

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF PELLA  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
MARCH 22, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER BY THE CHAIRPERSON AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Canfield called the Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Public Safety Complex. Members present were: Joe Canfield, Julio Chiarella (via phone), Cathy Haustein (via phone), Julie Heerema Mueller (via phone), Kisha Jahner, Tom Johnson, Dave Landon (via phone), Robin Pfalzgraf (via phone), Ann Visser (via phone), and Teri Vos (via phone); absent: Mark Groenendyk . Staff present: City Administrator Mike Nardini, Code Enforcement Officer Jared Parker, and the Deputy City Clerk. Due to heightened public health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, accommodations were made to broadcast this meeting via conference call. Twenty-two members of the public joined the conference call and one attended in person.

**APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA**

**Motion** by Visser, second by Johnson to approve the tentative agenda. Motion carried 10-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion** by Jahner, second by Chiarella to approve the minutes of the February 22, 20201 meeting. Motion carried 10-0.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Consider a Proposed Planned Unit Development for the Pella Market**

Due to technological issues, there were audio disruptions throughout this public hearing.

This proposed ordinance would amend the zoning district of three vacant properties located at or near 503 Main Street to a Planned Unit Development (PUD). If approved, the base zoning district would remain Commercial – Mixed Use Urban Center (CUC). The developer for this site is proposing the Pella Market, which is intended to be similar to the Gateway Market in Des Moines, Iowa. According to the developer, the proposed Pella Market will offer the very best fresh food and exceptional service by providing produce essentials, freshly baked artisan breads, world-class grocery, a collection of the finest cheeses, unique wines, chef-crafted meals-to-go, and educational food and wine experiences for their customers. The Café will serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner offering catering and boxed lunches of the same great quality found in the market.

The existing zoning for the property is CUC. The CUC zoning district recognizes the mixed-use character of urban entry corridors into Pella’s downtown, including Washington Street and Main Street, which contain a combination of residential, commercial, and office uses. These entry corridors include special aesthetic and sign design standards, which will help enhance their status as principal entrances and arterials into Pella’s downtown, and to maintain their character as urban streets. The proposed Pella Market is an allowed use under the current zoning for the district.

The base zoning for the PUD will remain CUC. However, the location of this site is within the Webster School Urban Renewal Plan (URP). As background, the primary objectives of this URP were to

provide opportunities and incentives that promote blight remediation. Furthermore, this area was previously declared as a 'blighted area' by the City Council. This is important as when redevelopment occurs in blighted areas, zoning requirements are often relaxed. In this case, the developer is proposing an enhanced building design in exchange for flexibility in minimum lot areas and setbacks.

Finally, it is important to note, the only use allowed on this site is the Pella Market as described on the previous page, which is also an allowable use under the City's zoning code.

Staff believes the proposed Pella Market aligns closely with a key strategic goal of the Comprehensive Plan, which is economic development. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan noted a 'gap' exists for food and beverage establishments. Staff believes the proposed Pella Market will help address this shortage in the community and will be a nice compliment to the new South Main development. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan has identified this section of Main Street as a commercial corridor and economic development area for the City.

Staff believes the proposed ordinance meets the requirements of the City's zoning code. In addition, staff believes the proposed ordinance is consistent and in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan, as detailed above. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the proposed ordinance.

Convened **Public Hearing** on the proposed ordinance.

One written comment was received from Jade Dix on behalf of the developer and read aloud.

**Motion** by Johnson, second by Landon to enter the written comment into the public record. On roll call the vote was ayes: Johnson, Landon, Canfield, Chiarella, Haustein, Jahner, Pfalzgraf, Visser, Vos; nays: none; no answer: Heerema Mueller. Motion carried 9-0.

Chiarella stated that he is in support of this project.

Jim Mueller stated that he thinks the Pella Market will be a good addition to the community. Though he is unhappy with the lack of parking on site, he said the parking agreement with First Baptist Church will help mitigate that concern. He expressed concern that the project is exempt from the City's design review process. He noted that other businesses in town must comply with the design standards, including Walmart, Casey's, Burger King, and Culver's. He requested that the proposed PUD be subject to these established design standards.

Heerema Mueller said there was a local business that wanted to expand outdoor seating during Tulip Time, but the City denied the request because it would take away from the business' parking. She asked who makes those decisions to determine which businesses do and do not qualify to have relaxed parking requirements.

