

Planning and Zoning Minutes

March 8, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Snyder. Members present: Hence (via zoom), Snyder, Welton, Aarhus and Jellison. Absent: none. Chris Philipp, Building Official was present. Trevor Jenkins from Ralston Construction was also present.

Motion to approve the February 8, 2022 minutes by Hence, seconded by Welton. All ayes. Motion carries.

Discussion of the re-zoning request began by Jenkins reviewing the overall plan to develop the agricultural ground as a whole which currently includes single-family residential, multi-family residential and highway commercial zoning districts. He went on to say that Ralston currently has another 8 acres for commercial development and they are not seeing any interest in that property. If Ralston would add additional property for sale as commercial property, they feel that sales of this property would lag and remain empty sites for several years or longer. They have an opportunity to sell the property as townhomes if this re-zoning is successful. The Board then went thru the zoning map from the original re-zoning from ag. Jenkins explained that only the highway commercial C-1 zoned property in the front center portion of the development would be affected by this re-zoning totaling 4.73 acres. Welton asked if any other property in this development would become available for commercial and Jenkins replied that no not at this time. Jellison asked if these additional dwelling units would increase the sewer needs for this development and if this would require the city to improve or expand the sanitary sewer lift station sooner than already anticipated. Jenkins was unsure at this time how this proposal would affect the sanitary sewer capabilities at this time and the engineers were still considering this. There was a brief discussion concerning the loss of commercial space in the city, but agreed that the demand does not appear to be strong for commercial parcels and they would not want to see the property just sit vacant. Motion by Jellison to recommend to council approval of this re-zoning from C-1 Highway Commercial to R-2 Multi-Family Residential. Seconded by Hance. All ayes. Motion carries.

The Board then wanted to send a message to council that in their opinion the council should consider the lift station that serves this development and also to consider the City of Palo re-establishing their own sewer treatment facilities again. They are hopeful that the city can find a workable plan to stop sending the sewage to Cedar Rapids because of annual increases in cost and they feel that these costs will escalate even more in the future.

The Board then discussed briefly Welton's election to the Council and the fact that there will soon be an open seat on this Board. Everyone agreed to spread the word and look for a new volunteer to fill the seat. The Board thanked Jen Welton for her service on the P&Z and congratulated her on her election to the Palo City Council.

Motion by Aarhus to adjourn. Seconded by Hance. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Minutes By Chris Philipp, Building Official