

**Joint Plan Commission and Common Council  
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

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1 The Joint Meeting of the Plan Commission and the Common Council of the City of Onalaska  
2 was called to order at 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18, 2019. It was noted that the  
3 meeting had been announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Common Council – Acting Mayor  
6 Diane Wulf, Ald. Tom Smith, Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Kim Smith. Plan  
7 Commission – City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Jan Brock, Skip Temte, Jenny Akins, Steven Nott

8  
9 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, City Clerk Cari Burmaster, City Attorney  
10 Amanda Jackson, Planning Manager Katie Aspenson

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12 Excused Absence: Plan Commission – Craig Breitsprecher

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14 **Item 2 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual)**

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16 Ald. T. Smith called for anyone wishing to provide public input.

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18 **Julie McGarry**  
19 **1220 County Road PH**  
20 **Onalaska**

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22 “We were told there wouldn’t be any public input tonight. We were just coming to listen to the  
23 discussion. Maybe I misunderstood, but yes, we would have definitely had something to say.  
24 But if you look at the minutes of all the proceeding meetings, you can go back to 1981 and look  
25 at any of the minutes that have been put on file for dealing with rezoning our neighborhood – any  
26 of the parcels along PH, as well as along West PH. We would really appreciate it if you would  
27 dig into some of the history of that area, especially since 2001 when Mr. Bronston bought the  
28 area at the corner of [State Trunk Highway] 157 and PH. We worked very hard back then, and  
29 then again in 2018 about the type of zoning to go in there. We were able to compromise with  
30 Transitional Commercial with Conditional Use Permits. That way, there was some say over  
31 what could possibly go in there. Even in 2018, this is what occurred. We supported that. It’s  
32 not exactly what we wanted, but we did end up supporting it because it was reasonable and the  
33 rest of us were left as residential. What happens to that? I look on the map, and I see that the  
34 plan is to zone that area that Bronston has as – correct me if I’m wrong – Mixed Use-  
35 Community, which would allow him – not Mixed Use-Neighborhood, but Mixed-Use  
36 Community – many, many things that could go in there with no Conditional Use Permit. That  
37 includes a bar. You took the bar off of the Mixed Use-Neighborhood, but it’s still with Mixed  
38 Use-Community. A motel, a hotel – he could even put a parking ramp in there if he wanted to. I  
39 don’t think he has the room for it, but you understand. He has two vacant spots, and we would  
40 no longer have a say. This kind of caught me off-guard tonight; I just saw it on the map. Again,  
41 I’m just speaking from not preparing anything.”

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43 Cari informed Julie she had reached her three-minute speaking limit.

44

45 Julie said, “We really would appreciate any consideration you can give to what we have been  
46 saying.”

47

48 Ald. T. Smith told Julie the public input session is the standard template for every meeting.

49

50 **Roger Wagner**  
51 **486 Sycamore Street**  
52 **Onalaska**

53

54 “My wife and I have been residents there for over 35 years. This isn’t the first time, as Julie  
55 brought up, that we’ve been having discussions about PH. Part of me says when I bought the  
56 property, nobody ever told us that there was potential that you wanted to change that  
57 development. So as an \_\_\_\_\_ owner out there, I think a little bit of burden is on the city for not  
58 divulging what your intent was out there, and what your intent is now. I don’t quite understand  
59 where this intent is coming from because it’s zoned R-1, but we keep having battles about what’s  
60 going to happen out there. Part of me [asks], why? It’s zoned R-1. Leave it alone. But yet the  
61 City of Onalaska went against everybody’s wishes and allowed Leo Bronston in [and] allowed  
62 Olive Juice [Quilts] in. That went against our wishes. It’s like we have no voice, and we [ask],  
63 why not? It’s residential. You wouldn’t like me coming into your neighborhood and buying a  
64 house next to you and changing some things up around you, because you like your  
65 neighborhood. The same thing is for us. We want what we bought into out there: the  
66 neighborhood. It is a nice neighborhood, but yet there seems to be this consensus we want to  
67 change it up. The question is, why? The infrastructure out there can’t handle it. I almost got hit  
68 again tonight out there. The traffic is horrible.

