

MINUTES OF THE ALBERT LEA PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
September 7, 2021
5:30 pm – City Center

Chairman Lucas Schuster called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Colby Cunningham
Jared Dawson
Lucas Schuster, Chairman
Steve Thompson
Matt Dorman
Larry Baker – Ex Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

Wyeth Anderson
Chuck Paczowski

STAFF PRESENT

Wayne Sorensen, Building and Zoning Administrator

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Thompson and second by Cunningham to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Schuster and second by Dorman to approve the April 6, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Conditional Use Permit for 423 Adams Avenue

Sorensen explained that Turning Point Real Estate has applied for a Conditional Use Permit to redevelop and reuse the property at 423 Adams Avenue for multi-family housing. Sorensen reviewed the staff report prepared by City Planner Megan Boeck. Sorensen also stated that the application meets the requirements for the Planned Development district, noting that this property was re-zoned from Limited Industrial (I-1) to Planned Development (PD) in March of 2021.

Lastly, Sorensen stated that review staff had concerns that there is not adequate parking space with the traditional straight parking stalls. Staff recommends that should the Planning Commission recommend approval of the proposed CUP, the following conditions be applied:

- 1) All parking stalls provided on-site shall be 9-feet wide and diagonal to allow for adequate parking space and for there to be enough room for traffic to pass through the alley.
- 2) There shall be no on-site parking allowed except for within the 20 parking stalls provided on the north side of the property. Parking stalls shall be clearly marked and striped.
- 3) Any building space rented for a commercial business or use shall be compatible with the on-site residential use.

Schuster opened the hearing to the public at 5:40 pm.

Keith Duncan – Questioned which properties were all included in the proposal. He had complaints of the rental properties in the area that are unkempt and the traffic in the area. He stated he was opposed to the proposed CUP.

Eric Kylo (Turning Point Real Estate) – Acknowledged Duncan’s concerns and commented on the crime in the area. He stated his intention is to renovate the existing building and improve the property.

Fred Campbell – Questioned if they are planning to use the existing building or demolishing and constructing a new one.

Cunningham asked if there are current renters in the building and Sorensen confirmed that it is empty. Kylo of Turning Point Real Estate explained that Almco rents the bottom portion of the building and it is used for storage.

Schuster appreciated the added condition for parking to be diagonal for easier maneuvering.

Schuster closed the hearing to the public at 5:44pm.

Motion by Schuster and second by Thompson to recommend to City Council the approval of a Conditional Use Permit for 423 Adams Avenue with the following conditions:

- 1) All parking stalls provided on-site shall be 9-feet wide and diagonal to allow for adequate parking space and for there to be enough room for traffic to pass through the alley.
- 2) There shall be no on-site parking allowed except for within the 20 parking stalls provided on the north side of the property. Parking stalls shall be clearly marked and

striped.

- 3) Any building space rented for commercial business or use shall be compatible with the on-site residential use.

Motion carried on a 5-0 voiced vote.

b. Zoning Amendment from One-Four Family Residence District (R-2) to Diversified Central District (DCD) for PID 34.118.0240 (722 Fountain St)

Sorensen stated that Shannon Vandersyde requests re-zoning the property at 722 Fountain Street from R-2 to DCD to allow for additional parking space adjacent to the Little Hair Place located at 726 Fountain Street. He noted that the property at 726 Fountain Street was re-zoned from R-2 to DCD in 2017.

Sorensen explained that the purpose of the Diversified Central District (DCD) is an extremely versatile zone meant for living, working, recreation, and retail all in one mixed area.

Sorensen added that there would be no additional entrance allowed off Fountain Street to the lot. The current access is off the back alley and can remain as such if it is re-zoned or the applicant may create a drive to connect to the property at 726 Fountain Street, however they would then have to isolate the access off the alley.

Sorensen explained that if the re-zone request is approved, this lot could establish any of the 17 permitted commercial uses as stated in Section 50.0811.

Schuster opened the hearing to the public at 6:16 pm.

Lenore Fries – Stated she is not in favor of the re-zone request. She noted that she does not want to see a residential neighborhood turn in to a commercial area. She questioned why the applicant needed the additional parking space for the very small existing building at 726 Fountain Street. She expressed concerns of additional traffic with many children in the area and the narrow alley. She questioned the intention of the property in the future.

Gary Oachs – Stated he was opposed to the zoning amendment for a parking lot. He questioned why the business needed a parking lot when it was for sale for some time. He commented on the narrow alley and additional traffic. He also questioned the intentions of the property in the future.

Schuster closed the hearing to the public at 6:31 pm.

Motion by Thompson and second by Dorman to recommend to City Council the approval of the request to re-zone the property at 722 Fountain Street from One-Four Family Residence

District (R-2) to Diversified Central District (DCD). Schuster and Dorman voted Nay. Motion carried on a 3-2 voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATION

None.

STAFF COMMUNICATION

None.

Motion by Cunningham and second by Dorman to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 pm. Motion carried.

Cierra Maras, Planning Commission Secretary

Lucas Schuster, Chairman