Jahner said she understands the site is in a blighted area, but the proposed Pella Market would be in close proximity to downtown. She stated she does not want to set a precedence by not requiring businesses to adhere to design standards. She said she loves the concept for Pella Market, but other businesses do have to comply with the City's design standards.

Canfield cited City Code Section 165.14.3(F), which states that "...a permit for any structure in a Design Review or Dutch Residential Overlay District shall not be issued until the Community Development

Committee has approved the exterior design.” He said he is also worried about setting a precedence in the future.

City Administrator Mike Nardini stated that PUDs are ultimately approved by the City Council. Through the PUD process, the City Council determines which projects are subject to design review requirements. The goal of the URP is blight elimination, which the City hopes to achieve through economic development.

Jahner asked how often the City Council follows the Commission’s recommendations. Nardini explained that if the Commission recommends that the City Council not approve the PUD, it will require a supermajority of the Council to vote in favor of the PUD for it to be approved.

Heerema Mueller asked whether the Casey’s located adjacent to the proposed Pella Market site was subject to design requirements. Nardini said yes. He explained that the Casey’s property was not part of the area determined to be blighted, nor included in the URP.

In response to a question from Canfield, Nardini explained that the City Attorney is the party responsible for drafting the ordinance.

Vos asked whether the City’s design standards were explained to the developer. Nardini said there were extensive conversations with the developer as part of the PUD’s negotiated process. He said the developer has stated that they believe the building will fit in with the community. He further explained that the developer has indicated that the proposed design of Pella Market is important to the business’ operational model.

Vos asked whether there is an opportunity for the Commission to get advisement from the Community Development Committee (CDC), which is the body charged with approving design permits for commercial buildings. Nardini said that may be a legal question to ask the City Attorney. He said the Commission is charged with determining whether the proposed rezoning is in alignment with the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Nardini explained that design permit applicants can appeal the CDC’s decisions to the City Council. As he understands the process, Iowa District Court would be the final decision-making body, should the City Council’s decisions on design permits be appealed.

Pfalzgraf stated via the chat function of the electronic meeting platform that she is looking at the proposed design as modern Dutch architecture. She asked whether the Commission only wants to have historical Dutch architecture portrayed within the City of Pella.

**Motion** by Jahner, second by Johnson to close the public hearing as no further comments were received. On roll call the vote was ayes: Jahner, Johnson, Canfield, Haustein (via chat), Heerema Mueller, Landon, Pfalzgraf (via chat), Visser, Vos; nays: none; no answer: Chiarella. Motion carried 9-0.

Landon stated that he believes the CDC should be permitted to weigh in on the proposed design of Pella Market.

Johnson said the proposed Pella Market site met the requirements to be considered a blighted area and qualified to be included in the URP. The site has also met the requirements to be considered for a PUD. He said he has heard a lot of support in the community for projects such as this in Pella. If hurdles are placed

in front of economic development opportunities, he said the City of Pella may not see those opportunities arise in the future. He said he objects to revisions to the proposed PUD.

Heerema Mueller stated that the City's design standards have not prevented businesses such as McDonald's and Applebee's from building in the community.

Nardini noted that a PUD is a negotiated process, so the developer would have to agree to any proposed changes or conditions to the ordinance to move forward with the project.

Haustein stated via chat that the City has waived design requirements for medical facilities. Landon explained that institutional properties are exempt from design requirements, per City Code.

Vos asked what steps would be taken by the City going forward, should the Commission vote to approve the ordinance with the revision that design review standards for the PUD are not waived. Nardini replied that he would first check with the developer to see if they want to move forward with the project. If the developer found the proposed revision(s) acceptable, then the ordinance would be considered by the City Council for approval.

Jahner said this is a tough decision as she likes the proposed Pella Market design, but the City does have design standards in place, and has had them for many years. Johnson said the City has eliminated a significant area of blight in Pella with the redevelopment of the former Webster School site and the removal of the yellow house at 503 Main Street.

Nardini stated that he will have to receive guidance from the City Attorney on whether a majority or supermajority of the City Council would be needed to override the Commission's recommendation on the PUD.

Canfield stated that the design requirements that are in place have been codified for a reason and have served Pella well, especially with regards to tourism. He said he would be comfortable if CDC were given the opportunity to provide input on the design of Pella Market.