69

70 Another thing [is] Olive Juice. They’re right at the end of our street. When they have big events  
71 going on, the patrons there start parking down Sycamore Street. It’s not one side, it’s both sides.  
72 I’ve called them up and complained, and nothing’s happened. My point would be if an  
73 emergency was occurring on our street, how does an ambulance, fire trucks, and policemen get  
74 into our area? If you’re not going to plan for it and you’re just going to have your way and  
75 change things up and we have to deal with it, I don’t think that’s right. That was never divulged  
76 that this was your intent. That’s probably why you’re meeting a fair amount of resistance,  
77 because of your intent out there. You want to change it up, and I don’t think that’s right. Thank  
78 you.”

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80 Ald. T. Smith called three times for anyone else wishing to provide public input and closed that  
81 portion of the meeting.

82

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**Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

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85 **Item 3 – Presentation and Discussion on Draft 1 of the new 2020 Unified Development**  
86 **Code/Zoning Code – A digital copy of Draft 1 can be found using the following link:**  
87 **<https://tinyurl.com/OnalaskaUDC>**

88  
89 Jeff Miller of Hoisington Koegler Group, inc. told those in attendance the presentation will  
90 include the following:

- 91  
92
- 93 • Goals for UDC improvements
  - 94 • Zoning Districts – new, updated, and eliminated
  - 95 • Zoning Map
  - 96 • Uses Tables – Principal & Accessory
  - 97 • Use Specific Standards
  - 98 • Lot and Site Dimensions
  - 99 • Form Based Standards
  - 100 • General Development Standards
  - 101 • Development Procedures

102 Jeff said the goals for the UDC improvements include:

- 103
- 104 • Reorganize and update the UDC to make it easier to understand and use
  - 105 • Implement the 2016 Comprehensive Plan
  - 106 • Implement the two Redevelopment Plans (Downtown and State Road 16 Corridor) that
  - 107 were approved in March 2019
  - 108 • Evaluate and update all zoning districts and the Zoning Map
  - 109 • Improve the UDC and zoning maps as tools for expanding housing development options
  - 110 • Modernize development standards to achieve high-quality, context-sensitive projects
  - 111 • Ensure the UDC meets Wisconsin State Statutes, particularly 2017 Wisconsin Act 67
- 112

113 Jeff next addressed the 2016 Comprehensive Plan and referred to the map that is included in that  
114 plan. The Future Land Use Categories are:

- 115
- 116 • Environmentally Sensitive Residential
  - 117 • Mixed Density Residential
  - 118 • Mixed Use “Smart Growth Areas”
  - 119 • Commercial
  - 120 • Industrial
  - 121 • Downtown Mixed Use
  - 122 • Medical Facility
  - 123 • Institutional
  - 124 • Parks & Open Space

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- 125       • Environmental Corridor  
126

127 Jeff said the Future Land Use Categories do not sync up perfectly with the current zoning  
128 districts, noting there are new zoning districts and others that are being removed to better match  
129 up with those categories and update the map.

130

131 Jeff next addressed 2017 Wisconsin Act 67 and its impacts on cities, which include:  
132

- 133       • A Conditional Use Permit must be granted if an applicant meets or agrees to all of the  
134 conditions specified in the ordinance.  
135       • Requirements/conditions for Conditional Use Permits must be reasonable and, to the  
136 extent practicable, and measurable.  
137       • Any condition specified in the ordinance must be related to the purpose of the ordinance  
138 and based on substantial evidence.  
139       • Substantial evidence is defined as facts and information, not personal preferences or  
140 speculation.  
141

141

142 The City of Onalaska's UDC approach to Act 67 is as follows:  
143

143

- 144       • One of the primary intents of the city's UDC Rewrite Project is to move away from  
145 conditional uses.  
146       • Most of the conditional uses in the current UDC have been converted to either permitted  
147 uses or permitted uses with standards.  
148       • For permitted uses with standards, use specific standards have been added rather than the  
149 more general conditions that are listed in the current UDC.  
150

150

151 The structure of the new UDC is as follows:  
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152

- 153       ○ **Chapter 1: Introductory Provisions**  
154           ○ Authority  
155           ○ Interpretation  
156           ○ Official Map  
157           ○ Administration  
158       ○ **Chapter 2: Zoning Districts**  
159           ○ General Provisions  
160           ○ Base Districts (Principal Uses, Accessory Uses, Lot and Size Dimensional  
161 Standards)  
162           ○ Design Overlay Districts (PUD, D-PUD, D-RN, PCID, AOZD)  
163           ○ Natural and Historic Resource Protection Overlay Districts (Floodplain,  
164 Bluffland, Shoreland, Wellhead, Historic)  
165           ○ District Specific Standards (includes new form-based design standards)

