

(These minutes are not approved until the next Commission meeting.)

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
June 11, 2014
West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Chair Roger Laughlin opened the meeting of the West Branch Planning and Zoning Commission at 6:35 p.m. by welcoming the audience and the following City Staff: Zoning Administrator Paul Stagg, Administrative Assistant Shanelle Peden, and City Engineer Dave Schechinger. Commission members Roger Laughlin (Chair), LeeAnn Aspelmeier, Helen Dauber, John Fuller, and Gary Slach. Commission members Trent Hansen and Molly Menard were absent.

Approve minutes from the May 28, 2014 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

Motion by Fuller to approve the minutes from the May 28, 2014 Commission meeting, second by Slach. AYES: Fuller, Slach, Aspelmeier, Dauber, Laughlin. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Hansen, Menard. Motion carried.

Approve West Branch High School Phase I Parking and Site Improvements Site Plan

Brian Boelk, Professional Engineer with HBK Engineering LLC, addressed the Commission on behalf of his firm and in cooperation with Struxture Architects. Boelk noted that Phase I includes an expansion to the parking lot to include a total of 103 parking spaces. Boelk added that this would help with traffic flow, and the development of an additional turn lane would better organize traffic. Boelk said he had a request from the School District to add spaces for bus parking and a road to connect on the south side on school property, as well as removal of a crosswalk from the bus loading zone. Boelk noted that four new lights would be installed in the parking lot. Boelk mentioned that the topography of the land causes water to flow towards the creek, and that he is partnering with firms to develop stormwater detention cells and to complete the testing of soil infiltration rates. Boelk concluded his statements by saying that some future changes to curbs would also be necessary.

Laughlin asked if there would be water basins included. Boelk mentioned that if included, it would be an additional cost for the school district. Laughlin also asked about lighting on sidewalks, with Boelk noting that placement and connection to the rest of the city would be advisable. Fuller asked if a turning lane would be included, in which Boelk replied that it was not included in the proposed plans. Schechinger added that he met with the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County last week, and that he is awaiting additional recommendations based on their discussions. Aspelmeier asked if the student drop off area could be designed for better traffic flow. Aspelmeier also asked if the turn from the west could be modified so drivers would not have to make a sharp ninety degree turn into the campus. Fuller asked if a location for bicycle parking was included. Boelk noted that it was not requested but could be incorporated into a revision. Fuller also asked for placement of additional trees, to which Boelk responded that the superintendent had asked for placement of tall grasses on the property. In conclusion, Boelk noted that the project is proposed to begin late July, with an estimated completion of fall 2014.

Motion by Laughlin to approve the site plan, with stipulations to include the placement of bike racks and review of the lighting plan of the area, second by Fuller. AYES: Laughlin, Fuller, Aspelmeier, Dauber, Slach. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Hansen, Menard. Motion carried.

Old Business

Stagg provided some updates based on comments from the Commission's last meeting. Stagg noted that he visited with City Attorney Kevin Olson regarding the annexation of the Dog Park. Stagg noted that Olson indicated the property can only be annexed if adjacent property is to be included. Stagg added that annexation of the cemetery can be initiated by the Mayor through Council resolution. Fuller asked if recommendation from Commission would be useful. Stagg noted that he had asked Olson to draft a resolution for such. Stagg also mentioned that he and Public Works Director Matt Goodale observed the two homeowners on the new portion of North Maple Street as they back out of their driveways. Slach said he was satisfied with the feedback provided. Stagg also noted that he had discussion with Police Chief Mike Horihan and City Administrator Matt Muckler regarding vehicles being unloaded in front of West Branch Ford. Stagg said he also spoke with West Branch Ford, who offered to have staff place cones out when delivery drivers are parked for unloading in the street. Stagg mentioned that he sent notification to the property owner on North Downey Street to ask that the sidewalk be widened to match the north and south portions. Stagg concluded his statements by saying that he is in the process of developing a final plat checklist which incorporates information from both Chapter 170 and filing requirements from Cedar County, which would be presented at a future planning & zoning commission meeting.

New Business

Slach asked if staff had received any feedback from property owners regarding the annexation of the southwest portion of the industrial park area on the west side of South Downey/Baker Avenue. Stagg replied that information was sent, but no response has been received. Laughlin asked if the future land use map was in development. Schechinger noted that a basis exists within the Comprehensive Plan, and mentioned that he needs to have future discussion with Muckler regarding the map.

Motion by Slach to adjourn, second by Laughlin. Motion carried on a voice vote. Planning and Zoning Commission meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.