

OATH OF OFFICE

Deputy Clerk Etzel administered the Oath of Office to commissioners: Shannon Sand and Craig Cihlar. Their terms will be for three years and will expire on December 31, 2022.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Werman called the regular meeting of the City of Rockford Planning and Zoning Commission to order on at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 6031 Main Street, Rockford, MN.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken and the following members were present: Werman, Petersen-Biorn, Cihlar, Morter and Sand. The following members were absent: none. Also in attendance was Planner Dan Licht, Council Member Debbie Buoy and Deputy Clerk Etzel.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2020

MOTION was made by Petersen-Biorn, seconded by Sand to elect Mike Werman as Chairperson of the Planning and Zoning Commission for 2020.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

MOTION was made by Sand, seconded by Werman to elect Wendy Peterson-Biorn as Vice Chairperson of the Planning and Zoning Commission for 2020.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

PUBLIC HEARING – Conditional Use Permit for ISD 883 for a Greenhouse at Ash Street and Bridge Street

Planner Licht stated ISD 883 Rockford Public Schools owns the vacant lot at the southeast corner of Ash Street and Bridge Street across from Rockford Middle School. The School District is proposing to construct a 1,440 square foot greenhouse on the property as for educational purposes as part of the Middle School curriculum. Construction of the greenhouse requires a conditional use permit. There are existing planting beds at the north corner of the lot. A public hearing to consider the application has been noticed for the Planning Commission meeting on 25 June 2020.

Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan guides the lot for low density residential uses as part of the Original Rockford Plat. School facilities are considered to be necessary and an incidental use complementary to neighborhood development. The proposed greenhouse as a school facility is consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning. The subject site is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential District. School facilities are allowed in the R-1 District as a conditional use subject to the performance standards established by Section 1001.12, Subd. 5.E of the Zoning Ordinance:

1. *Side yards shall be double that required for the district.*

2. *Adequate screening from abutting residential uses and landscaping is provided in compliance with Section 1001.09 of this Chapter.*
3. *Adequate off-street parking and access is provided on the site in compliance with section 1001.05 of this Chapter and that such parking is adequately screened and landscaped from surrounding and abutting residential uses in compliance with Section 1001.09 of this Chapter.*
4. *Adequate off-street loading and service entrances are provided and regulated where applicable by Section 1001.05 of this Chapter.*

Surrounding Uses. The subject site abuts Ash Street and Bridge Street, with the Rockford Middle School and an off-street parking lot across each respective street. There is an existing single family dwelling adjacent to southwest lot line of the subject site. An ally separates the subject site from the rear yards of existing single family dwellings to the southeast of the subject site. With existing vegetation along the southwest lot line and a fence and the alley along the southeast lot line separating the proposed greenhouse building from adjacent residential uses, no compatibility issues are foreseen.

Building. The proposed greenhouse is constructed with polycarbonate light transmitting wall and roof panels over a structural frame. The proposed materials are appropriate for the structure to be used as an education facility. The proposed building is 14 feet in height as defined by the Zoning Ordinance, with 10 foot sidewalls and 18 feet to the peak of the roof, which is within the 35 feet allowed for principal buildings within the R-1 District.

Setbacks. The table below outlines the setbacks required by Section 1001.12, Subd.6.B of the Zoning Ordinance for the R-1 District and the proposed setbacks for the greenhouse building as shown on the site plan. The site plan must be revised such that the proposed building meets the required 50 foot setback from Ash Street. This may require rotating the building 90 degrees within the site plan

	Ash St.	Bridge St.	SE	SW
Required	50ft.	50ft.	50ft.	50ft.
Proposed	24ft.	100ft.	85ft.	86ft.

Access. The subject site abuts Ash Street, Bridge Street, and a public alley along the southeast lot line. No vehicle access to greenhouse or lot is shown on the site plan. There is a paved walkway from the greenhouse entrance to Ash Street. The proposed pedestrian access would have pedestrians crossing Ash Street at a mid-block point. There is an existing pedestrian cross walk from the ISD 883 parking lot to the Middle School at the northeast quadrant of the Ash Street and Bridge Street intersection. We recommend that ISD 883 construct a 5 foot wide concrete sidewalk from the paved walkway to the greenhouse at the property line to the Ash Street and Bridge Street intersection, install a ADA pedestrian ramp, and paint a crosswalk over Bridge Street to the corner of the ISD 883 parking lot to provide a connection to the existing crosswalk accessing the Middle School.

