

URBANDALE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES

March 1, 2010

The Urbandale Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on Monday, March 1, 2010, at the Urbandale Administrative Offices Building, 3600 86th Street. Chairperson Judy Ralston-Hansen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioners present were Jeff Payne, Bill Kusy, Kevin Gass, David Russell, Paul Pick, Wayne Van Heuvelen, and Judy Ralston-Hansen. Staff members present were Steve Franklin, Community Development Manager/Chief Planner, and Cheryl Vander Linden, Department Secretary.

The first item on the agenda was to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2010, meeting. Mr. Gass moved, and it was seconded by Pick, to approve the February 15, 2010 minutes. On roll call; Ayes: Gass, Pick, Payne, Kusy, Russell, Van Heuvelen, Ralston-Hansen; Nays: none. Passes: none. Motion carried.

The next item on the agenda was the "Mercy Medical Clinic Driveway & Entrance Vestibule and Canopy" Site Plan No. 012-2010-02.00 (6200 Aurora Avenue).

Mr. Franklin said this site plan proposes a new entrance vestibule, a sidewalk and drop-off lane with an overhead canopy, and a right-in/right-out driveway on Aurora Avenue for the existing Mercy Clinic, which occupies 12,000 square feet on the first floor of the existing 6-story western building. The entrance vestibule, sidewalk, drop-off lane and canopy are located near the northwest corner of the building and combine to establish a more prominent and convenient entrance for the existing clinic. The site plan for the west building was approved by the City Council in April of 1989 and it was constructed adjacent to the existing building to the east, which was approved and built in 1979.

The proposed single-story vestibule has approximately 250 square feet, and extends about 22 feet northwest from the existing building wall. The proposed drop-off lane is 18 feet wide and passes under the proposed overhead canopy. The canopy is 17 feet wide and has a minimum clearance height of 12'-8", which is sufficient for regular passenger vehicles and ambulances. The proposed right-in/right-out driveway is located on the south side of Aurora Avenue just east of the existing crosswalk for Jensen Elementary School, which is located directly to the north across Aurora Avenue. The proposed location of the right-in/right-out movement creates a straight north-south drive lane through the existing parking lot connecting Aurora Avenue directly to the proposed drop-off lane, canopy and entrance vestibule.

Topographically, existing elevations on the site are quite flat due to the existing parking spaces and interior drives and range from high points of about 954 feet at the north end of the site near the proposed right-in/right-out driveway on Aurora Avenue, to a low point of about 951 feet at the south end near the proposed building vestibule and canopy, for an average existing grade on this portion of the site of about 1.22%. Very

minimal cuts and fills of generally less than 1 foot will occur where the driveways and building improvements are to be constructed. The property drains through the existing parking lot storm sewer system. No additional parking spaces or detention are required.

The property is zoned "C-O" Office/Service District. Adjacent to the west are existing single-family residences zoned "R-1S" Suburban Density Single-Family District. To the north, across Aurora Avenue is Jensen Elementary School, also zoned "R-1S" Suburban Density Single-Family District, and existing multi-family development, zoned "R-3" Low Density Multi-Family District. To the south is the portion of Merle Hay Mall located within the Urbandale corporate limits, zoned "C-G" General Commercial District, and to the east is commercial development located north of Merle Hay Mall in the City of Des Moines. The property is located in the Urbandale School District.

Mr. Franklin said Staff recommends approval subject to requiring the developer to:

1. Add "including all City of Urbandale Supplemental Specifications" to General Note B; revise General Note E from "the Des Moines Water Works" to "the Urbandale Water Utility"; add a General Note stating "All water main construction shall be in conformance with the City of Urbandale Water Department Standard Specifications for Water Main and Appurtenances"; correct the location of the arrow for Utility Note 6; add the dimension and utility notes for the water main and correct the apparent break in the water main, irrigation and canopy lines on the drawing; verify the correct size of the water main (6" or 8") between the notes and the plan; and callout all water main bends.
2. Extend the median on Aurora Avenue west to the centerline of the proposed entrance, and increase the curve of the exit lane to significantly discourage a potential left turn onto Aurora; revise the entrance radii curb to match the existing Aurora Avenue curb; provide a 5 foot clear radius around fire hydrants from all landscaping or other obstructions; and provide required truncated dome inserts where pedestrians enter vehicle traffic areas under/near the proposed canopy and on both sides of the proposed driveway at Aurora Avenue.
3. Show all erosion control methods; and provide updated drainage calculations or an Engineer's certification that the existing calculations are still accurate.

