

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MAY 28, 2024

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. in the Charles S. Crandall Center – Chambers at City Hall with Chairperson Kelly Rooks conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Rachel Springer-Gasner, Kelly Rooks, John Eickhoff, Nick Peake, David Effertz, and Mark Wilson. Commissioner Mark Meier was absent. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke, Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon, and Administrative Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Peake to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 14, 2024. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application VAR-17, which is a request by Jason Karsten to exceed the number of allowed accessory buildings on a residential lot, was presented by Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon. (Refer to report on file.) The applicant is requesting a third accessory building for the property at 1420 Canterbury Place SE.

Conditional Use No. CUP-14, which is a request by Jason Karsten to exceed 1,000 square feet in gross floor area for accessory buildings, was presented by Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon. (Refer to report on file.) The applicant is requesting 1,188 square feet for total gross floor area of accessory buildings. Ordinance 157.040 A(2)(c) allows lots more than 30,000 square feet in area up to 1,500 square feet in gross floor area of all accessory buildings.

Public hearing for both VAR-17 and CUP-14 opened at 5:38 pm. Cheryl Pfeifer, 1085 Greenleaf Road SE, said she is located south and west of the subject property. Her first question was the dimension of the building. In the staff report, it is 24 x 36. She is curious about the location of the building. There is quite a slope between the Karstens' property and her property. When it rains an inch, there is water between her house and the neighboring house at 1125 Greenleaf Road SE. She asked if a structure of this proposed size has potential to block drainage. Public hearing closed at 5:40 pm.

Kruschke said that when subdivisions are designed, generally speaking, the outlines are designed to carry water. No structure can impede any of that drainage and the applicant can direct drainage around that structure. He needs that structure to drain, too. There is direction and grading when that project comes forward that will redirect the water. The applicant will need a grading permit. Eickhoff asked what way the water flows. Kruschke said kind of east to west, following the 10' arrow on the site plan. Pfeifer said because they're at an angle. She handed out photos of her backyard to the Commissioners to show what the slope may look like. She said where the pool house is, they used to have erosion around that when they had high water. They put in groundcover and wildflowers to keep the erosion to a minimum. Since the fence has been there, they haven't had any water wash through. When they had a heavy rain a couple weeks ago, they could see where the water had moved toward Greenleaf Road. She said she has concerns that a structure of this size could interrupt the drainage; that is her main concern. Kruschke said that the Commissioners could add a condition if they feel it is appropriate about the drainage. Rooks asked if there were any covenants on this property. Kruschke said that covenants are between property owners and the City doesn't get involved with neighborhood covenants. The City will look at drainage, though. Wilson asked about the approximate size of the accessory structure being removed. Karsten said it is about 10 x 12. The other thing is, where Pfeifer is talking about the water running, there are railroad ties that will go into that area to divert the water toward the pool area. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Peake to recommend City Council approval of the variance and conditional use permit based on findings of fact and the following conditions:

1. That the existing accessory structure in the SW corner of the lot be removed.

2. Must comply with height requirements of the ordinance.
3. Total gross floor area of all accessory buildings may not exceed 1,188 sq feet without amending the conditional use permit.
4. The exterior materials shall have conventional house siding or siding that simulates conventional house siding or an exterior that is the same as the exterior of the principal structure.
5. Roof shall be covered with shingles, tile, shakes, or metal seam and batten roofing manufactured with a factory-applied finish, except a galvanized finish.
6. All grading and building permits shall be issued for the garage prior to commencing construction.
7. Accessory structure to be located as noted on the site plan in the application submittals; 10 feet from the southwest property line and 10 feet from the lot line separating the property from 1427 Canterbury Place SE.
8. All accessory structures shall not be used for commercial purposes.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Conditional Use No. CUP-15; which is a request by Jason Hall, with the consent of the City of Owatonna, to construct a 155 foot tall cell tower on the subject property at 1215 Kilworth Drive NW; was tabled. Public hearing opened at 5:46 pm. No comments were made regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 5:47 pm. A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Effertz to table the request to June 11th. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Kruschke said that they are taking public comments until the end of June for the 2050 Comprehensive Plan. To date, there are around two dozen comments that have come in online, in addition to what they had at the open house. For anybody who is interested in providing input on the draft plan, they can go to Owatonna.gov/Imagine2050.

Kruschke gave an update on previous items. City Council approved the Cashman Addition No. 3 and the rezoning.

Kruschke said there will be a request from the School District to construct a vehicle storage building at the old high school site near the old Ag Building as well as a variance request by Habitat for Humanity for their lot on the corner of Vine Street and Birch Avenue.

A motion was made by Springer-Gasner to adjourn and seconded by Wilson at 5:48 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager