ALTOONA PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
April 29th, 2025
Altoona City Hall

Members Present in Person: Jill Pudenz, Scott Henry, Michelle Sloan, Steve Chase
Members Present Virtually: Steve Moyna
Members Absent: Dan Narber, Erin Herbold-Swalwell
Staff: Claire Habel, Justin Peterson, John Shaw
Guests: Meeting was held in-person with a virtual Zoom option; In-person and online guests included Dorrance Brezina, Korey Marsh, Sam Bishop, Shannon Husse, Grant Polley, William J. Ludwig, Brittany Luchini, Arley Breese, Susan Breese, Loren Steenhoek, Nick Lause, Amanda Lindstrom, Randy J, and CQ.

Chairman Scott Henry called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call. Roll call was taken. Five commissioners were present at roll call.

2. Perfecting and approval of the agenda.

Motion by Sloan, second by Chase.

Votes: Yes – Sloan, Chase, Pudenz, Henry, Moyna No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

3. Public hearing to consider the rezoning of land generally bound by NE 62nd Avenue on the south, Union Pacific Railroad to the northwest, NE 70th Avenue on the north and NE 46th Street on the east from A-1 (Agricultural District) to Conditional M-1 (Limited Industrial).

Sam Bishop (Tract) presented the request and pulled up a PowerPoint created by himself. He introduced those with him, Grant Polley of Tract, and Shannon Husse of Denton's. They will be available for questions when the public hearing opens. Bishop stated that Tract is run out of Denver but work all over the country, they are experts in data centers and work on acquiring land, due diligence, and development of data center sites. The area that they are under contract to purchase is in the northwest section of Altoona, bound by Union Pacific Railway, NE 62nd Avenue, NE 70th Avenue. They are looking to rezone a portion of this area from A-1 (Agricultural District) to conditional M-1 (Limited Industrial) that would restrict certain uses. Bishop displayed the most recent comprehensive plan of the area, stated that the area that they are looking at is consistent with the M-1 use. He pointed out that a road network was identified in the comprehensive plan, they are planning to honor that from the comprehensive plan. Along the eastern portion of the property is a green space designation, they are not looking to rezone that portion so that they can be consistent with the comprehensive plan and not alter the existing green space. In consultation with staff, they feel that there are certain uses that should be restricted from the land, the uses that they would restrict could be considered nuisances by noise, smell, look, etc. Anything to do with food manufacturing or auto maintenance would not be allowed. Rail access would also not be allowed on the site. Bishop presented a conceptual site plan, the concept shows that M-1 bulk regulations can be met on site and that they took natural site features into account. Bishop spoke of the public infrastructure that would be put in at the time of the development of the site (water main loop, paving of NE 70th etc.).

Pudenz asked if there was any sort of timeline for the project. Bishop stated that they are still working with the City through infrastructure improvements and any additional due diligence, but they would like to start the next steps as soon as possible. Shaw added that other than the rezoning, Tract will need to plat out the buildable lots as well as get site plan approval. He also added that due to the size of the

project, the City will require two means of access for emergency services, this may be private, like in the Meta campus, or public.
Henry opened the public hearing to those online and in person. Loren Steenhoek addressed the commission at the podium. Steenhoek owns land just south of NE 62nd Avenue and the project area, he stated that he is here in support of the rezoning application. Steenhoek feels that the M-1 zone is less of a nuisance than 150 houses across the street would be. The M-1 zone allows for peace and quiet on his property. Steenhoek stated that he intends to keep his land and would like to be annexed to Altoona after this project is completed. What he wants to do on his property is not allowed by Polk County, he would like to be annexed and zoned M-1. Steenhoek added that he would be disappointed if a bunch of houses went in across from him, he stated that he would give his phone number to John Shaw.

Dorrance Brezina addressed the commission at the podium, he would like to see this project move forward as fast as possible as time is of the essence.

