

CITY OF OSKALOOSA
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
May 26, 2015

A special meeting of the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission for the City of Oskaloosa was called to order at 4:32 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, by Chair Pamela Blomgren at 220 South Market Street, Oskaloosa, Iowa.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Pamela Blomgren, Wyndell Campbell, Andrew Jensen, R. D. Keep, Sarah Tarbell and Gabriel Wagner. COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: None. CITY STAFF PRESENT: Akhilesh Pal and Marilyn Johannes. OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Olson, architect, Big Creek Design Group, Inc., Craig VerSteegh, chair of the Central Reformed Church Building Committee, Tom Walling, and several citizens.

Citizens to be Heard

Karl Wisbrock, 909 Avenue East, Stephen Tews, 1003 North , and Danny Ferree, 909 Avenue East, addressed the commission with concerns regarding closure of a portion of Avenue East including concern about cleanup of area, setback on property, privacy, snow removal, resale value of property and access to area where motor home is parked.

Karl Wisbrock presented a petition to the commission from citizens in the area.

Blomgren gave an update on both sides of the issue indicating that meetings were held between church officials and the public since the last Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. Blomgren said she believes the main concern of citizens at this time is premature closure of the street before the church proceeds with Phase 2 of their project.

Blomgren said she would entertain a motion to vacate the street contingent upon purchase of a building permit for Phase 2 with a site plan for final construction and then open the matter for discussion. Jensen made a motion to vacate Avenue East contingent upon the church filing a building permit for Phase 2 construction. Keep seconded the motion.

Campbell: Valid parking issues more important than closing the street. The final decision on vacation of the street is made by the City Council. The Planning and Zoning Commission just makes a recommendation to the City Council.

Blomgren: Phase 1 is more beneficial to the neighborhood but the church said they can't move on to Phase 2 without assurance the street will be vacated. If you look at the situation as a whole, Phase 2 is way too big. Even though Phase 2 is in the building plan there is no specific timeline for construction. Not philosophically against vacating streets, feel same as alley vacations.

Keep: Different than alley vacation, not a shifting of tax revenue, not putting anything on tax rolls. Two wild cards as I see it. Don't know what would do to housing valuations, don't know where snow is going to go which was Wisbrock's concern, looking at usability of street.

Blomgren: Could put a sunset on it – 5, 10 years.

Craig VerSteegh (chair of the church building committee): Willing to address issues the neighbors brought up – view from neighbors’ properties, parking on Street. There is screening that will be put there. Tax base – taxpaying citizens go to our church. Apologize for trash around youth house, will address this matter.

Jensen asked VerSteegh if ok with recommendation with contingency? VerSteegh: Yes, if contingency is for 10 years. Church expansion is economic growth.

Tarbell asked VerSteegh if the church was reconsidering any of the requests that were withdrawn. VerSteegh: Will wait and see what happens here.

Campbell: Church could go find a field somewhere and build, walk away from current site and build outside of the city. Hate to see properties abandoned. Believes with sunset he would be in favor of vacation of the street.

Jensen: Would like to amend my motion to have contingency with building permit pulled within 10 years. Keep seconded the amendment to the motion. Jensen called for the question.

The motion on the floor is to vacate and sell Avenue East between South Street and South Street to the Central Reformed Church located at 815 Avenue East contingent upon the provision that a site plan be submitted and a building permit obtained within the next 10 years and until that time the street will remain a city street. The vote was: YES – Blomgren, Campbell, Jensen, Keep, Tarbell and Wagner. No – none. Motion carried.

It was moved by Wagner, seconded by Campbell that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Minutes by Marilyn Johannes