



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

City Hall - 215 Sycamore St
Muscatine, IA 52761-3840
(563) 262-4141
Fax (563) 262-4142

Planning • Zoning • Building Safety • Construction Inspection Services • Public Health • Housing Inspections • Code Enforcement

To: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Andrew Fangman, Assistant Community Development Director
Date: September 15, 2020
Re: Rezoning Case #PZZ-13 • City of Muscatine • 304 Iowa Avenue (Former Musser Public Library) • R-5 Multi-Family Residence to C-2 Central Commercial

INTRODUCTION The City of Muscatine has submitted a request to rezone 17,080 square feet located at the 304 Iowa Avenue (former location of the Musser Public Library at the northwest corner of Iowa Avenue and Third Street), from R-5 Multi-Family Residence to C-2 Central Commercial.

BACKGROUND: This summer the Stanley Center for Peace and Security (formerly the Stanley Foundation), an endowed, private operating foundation funded by the long-term investment of its founders, Max and Betty Stanley, and the Stanley family, determined that the former Musser Public Library would make ideal location, after significant renovation, to become the Center's permanent headquarters. The Stanley Center currently operates out of leased spaced at Laurel Building in downtown Muscatine. The Center is anticipating investing more than \$6 million in renovation of the old library, which upon completion of the renovation, be occupied by a staff of 24. The Stanley Center have also set a goal of this renovation creating Iowa's first fully-certified Living Building. Living Building certification is the world's most rigorous proven-performance standard for buildings. To achieve certification, Living Buildings must connect occupants to light, air, food, nature, and community, be self-sufficient and remain within the resource limits of their site, and create a positive impact on the human and natural systems that interact with them. The renovated structure would also include space dedicated to the center's educational programming in Muscatine. Construction is targeted to begin in the spring of 2021, and for the renovation to be completed in the spring of 2022.

City Staff has negotiated with the Stanley Center, the attached purchase agreement for the old library, which sets a purchase price of \$120,000. The proposed sale would close no later than October 22, 2020. Closing is contingent on the successful rezoning of the property from R-5 Multi-Family Residential, to C-2 Downtown Commercial, and completion by the Stanley Center of structural and environmental due diligence on the property.

The City of Muscatine has operated a library on site from 1901 to 2018, when the Musser Public Library moved to its current location on 2nd Street. The existing building at 304 Iowa Avenue, was built in phases in 1965 and 1972, and replaced the original Musser Public Library which was constructed, on the same site at the intersection of Iowa Avenue and 3rd Street, in 1901. When the City of Muscatine adopted its first zoning ordinance, this entire block was zoned as B-2 Business, a zoning district which it equivalent to the existing C-2 zoning district. Under this zoning the library was compliant with all zoning requirements, permitted use, setbacks, required parking, etc. In 1974 the City adopted a comprehensive rewrite of the zoning ordinance. A new zoning district map adopted as part of this rewrite placed this block in the R-5 District. With this rezoning the library became a legal non-conforming use, as a library is not allowed use within the R-5 district, and the existing structure does not meet required setbacks

