

March 19, 2015

**Proceedings of the Zoning Commission of University Heights, Iowa, held at the City Office, 1004 Melrose Avenue, subject to approval by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. ALL VOTES ARE UNANIMOUS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.**

Chairperson Yeggy called the March 19, 2015, meeting of the University Heights Zoning Commission to order at 7:12 p.m.

**Present:** Zoning Commission Members: Alice Haugen, Larry Wilson, Stepheny Gahn, and Pat Yeggy. Staff: Attorney Steve Ballard. Also present: Dotti Maher and Silvia Quezada.

Approval of the minutes from the March 9 and March 16, 2015, meetings was deferred.

**Public Input:** none.

**The Commission's water runoff and sensitive slopes regulation discussion continued from the March 16, 2015, meeting.**

Yeggy and Gahn reported that the Cities of Iowa City and Coralville are updating sensitive slopes ordinances and regulations.

- Coralville has no sensitive slopes ordinance.
- Coralville's water runoff ordinance applies if proposed construction involves installation or placement of 5,500sqft of impervious material (roofs, concrete, etc.).
- City of Windsor Heights regulations discussed at the last meeting only apply to commercial properties.

Wilson spoke with Josh Busard with Johnson County and summarized the discussion.

- Many County development regulations apply only to commercial property and residential subdivisions.
- "Subdivision" is defined as 3 or more lots.
- Johnson County has 4 maps showing sensitive areas
  - steep slopes
  - unstable soils
  - national wetlands inventory
  - hydric soils
- Johnson County's focus is on larger tracts of land being subdivided.
- Johnson County requires developer to show that no areas proposed for development are "sensitive".
- County ordinances and regulations apply only to areas in unincorporated areas of the county – not areas in Cities.
- All of the "sensitive" areas may be mitigated
  - If specified conditions are met, the "sensitive" areas may be developed or partially so
  - Even "protected" slopes, etc.
- Regulations don't apply to already platted residential property.
- Proponent must show that there are no "sensitive" areas or that acceptable mitigation will be included.
- Showing must be made at time of building permit.
- Proponent bears the expense of identifying and pointing out "sensitive" areas.
- Josh suggested focusing on erosion control as part of sensitive areas discussion.

Yeggy and Gahn spoke with Rick Havel with Johnson County GIS and summarized the discussion.

- Rick will provide a map or maps showing
  - Different slopes
  - Soil types, particularly if deemed critical
  - Contour lines
- Map may be interactive.
- Commission may need to wait for mapping and discussion on mapping to complete work on definitions.
  - Need to see what slopes exist.
  - Need to see what soil types exist.

The Commission discussed possible building permit additions.

- Check-the-box section requiring applicant to identify sensitive areas.
- Clarify that burden would be on proponent to identify areas and show how development would comply with protections and restrictions.

The Commission continued its discussion on buffer area.

- Wilson said 50' was too large for how much City property is already developed and how close together City lots are.
  - Largest frontage lots are 100'.
  - Some are 50'.
- Perhaps up to 20' would be more reasonable.
- Gahn said that 50' does not seem that large.
- Commission may need input from professionals with respect to necessary dimensions of sufficient buffer.
- Discussion of how present and possible revisions to sensitive areas ordinance may impact St. Andrew proposed development and how existing ordinance applied to prior construction.
- Other treatment of "buffer" - Iowa City Ordinance (14-5I-8 (and that's an "I - eye", not a "1 - one")):
  - Required around "protected" slopes
  - 2' buffer for each 1' of vertical rise up to max of 50'
  - No development allowed within the buffer
  - If geologist satisfies Council that development won't be harmful, then some development may be allowed (see Iowa City Ordinance)

GIS blue-line streams

- Streams generally run directly to a river.
- Not sure whether there are any such in University Heights.
- Buffer strips generally are required along blue-line stream.
- Iowa City – any property located within a stream corridor shall not be developed for any purpose.

Implementation procedures and requirements

- Who inspects
- What's the process
- To the extent Council has authority or responsibility to consider plans and/or requests for mitigation/exception, what are the criteria to apply

Engineer/Erosion/Sensitive Areas consultant

- The Commission discussed various possible consultants who might assist in this discussion
  - MPO-JC
  - City Engineer's office
  - Iowa League of Cities
  - Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation
- Submit questions to Gahn for inquiry to engineer for response by April 7 meeting

**Further Public Input:** none.

The meeting was adjourned **by unanimous consent at 8:53 p.m.**

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**Attest: Steven E. Ballard, City Attorney**  
**(substituting for City Clerk)**

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**Approved: Pat Yeggy, Chairperson**