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- 166           ○ Use Specific Standards
- 167       ○ **Chapter 3:** General Development Standards
- 168           ○ Performance Standards
- 169           ○ Parking and Circulation
- 170           ○ Landscaping
- 171           ○ Fences and Hedges
- 172           ○ Screens and Buffers
- 173           ○ Tree Protection and Restoration
- 174       • **Chapter 4:** Subdivision Standards
- 175           ○ Basic Subdivision Requirements
- 176           ○ Subdivision Design Standards
- 177           ○ Required Improvements
- 178       • **Chapter 5:** Administration and Procedures
- 179           ○ General Provisions
- 180           ○ Site Related Procedures
- 181           ○ Subdivision Related Procedures
- 182           ○ Ordinance or Plan Amendments
- 183           ○ Impact Studies
- 184       • **Chapter 6:** Definitions
- 185           ○ General Definitions
- 186           ○ Uses Definitions
- 187           ○ Floodplain Zone Definitions
- 188           ○ Airport Zone Definitions

189

190 The Base Zoning Districts in the new UDC are:

191

- 192       • A-1, Agricultural District
- 193       • R-1, Low Density Residential District
- 194       • R-2, Low-Medium Density Residential District
- 195       • R-3, Medium Density Residential District (NEW)
- 196       • R-4, High Density Residential District
- 197       • R-MMH, Manufactured & Mobile Home District
- 198       • B-1, Neighborhood Business District
- 199       • B-2, Community Business District
- 200       • B-3, Regional Business District (NEW)
- 201       • MU-N, Mixed Use Neighborhood District (NEW)
- 202       • MU-C, Mixed Use Community District (NEW)
- 203       • MC, Medical Campus District
- 204       • I-1, Light Industrial District
- 205       • I-2, Heavy Industrial District
- 206       • P-1, Public and Semi-Public District (NEW) (schools, churches)

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- 207       • P-2, Park and Open Space District (NEW)

208

209 The Design Overlay Zoning Districts are:

210

- 211       • PUD, Planned Unit Development Overlay District  
212       • D-RN, Downtown Residential Neighborhood Overlay District  
213       • D-PUD, Downtown Planned Unit Development Overlay District  
214       • PCID, Planned Commercial Industrial Overlay District (nothing may be zoned PCID in  
215       the future, but the existing districts may be amended)  
216       • AOZD, La Crosse Municipal Airport Overlay Zoning District

217

218 The Natural and Historic Resource Protection Overlay Zoning Districts are:

219

- 220       • FP, Floodplain Protection Overlay District  
221       • BP, Bluffland Protection Overlay District  
222       • SP, Shoreland Protection Overlay District (NEW)  
223       • WP, Wellhead Protection Overlay District  
224       • HP, Historic Preservation Overlay District

225

226 The following base districts have been eliminated:

227

- 228       • R-160, Special Single Family Residential  
229       • M-3/I-3, Heavy Industrial  
230       • T-C, Transitional Commercial/Business  
231       • TMD, Traditional/Mixed Neighborhood

232

233 The following overlay districts have been eliminated:

234

- 235       • TND, Traditional Neighborhood Development  
236       • CCD, Conservation/Cluster Development  
237       • EDA, Economic Development Area

238

239 The following base districts have been renamed:

240

- 241       • M-1 and M-2 are now I-1 and I-2

242

243 Jeff next addressed Zoning District Purpose Statements:

244

- 245       • A zoning ordinance best practice is to provide a brief explanation at the beginning of  
246       each zoning district's regulations that states the purpose/intent of that district. The  
247       purpose statements should clarify the general types of appropriate uses, character and

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248 applicable areas for each zoning district.

- 249 • Many of the current UDC's zoning districts do not have purpose statements. Purpose  
250 statements have been added for all districts, existing and new.

251

252 Jeff next addressed the new tables for organizing uses:

253

- 254 • In the current UDC, allowed uses are listed in each zoning district. In addition,  
255 conditional uses and accessory uses are identified in completely separate sections from  
256 the zoning districts. As a result, there are inconsistencies, redundancies, and gaps in how  
257 uses are defined and allowed across the 15 districts.
- 258 • By organizing all uses into a single table, the UDC is able to show all principal uses, all  
259 zoning districts, and what uses are allowed in each district in one place.
- 260 • The new UDC contains two uses tables: Principal Uses Table and Accessory Uses Table.
- 261 • For each district, the table identifies whether a use is Permitted (P), Permitted With  
262 Standards (PS), Conditional (C), or Prohibited (blank).