Mr. Randy Downs, Snyder and Associates, was present to answer questions.

Mr. Russell asked there's a bank on the east side of that building, with drive through lanes, right?

Mr. Franklin said yes. That's on the other side of the east building. The bank is in this location over here. The clinic occupies about 12,000 square feet on the first floor of this west building.

Mr. Russell asked you don't see any overlapping or any traffic issues?

Mr. Franklin said no, we don't anticipate any problems with that. Because it really is just a drop-off lane located right at this corner. It does line up with this existing drive lane, you come in, pull right in there, drop off and then go park. So we don't anticipate any problems at all.

Mr. Kusy asked are you okay with that it doesn't line up with the Jensen school drive?

Mr. Franklin said yes. Engineering looked at that. Again, that's something that, because it's a right-in, right-out, it doesn't necessarily need to line up. If it was a full-movement, we'd want it to line up. But right-in, right-out is not as big a deal.

Mr. Kusy asked will there be any signage right there that would say "no left turn"?

Mr. Franklin said no, there is no signage. There is a median, one of the comments you can see is to extend this median just a little bit more to try to pull this thing out just a little bit more, get a little more curve in there and extend it out here just a little bit more, just trying to discourage that left turn as much as we can.

Mr. Kusy said I'm just concerned that if you get people that aren't familiar, they'll already be a car length from there going up there, and may come out here instead of turning around and going the way you'd like them to.

Mr. Franklin said these types of situations are the ones that Engineering looks at pretty closely. And if they deem that some sort of signage saying "no left turn" might help, then they'll put one up.

Mr. Gass said it's kind of like right out here by the City Administrative Office buildings.

Mr. Franklin said yes, actually there is one out there, leaving the complex. It's a very similar situation.

Mr. Kusy said if you know about it far enough back so that you have time to adjust, then it's not right at the last minute.

Mr. Gass said there are certain times of the day that I'd like to turn left, going out that way. But I don't do it because I'm a law-abiding citizen!

Ms. Ralston-Hansen asked are you agreeable to the Staff recommendations?

Mr. Randy Downs, Snyder and Associates, 2727 SW Snyder Boulevard, Ankeny, said I'm representing the managing partner of Merle Hay Mall Limited Partnership. From the

comments, my understanding is that they wanted to extend the raised median in Aurora as well, to carry that about 55 feet further west to discourage the ability to come in or out of that driveway the wrong direction. There's a black dot which is the existing sign on that raised median on Aurora. We're trying to get those details worked out with the Engineering Department. You can see there is a median out here in Aurora. By some combination of extending that curve a little bit more and then maybe pulling this one out a little bit, we can probably get it to where we can work it okay. The area today is a painted taper where the concrete raised median stops and there's a painted taper for another 75 feet or so. Staff has asked us to extend that raised median approximately 55 feet to get to the center line of our new driveway.

Mr. Russell moved, and it was seconded by Gass, to approve the Mercy Medical Clinic Driveway and Entrance Vestibule and Canopy Site Plan, subject to Staff recommendations. On roll call; Ayes: Russell, Gass, Payne, Kusy, Pick, Van Heuvelen, Ralston-Hansen; Nays: none. Passes: none. Motion carried.

Regarding Staff reports, Mr. Franklin said it looks like we will not need to meet next time as there is nothing pending. Something did come in today. I didn't have a chance to look at what it was. We had some candidates in today for our Assistant Parks Department Director, so I was touring them around this afternoon. So I think we will need to meet in four weeks, on March 29, but not on March 15.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.