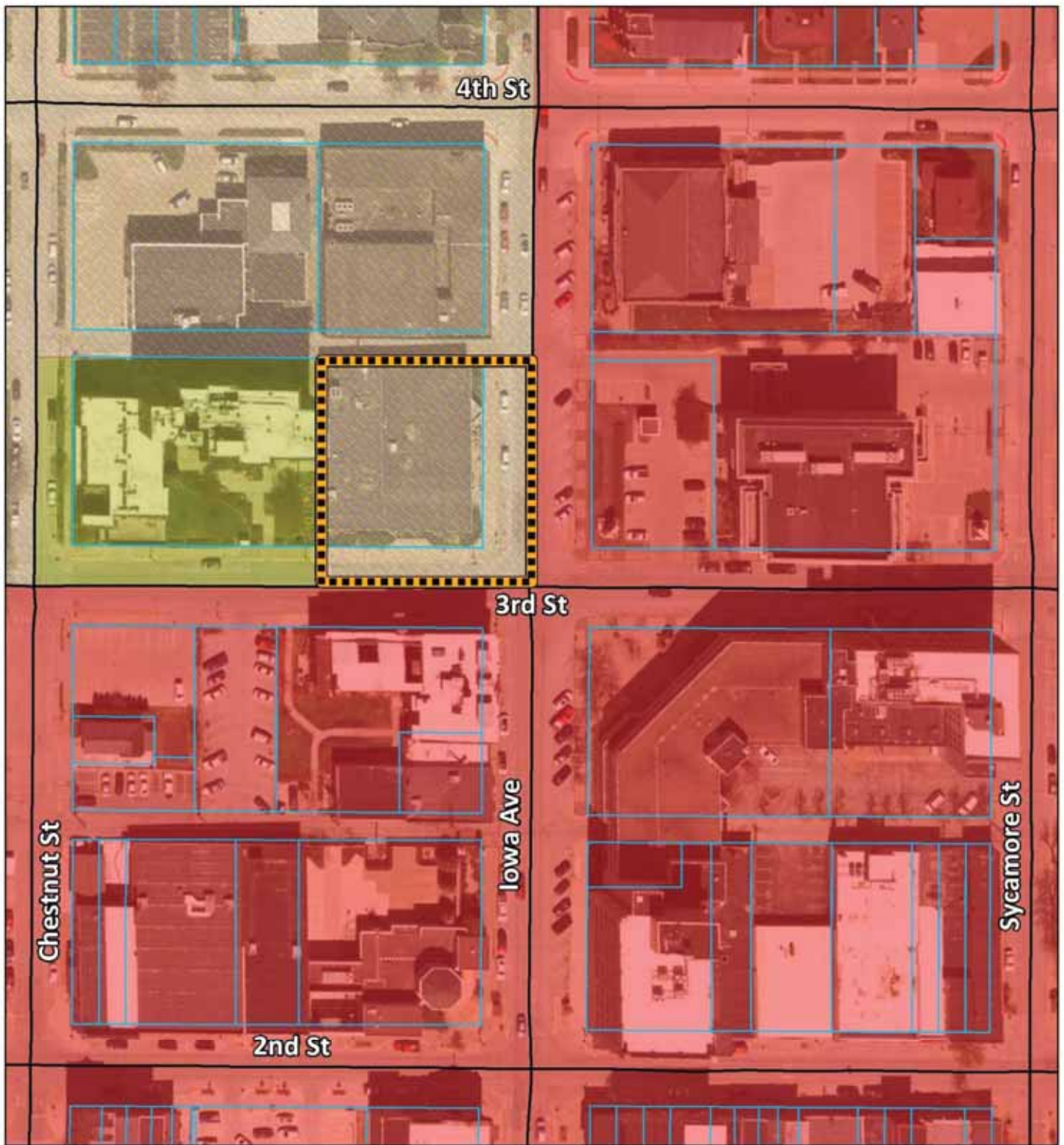
for the R-5 district, nor is there any off-street parking, something which every permitted use in R-5 district requires.

RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE:

Staff recommends approval of this rezoning request. The recommendation of approval is based on a finding that the proposed rezoning is supported by the adopted Comprehensive Plan, and compatibility with adjoining and nearby land uses. The office use being proposed by the Stanley Center is very much in harmony with surrounding land uses. Two of the other three buildings located at the intersection of Iowa Avenue and 3rd Street are being used for office purposes. The size and placement of the current building, a multi-story building that occupies nearly all of the parcel, leaving no room for off-street parking is consistent with both what is allowed and found in the adjoining areas zoned as C-2.

This rezoning request is also rational as the current building can not be used for any purpose without demolishing at least part of the existing structure or obtaining a variance from the requirement in the R-5 district for all uses to provide off-street parking.

The Stanley Center's renovation of this building would represent a major investment in downtown Muscatine, this investment and keeping the Stanley Center's staff located in downtown Muscatine; are both important steps in ongoing effort to build an even more vibrant downtown.



Area Proposed for Rezoning to C-2



Parcel Lines

Current Zoning Districts



S-1 Special Development



C-2 Central Commercial



P.E. Multi-Family Residence



MUSCATINE

Rezoning Case #PZZ-13

Date Source: Muscatine Area Geographic Information Consortium, City of Muscatine
Prepared by: Andrew Fangman,
Assistant Community Development Director

0 50 100 200 Feet

