

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2026

The Mount Vernon Planning & Zoning Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on February 4, 2026 at City Hall, 213 First St NW, Mount Vernon, IA; with the option of attendance via Zoom.

Call to Order: At 6:35 p.m., Commission Chair Truman Jordan called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Truman Jordan, Jay Willems, Cathy George, Mary Horst and Brian Squires - present; Nosek not present. City Administrator Chris Nosbisch and staff member Leigh Bradbury, attending.

Agenda Approval: Motion by Horst to approve, seconded by Squires. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes: Move to approve the minutes for January 14, 2026, by Horst, seconded by Squires. All in favor.

Public discussion - items not on the agenda: None

Agenda Item #5: Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment – Bulk Regulations for Residential Districts.

Kelli Feickert, Boomerang, Inc., was present on behalf of Bryce Ricklefs. Feickert explained that builders and prospective home buyers are interested in home designs that include a “drop zone” between the garage and dwelling unit. The developer does not wish to increase lot size, as a greater number of lots allows them to spread development costs out. Applicant therefore requests increasing the allowed distance between the garage face and dwelling unit to fifteen feet (15’) in order to accommodate a drop zone in the back.

When asked if other builders had made similar requests or were experiencing issues with selling lots to prospective buyers, staff noted that builders who have been in the area for some time know the rule, but new individual builders have presented plans which exceed the 10’ restriction. Those plans have been amended to meet code and approved. Nosbisch noted that Stonebrook Additions 1-9 were built with the ten foot (10’) restriction in place and the homes continue to be well sought after. The developer has brought new

builders into the community with the latest addition, which may be why the matter is coming before the commission at this time.

Per a question regarding standards in other communities, Nosbisch noted that Mount Vernon has set a standard that works well and produces viable neighborhoods, so what other communities are doing is less of a concern. If standards start to inhibit growth in a community, concerns such as this would warrant revisiting. Staff cited alternative code provisions currently utilized by other cities to prevent garage-centric designs include minimum façade requirements for the dwelling unit, front porches and fenestration.

The variance process was explained as appropriate for lots with unique hardships. With the exception of one, all lots in Stonebrook 10th Addition are of standard size or greater for Traditional Residential neighborhoods.

A motion to recommend City Council approval of the ordinance to allow for 15' between the garage face and dwelling unit was introduced by Willems, with no second. Motion failed.

Move by George to not recommend approval of the ordinance change, thereby preserving existing language for a ten foot (10') requirement between the garage face and dwelling unit in residential neighborhoods. Seconded by Horst with four voting in favor, Willems opposed.

Agenda Item #6: Final Plat – Ellis Rose and Jace Roy Wolrab Preservation Addition

Mike Brain, surveyor for the project, was present on behalf of the applicant, and explained the plat, as presented. Brain noted that the applicant does intend to further develop Outlot B in the future, with a cluster subdivision. In order for that to be approved by Linn County, it must be a minimum of forty (40) acres. On the final plat, Outlot B is currently 40.87 acres. This was accomplished by adding a twenty-foot (20') strip of land, wrapping around Lot 1 and Outlot A to connect with the triangular section lying south of Lots 1 and Outlot A.

Nosbisch explained that this plat and the unusual shape presented as Outlot B is also the result of prior and repeated divisions of land in which the City did not have an opportunity to review the plats prior to approval by the County. A text amendment is therefore recommended to Mount Vernon's Subdivision Regulations CH166.03 Jurisdiction and Applicability, to ensure the City has extra-territorial jurisdiction on both plats and plats of survey.

Nosbisch clarified next steps for this proposed final plat. The Planning and Zoning Commission makes recommendation to City Council, which then makes recommendation

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to Linn County's Board of Supervisors to either approve or not approve the final plat. If the City Council recommends not approving the plat, the Board of Supervisors may still vote to approve it.

While expressing support for the final plat as presented, Nosbisch cautioned the commission that future subdivisions would be a concern, due to proximity of the City's corporate boundary and the obligations that come with annexation.

Commission member Willems moved to approve the Final Plat – Ellis Rose and Jace Roy Wolrab Preservation Addition, which was seconded by George with all voting in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.