

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 10, 2024**

**The Mount Vernon Planning & Zoning Commission met April 10, 2024 at City Hall, 213 First St NW, Mount Vernon , IA; with the option of attendance via Zoom.**

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Jacob Buster at 6:45 p.m. to allow for a quorum.

**Role Call:** Four members present including Jacob Buster, Jacob Lindauer, Cathy George and Joan Burge. Absent: Truman Jordan, Matthew Nelson and Jay Willems.

**Agenda Approval:** Motion to approve, Burge; seconded by George. All in favor.

**Minutes Approval:** Motion by Burge to approve the minutes from March 13, 2024; seconded by Lindauer. All in favor.

**Public discussion - items not on the agenda:** none.

**Agenda Item #5: Preliminary Plat – Stonebrook 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> Additions**

Lot #26, previously reserved for potential stormwater management is proposed for subdivision into five (5) lots. Other minor modifications to the stormwater management at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street has been reviewed by the City Engineer. Public Hearing was opened and closed without comment.

**Motion by Burge recommending approval of the preliminary plat to City Council, Seconded by Lindauer, all in favor.**

**Zoning Update – Presentation by Tom Gruis / ECICOG**

Tom Gruis attended the meeting and presented zoning updates on three topics. Tiny houses and structures made from shipping containers were recommended for discussion by staff, based on recent inquiries from area residents. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) were considered per Council direction following a report by the Housing Commission which recommended further research on this topic for potentially increasing affordable housing stock in Mount Vernon.

The following items received additional discussion beyond Gruis' presentation:

- Permanent foundation requirements
- Parking Requirements (off-street vs. on-street)
- Design standards requiring secondary structures to match the primary structure

## Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg Minutes – April 10, 2023

- Potential Impact of rental units on neighborhoods
- Permitted Use versus Use by Right
- Inspection Requirements

Commission member Burge expressed concern regarding permitting, regulation and inspection of units. Inspection services are available through ECICOG, and the existing building and nuisance inspection services agreement with Linn County could potentially be expanded as well.

Staff inquired whether establishing a zoning district that is specifically designed to accommodate tiny houses / container houses would be an option. Gruis confirmed this would be a possibility.

All members supported setting a date to allow for a public education / input session on before proceeding further. Gruis will prepare visual aids and be present to facilitate the session, date to be determined.

### **Staff Updates:**

- Next regular meeting will be Wednesday, May 8, 2024.
- A privately-funded traffic count will be conducted on Hwy 1, south of the roundabout and north of the Hwy 30 bypass later this spring. Results of the study will be used in state-determined traffic calming requirements, based on volume.
- Public engagement efforts continue with the Uptown Streetscape Project. The next event is a Stakeholder Visioning Workshop on April 24, 2024, which will provide an opportunity for uptown business and parcel owners to participate in the design process.
- Community Housing Initiative anticipates construction to begin in June, 2024.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.

**Staff present:** City Planner Leigh Bradbury

**Members of the public:** Tom and Finn Gruis