Off-Street Parking. Although the greenhouse will be the principal structure within the subject site, it functions as an accessory structure to the Middle School. The Middle School has adequate existing off-street parking, including the parking lot across Bridge Street from the

subject site, so no additional off-street parking stalls are to be required for the proposed greenhouse.

Exterior Lighting. The submitted information does not detail any exterior lighting to be installed. Any exterior lighting is required to have a 90 degree horizontal cut-off fixture so as to not cast light towards the public streets or adjacent properties. Any exterior lighting is to be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator at the time of application for a building permit

Waste Storage. The ISD 883 narrative describes that any waste will be handled by contracted vendors. Exterior storage of any trash, recycling, or other waste requires an enclosure to secure the containers and screen them from view of public streets and adjacent properties. Exterior waste storage, including the design and construction of an enclosure, is to be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator at the time of application for a building permit.

Utilities. No utility plan has been submitted for connection to sewer or water utilities. All utility issues are to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director at the time of application for a building permit.

Grading. The site plan illustrates the existing contours of the subject site. Any grading of the subject site for the proposed greenhouse building is to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director at the time of application for a building permit.

Planner Licht noted the proposed greenhouse building to be constructed on Lots 6, Block 20 Rockford Original Town Plat is consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, compatible with surrounding land uses, and complies with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Our office recommends approval of the requested conditional use permit as set forth on the draft resolution without conditions.

Chair Werman opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

No one from the public spoke.

Chair Werman closed the public hearing at 7:11 p.m.

The Planning Commission asked about reflection, the building will be far enough away not to be any issues for the surrounding property. There was a question about lighting, the school will be using natural lighting at this time. Fans will be powered by a generator and on for ventilation when the students are on-site, otherwise they will not be operating. The glass is designed not to easily breakable, and if a panel does get damaged, they just slide out for replacement. The floor will be gravel, allowing drainage to the ground.

The greenhouse is designed to be a working space for the students and would be used for 9th grade biology. Items grown will be researched by the students as it is a working space for the students. At this time, no items will be sold; may consider in the future.

City staff were concerned about a water connection to the property. Chris Rear with ICA stated there is no need for a water utility at this time, as the school plans to transporting water from the middle school for the few month the greenhouse is used. Jim Leuer, Director of the school

grounds stated a water utility would be financial impact. The school staff will use a 500 gallon tank to supply the water to the site. There was discussion about getting rain barrels. Bobbi Anderson-Hume, Rockford Middle School Principal, added this is all about education. With the STEM program they will be looking at alternative energy. There was some discussion about possible solar panels in the future.

The direction the building faces and access to match up with the crosswalk were part of the conversation. The proposed lay-out has the gable ends face the road. It was suggested to put the building at an angle, they are working on the setbacks and lay-out. There is currently no sidewalk where the greenhouse is proposed.

The Planning Commission discussed and agreed with the Planner’s recommendation with the following conditions:

1. The greenhouse shall comply with the following setbacks required by Section 1001.12, Subd.6.B of the Zoning Ordinance for the R-1 District:

Ash St.	Bridge St.	SE	SW
50ft.	50ft.	50ft.	50ft.

2. ISD 883 shall construct a 5 foot wide concrete sidewalk within the Ash Street public right-of-way from the paved walkway to the greenhouse at the property line to Bridge Street, install an ADA pedestrian ramp, and paint a crosswalk over Bridge Street, subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director.
3. Any exterior lighting is to be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator at the time of application for a building permit
4. Exterior waste storage, including the design and construction of an enclosure, is to be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator at the time of application for a building permit.
5. All utility issues are to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director at the time of application for a building permit.
6. Any grading of the subject site for the proposed greenhouse building is to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director at the time of application for a building permit.
7. Water for the proposed greenhouse shall be provided via connection to City utilities or use of a storage tank installed, maintained, and operated by ISD 883 staff.
8. The addition of grow lights or fans to be used between the hours of 10PM to 7:00AM or installation of solar panels other than mounted on the structure shall be subject to approval of a conditional use permit amendment.

MOTION was made by Werman, seconded by Cihlar to recommend approval of the proposed conditional use permit with the eight conditions as discussed.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

The recommendation from the Planning Commission will be submitted to the City Council at their upcoming July 14, 2020 regular meeting for final approval or denial.

