



PLANNING AND ZONING

Cerro Gordo County Courthouse

220 N Washington Ave, Mason City, IA 50401

Tom Meyer, Zoning Administrator

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July 25, 2025

Planning & Zoning Commission

Staff Report

Meeting – August 7, 2025

4:00 PM

Applicant: AgVantage FS

Existing Zoning: M-1 Light Industrial

Location: Site is immediately east of the existing facility at 206 Ash Street, Thornton, Iowa, 50479 on the north side of 125th Street

Request: Rezone approximately 3.00 acres from M-1 Light Industrial District to M-2 Heavy Industrial District

STAFF REVIEW:

AgVantage FS is requesting to rezone the 3.00-acres indicated on the aerial photo in your packets from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the M-2 Heavy Industrial District. The parcel is located in the SE¼ of the NWFR¼ of Section 19, Pleasant Valley Township. The parcel is located adjacent to the city limits of Thornton on 125th Street. The reason for the request is for a proposed expansion of their existing facilities that are located inside the city limits of Thornton at 206 Ash Street.

AgVantage FS plans to request a Special Use Permit from the Board of Adjustment to place two 30,000-gallon Nh3 fertilizer tanks as well as approximately 20 nurse tanks on the property and construct a proposed seed treatment warehouse that would be used to store chemicals for seed treatment & other various equipment. The proposed seed warehouse will be 132'x80' in size and is proposed to be constructed in the grass area on the south portion of the parcel. The 30,000-gallon Nh3 tanks will be located behind the warehouse and the nurse tanks will be located in the NE corner of the parcel. The existing nurse tanks on the property are empty and the large white tank will be removed. Anhydrous ammonia pumping and storage facilities are only allowed by an approved Special Use Permit in the A-1, A-2, or M-2 zoning districts.

The closest dwelling is within Thornton city limits, which is 300' to the west at 204 Ash Street. Ingebretson County Park is located across 125th Street to the south. The Prairie Land Trail runs behind the parcel on the north and Pleasant Valley Golf Club lies northwest of the parcel. North Iowa Cooperative is directly across 125th Street on the south. The Coop received a zone change

from the A-1 Agricultural District to the M-2 Heavy Industrial District on September 22, 2020 for a commercial scale grain facility.

There is an existing driveway from 125th Street to access the property. The County Engineer does not have concerns with the proposed facility as long as traffic does not cause a backup in the travel lanes of 125th Street and the proposed building and tanks maintain the required setbacks. If traffic is forced to wait on the traveled portion of the roadway or the shoulders because of the new facility, the owners may be responsible for the costs of a turn lane to maintain traffic.

According to CG Public Health, the property does not have water on it. The applicant's existing site to the west inside city limits has a well and is tied to city sewer. The location of the well is not identified in the plans. A private well must be at least 150' from preparation or storage area for spray materials, commercial fertilizers or chemicals that may result in groundwater contamination. It is recommended that a water test be conducted annually. The applicants do not plan on adding water to this site; therefore, this project should not impact sewer/septic needs.

The project information was submitted to the City of Thornton for comment. After public hearing on June 2, 2025, the Thornton City Council approved the Nh3 tanks.

RECOMMENDATION:

The site appears to be an appropriate industrial development site especially with North Iowa Cooperative located across 125th Street. No water is planned for this site. The site is located on a paved road appropriate for the type of traffic serving the facility. All federal, state and local regulations related to Anhydrous ammonia (Nh3) tanks and storage of chemicals must be followed. Any additional conditions/requirements/regulations will be addressed in the Special Use Permit.