263

264 Jeff next addressed the new tables for organizing dimensional standards:

265

- 266 • In the current UDC, dimensional standards are listed in each zoning district.
- 267 • By organizing all dimensional standards into two tables, the UDC is able to show all of  
268 these standards in one place that is easy to find and use.
- 269 • Shows minimum lot area and lot frontage standards for each district.
- 270 • Specific standards for new housing types have been added, such as duplexes and attached  
271 townhouses.
- 272 • Shows minimum yard setback standards – street (front), rear and side – for each district.  
273 Street (front) yard setback standards have both a minimum and maximum. Minimums  
274 only for rear and side yard setbacks.
- 275 • Maximum building height standards for all districts.
- 276 • Minimum building width standards for residential districts.

277

278 Jeff next addressed district form-based standards, which are new to the UDC. Four types of  
279 form-based standards are being proposed for the R-3, R-4, MU-C, and MU-N districts:

280

- 281 • Building siting (street frontage, off-street parking location)
- 282 • Building height (total building, per story)
- 283 • Building façade (articulation, transparency, materials)
- 284 • Building entries

285

286 Jeff highlighted the following general performance standards for parking:

287

- 288 • Attached townhomes or rowhomes reduced to 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit.

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- 289 • Apartments reduced to 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit.
- 290 • Senior independent living reduced to 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit.
- 291 • Hotel/motel standard now based on guest rooms rather than employees.
- 292 • Clinic based on gross floor area rather than per doctor.
- 293 • Retail spaces reduced from 1 per 150 square feet to 1 per 250 or 300 square feet.
- 294 • Office spaces reduced from 1 per 150 square feet to 1 per 300 square feet.
- 295 • Drive-through facilities – added required stacking spaces.

296

297 Jeff highlighted the following general performance standards for landscaping:

298

- 299 • Consolidated from many sections of the code.
- 300 • Landscape plans will be required for all activities except the construction of an individual
- 301 single-family or two-family dwelling.
- 302 • All residential single- and two-family developments shall require two canopy trees per
- 303 dwelling unit installed in the city right-of-way.
- 304 • All multifamily, mixed-use, and non-residential uses shall provide one canopy/evergreen
- 305 tree per 25 feet of frontage and foundation plantings.
- 306 • Additions, expansions, or additional structures shall require an additional two shrubs per
- 307 1,000 square feet of new construction.
- 308 • Off-street parking areas are required to have one square foot of landscaping per 10 square
- 309 feet of parking.

310

311 Jeff highlighted the following general performance standards for screening:

312

- 313 • Buffer areas shall be required abutting residential uses following the included table.
- 314 • The buffer area must contain a solid wall, solid, commercial-grade fence, or hedge with
- 315 year-round foliage, between 6 and 8 feet in height (unless located in front yard or corner
- 316 side yard). If hedges are used, the landscaping must be at least two staggered rows of
- 317 evergreen trees spaced a maximum of 12 feet.
- 318 • Screening is also required for refuse disposal areas, outdoor storage areas, loading areas,
- 319 mechanical equipment, and off-street parking areas.

320

321 Jeff next addressed the development review procedures:

322

- 323 • Consolidated procedures into one chapter.
- 324 • Grouped procedures into Site Related, Subdivision Related, and Ordinance Related.
- 325 • Created table to summarize application process.
- 326 • Clarified procedures required for Planned Unit Developments, annexations, and the
- 327 creation of a Medical Campus District.
- 328 • Removed requirements for individual applications into an Application Manual.

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329  
330 Jeff noted the Community Open House will take place following this meeting, and HKGi and  
331 staff will review and incorporate any input received into the final draft. The public hearing is  
332 tentatively scheduled to be held at the January 28 Plan Commission meeting. The Common  
333 Council could adopt the code at its February 11 meeting.

334

335 **Adjournment**

336

337 Motion by Acting Mayor Wulf, second by Steven, to adjourn.

338

339 On voice vote, motion carried.

340

341

342 Recorded by:

343

344 Kirk Bey