SET AGENDA AND APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

MOTION was made by Sand, seconded by Petersen-Biorn to set the agenda and accept the December 12, 2019 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

OPEN FORUM

Chair Werman called for open forum, no one from the public spoke.

NEW BUSINESS

Site Plan Review for 8910 Autumn Oaks Drive

Planner Licht explained that Mr. John Ritten has submitted plans for development of the vacant lot located at 8910 Autumn Oaks Drive with a 8,730 square foot building. The building is to be occupied by Custom Design Wood Products, Inc., which builds bespoke cabinetry and other woodworks.

Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan guides the subject site for commercial uses. The proposed business is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in terms of creating employment opportunities and expanding tax base within Rockford.

Zoning. The subject site is zoned C-3 District. The proposed use is allowable within the C-3 District as a permitted use.

Surrounding Uses. The table below summarizes existing and planned land uses surrounding the subject site. The commercial buildings situated along Autumn Oaks Drive are quasi-industrial type businesses that the proposed use is consistent with in character.

Direction	Land Use	Zoning	Existing Use
North	--	--	TH 55
East	Commercial	C-3 District	Single Family
South	Commercial	C-3 District	Nordstrom Metal
West	Commercial	Rockford Twp.	Single Family

Setbacks. Section 1001.19, Subd. 6.B of the Zoning Ordinance requires the proposed building to comply with the following setback requirements. The proposed building complies with the setback requirements of the C-3 District.

	TH 55	Autumn Oaks Drive	South	West
Required	35ft.	35ft.	15ft.	25ft.
Proposed	38ft.	67ft.	16ft.	34ft.

Building Coverage. Section 1001.19, Subd. 7.A of the Zoning Ordinance limits lot coverage by structures to not more than 35 percent of the lot area. The proposed 8,730 square foot building will cover 25.8 percent of the lot area. Building coverage complies with the provisions of the C-3 District.

Building Height. The proposed building is to be a 1 story building. Section 1001.19, Subd. 7.B of the Zoning Ordinance allows buildings within the C-3 District to be 35 feet in height. The 1 story design of the proposed building is less than 35 feet in height and complies with the height limits of the C-3 District.

Exterior Finish. Section 1001.09, Subd. 12.B.2 of the Zoning Ordinance requires the exterior finish of the proposed building to use masonry exterior materials. Exterior materials are not specified. The other commercial buildings in the area utilize primarily metal exterior finish materials, which would be appropriate to incorporate into the proposed building. Use of materials other than masonry exterior finishes will require approval of a conditional use permit in accordance with Section 1001.09, Subd. 12.C of the Zoning Ordinance.

Landscaping. No landscaping plan has been submitted as required by Section 1001.09, Subd.3.B of the Zoning Ordinance for the perimeter of the structure and perimeter of the lot. A landscape plan must be submitted and we recommend planting shade trees at 50 feet on center along the north and east property lines. All areas not taken up by the proposed building and parking/drive aisles must be surfaced with turf grass.

Access. The subject site is proposed to have 1 access to Autumn Oaks Drive. The proposed access is setback 60 feet from the north property line at TH 55 as required by Section 1001.05, Subd. 4.H.5 of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed access is 24 feet wide, which complies with Section 1001.05, Subd. 4.H.7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Off-Street Parking. The site plan illustrates 6 off-street parking stalls, including 1 stall that is ADA van accessible. The off-street parking area and drive aisles have perimeter concrete curb and surfaced with an unspecified material as required by Sections 1001.05, Subd. 4.H.12 and 15 of the Zoning Ordinance. The surface specifications for the off-street parking area are to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer.

Section 1001.05, Subd. 4.H.15 of the Zoning Ordinance requires off-street parking stalls and drive aisles to be setback a minimum of 5 feet of side or rear lot lines. The proposed off-street parking area is setback only 2 feet from the south lot line. The site plan must be revised to comply with the minimum 5 foot setback or application for a variance filed.

Section 1001.05, Subd. 6.C of the Zoning Ordinance requires that off-street parking areas be setback a minimum of 15 feet from any street surface. The off-street parking area is setback 12 feet from the property line and 25 feet from the west side of Autumn Oaks Drive. The location of the off-street parking area complies with the setback requirements from TH 55 and Autumn Oaks Drive.