**Motion** by Landon, second by Vos to approve the ordinance with the revision that Section 3A of the proposed ordinance is removed, which will not permit design review standards contained in Pella City Code Sections 165.16, 165.17, and 165.18 to be waived. On roll call the vote was ayes: Landon, Vos, Canfield, Haustein, Heerema Mueller, Jahner, Visser; nays: Johnson and Pfalzgraf; no answer: Chiarella. Motion carried 7-2.

## **NEW BUSINESS PROPOSED**

### **Consider a Proposed Site Plan for Pella Market, Located at 503 Main Street**

RDP Holdings, LLC has proposed building a structure on the property located at 503 Main Street. The main structure proposed shall be 6,640 square feet with a paved area of 11,100 square feet. The developer for this site is proposing the Pella Market.

Chapter 165.36(F)(3) requires the proposed site plan to conform to the City's Comprehensive Plan. Staff believes the proposed Pella Market aligns closely with a key strategic goal of the Comprehensive Plan, which is economic development. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan noted a gap exists for food and beverage establishments. Staff believes the proposed Pella Market will help address this shortage in the

community and will complement the new South Main development. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan has identified this section of Main Street as a commercial corridor and economic development area.

The proposed site plan meets the minimum zoning requirements when taking into account the proposed changes included in the PUD. Additionally, staff believes the proposed site plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan by meeting the existing gap for food and beverage establishments. Staff recommends approval of the site plan as submitted, contingent upon the City Council approving a PUD for the site.

**Motion** by Johnson, second by Landon to conditionally approve the site plan as submitted, contingent upon the City Council approving a PUD for the site. On roll call the vote was ayes: Johnson, Landon, Canfield, Haustein (via chat), Heerema Mueller, Jahner, Pfalzgraf, Visser, Vos; nays: none; no answer: Chiarella. Motion carried 9-0.

**Consider a Rezoning Application for Land Along 218th Place to Change the Zoning from Agricultural (A1) and Community Commercial (CC) to Limited/Light Industrial (M1)  
(Tabled at the February 22, 2021 Planning & Zoning Meeting)**

This item was tabled at the February 22, 2021 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and, due to a lack of motion, it remained tabled.

**Consider a Site Plan for a Drive-Through Coffeehouse at 2010 Washington Street**

This item was pulled from the agenda.

**Consider a Site Plan for a Parking Lot Expansion at 414 Main Street**

Marion County State Bank has proposed expanding their paved surface at 414 Main Street, which is currently used a bank with automated teller machine (ATM) and drive-through services on-site. The total area of paved surface will be 11,842 square feet and is intended to accommodate a small building addition, which is not subject to the site planning requirements, and improve traffic conditions on the site.

Chapter 165.36(F)(3) requires the proposed site plan to conform to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map identifies this site as Low Density Residential, bordered by Commercial to the north. The proposed use of the facility is considered a "Financial Office" which is described as a "provision of financial and banking services to consumers or clients." Therefore, staff believes the proposed use and site plan are in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed site plan satisfies pertinent City Code and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends approval of the site plan as submitted.

Code Enforcement Officer Jared Parker explained the scope of the project.

**Motion** by Jahner, second by Johnson to approve the site plan as submitted. On roll call the vote was ayes: Jahner, Johnson, Canfield, Haustein (via chat), Heerema Mueller, Landon, Pfalzgraf, Visser, Vos; nays: none; no answer: Chiarella. Motion carried 9-0.

**OTHER BUSINESS / PUBLIC FORUM / WORK SESSION**

**Next Meeting Date**

The next regular Planning and Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2021. Communication has been sent to the Commission regarding a proposed special meeting for either April 5, 2021 or April 12, 2021.

Adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

**From:** Jade Dix <[jade.dix@GenlinkLLC.com](mailto:jade.dix@GenlinkLLC.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 5:52 PM  
**To:** Mike Nardini <[mnardini@cityofpella.com](mailto:mnardini@cityofpella.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Planning and Zoning Meeting

Mike, here is a statement from the Developer that you can read tonight if possible:

We have been working diligently to bring enticing new amenities to the community. By bringing in modern amenities, we reinforce the notion that the community of Pella is a great place to work and live. This is what enables our companies to attract and retain talent, and our community to grow and thrive. As the builder/developer in this project, we are excited to bring this unique building to Pella. This property is in a highly visible area of town and is currently in a blighted zone. The building's design reflects a modern inspiration, with a historical twist, that compliments the street scape and surrounding properties beautifully. Pella is a community grounded in our heritage yet focused on the future and we hope to demonstrate that with the exciting addition of this Market.

Jade