are ugly or that they do not fit in with the town as she does not understand.

Mr. Wesselhoft responded that one potential concern would be that since no one has done a 60 foot tall sign it might be jarring because no one has done it.

Craig Agan asked if there was no uproar about this issue.

Mr. Wesselhoft responded there has been no uproar and when the Community Development Committee approved the ordinance in December the approval for the Dairy Queen 40 foot tall sign was on the same agenda.

Mr. Van Vark stated let the City Council use their supermajority voting capability and override the Commission if they want to do it that way.

Mike Vander Molen stated he agrees with Mr. Van Vark and sees this as a solution to a problem that does not really exist and he does not understand it at all.

David Landon made a motion to recommend to deny the proposed ordinance amendment. Gary Van Vark seconded the motion. There was further discussion on the ordinance. Upon vote, all voted yes. Motion carried 9 to 0.

- 6) Site Plan for the Pella Community School District. The Pella Community School District is proposing building addition, parking modifications and detention for

the existing high school facility. The building addition would be 18,714 square feet in size.

Gary Van Vark asked Mr. Ebeling in a nutshell what the new building addition consists of.

Greg Ebeling explained that the biggest part of the addition would be a new student center with new lunch room which will hold about 350 students compared to 250 students currently, so it will move them to a two period lunch section instead of a three period lunch. Because they are going out that way that is where the weight room is so the fitness room and weight room have to be moved. It will wrap around the east gym. There will also be a new prep area where students receive their lunch and two new lockers rooms. Essentially locker rooms, student lunch area, and fitness room and wrestling room.

Bob Smith asked whether they will have to raise the grade there.

Mr. Ebeling yes that it will stay the same grade until it reaches a certain point then it will change.

Gary Van Vark asked if the Ag department and shop has been moved into the Career Academy.

Mr. Ebeling responded yes, anything that was in this facility has now been moved and after this addition is made then the art room will be where the current lunch room is.

Gary Van Vark made a motion to approve the site plan. Bob Smith seconded the motion. Upon vote, all voted yes. Motion carried 9 to 0.

- 7) Other Business. Mr. Wesselhoft briefly reviewed the 2015 Development Report.
- 8) The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
George Wesselhoft
Planning and Zoning Director