Section 1001.05, Subd. 9.AA of the Zoning Ordinance requires that 1 off-street parking stall be provided for each 500 square feet of net building area. Based on the 8,730 square foot area of the proposed building, 16 off-street parking stalls are required. The site plan must be revised to identify a location for 10 additional off-street parking stalls as proof-of-parking that may be constructed in the future based on a change in occupancy.

Exterior Lighting. No information has been provided regarding exterior lighting proposed for the subject site. Details regarding the location and type of exterior light fixtures must be submitted with application for a building permit. All exterior light fixtures must be cast down with a 90 degree horizontal cut off to prevent glare cast to public streets or adjacent properties. All exterior lighting is subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator.

Waste Storage. The submitted plans do not provide details for storage of trash and recycling storage. Waste must be stored within the principal building or an enclosure provided as required by Section 1001.09, Subd. 19.B of the Zoning Ordinance. The location, materials, and construction of an exterior waste storage enclosure would be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator.

Signs. No information has been submitted regarding signage to be installed as part of the site and building plans. Section 1001.08, Subd. 10.D of the Zoning Ordinance allows 1 free standing sign up to 120 square feet in area not to exceed 24 feet in height and 1 wall sign not exceeding 100 square feet in area on each elevation facing TH 55 and Autumn Oaks Drive for the subject site within the C-3 District. A sign permit is required by Section 1001.08, Subd. 3 of the Zoning Ordinance prior to placement of any sign upon the lot.

Utilities. Sewer and water utilities are located at the property within Autumn Oaks Drive. Connection to public utilities is to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director.

Grading. The submitted plans include basic information regarding proposed grades for the site plan. A detailed plan for stormwater management is required to be submitted for water quality, retention, and rate control. All grading, drainage, and erosion control issues are to be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director.

The Planner's office recommends approval of site and building plans for 8910 Autumn Oaks Drive subject to the following conditions:

1. The exterior finish for the proposed building shall comply with Section 1001.09, Subd. 12.B.2 of the Zoning Ordinance except as may be allowed by conditional use permit in accordance with Section 1001.09, Subd. 12.C of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. A landscape plan as required by Section 1001.09, Subd. 3.B of the Zoning Ordinance shall be submitted and is to be subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator.
3. The site plan shall be revised to provide a minimum 5 foot setback of the off-street parking drive aisle from the south lot line as required by Section 1001.05, Subd. 4.H.15 of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. The site plan shall be revised to illustrate 16 off-street parking stalls as proof-of-parking as required by Section 1001.05, Subd. 9.AA of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. The specifications for off-street parking area surfacing shall be subject to review and approval of the City Engineer.
6. All exterior light fixtures shall be cast down with a 90 degree horizontal cut off and is subject to review and approval of the Zoning Administrator.
7. Waste shall be stored within the principal building or an enclosure provided as required by Section 1001.09, Subd. 19.B of the Zoning Ordinance.
8. All signs shall comply with Section 1001.08 of the Zoning Ordinance and require a sign permit prior to placement upon the lot.
9. All utility plans are subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director.
10. All grading, drainage, and erosion control issues are subject to review and approval of the City Engineer and Public Works Director.

Mr. John Ritten stated there will be a small showroom. He plans to screen the trash containers. Parking will be 5' from lot line. He will request a variance for the retaining wall and a conditional use permit for a metal building.

The City Engineer would need to approve any additional driveway width.

MOTION was made by Petersen-Biorn, seconded by Sand to recommend approval of the proposed site plan review for 8910 Autumn Oaks Drive subjected the Planner's ten conditions and any further staff recommendations.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

The recommendation from the Planning Commission will be submitted to the City Council at their upcoming July 14, 2020 regular meeting for final approval or denial.

Staff Reports

Deputy Clerk Etzel's report included: July 9th meeting will be held if an application is received by July 1st, Residential New Construction for 2020 is currently 13 homes, Commissioners Sand and Cihlar was sworn in for a three year term, Kwik Trip plans to open for business on September 24th, the Council approved the Conditional Use Permit Unit Development to Allow Car Sales at 9000 Walnut Street at their December 23rd meeting, City Hall will be closed July 3rd for the 4th of July, Rockford River Days has been cancelled and Rocktoberfest is currently planned to take place Saturday, September 26, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN was made by Werman, seconded by Petersen-Biorn.

MOTION CARRIED – VOTING IN FAVOR – WERMAN, PETERSEN-BIORN, CIHLAR, MORTER, and SAND

Chair Werman adjourned the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Submitted by Audra Etzel, Deputy Clerk