

The Muscatine County Zoning Commission met in the Board of Supervisors Office on Friday, July 9, 2021, with Chairperson Tom Harper and board members Carol Schlueter and Brad Akers present, Virginia Cooper was absent. Eric S. Furnas, Planning, Zoning & Environmental Administrator and Dixie Seitz, Office Administrator were also in attendance.

Others present for this hearing: Stephen Parizek, Debora Parizek, Steve Shield and Chad Fulton.

Tom Harper: Okay, I will open this public hearing and I will read the mission statement. The Muscatine County Zoning Commission is a five member group of residents of the County who are appointed by the Muscatine County Board of Supervisors. We serve as non-professionals and without compensation. Our purpose is to advise the Muscatine County Board of Supervisors on managing the growth of the County. This involves reviewing subdivisions, rezoning requests, the use of public property, and reports related to land use policy and long range planning. Recognizing that our decisions will not satisfy everyone, we attempt to base our decisions on what is best for the long term interest of the County. We ask for your input, pro or con, on issues before us in order that we may formulate the best decisions possible. Please take this opportunity to share your thoughts and concerns with us. Our recommendations are not taken lightly by the Board of Supervisors, but the Board of Supervisors, your elected representatives, make the final decisions on all issues. We have four members present today, one member is absent. So if it's a tie vote, it would be a no vote. You have the option of asking us to table this request until next month when we may or may not have a full board. That's up to you. You would need to ask for it to be tabled prior to us taking the vote. Would you like to continue?

Stephen Parizek: Yes, we'll go ahead.

Tom Harper: Okay, Eric, would you please read the request?

Eric Furnas: Zoning Agenda Item #01. Stephen J. or Debora A. Parizek, Record Owners, request rezoning their property located in Wapsi Township in the NE¹/₄ of Sec. 14-T78N-R4W, 1240 Elder Avenue, containing approximately 9.94 acres from the present A-1 Agricultural District to the proposed R-1 Residential District.

Tom Harper: Would the spokesperson or owner please tell the board about your request?

Stephen Parizek: My name is Stephen Parizek and this is my wife Debora. The address is 1240 Elder Avenue. It's nine acres. We lived past it for quite a few years and every time we drove by it we thought, boy if that ever comes up for sale we'd sure like to have it. And sure enough, we did get it bought with the thought that sometime we'd like to build a house on it. Our son, he would also like to build a house down the road on it. I think the country club at some point... they're having problems with their sewer and they might request some of the ground for that, I guess it would be called an outlot. So down the road maybe we'd like to turn it into maybe five lots and sell a couple off. The people that live up the hill there, they'd like to buy a little bit so that they may build a shed. So that's why we are thinking about now. We are thinking about building one of those barndominiums or whatever.

Tom Harper: Was there any correspondence?

Eric Furnas: No sir.

Tom Harper: Okay, so this is a rezoning request only? There is not plat to look at?

Eric Furnas: Right, we are not reviewing any design or lot configuration at this time. They are just asking to have this property rezoned to residential.

Carol Schlueter: So if we do approve the rezoning, they can build one house on that lot, is that correct?

Eric Furnas: Well not in its current configuration because it already has one house on it now. It would need to be subdivided to build any additional houses. One way or the other, a subdivision plat will be back here before you ... before any additional development can happen. But that is their desire and this would be the first step in order to subdivide.

Carol Schlueter: So there is somebody living in that house?

Stephen Parizek: We are living in the house now.

Carol Schlueter: Oh, you live in it?

Debora Parizek: It's just a small one bedroom home.

Carol Schlueter: Okay.

Tom Harper: And the majority of the land surrounding this property is already zoned residential?

Eric Furnas: Yes. There is a zoning map in your packet that shows the surrounding properties and what they are zoned.

Martha Peterson: So at this point in time we don't need to know where lot one, two and three are?

Eric Furnas: Nope, because there are many options with different configurations. This is simple to determine whether or not we think that this ground is ideally suited for residential development, just generally speaking. And I can kind of speak to that when you are ready for me.

Tom Harper: Okay, so there are future plans but no engineering has been done yet.

Eric Furnas: Nope, this is just for the rezoning.