Amanda Lindstrom stated that she had a question, she was unsure what the dashed line surrounding the rezoning area was, as it went into her property. Shaw stated that the line was a 200' buffer from the rezoning area, Iowa law requires all properties within 200' to be notified by mail of a public hearing, we notified outside of the 200' as well. Lindstrom asked to confirm that no part of her property will be rezoned, Shaw stated that that is correct, her land will stay A-1.

Henry closed the public hearing. He asked the other commissioners if they had questions for staff or Sam, or a motion. Shaw wanted to add that this request is a conditional rezoning, the heavier light industrial uses or uses that allow for outdoor storage have been excluded from the M-1 uses that are generally allowed. City Council will go through the same process and review the excluded uses prior to a vote.

Motion by Pudenz, seconded by Moyna, for recommendation of a rezoning request as presented.

Votes: Yes – Pudenz, Moyna, Sloan, Chase, Henry. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

4. Consideration and recommendation of a site plan for the DMWW booster station generally located on the west side of 34th Ave NW and north of I-80.

Brittany Luchini (Veenstra and Kimm) presented, there is an existing booster station on the Meta site which is owned by Des Moines Water Works, it is old and needs to be replaced. A larger booster station is proposed, the intent of the look of the building is to match the existing Meta buildings. They have also worked with staff to ensure that there is some screening and beautification provided through landscaping.

Henry asked why the booster station is for Des Moines Water Works if Altoona has their own water. Shaw answered, this is a transmission line that plugs into the northern portion of the Des Moines Water Works service area. The water stops at the booster station then continues on its way north.

Motion by Chase, seconded by Sloan, for a recommendation of a site plan for a Des Moines Water Works booster station.

Votes: Yes – Chase, Sloan, Pudenz, Moyna, Henry. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

5. Consideration and recommendation of a Preliminary Plat for LPL Plat 2 generally located at the southeast corner of 1st Ave S and Edwin W. Skinner Pkwy SE.

Korey Marsh (Snyder and Associates) presented, the applicant wishes to take a 7.78 acre outlot and subdivide it into four buildable lots. The proposal fits the current comprehensive plan, it is currently zoned as C-2 commercial. Access for the site will be from a private drive north of Altoona Smiles, that goes to 1st Ave S and Edwin W Skinner PKWY. The drive and utilities will be private, water will be pulled off of 1st Avenue.

Pudenz asked if the drive coming down from Edwin W Skinner would line up with the stop sign across the street. Marsh affirmed.

Shaw added that like the lots across 1st Ave, this area was conditionally zoned so there are some restrictions placed on the lots in regard to visual design that incorporates residential design elements.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Sloan, for recommendation of a preliminary plat for LPL Plat 2.

Votes: Yes – Henry, Sloan, Pudenz, Chase, Moyna. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

6. Consideration and recommendation of a Final Plat for LPL Plat 2 generally located at the southeast corner of 1st Ave S and Edwin W. Skinner Pkwy SE.

Henry asked if Marsh had anything to add. Marsh stated that he has nothing additional to present. Pudenz asked if the conditions of zoning are still applicable, Shaw affirmed.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Sloan, for recommendation of a final plat for LPL Plat 2.

Votes: Yes – Henry, Sloan, Pudenz, Chase, Moyna. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

7. Minutes of the March 25th, 2025 meeting.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Pudenz, to approve the minutes from the March 25th, 2025 meeting.

Votes: Yes – Henry, Pudenz Sloan, Chase, Moyna. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

8. Next regular meeting Wednesday, May 28th, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Old/New Business

Shaw told the commission that a request for proposals is being drafted for the Olde Town area and 1st Avenue North comprehensive plan amendment. This would focus on redevelopment, business retention, and business attraction. The annexation to the east has been put on hold for the time being as the Council wishes to hold off on it until the state legislature has made a decision.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Sloan, to adjourn at 7:12 p.m.

Votes: Yes – Henry, Pudenz Sloan, Chase, Moyna. No – None. Abstain – None. Motion approved, 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Habel
City Planner