



PLANNING AND ZONING

Cerro Gordo County Courthouse

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April 20, 2021

TO: Cerro Gordo County Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: John Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator

SUBJECT: Next Meeting – *Thursday, May 6, 2021; 4:00 p.m.; Boardroom*

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The next meeting of the Cerro Gordo County Planning and Zoning Commission is scheduled for **May 6, 2021 at 4:00 p.m., in the Boardroom at the Courthouse**. Staff will be seeking input from the Commission on two proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments. We will likely do a separate public hearing for just public input prior to making a formal recommendation for the proposed overlay district.

If you have concerns with attending in person due to COVID-19, the option to attend the hearing via teleconference will be made available. Social distancing will be practiced. You may join via teleconference by calling the phone number below and enter the Conference ID when prompted. Please let me know if you have any questions or if you are not able to attend in advance of the hearing.

Conference phone: (641) 421-3113

Conference ID: 3044#

1. Zoning Amendment – Establishing a South Shore Residential Overlay District

The first proposed amendment before the Commission is an amendment to establish a “South Shore Residential Overlay District”(SOD). An overlay district establishes standards for a specific purpose on top of the underlying zoning district requirements. One example already within the Zoning Ordinance is the “Environmental Resource Overlay District” that establishes standards for septic systems that use soil absorption within the watershed of Clear Lake. A copy of the proposed text amendment and a map illustrating the amendment to the zoning map are included in your packets.

The proposed overlay district would establish requirements for residential uses over the subdivisions of the south shore of Clear Lake, as illustrated on the included map. The purpose of the overlay district would be to establish minimum requirements designed to preserve the urban residential character of the south shore neighborhoods. In recent years, the department has been receiving proposals for agricultural, style buildings in the south shore area, such as machine

sheds, shop-houses or houses that use an ag-metal exterior, and multiple, large accessory structures that are atypical of an urban, residential character. To summarize, the SOD would:

- Prohibit the use of classic-ribbed or galvanized steel on the exterior wall faces of buildings above 150 square feet in ground floor area, which is designed to discourage large machine shed or pole barn buildings typically found on a rural acreage. A special exception that can be granted by the Board of Adjustment is included with certain standards that could incorporate such steel in an acceptable residential design.
- Limit the number of detached garages above 150 square feet in ground floor area on a single residential lot to no more than one.
- Prohibits mobile homes to be used as dwellings within the overlay district, except within a permitted mobile home park.
- Establishes a submission requirement to be included with a Zoning Permit Application for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the overlay district.

The overlay district requirements are designed to be as targeted as possible to accomplish the purpose of the district itself. The requirements would apply strictly to residential uses. Some requirements that may apply to purpose of the proposed overlay district made sense to apply generally in the ordinance and are included in the second proposed zoning amendment for general dwelling requirements.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan update provides limited guidance in relation to the proposed overlay district. It is the intention of the department to provide for a neighborhood component for the whole of the south shore in a future Comprehensive Plan within the next couple of years. However, due to recent development proposals, it is believed to be necessary to address preservation of the character of the residential areas of the south shore now.

The future land use map designates the vicinity as primarily a residential area, though supplemental commercial uses exist that provide essential services to the lake community. Policy 1.1.4 discusses implementing development trend data for the purpose of comprehensive planning purposes, which is the intent of identifying the need to prevent agricultural-style development in the south shore area—as recent development trends have been identified. Policy 2.1.5 encourages the establishment of performance standards to ensure compatible development. The SOD is designed for that purpose to protect the character of the residential neighborhoods of the south shore. Policy 2.1.3 discusses establishing master plans for developed areas where appropriate. While this is not a master plan, it is intended that a future Comprehensive Plan update will address the existing neighborhoods of the south shore as well.

This meeting will be for the purpose of study and input for the proposed text amendment and overlay district. The intention is to do at least two separate public meetings before going to the Board of Supervisors—one for public input and another for a formal recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Please review, and we will discuss at the meeting.

2. Zoning Amendment – General dwelling requirements

The second proposed amendment updates general standards for dwellings. Like the first proposed amendment, staff is seeking input from the Commission. This will not be a formal public hearing for formal recommendation. To summarize, the proposed amendments does the following:

- Combines the existing Sections 6.19 and 6.20 of the Zoning Ordinance into a general “Bulk Requirements for Dwelling” section. It also repurposes Section 6.20 for “Supplemental Requirements for Dwellings.”
- Under the bulk requirements section, it adds a requirement that dwellings in a residentially zoned property cannot have an attached garage area that exceeds the usable residential floor area within the dwelling. This is designed to preserve the character of residential neighborhoods.
- Adds a requirement that a dwelling must have a foundation, except for a specific exception outlined in state code.
- Adds a requirement that vehicles or watercraft cannot be included in the structure or design of a dwelling.
- Updates an Iowa Code reference for a permitted use in single family residential zoning districts.

The Comprehensive Plan has little to no guidance on this type of zoning amendment and would fall under establishing reasonable performance standards under Policy 2.1.5. Please review, and we will discuss at the meeting.