Carol Schlueter: So this ground here, what has it been used for in the past? Just one house for somebody to live on?

Stephen Parizek: Yes.

Carol Schlueter: And cut all of this grass or it's just like in weeds?

Stephen Parizek: Well actually they did have a guy come over and bale it so they didn't have to mow so much.

Carol Schlueter: Hay or something?

Stephen Parizek: Yeah.

Carol Schlueter: Okay, so on this map, there is like a triangle here and a triangle down here. Is that not going to get sold or what?

Martha Peterson: Well somebody else owns that.

Brad Akers: Are you talking about here?

Carol Schlueter: Yes.

Brad Akers: Well that is someone else's property and so is that. You are just dealing with the blue outline.

Carol Schlueter: Okay.

Eric Furnas: Yes, you are dealing with the blue outline and actually we have determined that he also owns that slight corner across the street. It's not outlined in blue because the county doesn't actually portray that quite properly on the parcel map. There was a road right-of-way easement and I had the county highway department look into it. They own a small triangle piece across Elder Avenue as well.

Carol Schlueter: So that goes with this?

Eric Furnas: Yes, it is with this rezoning request as well.

Carol Schlueter: So you can cut more grass over there?

Stephen Parizek: Well actually there is a little bit of timber over there. This actually has timber on two sides of it. In fact there were deer out there the other night looking around.

Tom Harper: Okay, is there anyone here in attendance that would like to make any comments concerning this request, either for or against? Okay, Eric would you give us your take on this?

Eric Furnas: Yeah I listed a few things on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in your packets. I think that it is good that anytime we consider rezoning something that we stipulate the reasons why you feel that it is ideal for that zoning. I do believe that this is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. It's adjacent to existing residential zoning, as the board has already noted. It's not considered prime farmland. There is not a stated CSR2 because of the small size of the parcel, however the Comprehensive Plan talks about maintaining or reserving economically viable sized ground. Well this is not really economically viable, even if it did have a high CSR2. You couldn't make a living off of this little piece of ground. There is access and frontage off of a hard surface road and there is an existing entrance. If he wanted to change that entrance or to add one, it would need to be approved by the County Engineer's Office first. These are all things that the Comprehensive Plan talks about in support of future residential development. So there's actually a couple of different options. There is an option to allow the property owner to use the existing driveway or he can ask for an entrance to go onto Elder Avenue from the County Engineer's Office. I would like to point out that the residential development is consistent with the land use development, particularly being on the west side of West Liberty. There is sewer and water in the vicinity, that's one of the things that is listed for future development. Obviously it is within two miles of the city limits of West Liberty, which is a plus. If the city water and sewer is not available for this proposed subdivision than we would look at the plat to make sure that the lot sizes are large enough, which means they have to be at least one acre each.

Tom Harper: Okay, are there any other comments, questions or discussion? Should I entertain a motion?

Eric Furnas: Let's close the public hearing first.

Tom Harper: Okay, is there a motion to close the public hearing?

Carol Schlueter: So moved.

Tom Harper: Is there a second to the motion to close the public hearing?

Martha Peterson: Second.

Tom Harper: A motion has been made to close the public hearing and it has been seconded. Is there any discussion? Not hearing any, all those in favor please say Aye (4) Opposed (0) Absent (Cooper). Okay, is there any further discussion or questions on this request? If not, is there a motion on the request?

Carol Schlueter: I will make a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to approve Mr. and Mrs. Stephan Parizek's request to rezone their property from the present A-1 Agricultural District to the proposed R-1 Residential District, along with all the recommendations from the Planning, Zoning & Environmental Administrator.

Tom Harper: Is there a second?

Brad Akers: I'll second it.

Tom Harper: A motion has been made and seconded that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of Mr. and Mrs. Parizek's, request to rezone their property from the existing A-1 Agricultural District to the proposed R-1 Residential District, due to the fact that it is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in this area. Is there any further discussion or questions? Not hearing any, all those in favor please say Aye (4) Opposed (0) Absent (Cooper). The request will now move onto the Board of Supervisors.

Stephen Parizek: Thank you.

MUSCATINE COUNTY ZONING COMMISSION

By Eric S. Furnas, Planning, Zoning & Environmental Administrator