

MINUTES
December 1, 2015 – 5:30 p.m.
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Muscatine City Hall
City Council Chambers

Present: Allen Harvey, Larry Wolf, and Jodi Hansen.

Absent: Rochelle Conway and Seth Munier

Staff: Andrew Fangman, City Planner, Community Development
Stephanie Oien, Office Coordinator, Community Development

Chairperson Allen Harvey opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and read the Mission Statement.

Minutes: Wolf motioned to approve minutes for the September 1 and October 6, 2015, meetings; seconded by Hansen. All ayes, motion carried.

Conditional Use Case No. 274, filed by Pete Schwiegeraht for Harrison Street Lofts, to construct a 3-story multi-family (workforce housing) building, on the corner of Harrison Street and Bandag Road (Parcel #0825276036). A conditional use is required for residential use on the first floor in the C-1 Zoning District per City Code Section 10-11-2(l).

Peter Schwiegeraht of Miller Valentine Group was present to discuss the request. Mr. Schwiegeraht noted that the company has been a developer for more than 50 years and have been operating in Iowa for six years. He advised that they are long term owners of the assets. They propose a building with approximately 55 units with a mix of 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units. All units will include laundry, two bathrooms, and have open floor plans. They will have full-time on-site management. The buildings will be built to green building standards. All units will be handicap accessible. Mr. Schwiegeraht explained that they were submitting a funding application to the Iowa Finance Authority for \$10 million. The housing credits available are for housing units only. The credits will not apply if there is any commercial use at the property. Additionally, they do not believe the space to be marketable for retail on the first floor being located so close to the mall. He advised that his company had presented the project informally to City Council and received support. After meeting with ZBA they will have a full presentation to City Council for review and support. City Council support is needed for the funding application. Harvey asked if the color representation shown at the meeting would be the same as what is to be built. Mr. Schwiegeraht indicated that it will be very similar to the photos of the unit in Newton. He indicated that the front of the building will face Harrison Street. One wing of the building will face Harrison and another will face the school with parking in the rear. Wolf asked for clarification of the workforce housing designation. Schwiegeraht explained that it represents families in general. He added that income criteria is a factor for qualifying to rent one of the units. The target is moderate income with a bandwidth of \$20,000-47,000. With the tax credits they will be able to provide somewhat discounted rental fees. Hansen asked if there were any statistics available for viability. Schwiegeraht stated that a market study had been conducted but he just received the report and would like to verify the findings before sharing. He added that early indicators show that there is a huge demand for housing in Muscatine and no tax credits have been issued in Muscatine for more than 10 years. Approximately 900 households in the area would qualify for their housing type with only 70-90 units now available. Harvey asked if it was possible more housing units could be needed. Schwiegeraht replied that the hope is to get this project built and obtain funding to come back with senior housing units. Harvey questioned if they have existing multi-family units in other towns. Schwiegeraht noted that there were and that there was a smaller unit in Newton. Hansen asked if the existing buildings are well-maintained. Schwiegeraht stated that there is no third party management. They are responsible for their own property management and maintenance. They believe this protects their properties and reputation. Harvey followed up by asking if they build the units themselves. Schwiegeraht explained that they will act as the general contractor only. The project will be bid locally. Fangman advised that staff strongly supports this proposal. He added that it fits a need and the location is good. Wolf motioned to approve the request; second by Hansen. All ayes, motioned carried.

Adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Fangman, Secretary
City Planner

ATTEST:

Allen Harvey, Chairperson
Zoning Board of Adjustment